FACE OF MOTHER INDIA

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Author of "MOTHER INDIA"

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THE STORY

THIS book is a story-picture-book. Its aim is to give eyewitness of India as India stands today. Its pictures, all photographs of the actual object, number 406. Had they been thrice as many, they still must have left untouched a multitude of interesting peculiarities of that most interesting and peculiar land. But the limits of space compel selection, and from a storehouse so rich in subjects so varied, any selection is bound to leave many minds unsatisfied, even to the point of protest.

For a reasonable understanding of the photographs, however, some slight background is necessary, beyond the tags of statements attached to each item. Therefore the story comes first.

* * *

"Land of internal antagonisms." So to describe modern India would strike close to the core of fact. Yet of all the many antagonisms, social, political, moral, today gnawing at India's vitals, the deepest-toothed, the least tamable, the strongest, hottest, fiercest, is precisely that which few Western minds seem willing to face. Politicians are prone to avoid and undervalue it. Idealists misstate and undervalue it. And both, in pious hope, try to still it with lullabys so that they may proceed in peace on ways of their own preference.

As well sing lullabys to erupting Vesuvius, as wisely forget, under Etna, that ever-impending fate, as attempt by any cajolement, any evasion or denial, to mask the fiery gulf that yawns between the Hindu and Islam.

When, in the year 632 A.D., Muhammad, founder of Islam, closed his mortal career, he left kindled behind him one of the most tremendous moral fires of all time. As through fields of ripened wheat that blaze swept out from Arabia, land of its birth, west and east, igniting the minds of men, until today the Islamic creed—Muhammadanism—is professed by one-ninth of all mankind.

In India today it controls, in passionate devotion stronger than life itself, eighty millions of human beings; or almost one-fourth, and that by far the strongest fourth of the entire Indian population.

"Islam," the word, means "surrender"—surrender of the human will to the revealed will of God. Hinduism, too, declares itself to rest on revealed divine will, and is equally unshakable in its hold on its adherents. Hindus, including outcastes, whom it counts as Hindus for political purposes only, claims about two-thirds of the Indian population. Between the two creeds, Hinduism and Islam, the contrast is antipodal.

[ 1 ]
The Muslim is the purest of monotheists. He owns no two religions—one for the learned, one for the simple. No matter what his station, intellectual or social, he worships One God and Him only, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient, First Cause, unbegotten and unbegotten, Master and Judge of all creation; and the Ten Commandments of Moses are embedded in his law.

The Hindu, excepting a few advanced theologians utterly aloof from and indifferent to the people, is the most elaborate of Polytheists. He worships millions of gods, some by acts that are cardinal offences against any moral code of civilized humanity.

The Muslim asserts that in the sight of God all men are equal, be they rich or poor, dark or light, bond or free. Muhammad, Prophet of Islam, was no respecter of persons, welcoming to his friendship the most humbly born.

The orthodox Hindu holds that his gods have ordained a social scale at whose top everlastingly sits the Brahmin, endowed with all privilege; below the Brahmin descend by steps some three to four thousand inferior castes and sub-castes, each inescapably fettered, as to every concern in life, within its own compartment; whilst beneath them all wallow helpless and hopeless millions of outcastes—humanity born so low that they possess no rights of any sort and their very shadow defiles whatever it falls upon.

The Muslim concedes no place for priestly mediation between himself and his Maker, holding that every true believer enjoys immediate access, through his own prayer, straight to the throne of God.

The Hindu believes that access to his deities can be attained only through the paid interventions of the Brahmin; and that, as charms—mantras—control the gods and the Brahmins control the charms, the Brahmins, for all practical purposes, dominate the gods, whose earthly form they are.

The Muslim teaches his Bible, the Koran, freely and without reserve, to every member of his faith, man, woman and child, and opens his Heaven to all believers.

The Hindu counts exclusive control of his holy scriptures amongst the prerogatives of the Brahmin, leaves all women, except as wives, outside the scheme of salvation, and denies to outcasts the right to learn, to use, or even to hear, the Vedas.

The Muslim accepts both our Old and our New Testament—the Law and Gospel—as, like the Koran, the revealed Word of God; venerates Christ as, like Muhammad, God's chosen Prophet; and may intermarry with Jews and Christians though these retain their faith.

The orthodox Hindu ranks all Jews and Christians amongst the outcastes, untouchables, contact with whom is defilement necessitating religious rites of purification.

The Muslim, bracketing idolatry with polytheism, abhors both as the most blasphemous of sins.

The Hindu, in his ultra-polytheism, has devised an infinitude of idols which he venerates daily with elaborate and minutely fixed ceremonial.
The Muslim, exultant, plunges into battle for Islam, his Faith, assured that if he dies for its sake, fighting the Idolater, his soul soars straight to Paradise. And for that cause it was, in that triumphant assurance, that he first descended upon India. Nor can any clearer light be thrown upon the whole subsequent Muslim-Hindu position, even to the present day, than is shed by one story of that first coming.

Let the story begin at the year 999 A.D., when, up in the mountain fastnesses beyond India's north-west flank, in the region now called Afghanistan, reigned a young Muslim chief of Turko-Mongolian race, called Mahmoud of Ghazni.

Son of a soldier-king, twice before his fifteenth year Mahmoud had ridden south through the high passes, down into the plains of Hindustan, to campaign against the Hindu, fighting in pitched battles, hand to hand, at his father's side. Already he shone in skill at arms and in the art of war when his father died. Now Mahmoud stood in his father's place, another David, King of Israel—soldier and champion proved, poet, musician, ardent in religion and learned in the learning of his day—when to him out of the distant west came riding an embassy.

The Caliph of Baghdad, revered head of the whole Islamic world, confirming Mahmoud's sovereignty, was investing him, on this the threshold of his career, with two great titles—"Right Hand of Government" and "Guardian of the Faith."

Like Pentecostal fire the words caught the heart of the young ruler. Then and there he registered his oath. "By the One God," he swore, "and for the love of His Holy Prophet, on whose name be peace," he, Mahmoud, would not tamely accept these stern titles; he would well and truly earn them. As soon as he could prepare, and once each year thereafter, as long as strength endured, he would scale the Frontier passes and march on the Faith's chief offender, most ancient of arch-idolaters, the Hindu.

With one swift blow at the Punjab, northernmost Hindu territory, he began the task. This was about the year 1000. In 1001, again swooping down from his eyrie, he cut still deeper south, crushing the Rajah of Lahore and laying waste his sanctuaries. Again and yet again, year after year, farther and farther afield he struck with practically unbroken success, always demolishing both idols and shrines, until at last, in 1008, six powerful Hindu princes united to stop him.

The numbers of the allies greatly exceeded those of the invaders, but while Mahmoud's troops were disciplined veterans trusting and glorying in their general, each Hindu contingent secretly doubted the loyalty and the object of the rest and no Hindu prince would wholly entrust the control of his own men to the titular commander-in-chief of their combined armies. Nevertheless, so great was their advantage in numbers that it alone seemed bound to decide the issue of the day, when suddenly, as the hostile forces yet stood facing each other, an event intervened such as abound in war annals of the kings of Israel. One of the vessels of naphtha, carried in Mahmoud's supply-train for the better and quicker destruction of idol-houses, blew...
up with a roar. The elephant bearing the ranking Hindu chief, terror-stricken and out of control, turned and bolted through the allied body. The Hindu hosts concluded thereat that their mutual suspicions were justified. Behold, was not here their premier prince, without striking a blow, deserting in the face of the enemy? General rout ensued. For two days and two nights thereafter Mahmoud “smote them and chased them” after the fashion of Joshua dealing with the seven kings at the waters of Merom, obeying the orders of Moses.

Thus ended for the Hindus, in confusion, disaster, and an aftermath of mutual blame, the only approach to union by which they were ever to oppose Mahmoud’s invasions.

Many great temples did Mahmoud thereafter destroy. Many idols did he shatter. Many thousands of slaves did he bring back to Ghazni; much precious treasure of art for the adornment of his capital and his court, where it was his joy to assemble the scholars and poets of his day—such lights as Alberuni and Firdousi amongst them. But never did he linger in the land of the idolater, always returning swiftly to his own place and his own people.

Then came a day, after years of almost monotonous triumphs, when rousing news reached him. The Hindu priests—the Brahmans, had at last collected their wits to save their faces: To all that would hear they were now proclaiming that Mahmoud’s successes, far from being due to the power of Mahmoud’s God, as Mahmoud himself pretended, were in reality a supreme manifestation of the strength of the Hindu super-deity, Siva. (See photograph No. 4.)

Siva, declared the Brahmans, enraged against the lesser Hindu gods, his vassals, because of certain ill behaviour, had willed to punish them by destruction of their shrines. Wherefore, he, Siva, had employed the rude hand of Islam, otherwise powerless against their divinity.

If this new preaching accomplished its purpose by bracing the faith of the Hindu, no less surely did it spur the zeal of the Muslim. Mahmoud cast about for a target that should truly test the Sword of Allah. So doing, his mind came to rest upon Somnath.

Now Somnath, on the far distant coast of Kathiwar, was Siva’s greatest shrine in all western India. Here the god was especially adored as Lord of the Moon, the way of it being thus explained in priestly teaching:

Siva’s wives, inflamed with righteous wrath, once complained to another god of their husband’s unsatisfactory marital conduct. This second deity called Siva to account and, when the latter delayed to mend his ways, cursed him with disease that eats the flesh of the face. Aghast at his damaged fairness—witness to this day the gnawed and ravaged countenance of the full moon—Siva now promised reform and begged for the removal of the curse. The co-god refused to retract his word. Finally a compromise was reached whereby Siva was permitted to hide most of his shameful sores for two weeks out of every four—witness to this day the moon’s two minor quarters; but on condition only that Siva set up a special memorial of the whole incident.

That memorial, so it was divinely ordained, should be a huge image of his own lingam.
to be enshrined supreme in a grand new temple where faithful Hindus must come to worship it.

This time the god obeyed. And so appeared, in Kathiawar, the famous temple of Somnath, reared to the honour of Siva, Lord of the Moon.

Its floor, resting on blocks of stone, consisted of massive teak planks, the cracks filled with lead. The pyramidal roof of the main hall, thirteen stories high, rose from fifty-six columns of solid teak. Within, crowned with splendid jewels, stood the lingam itself—a rounded shaft of stone seven cubits high, its lower third sunk in its yoni. And—so potent was this emblem's sanctity—the very sea, as the Brahmins pointed out, twice each day fell down before it, doing it reverence. Witness to this day the tides that rise and fall on the beach of Somnath. Especially in seasons of eclipse, pious Hindus, a hundred thousand at a time, gathered in pilgrimage to adore the image in appropriate rites—those rites that the Hebrew prophets denounced when performed before Moloch, Baal, and Ashtoreth. Rich Hindu rajahs sent in their unwanted daughters to supply its corps of 500 devadasis—resident prostitutes, "wives of the gods," kept for Brahmin priests and for favoured visitors. And into the temple endowment fund, aside from constant gifts, poured the revenues of ten thousand villages devoted by their rajahs to its use.

Of all western India's countless temples, that of Siva of Somnath towered supreme in holiness. And so that its spiritual power might be fully complemented, it was surrounded by a great and forbidding fortress.

Therefore, when the tale of the Brahmins reached Mahmoud's ears—their tale that Siva, not Allah, through all the years had sustained his sword against the idolaters—Mahmoud thought naturally of Somnath, stronghold of Brahmin pride. Not only its preeminence, not only its strength, not only the quality of its tradition and its rites, marked it out for attack, but also its exceeding difficulty of approach challenged both his faith and his generalship.

From Ghazni to Somnath, as the crow flies, is over a thousand miles. Mahmoud must travel by a longer route, through far stretches of bone-dry desert over which his camels and elephants must carry every ounce of water, food and munitions required for his whole force, man and beast. But that march—one of the outstanding feats of ancient soldiery—brought him safely at length under the fortress walls of Somnath.

Fifty thousand armed Hindus, long forewarned, had gathered to the defence. These from the lofty ramparts now shouted defiance: "Fools, Our Lord of the Moon mocks you! Mad men! He himself has brought you here, every step of the way, solely that he may destroy you, every one, at a single blow, because of your insults to our gods of Hindustan!"

After the assault began—so the record reads—band after band of the defenders, aghast at its progress, fled down from the walls to weep and plead before the lingam—then returned to their places to die. The fortress fell. The garrison was wiped out—put to the sword or chased into the sea. The famous shrine, swept bare of its mass of treasure and drenched with naphtha,

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vanished in swift flames. The great lingam itself, smashed into bits, was carried away to Ghazni to serve as stepping-stones before the Mosque. And the temple gates, lifted from their hinges, followed.

So ended the sixteenth crusade of Mahmoud of Ghazni, called in his day “the Idol-breaker.”

Certain modern historians, because of his wholesale seizures or destruction of works of art, with the accompanying loss to archaeology, denounced Mahmoud, in his relation to India, as no more than a barbarous bandit whose master-motive was avarice. This quality of estimate constantly appears when the deeds of one period are measured by the standards of another. Mahmoud rated the thing before him on its merits as what it then was. What merit it might acquire in the eyes of European archaeologists yet nine hundred years from birth, if he let it stew on undisturbed, may easily not have occurred to him. Further, nine hundred years make a long, dark tunnel down which to descry a concealed motive in any man’s mind; but as for the motive that Mahmoud himself professed, it was at least logical; it lay, at least, in his law. If he was merely a bandit driven by avarice, what were Joshua, Gideon, Saul, and David when they too obeyed their God speaking by the mouth of His prophet, smashed the idols, hewed down their groves and their temples, and slew and spoiled the idolater?

And it must never be forgotten, nor can it be overemphasized, in following Indian history from that time to this, that the faith, the spirit, and the virility of Mahmoud on the one hand, and, on the other, the faith, the spirit and the practices that provoked Mahmoud to violence—these two unchangeable and irreconcilable opposites, have remained, are today and will long continue to be, determining factors in India’s destiny.

* * *

The barrier that Mahmoud scaled, leading his men “up like mountain goats, down like waterfalls,” out of Afghanistan into the land of the idolater, is a part of the Himalayas. A hundred miles deep, fifteen hundred long, and containing the highest three measured peaks in the world, the Himalayan range blocks access from the north to the V-shaped wedge of land that we call India. In Mahmoud’s time that wedge, two thousand miles in length, had no covering name of native giving. Each of its hundreds of kingdoms, larger and least, was ruled by its own absolute despot. All frequently at war and battered by war, all dominated by a radically anti-social religion, they recognized little community of interest. Separated by bars of mutually unintelligible languages and mutually repellent tradition and customs, as well as by history and by blood, they never conceived of themselves as together an entity, social or political—not even to the extent of giving a name to the sub-continent upon which fate had thrown them. That common habitation—to them the world—made between them no more of a bond of fellowship than proximity today creates between Italy and Ethiopia.

Further, the whole country is much broken, split, subdivided by various mountain sys-
terns and by wide tracts of desert; and while its southern tip almost touches the 8th parallel above the equator, the northernmost boundary approximates parallel 35. Both physical and climatic oppositions, therefore, accent other elements of disunity.

Yet, from Mahmoud's point of view, all humanity between the Himalayas and Cape Comorin were as peas of one pod; for all were idolaters. And while they themselves might discern important differences amongst the gods, demons, hobgoblins and monsters, members of their teeming Hindu pantheon, Mahmoud set one value on the lot. Buddhism, originally a reforming departure from Hinduism, had reached its zenith in the fourth century before Christ. Now, encumbered with creeping lichens from the root that it had spurned, it was, in India, fast sinking to its end. The Punjab—great northernmost plain of India—had almost forgotten Buddha. The gods had returned to their own,—de facto governors of the land—when Mahmoud began his holy war.

By the close of Mahmoud's career a large part of the Punjab had already acknowledged Muslim control. As time passed, other Muslim conquerors, descending like Mahmoud down out of trans-Himalayan Asia, increased that area. Their road was often disputed, but the results, even of the stiffest resistance, rarely varied. Enormous Hindu armies, by no means lacking in individual chiefs of great personal gallantry but always lacking in skilled command, always lacking in discipline, always lacking in internal confidence and mutual trust, and always hampered by endless barriers of caste, melted into head-long mobs before small, well-led, disciplined and united Muslim forces.

When the Hindu troops were Rajputs—a proud and valorous folk descended, so some students think, from ancient Mongol stock, then the Muslim needs must fight for victory. But as the field of conquest moved south-east, that condition changed. Two hundred Muslim soldiers sufficed to take the entire province of Bihar. And all of populous Bengal, a territory twice as big as the State of Virginia, dropped like a ripe plum when that hardy Islamic campaigner, Muhammad Khilji, barely twitched the bough. Muhammad Khilji, with eighteen Afghan horsemen at his heels, rode up to the palace gate of Bengal's reigning rajah. Nothing more was required. The rajah, a Bengali Brahmin, waiting neither for word nor for blow, slipped swiftly away by the palace back door.

That “conquest” was effected in the year 1200. With it ended Hindu rule in Bengal. For five and a half centuries thereafter the great Brahmin stronghold lay, almost without interruption, flat as a millpond under Muslim lords. And when, in 1757, she changed hands it was to glide at Clive's touch into British, not Hindu, control.

During the period of Muslim conquest and assumption immediately following Mahmoud of Ghazni's day, some Islamic masters concerned themselves more, some less, with the religious practices of the Hindu populace. But all levied on its wealth and its produce, all commandeered its services and its labour, most shouldered their sacred duty of smashing its idols.

In all India, excluding Burma, there are now only 439,000 Buddhists. Census of India, 1931, vol. i, part 1, p. 389.

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and its idol-houses, and many turned to account the abundant wreckage thereof as ready-made, convenient and significant building materials for that noble architecture in which from the first the Muslim excelled.

For example, when the Muslim commander, Kutbu-d-din, about 1209, A.D., raised in Delhi the great Kuth Mosque, he used in its construction the wreckage of no fewer than twenty-seven Hindu temples. (See No. 5.) In the masonry of this Mosque, as in many another splendid Muslim creation spread over the face of India, it is still easy to identify Hindu temple remnants—blocks of carved stone showing fragments of temple patterns or figures of monsters, demons, gods. And the student of races, observing these blocks, ponders the fact that in all the centuries since first they were so placed by the victor's hand, the Hindu living in their presence has never dislodged them.

So passed five hundred years and more; years checkered not only with fresh invasions, but also with rivalries between Muslim conquerors already settled in the land.

Then, in 1526, down through the Himalayan gorges rode, as Mahmoud had ridden, another epoch-making Islamic figure—Babur of Samarkand, since his twelfth year king and soldier.

Babur, then forty-three years old, united in his veins the blood of those two classic Mughal conquerors, Tamerlane and Genghis Khan, adding to the strain his own brilliant individual gifts of character and mind, accomplishment and learning. His diary-memoirs, written by his own hand, preserve today the freshness of life itself. To read them is to be translated into his time and company. For he saw and thought with clarity and he practised the rule that he laid down for his son: "Write without elaboration; use plain, clear words. So will thy troubles and thy reader's be less."

Recording the campaign into India, he begins:

I put my foot in the stirrup of resolution, set my hand on the rein of trust in God, and moved forward against Sultan Ibrahim ... in possession of whose throne at that time were the Delhi capital and dominions of Hindustan.  

Babur’s army of invasion numbered 12,000 men, all told. Ibrahim’s force was estimated at 100,000, with 1,000 elephants. News of the odds spread betimes. "Some in the army were very anxious and full of fear," writes Babur of his own command. "Nothing recommends anxiety and fear. For why? Because what God has fixed in eternity cannot be changed." On the famous field of Panipat the two armies met, and such a battle ensued as, says the chronicler of the other camp, had not been seen before in all that land. For the leaders on both sides were Muslims, whatever the composition of Ibrahim's troops.

Babur goes on to state that at the date of his conquest the country was governed by seven "respected and independent rulers," of whom five were Muslims "many-legended and broad-landed"—the Sultans of Delhi, Gujarat, the Deccan, Malwa and Bengal. The remaining two

rulers, "pagans" (Hindus) both, were a Rajput chief who disputed the possession of Mewar, or Udaipur as it is now called; and the rich rajah of Vijayanagar in the remote south. Aside from these seven major figures, a host of little chiefs were sprinkled about the land, some obedient to Islam, some lodged in fastnesses so remote or inaccessible as still to have remained unvisited.

When Babur, having conquered Ibrahim of Delhi, had got his conquest well in hand, he turned first to deal with the Rajput chief who threatened him in the west. But, because of one depletion and another, he had at this juncture only a few hundred of his own transmontane Mughals to stiffen a small army mainly of local draft and perhaps largely converts from Hinduism. This native element now chattered and shivered in praise and in terror of the Rajput fighting fame. "At such a time as this," exclaims Babur, came an ill-omened astrologer who, "though he had not a helpful word to say to me, kept insisting to all he met, 'Mars is in the west in these days; who comes into the fight from this (east) side will be defeated.' Timid people who questioned the ill-augurer became the more shattered at heart. We gave no heed to his wild words, made no change in our operations, but got ready in earnest for the fight."

Things were at this stage on the morning of February 25, 1527, when Babur, thinking to ride off his irritation, ordered his horse.

Now, it happened that Babur, careful of religious duties in other respects, had always loved and freely drunk good wine, forbidden though it is by the Koran. Also three strings of camels loaded with "acceptable wines of Ghazni" had just come into camp from Kabul, by Babur’s express order. Upon this background must be read the following entry in the diary:

"On Monday [Feb 25 1527] when I went out riding, I reflected, as I rode, that the wish to cease from sin had always been in my mind, and that my forbidden acts had set a lasting stain upon my heart. Said I, 'Oh! my soul
How long wilt thou draw savour from sin?
Repentance is not without savour, taste it!'"

The resolve taken, that very day in the presence of his high officers he ordered all his "flagons and cups of silver and gold, the vessels of feasting," brought before him, then and there broken up, and their fragments bestowed on the deserving poor. Next day he issued a public proclamation making known his vow of perpetual abstinence. And all the good Ghazni wine from Kabul was salted to make vinegar. Not without difficulty, not without hardship, but with unbroken faith, Babur kept his oath throughout his life.

But the army still shivered.

"No manly word or brave counsel was heard from any one soever. . . . None had advice to give, none a bold plan of his own to expound. . . . At length after I had made enquiry concerning people's want of heart and seen their slackness for myself, a plan occurred to me; I summoned all the begs and braves [officers and men] and said to them, 'Begs and braves!'"
Who comes into the world will die.
Who lasts and lives will be God.

He who hath entered the assembly of life
Drinketh at last the cup of death. . . .

Better than life with a bad name is death with a good one. . . . God the Most High has allotted to us such happiness and has created for us such good fortune that we die as martyrs, we kill as avengers of His cause. Therefore must each of you take oath upon His Holy Word that he will not think of turning his face from his foe, or withdraw from this deadly encounter so long as life is not rent from his body!"

May an American be permitted, reading those words, to remember the jubilant scorn of our sergeant of Marines in Belleau Woods to the men he leads over the top: “Come on, you sons of——! Do you want to live for ever?”

Babur’s victory over the Rajput was complete. And soon he had swept all northern India clear of opposition, becoming himself the first Mughal emperor. But, neither he nor his men liked the land of their conquest, of which few details escape the Emperor’s recording. Flora and fauna he observes with a naturalist’s closeness and an artist’s, gardener’s and animal-lover’s joy, describing leaf, flower and fruit, paw, fin and feather. Climate, topography, manners, methods, he sets all down. And when he comes to summarizing his opinion of land and folk he is no less definite:

“Swordsmen though some Hindustanis may be, most of them are ignorant and unskilled in military moves and stand, in soldierly counsel and procedure.” . . . “Hindustan is a country of few charms. The people have no good looks; of social intercourse, paying and receiving visits, there is none; of genius and capacity, none; of manners, none; in handicraft and work there is no form or symmetry, method or quality; there are no good horses, no good dogs, no grapes, musk-melons or first-rate fruits, no ice or cold water, no good bread or cooked food in the bazaars, no hot-baths, no colleges, no candles, torches or candlesticks.”

The general bleak disorder of human life and works repels him to the point of disgust, and his particular description of such things as the habitual fouling of well-water—photographic in application to the practice of 1935—show how thoroughly he loathed the things he described. But he could not withhold his hand from the plough: Endless were his efforts, snatched from the demands of a crowded life, to introduce beauty, order and the amenities of civilization into the land of his conquest.

Even the end of his career, sudden and untimely, came in the same self-giving. It was in 1530. Babur, then in his forty-eighth year, had recently returned to Agra from an expedition into the north-west, when news came to him that his eldest son, Prince Humayun, attended by his mother, was being brought to him, down the Jumna, ill. Humayun lay in the grip of a violent fever, which, resisting all medical skill, grew so rapidly worse that the young prince’s fate seemed already sealed, when his father announced a resolve to practice the Muslim rite of inter-
cession. According to that rite the suppliant offers to Heaven that which he holds most precious in exchange for the life besought.

Those around the Emperor thought of the great diamond, supposedly the Koh-i-nur, of which Babur himself had written at the time he acquired it, that "every appraiser has estimated its value at two and a half days' food for the whole world." But the Emperor would make offering of no gift so small. Walking thrice around his son's bed, he prayed aloud, so that all might hear, "O God, if a life may be exchanged for a life, I, who am Babur, give my life and my being for Humayun."

Even as he spoke a surge of fever seized him. "I have taken up the burden!" he cried in joy. Humayun at once rose from his bed, bathed, went out and held audience. The Emperor, stricken on the spot, died shortly thereafter.

This is the testimony of the Princess Gul-badan, Babur's daughter, who wrote it down in her own book, the *Humayun-Nama*, made for the Imperial family records.¹

From father to son at each step, Babur's crown descended to Humayun, to Akbar, to Jahangir, to Shahjahan, to Aurungzeb, the "great Mughals." Akbar, *the Great Mughal*, mounted his throne in 1536—two years before the accession of Queen Elizabeth to the throne of England. Soldier and statesman, both by arms and by diplomacy he pushed back his borders until his domain stretched from Kabul, in Afghanistan, twelve hundred miles to the south, where it marched with the territories of earlier established Muslim conquerers. One by one, he brought under control almost every Hindu prince that resisted him, even the gallant Rajputs eventually becoming, for the most part, loyal supporters of the Imperial house, to which some of their greatest rajahs were glad to give their daughters in marriage.

Thus, by conquest or by agreement, Muslim suzerainty spread through India.

The reign of the Emperor Akbar, like that of his contemporary, Elizabeth of England, was a reign not only of extended boundaries but of enhancing wealth, of a magnificent court, of encouragement and flowering of arts and letters, of ordered government, of administrative reforms. A man of kingly presence and of distinguished qualities of mind, Akbar himself could neither read nor write, having as a boy refused to waste soldier's energies on clerk's business. Nevertheless, he was in effect well read, a remarkable memory serving him instead of the printed page. Systems of theology and philosophy especially engaged his interest. With the hospitality of a patron of pure learning he listened to the exponents of all faiths. Further, he permitted their practice. He invited Jesuit priests to his court, and to them gave leave to make converts if they could. He chose his friends and high officers from amongst Hindus as well as Muslims; yet it is obvious through all that his tolerance entailed no liberty to the Hindu to encroach upon Imperial control.

The twenty-two-year reign of Jahangir, Akbar's son, passed unchallenged as to suzerainty by any Hindu element save the Rajputs of Udaipur, whose effort failed. Like his father,
Jahangir was an advanced liberal in things of the mind. He decorated his throne-room and audience-chamber with pictures of Christ and of the Christian saints, some of which his own hand painted. He carried friendship to Christian missionaries still farther than had Akbar. Akbar chose to carve upon the magnificent Gate of Victory, leading into his city of Fatehpur Sikri, these words attributed to Our Saviour: "Jesus, on whom be peace, said: 'The world is a bridge, pass over it, but build no house upon it. The world endures but an hour, spend it in devotion.'" But Jahangir went farther still, actually subsidizing with Imperial funds the Jesuit missions and their converts to the Christian faith. Hinduism, however, he contemptuously dismissed as a "worthless religion," troubling himself little farther concerning it.

The period of the Emperor Shahjahan, Jahangir's son, during its thirty years of almost unbroken peace, was the supreme period of the great Mughals. Still farther the Imperial borders spread. No invading power, however briefly, set foot upon India's soil; no Hindu prince raised a rebellious head. The court of Shahjahan, like those of Akbar and Jahangir, exceeded in magnificence all other courts in the world of that day. The Emperor's wealth attained enormous proportions.

All the Mughals were passionate lovers of beauty in every form, from the simplest and most delicate to the most grandiose, from the sound of falling water in a mountain cascade or the blue of a wild flower in the shadow of a cliff, or the poise of a last autumnal leaf upon its twig against the sky, to the gravest, purest and loftiest forms of architecture that the Oriental mind has conceived.

Babur had inherited from his great-great-grandfather, Tamerlaine the Conqueror and Builder, and from a double ancestral line of scholarly men and women, a trained and discriminating love for noble architecture. But, save for the many gardens with which he softened the land he found, his brief and active life left him little time for building. "No bondage equals that of sovereignty," he wrote, and his creative gift, but little used, passed on from him to his successors on the throne of Empire.

Fatehpur Sikri and the reverence-commanding tomb of Humayun remain as living monuments to Akbar's architectural sense. Jahangir's inheritance of his father's aesthetic genius stands proven in much besides the Mausoleum that he designed. Shahjahan's palace in Delhi, like his dreamlike Pearl Mosque, places his name among the greatest of human creators; and the shrine of his life's love, the Taj Mahal, is the treasure of all the world.

As to religious thought in the mind of Shahjahan, the pendulum swung well away from the nebulous theologies reached by his two Imperial forbears. Shahjahan stood fast by the supremacy of his own Muslim faith. Given this foundation, certain acts of insolent evil committed by Christians lodged in the Empire—largely in seizing Imperial subjects to sell as slaves—produced their natural result for Christians as a whole.

Proceeding farther on the return to orthodoxy, Shahjahan withdrew from his Hindu subjects certain privileges into which they had gradually crept during the easy days of the
two previous reigns. One of these privileges was that of rebuilding the idol-houses which, beginning with Mahmoud of Ghazni, over six centuries before, many Muslim rulers had destroyed, each as he penetrated new Hindu territory. This indulgence Shahjahan now cancelled. More, he ordered that all such edifices as were in process of construction be levelled flat to the ground. An empire-wide crash followed. In the district of Benares alone, seventy-six Hindu temples dissolved forthwith into heaps of stone.

To the throne of Shahjahan succeeded Aurungzeb, his son, a religious puritan of the sternest type. Aurungzeb, in the midst of a gorgeous court on whose splendour he insisted, lived his personal life as a rigid mortifier of the flesh. His Muslim subjects he permitted in such matters to follow their individual consciences. But his own conscience, above all in the matter of idolatry, left him no choice. Nor can any student of the Bible fail to recognize the source of the law to which he bowed.

Thou shalt have no other gods before Me. . . . Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. . . . Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them. . . . Ye shall utterly destroy all the places wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods . . . ye shall overthrow their altars and break their pillars . . . ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place. (Exodus XX and Deuteronomy XII.)

Could any command be clearer? And what though the words were brought, not by Muhammad, but by Moses, down from the Mount of the Presence? What though the place of their first recording be not the Koran, but The Book of the Jews? Moses, or Jesus, Son of Mary, or Muhammad, third and last of the Holy Prophets, did not the One God speak through each alike? Could His servant, Aurungzeb, do else than obey? The land entrusted to his stewardship must be cleaned of sacrilege.

Right and left, then, Aurungzeb struck out, destroying whatever remained to be destroyed. Combing Benares for overlooked offence, as the Muslim lords of the land had often done before him, he found an ancient temple of Siva, tore it down and built of its fragments, still plain to be seen, a mosque upon its site. Thousands upon thousands, over the land, the idols crashed. Trainload upon trainload of gem-encrusted gods, brought from the four points of the compass, came to burial beneath the steps of the Agra Mosque, where the feet of all future generations of Muslims, ascending to prayer, might daily glorify the Oneness of the One God.

So was the first, the constant theme repeated.

So, and not otherwise, had Mahmoud of Ghazni struck, overthrowing the altars, hewing down the graven image, seven hundred years before. So, on the backs of his war elephants, had Mahmoued brought home to Ghazni the broken fragments of that gem-wreathed “pillar”—the great stone lingam of Siva, to lodgment beneath the feet of the faithful ascending the steps of the Ghazni Mosque.
And so, as in the glare of a lightning-bolt at night, now stood revealed once more that bottomless gulf that has yawned through all the centuries between Hindu and Muslim. On the one hand, the subtle Brahmin, knitter of cobweb cables that have bound his victims’ souls in slavery to multi-millions of gods worshipped in idol-crowded shrines befouled by unnamable rites; and on the other hand, the plain, free man who, offering his simple and direct worship in a house of prayer as bare and clean as was that of John Knox, rides out to his death unterrified, shouting: “The Faith! The Faith! There is but one God and Muhammad is His Prophet.”

But Aurungzeb was not a constructive monarch. The special genius of government lay not in him. Whether directly or indirectly, his policies tended to diminish or destroy the fealty of his vassal lords, opening the way for troubles of many stripes.

Thus in his day serious Rajput rebellions broke out, provoked by unwise handling of certain Rajput princes, long-faithful lieutenants of the Mughal crown. And again, near the opposite end of the social scale, the Mahrattas of the west-coast mountains, all Hindus of inferior caste, rapidly developed as an organized brigand horde. Rough, sturdy, nimble, cunning, and taking by nature to banditry, the Mahrattas now possessed in one of themselves, Sivaji by name, a leader of great energy and resource.

Against this enemy Aurungzeb’s natural shields were the two states on his southern border—Golconda and Bijapur, both independent Muslim sultanates sprung from conquests made long before the Mughal Empire was born. But in each case the sultanate, adhering to the Shiah sect of Islam, regarded by the orthodox as heretical, had displeased its Imperial neighbor. Bijapur, besides, was deemed too powerful, too proud; while Golconda equally offended by lacking pride enough, having stooped, on the one hand, to bargain for peace with Mahratta peasant banditry, and, on the other, to make use of Brahmins as Ministers of a Muslim state. Both Sultans, therefore, were snatched from their thrones; both countries, being left without sufficient direction, sank under the raids of this and that marauding gang; and the Mughal Empire lost thereby what it ill could afford to lose—its buffer to the south.

So, in fast-gathering darkness, closed Aurungzeb’s half-century reign.

The Emperor was ninety-one years old when, in 1707, he died. In his latter days his brain had lost something of its native vigour; but his will remained of iron, up to the last. Whatever his other qualities, he was sincere as Savonarola, sincere as Martin Luther, in religious zeal. Even when the burden of years bowed low his head he would shift to no other’s shoulders one jot of the duty with which he believed himself divinely charged.

For one hundred and eighty-three years—from the accession of Babur, its founder, to the death of Aurungzeb, the sceptre of the Mughal Empire had been gripped in a master hand. Now the strength of that strong blood-royal was spent while yet its life dragged on. Between 1707 and 1749 came a series of crowned ephemerae ending with one no abler than the rest, whom for almost thirty years a freakish fate pinned fluttering to the throne.
While the Imperial Mughal power thus sloughed into decay, movements made possible thereby swarmed up on every side. The Imperial Governors of Hyderabad, Oudh, and Bengal each in turn set up his province as a separate Muslim State practically free of the Imperial power. An Afghan Muslim clan, the Rohillas, boldly scaling the Frontier, rode south into India, helped themselves to good Hindu ground, and sat down thereon to stay. And the Mahratta bandits, for a time obscured, again appeared equipped for mischief on a larger scale.

Without detailing the Mahratta successes, it will suffice here to say that they included, by process of blackmail and trickery rather than by valour, the laying of states and provinces under extortionate tribute; and also the acquisition of much territory by conquest of arms; so that for a time it seemed as if the entire country so long obedient only to Muslim high control, might now come under the yoke of the marauding gangs.

But not to the Mahratta, not to any Hindu, was it granted to seize the sceptre dropped from the Mughal grip. News of the weakened defence of the Himalayan passes, for nearly two centuries barred by the Mughal sword against all invasion, had spread far back into the inexhaustible fountain-head of Islam. Once more, then, down through the grim defiles, poured fresh armies of the Crescent and the Star—first Persians, under the famous Nadir Shah, killing unnumbered multitudes and bearing away to their own country the still-splendid wealth of Delhi; then wild Afghans under Ahmed Shah Abdali, founder of the present Afghan kingdom, to deal the final blow.

Struck home on the field of Panipat, in 1761, that one impact drove the Mahratta force back to its jungle, broken beyond recovery of its towering hope. In strength of arms and in numbers deployed, it had far excelled its opponent. But the story now enacted was exactly the story so commonly enacted before. Faced by a typical Muslim fighting force led by an able commander, these Hindu troops did as others had done when similarly placed. Fighting stoutly for a time, they suddenly broke en masse, running just as Hindus so often had run from Mahmoud of Ghazni seven hundred and fifty years before.

"By one effort, we now get this thorn out of our side for ever," declared the Afghan chiefs, as, over a circle of seventy miles, they hunted the flying Mahrattas. Of those fugitives, it was reckoned, over 200,000 fell, before, sated with slaying, the Afghans turned back to their hills.

After that, full chaos descended—a blood-soaked era of small wars and hideous rapine, while some two thousand separate predatory chiefs of every sort and origin, Mahratta with the rest, rode up and down the land at will, murdering, looting, burning, scattering or destroying all accumulated wealth, each striving either to hack out a toe-hold for himself, or to defend and enlarge a position imperilled. A titular Mughal Emperor still sat on the throne, but little power remained with him. Effectual central government had ceased to exist. All India, out of control and abandoned to the lawless ambitions, jealousies, greed, and mutual antago-
isms of its own innumerable races, tribes, clans, religions, cases, factions, and individual adventurers, had returned to a state even less coherent than that in which it lay when Mahmoud of Ghazni first shivered it with his iron mace.

* * *

And now, turning time backward, we must pick up a different thread—that of Europe's first interweaving in the web of Indian life. It was in 712 A.D., that the Arabs conquered Sind, the country around the Indus, on India's western coast. And for four centuries thereafter Sind remained under Arab rule, thus permanently casting the Muslim character of the population. Arabs again, somewhat later, began, as traders and sailors, peacefully to settle amongst the people of the Malabar Coast, south of Sind, where their multiplied descendants, the ardently Muslim "Moplahs," live to this day. But India's first practical contact with a western European power was deferred until 1498, when the Portuguese Crown was seized with urgent concern for the saving of Hindu souls. Circumstances related to that concern appear as follows:

An enormously profitable trade flourished between the west coast of India and the great merchant cities of Italy. Arab ships carried that trade, because Arab ships enjoyed undisputed passage over the direct sea-route, all of whose waters were bordered by Islamic power. But why, Portugal now asked herself, should Italy pocket all this wealth? Why should riches so luscious be shared by the infidel "Moor"? And how, in the face of these two unanswerable questions, could spiritual neglect of heathen India be longer endured?

Portugal's duty admitted no doubt. And so it was that that famous old sailor-man, Vasco da Gama, with three little ships much smaller than the Mayflower, set out by order of King Manoel of Portugal to find the way, out of sight of inquisitive eyes, around the south end of Africa and so across to the Indian coast—for the saving of the souls of the heathen.

In the summer of 1498, da Gama touched the coast near Calicut, its richest port. This was twenty-six years before Babur founded the Mughal dynasty. Much of southern India still remained in Hindu hands, including Malabar, the south-western coastal strip where Hindu rulers bore the title of Zamorin. The Zamorin of Calicut received da Gama with courtesy, scarcely grasping, perhaps, the meaning of a neat little marble pillar, typifying Portuguese conquest and claim of possession that the visitor quietly set up on his shore. Certain harassing incidents occurred, yet when da Gama, having seen what he needed to see, at last sailed away, he bore from the Zamorin to King Manoel a letter written on a palm-leaf that read:

"Vasco da Gama, a nobleman of your household, has visited my kingdom and has given me much pleasure. In my kingdom there is abundance of cinnamon, cloves, ginger, pepper, and precious stones. What I seek from thy country is gold, silver, coral, and scarlet."

But when da Gama came again to Calicut, still by his King's command, the time of compliments had passed. Time for business had begun. Soon da Gama spoke by the mouths
of his guns, bombarding the Zamorin’s palace. Contemporaneous Portuguese chronicles tell
the story; and if an extract or two be given here, may the matter be pardoned because of its
lasting significance.

It befell, one day, that a boat from Calicut came alongside da Gama’s ship, carrying, under
a white flag, a letter from the Zamorin. Da Gama allowed its bearer, a Brahmin, to come
aboard, promising him safe-conduct back to shore. Meantime, the letter being interpreted, da
Gama conceived a suspicion that it did not cover the Zamorin’s whole intent. Therefore, he
put the Brahmin to torture, to discover the truth. Under torture the Brahmin finally admitted
that his orders were to observe whatever he could, on board the ship, that might be of interest
to his master. He then begged to be killed at once, since otherwise he must kill himself for
shame of having betrayed his master’s confidence.

The situation left no two ways open. That heathen dog, the Zamorin, if ever he was to
learn the fear of God, must first learn fear of His Majesty of Portugal. Da Gama, seeing the
picture clearly enough, hastened to project it. First he cut off the ears of his ship’s dog, then
those of the Brahmin; after which he caused the dog’s ears to be sewed “with many stitches”
to the Brahmin’s head. Then he cut off the Brahmin’s upper and lower lips, so that the teeth
showed as in a canine snarl. Which completed, with some further details that must here be
spared, the messenger was shipped back to his master as Portugal’s complete answer to heathen
insolence. Yet, for good measure, bombardment of the town followed.

Against such visitations the Indians, both then and always, were powerless, having no sea
strength able to cope with that of the foreigner. It also chanced that da Gama lay before
Calicut when a fleet of twenty-four little native sailing-craft, bearing rice from farther down
the coast, swung into the harbour. Escape from the Portuguese caravels being impossible,
da Gama easily robbed the fleet of all its cargoes. Then he ordered his own people to cut off
the hands, ears, and noses of every man in the native crews, and to tie each man’s two feet
together. After that, lest they unte with their teeth the lashings that bound their ankles, he
had their teeth knocked down their throats. This duly done, he ordered some of his victims
to be hung by their heels to their own mastheads; after which the rest, roughly numbering
eight hundred, were flung into their boats in heaps and the heaps covered over with mats and
dried leaves. Finally, all sails being set for shore, the inflammable stuff was fired, and the little
craft sped forward, blazing. As they sped, under the eyes of great crowds of horror-struck
natives gathered on the beach, the Portuguese cross-bowmen, from da Gama’s decks, shot
arrows into his still-living victims as they swung head-downward from the masts into the blaze.

While this was in progress, several other small vessels, unwarned and unsuspecting, swept
into the harbour, to be likewise seized. But from aboard these later comers certain natives
called out to their captors, begging “for the sake of Thomas” to be made Christians. Now
the Apostle Thomas the Doubter is believed to have spent the last years of his life on the eastern
coast of India, where, before his martyrdom, he made converts. The cry of the helpless,
raised in St. Thomas's name—so says da Gama's chronicler—"from pity was repeated to the Captain-Major [da Gama], who ordered them to be told that even though they became Christians, still he would kill them. They answered that they did not beg for life, but only to be made Christians. Then, by order of the Captain-Major, a priest gave them holy baptism. There were three who entreated the priest, saying that they wished for once to say our prayer, and the priest said the Pater Noster and Ave Maria, which they also repeated. When this was finished, then they hung them up strangled, that they might not feel the arrows."

These episodes will be found at length in the Lendas da India of Gaspar Correa, chronicler of the voyages of the famous Portuguese navigator and in other old Portuguese records.

The relations thus launched developed in kind. Unable, after all, to seize Calicut, the Portuguese, by heavy fighting, wrested from the Sultan of Bijapur his island of Goa, some 260 miles to the north on that same coast. Here they set up the first European control that any Indian soil had known since the beginning of the Christian era. Here they raised a pretentious city that thrived and grew rich for half a century, while its masters built up a history that should blister the page recording it. They "converted" the natives by wholesale torture, and by torture slew such of their converts as dared resume their earlier faith. In a land used to cruelties, the cruelties of the Christian Portuguese brought new horror. Their religious zeal was beyond question, but so was their stupid brutality. Their administration was evil to the core, their way of living rotten, and their abuse of the people hedged them in with hatred and fear.

Elsewhere in India, by one means or another, Portugal effected settlements. But her policy was always the same and her hothouse growth sank of its own badness. When, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, Dutch battleships, hot on the trade trail, hove in sight, Portugal's knell sounded. Yet a few throes and henceforth she would be known in India only by certain small dead spots bearing her flag.

But the Dutch, having torn from Portugal's grasp all her blood-stained power, made relatively little use thereof. Holland's real interest in the East lay in the great Spice Islands; of her one-time tarrying in India few traces today remain.

So with Portugal, so with the Dutch—conquest by arms was their first approach, and conquest by arms their ultimate title. But with England the story differed.

Queen Elizabeth, as sovereign to sovereign, opened relations, by letter, with the Emperor Akbar. Later she granted a royal charter to a company of English merchants, authorizing them alone amongst Englishmen to trade with India. Next, the East India Company so created secured permission from the local Mughal governor to build a factory on the western coast of India, at Surat. And not until that permission had been finally confirmed by special Imperial edict did the Company proceed to build its first factory and to open its trade.

Meantime, both Queen and Emperor having died, again the throne of England acted, King James I sending his ambassador to the Emperor Jahangir. Further agreements were
now made, resulting in the gradual establishment, by Imperial consent, of a chain of British East India Company trading-posts along both coasts of India. Madras was so founded, on a forlorn sandbank, in the year 1639—nineteen years after the Pilgrim Fathers landed on the “stern and rock-bound coast” of Massachusetts; Calcutta, chosen for its harbour, began as an English settlement in 1690. Bombay, never a part of the Mughal dominions, still flew the flag of Portugal when, in 1655, King Charles II of England received it as part of the dowry of his bride, a Portuguese princess. Pestilent little island that it was, its position nevertheless pointed to commerce, and King Charles, accordingly, released it to the Company, which soon found Britons mad enough to face death by fever and start a post there.

Thus all the English Company’s positions were attained in a policy looking neither to military control nor to territorial acquisition, nor to soul’s salvation, but to trade and trade only. Practically the only land that the Company acquired, aside from the plots on which its buildings stood, were, first, a few square miles around Madras secured by paying its price and taxes to the native authorities; and, second, the little island of Bombay, as just described.  

In the rich commerce that now arose the French shared, having their own chartered trading company and their own headquarters founded in 1674 at Pondicherry, on the east coast south of Madras. At first peace reigned between the two companies in their several posts, each conducting its own business in a field ample for both, and neither ambitious beyond its zone. But when, in 1745, and again in 1756, war broke out between England and France in Europe, its flames blazed up wherever the two flags met around the globe. Thus while the British Colonists of New England and New York, with the aid of red Indian allies, were fighting “French and Indian wars” for control of the future of America, British and Indian allies on the other side of the world were also struggling against the French,—and to similar outcome.

Meantime, in India’s internal affairs, the knell of the Mughal Empire had sounded. Aurungzeb, last of the Great Mughals, had died, and his domain, as we have seen, had fallen into chaos. No power remained in it capable of maintaining peace, of protecting life and property, or, in the English case, of supporting the Imperial edicts and treaties under which the Company operated. The latter, therefore, found itself faced with these alternatives: either it must take strong measures to help itself, or it must see its work, its future, and its people perish in the general crazy whirlwind of little wars, gang maraudings, lootings, and butcheries.

The Company chose. It set up for its own defence a body of European troops supplemented by Indian auxiliaries. Small as the force was, its character proved formidable in the type of work there was to do. Seeing this, Indian princes, beset by each other or by Mahratta raiders, repeatedly besought its protection, in return becoming allies or tributaries of the East India Company. Other Indian states, their forces often trained and led by French officers who

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1 Sir Joshua Child’s attempt upon Chittagong, in 1685, and another sporadic gesture at Surat, were lonely, short-lived, and fruitless breaks in the Company’s policy.
reflected the ambitions of France in the East, made war upon the Company and its Indian friends; which was frequently ended in the Company’s establishment of a protectorate or in its definite acquisition of territory.

At this point three possibilities lay visible for India: She was about to become either a French or a British sphere of influence if not outright possession, or some strong new Muslim power would enter from the north. France was not sufficiently interested to throw much weight into the scales. The British Company, sincerely opposed to territorial acquisition and to political action of any kind, wished to remain purely and simply a trading concern. Curiously enough, it was neither the French nor the British, but the Bengalis, who settled the point.

Ever since its “conquest” by Muhammad Khilji and his eighteen Afghans in the year 1200, Bengal, centre of Brahmin Hinduism though it was, had lain in Muslim hands. Ever since 1576, when Akbar took it, it had remained a province of the Mughal Empire, ruled by a Mughal governor. At the time now in question that Mughal governor, the Nawab Siraju-d daula, was a young man ambitious to test his fate. To which end he suddenly fell upon the practically defenceless English settlement at Calcutta and seized it by force of arms.

This deed and its complicated sequels—amongst which was the tragedy of the Black Hole—brought about action on the part of the Company: Clive, then a colonel in the Company’s army, led against the Nawab a contingent about 2,900 strong, of whom 900 were Europeans, while the remaining 2,000 were British-trained native troops. Clive’s artillery consisted of eight six-pound cannon.

This little force the Nawab confronted with an army of 68,000 men and fifty heavy-calibre guns. But the disparity proved other than it sounds; the Nawab’s troops, Bengalis, “failed to display courage or any other soldierly quality,” the only steady fighting on the Nawab’s side being that put up by a small party of French artillerists.

Therefore, at Plassey, on June 23, 1757, all Bengal dropped from the Mughal Empire into the hands of Colonel Clive, at the cost, to Colonel Clive, of twenty-two men killed and fifty wounded.

The domain thus in a sense accidentally acquired was too big not to tip the scales as between England and France. The Bengalis, at Plassey, gave India to England.

In its chief executives the East India Company was often greatly fortunate. Clive, Hastings, Wellesley, such giants led through the deepest wilderness. Whatever directors at home might prefer, they could scarcely maintain their position as a mere trading concern while such men acted for them in India. As the Company’s dominions increased, Clive, Hastings, Wellesley, with their long vision, their imaginative courage, and their unbreakable will, each in turn, by his special genius suited to his special day built toward a future in which order was gradually to emerge from chaos, and life and property to become increasingly secure under the extension of peace and law.

1 Vincent Smith, Oxford History of India, p. 494.
But Clive and Hastings, these two in especial, found a thicket of domestic growth to clear from their path. The East India Company's administration had no horrors in its record such as those that should have disturbed the Portuguese peace; but it bore, for a little while, another and probably an inevitable stain. In a country such as India became after the death of Aurungzeb, it required almost superhuman integrity to resist meeting guile with guile. And the ordinary run of the Company's employees were mere ordinary folk a long way from home and the public opinion of home. Meagrely paid, they were constantly plied with enormous bribes by native magnates and the Ministers of native courts, to whom bribery, murder, and tricks were other names for statecraft. Every man and every advantage was for sale to the highest bidder. Every crime could enter the argument, from the native side. And the whole atmosphere made straightforward dealing next to impossible for the foreigner having business to put through. Once standards had been lowered to meet these conditions, entanglements multiplied. Clive's devoted efforts to clean them away cost him dear—even to life itself. Hastings, taking up Clive's burden with a self-immolating loyalty beyond praise, accomplished all that any man could, in the time allowed him, toward redeeming a system so embarrassed. His work both for England and for India was of the first order of merit. His reward was seven years of torture at the hands of his enemies—an ordeal from which he emerged unsoiled and unbowed, but an ordeal such as few men have been called upon to endure.

But dawn was near. When Lord Cornwallis came in as Governor-General—this was in 1786, after Yorktown—he could stand on the foundation laid by the toil and sacrifice of Clive and Hastings and work effectively toward the end dictated by his own high moral character. Yet a little while and the position was practically cleared.

Further time, however, was needed for the construction and establishment of an administrative network that could bring ordered and unified civil government to a conglomerate of inter-repellant peoples speaking two hundred and twenty different languages and exhibiting degrees of development beginning with the Stone Age; peoples whose majority fought every effort toward lessening poverty, defeating disease, or in any way raising their physical and social status. For the wide experience of social reformers, in India, has been and is, that the anchor of the wrong to be righted, almost without exception, is found firmly sunk in the bed of the Hindu religion. Pull at its cable and the whole earth quakes—the whole Hindu orthodoxy, led by its priests, shrieks, "Sacrilege!"

Of this fact an early and perfect illustration lies in the story of suttee. According to Brahminic teaching, any Hindu wife who submits to be burned alive with her dead lord's body performs thereby an act of great religious merit, and reflects much-coveted distinction upon all her surviving family—as well as relieving the estate from a widow's unwelcome claim. Concubines, too, may share the wives' privilege, adding their bodies to the glory of the pyre.
So, willing or forced, half-drugged or wholly conscious, old, young, or child, noble or simple, wife or concubine, hosts of such victims were immolated yearly, in Hindu India, from the earliest historic times.

The Mughal emperors held suttee in utter horror. Akbar himself once “rode at top speed nearly a hundred miles” to save a Rajput princess from being burned against her will. Akbar’s successor, Jahangir, is credited with meting out capital punishment to persons implicated in suttees. Mandelslo and other travellers record the patient and practical efforts of Shah Jahan’s governors to protect and dissuade Hindu women from that awful death. Thus within the territories directly under the Muslim emperors’ control, the practice was gradually so discouraged that, in the region around the Mughal capital, for example, it never revived.

But wherever the Hindu religion remained undisturbed, suttee continued—until at last a Governor-General of the East India Company, Lord William Cavendish-Bentinck (see No. 9), found himself in position strong enough to proclaim that man guilty of culpable homicide who should aid and abet the burning alive of a Hindu widow, whether or not the victim consented; and to sanction the death penalty where violence, drugs, or any other means of overpowering the victim’s will was employed.

This Regulation he issued on December 4, 1829, acting thereby against the dissuasions of that eminent Brahmin reformer, Raja Rammohan Roy, who, though himself militantly opposed to suttee, feared that so bold a step as its prohibition might upset the country.¹

And, indeed, although certain Hindus approved the Regulation, the greater number resented it, particularly in Bengal, where 463 wives had been burned alive in the previous year, and where the rite was not only a religious edification, but an exceedingly popular public show. On January 14th Lord William was waited upon by a delegation of Bengali gentlemen of the first station and piety, in protest against so gross an assault upon ancient religious privilege. Two days later Rammohan Roy and his supporters came forward with a counter-address, laying the origin of suttee to jealousy and selfishness, and expressing “deepest gratitude,” “utmost reverence,” for the “everlasting obligation” that the British Governor-General had “graciously conferred upon the Hindu community at large.” But the indignant gentlemen who had first waited upon Lord William countered promptly with a great meeting of Calcutta’s orthodoxy—rich folk, largely, whose waiting carriages formed a line a mile in length while they conferred.² The immediate fruit of this conference was the dispatch of a petition to His Majesty at Westminster, praying for relief from unsympathetic alien oppression, and bearing the signatures of eight hundred male advocates of the immediate burning alive of widowed wives.

² Ibid., p. 152.
The reply from Westminster did not, however, at once end the struggle. Despite the vigilance of British district officers, for years after the issuance of the edict suttees not infrequently occurred, while in Hindu-controlled native states women burned as before.

The second social reform undertaken in Lord William Cavendish-Bentinck’s time was suppression of Thuggee. The Thugs were devotees of the Hindu goddess Kali (see No. 368), whose tongue forever lolls in unquenchable torments of thirst for human blood. An ancient secret and hereditary brotherhood, pervading almost all of India, the Thugs worked in gangs, their victims being, as a rule, travellers on the main highroads. For Kali’s solace these people strangled their prey, robbed them and buried them, all with a peculiar set technique so swift, so noiseless, so traceless that detection was practically unknown. Hindus of many castes, high or low, were Thugs by religious inheritance; men of rank and fortune belonged to the organization or connived with it, drawing from the work both cash profit and a ghastly exhilaration spiced with fear. And occasionally Muslim associates were found—dregs of their world.

In crushing this industry, the Governor-General’s right hand was Sir William Sleeman, whose task was brilliantly accomplished in the period between 1831 and 1837. Up to that time thousands of travellers on India’s main arteries of traffic had been butchered each year in Kali’s honour.

Thuggee, crushed, was not openly bewailed as was suttee. Yet the two were one in that their existence from prehistoric times rested upon strong religious roots and consequent popular veneration. Amongst Hindus, centuries are not long enough to kill such rootage. The issuance of temporal edicts against any practice arising therefrom merely serves to drive it to deeper and wider underground spread, on which to produce in new form its essential leafage. Widows seldom now mount a funeral pyre, because the flames, visible from afar, may attract the police. But garments catch fire within the house; “accidents” happen; and the suttee accomplished is still ecstatically praised by Hindu political speakers and the Hindu nationalist press.

“Would suttee revive if the British left India?” asks one who has deeply studied the subject—and answers himself: “... there would undoubtedly be instances of suttee, especially where Brahmin and Rajput influence is strong; and in some districts the rite might become not uncommon. The disquieting thing is, suttee has troubled the Hindu conscience hardly at all.” The Thugs have still their lineal and spiritual descendants; and Kali, in her eternal thirst, is still heard by obedient worshippers as she calls aloud for draughts of human blood.

Lord William Cavendish-Bentinck, in conferring upon India the blessing of his two social reforms, was enabled by a power of which the British administration was soon to be shorn. Queen Victoria, in her Proclamation of 1858, issued this fateful command:

“Firmly relying ourselves on the truth of Christianity and acknowledging with gratitude the solace

Suttee, Edward Thompson, Allen & Unwin, Ltd., London, pp. 139-140—a valuable study.
of religion, we disclaim alike the right and the desire to impose our convictions on any of our subjects. We declare it to be our royal will and pleasure that none be in any wise . . . molested or disquieted by reason of their religious faith or observances. . . . We do strictly charge and enjoin all those who may be in authority under us that they abstain from all interference with the religious belief or worship of any of our subjects on pain of our highest displeasure."

Had that command been given before Lord William Cavendish-Bentinck's day, it would have left him as powerless to move against the burning of living women as are viceroys of the present time to move against child marriage, the debasement of widows, and other forms of social evil that are rooted in the Hindu religion.

And now let us turn to look at the Indian masses as a whole, of whose general condition little has thus far been said—and for the following reason: The history of India, through its pre-British centuries, is a history of princes, not of peoples. Under no Indian régime of any recorded period did the common people's welfare determine a ruler's policy. Their condition, for better or for worse, inspired no course of action—scarcely even their own. Except where the waves of Islam broke and rested the majority of the population were Hindu, and these in especial lay like clots of helpless insects beneath their masters' feet. Their religion dictated flaccid acquiescence in all life's ills. Because of forgotten sin in some forgotten birth, the gods had condemned each soul to whatever pain its body suffered now. Why increase the awful debt by further sin of resistance? Let the gods have their way.

Actual figures are lacking, but the Indian population in habitable regions was probably always denser than that of contemporaneous Europe, and Indian climatic conditions at all times insure periodic local recurrence of crop shortage. Against this terror no general safeguard was ever undertaken. The first historic reign of a Hindu king is that of Chandra Gupta—the period lamented by present-day Hindu politicians as "India's Golden Age of peace and plenty." To the reign of Chandra Gupta, about three centuries before Christ, a twelve-year famine is traditionally ascribed. And Chandra Gupta, it is written, met his people's emergency by suddenly abandoning his throne and its responsibilities in favour of a religious life, taking himself off with a band of congenial associates to settle afar, care free, in a more prosperous land. His subjects, because of their former sins not possessing royal mobility, might stay as they were and starve to death—which they did.

Over eighteen centuries later the Hindu ruler of Agra and Delhi, Hemu by name, fed his five hundred state elephants on sugar, butter, and rice whilst a famine-scourged populace, grown by suffering "so hideous that one could scarcely look upon them," devoured the flesh of their own kin and kind. A hundred years later the people of Mewar "went mad with hunger. . . . Things unknown as food were eaten . . . even the insects died: they had nothing to feed on. . . . All was lost in hunger . . . man ate man!" 

1 Badaoni, quoted by Vincent Smith in Akbar, the Great Mogul, p. 32.
During the periods that separated these three episodes, the same visitation recurred many times over throughout India, leaving only too clearly established, by the pen of numerous and unanimous witnesses who saw the facts, its record of unconcern on the part of most rulers, and, on the part of the populace, of misery ending in cannibalism and other horrors too monstrous to detail here.

Akbar, it is true, tried to lessen extremes of distress by the distribution of food. But Akbar stood almost alone. “We must recognise,” writes a modern historian, “that alike in greater calamities and in lesser, the peasant was ordinarily left to bear the burden unassisted except in so far as he might be able to secure a reduction in the revenue demand.”

But the demand for revenue laid upon the Indian peoples by their own rulers remained in general as relentless as death. Individual monarchs might decree, as did the Mughal Emperors Akbar, Jahangir, Aurungzeb, special measures of mercy in the face of some great need; but mercy of that sort was practically inoperable beyond the immediate range of the monarch’s eye. It had no root nor reason in the land’s native philosophy. Remoter officials could scarcely be expected to work it. From greatest to least, since time immemorial, each in descending order had, as a natural right, taken his personal “squeeze” of all that passed through his hands. And the crown itself was recognized by ancient Hindu law as entitled to twenty-five per cent of the crops.

Sivaji, the Mahratta bandit king, exceeded that limit, demanding for himself forty per cent of every man’s produce, and putting his headmen, even when they were Brahmins, to torture on the rack if they failed to extract his full claim. Additional taxes everywhere were imposed at the rulers’ need or caprice. If the villager could not deliver his toll, he, his wife, his children, could be, and were, sold into slavery. The few buried coins of the artisan could be unearthed. The merchant could be forced, by physical torture, to surrender his hidden gold.

Under such conditions industry offered no reward, for any belongings, however humble, courted seizure if visibly enjoyed. The peasantry lived poorly, if for that reason alone; and the margin of substance left in their hands was at best so small that, famine or no famine, hunger crouched always near the hearth. Human life itself had little value. The common people were often sold with the land on which they lived. No one was charged with studying their needs in any direction; they existed solely to produce for their master’s use. No good highway had ever been built. In North India a rough waggon-path connected Agra, Lahore, and the west coast, but otherwise the Ganges and the Indus offered the only channels of communications, and all ways, at all times, by land or by water, were beset by brigands and Thugs. In South India, from Golconda to land’s end—a thousand miles’ stretch—no wheeled vehicle could travel, the trails being passable only to pack animals and men afoot.

1 W. H. Moreland, India at the Death of Akbar, p. 128.
2 Institutes of Manu, ch. vii, v. 139, and ch. x, v. 118.
3 Oxford History of India, p. 435.
And in that lushly fertile south country—so wrote van Linschoten, who knew it between 1580 and 1590, the peasants “are so miserable that for a penny they would endure to be whipped.”

Against this uniform poverty of the people stands out in sharp contrast the fantastic splendours of emperors and kings, their seraglios, their courtiers, their high officials. Muslim or Hindu, North or South, through all chronicled centuries the story in this respect runs much the same. All personal property, even that of the great, was insecure. No means existed for the investment of savings. The one way surely to enjoy money was to spend it quickly in gorgeous living. Every monarch accumulated his own hoard of bullion, coins, and gems, in addition to that which he inherited; but he also wore upon his person masses of jewels of the greatest value that he could acquire. His robes, his cushions, his throne, were encrusted with precious stones, as were the trappings of his elephants. Shahjahan is described as wearing, at a given time, jewels amounting in value to 20,800,000 rupees. The Russian bishop Athanasius Nikitin, visiting the Deccan about 1470-75, observed that the ruler of Bedar, “riding on a golden saddle, wears a habit embroidered with sapphires and on his pointed headdress a large diamond. He also carries a suit of gold armour inlaid with sapphires, and three swords mounted in gold. . . . Behind, a great many attendants follow on foot, also a mighty elephant decked with silk and holding in his mouth a large iron chain. It is his business [by swinging the chain] to clear the way of people and horses in order that none should come too near the Sultan. The brother of the Sultan rides on a golden bed the canopy of which is covered with velvet and ornamented with precious stones. It is carried by twenty men.”

This, however, was not a state progress. On occasions more formal, the same ruler, wrote Nikitin, was wont to be accompanied by three hundred elephants clad in Damascus steel armour, wearing scythe-like swords weighing over one hundred pounds lashed to each tusk; 1,000 horses decked in gold, 100 camels carrying torch-bearers, 300 trumpeters, 300 dancers, and 300 concubines. And sometimes troops of 300 monkeys.

Below the Deccan lay, at that time, the Hindu Empire of Vijayanagar, of which Babur wrote, founded in 1336 to check the southward sweep of the Muslim conquerors and to preserve in itself the glory of Hindu civilization. Muslim conquerors, two and a quarter centuries later suddenly attacking the place, wiped it so thoroughly out that scarce one stone remained upon another. But in the interval Vijayanagar was visited by travellers from several foreign lands, who recorded eloquent descriptions, on the one hand of a court and city of indescribable opulence and sensuality, and on the other of a peasantry peculiarly wretched, poverty-ridden, and oppressed. Here great men’s funerals were so lavish that from two to three thousand wives and concubines were customarily burned alive with their master’s body; and the decorations of the palace surpassed all telling. But the peasantry, toiling patient and hopeless like the naked slaves that they were, had scarcely their bare necessity of bread. This
status of the masses obtained in general throughout India until England's authority began to
effect change.

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Meantime, in England herself the social conscience of the people was undergoing a
famous awakening. England’s abolition of negro slavery throughout her dominions, in 1832,
three-thirty-three years before America so painfully followed her lead, was one result of that strong
tide. And now that British responsibilities in India had grown so great, British public opinion
increasingly insisted that no territory, no population of such size, could properly continue in
the hands of any private trading organization, however competent, however safeguarded.

In 1858, therefore—the year after the Mutiny—by an Act of Parliament “for the better
government of India,” all powers, rights, and responsibilities of the East India Company’s
were finally assumed by the British Crown.

The great and essential pioneer work of the Company’s governors—hewers of roads
through primeval jungle—could now be strengthened and built upon more widely. The civil
administration could be augmented with a view to service more advanced.

Among the duties so to be undertaken were the defence of the Frontier against inva­
sions, so frequent and so deadly in the history of the past; the better country-wide enforce­
ment of internal peace; the codification of the laws, with, as before, sympathetic regard to
the ancient laws and customs of the peoples; the extension and protection of competent courts
and of a competent police; the survey of the land and its due and minute recording, in order
that land titles to each acre of the humblest owner might at last be sure; the forestallment
of famine and the provision of famine relief measures; the building of good highroads, of
railroads, of bridges and of ports; the irrigation of deserts; the improvement of agricultural
methods and the increase of crops; the establishment of hospitals and of medical relief and
of schools for the people; the study and combat of those terrible pestilences and chronic dis­
eases that peculiarly ravage India and which, through her, threaten the rest of the world. These were some few of the things that imperatively needed doing.

But, imperative as they were, who was to do them?

As far back as 1833, Parliament had decreed that no native Indian should, by reason only
of his religion, place of birth, descent, or colour, be disabled from holding any place, office,
or employment under the East India Company. In 1858, when the obligations of the Com­
pany passed to the Crown, this pledge carried over. And Queen Victoria, in her Procla­
manion announcing the Crown’s assumption of sovereignty, emphasized her will that

“so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to
office in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity
duly to discharge.”

The Indian’s right to serve his country in governmental office was, therefore, early and
amply recognized. But "education" and "ability" to perform necessary types of executive work highly technical in themselves, Western in concept, and strange alike to the history and the spirit of the land—where were these qualifications to be found? British influence in India having to this day almost wholly failed to produce them, it may be well to see the reason of a failure so deadly.

The East India Company, in the earlier days, had no thought of imposing any sort of Western system of education upon the Indian peoples. Warren Hastings, as Governor-General, promoted study of both Muslim and Hindu law and of the ancient literatures of the land. "It was his belief," says the Calcutta University Commission "that if the British power was to be lasting it must become an Indian power, and that its greatest gifts would be the gifts of order and justice, under which the ancient indigenous culture might revive and flourish"—to which end Hastings himself, in 1781, founded the Calcutta Madrasah, or Muslim College. And British political opinion of the time agreed that India would profit most if left, on the intellectual side, to find her own way forward. But such opinions did not long prevail.

The policy displacing that of Hastings came neither from statesmen nor from men of letters, but from certain British missionaries in the current of the great evangelical revival of the 1830's. These men vehemently urged it as England's duty, through education, to open her own intellectual and moral concepts to India; and their fervour carried their cause. English missionary work in India, now stimulated to new zeal, took the form of rapid multiplication of missionary schools and colleges. Under the same influence, the East India Company increased its allotment of funds for education, and that factor, too, was thrown to the side of Western learning.

Debate then arose as to the language vehicle to be employed. Neither the Company nor the missionaries had any desire to discourage the development of the vernaculars. Indeed, it was the Baptist missionaries of Serampur, near Calcutta, who first raised Bengali to the rank of a literary dialect. It was generally agreed, however, that none of the native vernaculars was sufficiently developed to serve as a medium for Western knowledge and that, therefore, either English or one of the classical languages—Persian or Sanskrit—must be adopted for the higher schools.

Partly because of lack of textbooks in either classic tongue, the choice fell upon English. Two years later—in 1837—English was adopted as the official language of the courts of law, thereby dislodging the imperial Persian from its ancient and honoured throne. Yet seven years, and Lord Hardinge, as Governor-General of the East India Company, announced that thenceforward preference would be given in all appointments under the Company's government to men who had received Western education; and he set up examinations so based.

1 Report, vol. i, part i, p. 31.
3 Calcutta University Commission Report, vol. i, part i, p. 35.
Those three steps—the adoption of English in the higher schools, the displacement of Persian in the courts of law, and the making of Western education a passport to government service—produced results of a character little foreseen by their authors. One of these results, a great and fateful one, was the reversal of the order of racial power that for many centuries had obtained in India.

The Muslims could not and would not give up learning Persian—for them the language of philosophy and of poetry, of history and of science, of authority and of law—the language, in a word, of cultivated minds. To master and use English in addition to Persian would be too heavy a burden. Furthermore, English was the tongue used and taught by Christian missionaries. Heads of families did not care to endanger their young sons' Islamic orthodoxy by that approach. In religious loyalty, therefore, as well as in pride of race, Islam in India withdrew within itself, refusing to abandon its own culture and compete in common market for room in the strange new world that had replaced its own.

Not so the Hindu of the clerkly castes. For many centuries their fathers before them had learned a foreign language—Persian—in order to secure employment under their Muslim lords. Now they had only to change to another foreign language, to obtain from new rulers a like result. The Bengali in especial, quick of wit, apt at words, and for over six centuries never his own man, found himself suddenly Fortunatus.

The English educational scheme for India was far from intended to emphasize bookish attainment as education's goal. On the contrary, it urged studies useful in the practical upbuilding of the country's welfare; but in so doing it counted without the Hindu mind, upon which, almost exclusively, the plan was to operate. It failed to reckon with the facts, first, that the Hindu religion is an active anti-social force, confining every man's interest to himself, his family, and his caste only, leaving him blamelessly indifferent to others' welfare; and, second, that it had dangled the prize of government jobs before the possessors of arts degrees.

The result followed as night follows day: To have a university graduate in the family became the great ambition of every Hindu household amongst the clerkly classes; for a youth so distinguished may go any length. At once he may and does demand a higher dowry with his wife. Also, if he gets a government job he can—and must, by one method or another—maintain many of his relatives; for that which the West calls "nepotism," with condemnation implied, ranks, in the iron-bound law that governs each Hindu caste, as a cardinal virtue whose claim no man, high or low, dare deny. To attempt to deny it would mean unbearable moral and material ostracism throughout his own world.

Scientific agriculture, veterinary science, forestry, engineering, commerce—few Hindu youths desired to spend their efforts on humble technical subjects like these, because of cash values; and also because such practical callings were, to them, identified with the lower castes. But the demand for degrees in arts grew apace, and universities multiplied to supply them.
Thence sprang the inevitable. Rapidly as the work of the new government grew, with the passing years extending its multiformal activities in a network over India, it could not absorb all the Bachelors and Masters of Art turned out by India's degree mills.

The type of service that their country most needed, these young men were both unprepared and undesirous to render. Anything nearer to the soil than a government clerkship was beneath their dignity to assume. Better starve than accept the humiliation of a merely useful job. Yet the stools they wanted to perch upon were filled already, their occupants' heels fast locked in the rungs. Each year, therefore, saw the further increase of a class of unemployed, hungry, discontented, and ever-more-dangerous literates whose minds, clouded by misunderstood and misapplied Western political and economic theory, were now exposed to every bitter doctrine of social unrest. By 1897 a Brahmin called Tilak had started in Bombay a fruitful propaganda of anarchy and assassination. By 1905 his work had developed new foci in places as far apart as London, Paris, and San Francisco. Here, among groups of young Indians, the revolutionary spirit was invoked through appeal to religion, the making of infernal machines was taught, special conspiracies were plotted, and murders of British officials followed through the years, both in England and in India.

Thus, while Indian High Court Justices sat upon the bench; while Indian legal lights shone at the bar; while Indian members sat in the Cabinets of the Secretary of State for India and of the Viceroy; and while India's general conditions were being improved as fast as was possible without a larger measure of intelligent and patriotic Indian help—young Hindu malcontents were preparing their chosen contribution to their country's advance.1

Then came 1914 and the Great War, testing all India like a touchstone. The Indian princes vied with each other in practical demonstration of loyalty. The commercial magnates, though less readily, gave of their wealth. But the greatest story of all came from the North—from the Punjab and the little North-West Frontier Province.

Let us see it, first, in figures.

The areas of the Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province, combined, make about one-seventeenth part of the total area of India. The population of the two provinces, as of 1921, made about one-thirteenth part of the total population of India. But the number of combatant troops sent to the King-Emperor's support by the Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province well exceeded fifty per cent of India's total man-power contribution. And over half of India's total combatant losses in the Great War were sustained by the Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province.

That North-country is indeed the home of India's martial races—Rajput Dogras, Sikhs, 2

1 India's total population is 340,000,000. Counting every man, woman and child, from Viceroy down, only 135,000 are Europeans, including all British troops, who number 60,000. The Indian Civil Service, seed frame of administration, reckoning both executive and judicial branches, has 1,500 members, over a third of whom are Indian. The Police Force totals some 200,000 rank and file, all Indian, with 700 officers, the higher largely British. All provincial Ministers are Indians, as are nearly half the High Court Judges. In every branch the process of Indianization, inherent in Britain's original conception of Government for India, proceeds methodically.

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and Jats, as well as of the pure Muslim stock; and the flower of them all stood forward now. No need to conscript them—only to say, “The King-Emperor goes to war.” The great Muslim territorial chiefs, Colonel Sir Umar Haiyat Khan and Nawab Sir Khuda Bakhsh Khan (both of the famous Tiwana tribe), Nawab Ghulam Muhammed Khan Gheba, the Ghakhar and Janjuha chiefs—these and many others, themselves soldiers all, called up their men; and the clansmen, swarming in from the villages to answer that call, not seldom were escorted by their women chanting farewells in Islam’s ancient battle-songs of valour and victory.

Pride of race would still forbid a standing before the new Government as suppliant competitors with the Hindu for material advantage so long and so lately all in Muslim gift. But now that Government came to them, itself a suppliant, asking for their lives, instantly their attitude changed. With dignity and with gladness, from chief to the humblest, they offered their lives in their open and outstretched hands.

Sir Walter Lawrence, Special Commissioner charged with the care of sick and wounded Indian soldiers in the Great War, shows, in one small example, how positive a thing is that Islamic loyalty. The centre for Indian invalids had been placed at Brighton, because of the sunshine. Several hotels and other large buildings had been commandeered for hospitals, and to these His Majesty the King added his own house, The Pavilion, especially for wounded Indians’ use. So came the month of Ramazan, during which, between sunrise and sunset, Muslims take neither food nor drink. And when the Muslim patients began that rigorous fast the doctors in alarm protested that some of them, at least, were inviting disaster. Sir Walter Lawrence, attempting to dissuade his charges, reminded them that Islam grants exemption from the Ramazan fast to men on a journey. “But we are not on a journey,” protested one and all, “we are honoured guests in our King’s country.” “And we,” added those in The Pavilion, proudly, “are guests in our King’s own house!” So, between allegiance to their Faith and allegiance to their King, they would cede nothing whatever either to the weakness of the body or to human commands.

Over fifty per cent of the North’s recruitment of fighting-men was the gift of Islam.

But the Province of Bengal, with a population of nearly 47,000,000 against the 23,000,000 of the two northern provinces combined, sent only one battalion to the front, lost not a single man in combat, and established, in that battalion, a record so appalling that out of pity it has never been exposed to the public eye.

A satiric star might seem to have governed the birth of the Bengali race as to its martial aspect; but their Great War record, like their records in wars of centuries past, was probably predetermined by their peculiar socio-physiological history. And it is also just to remember that Bengal’s share of the new Western-educated intelligentsia is over-heavy; that the accumulation of bitterness in the minds of that class was by now an inheritance of rising generations; and that its boys came into the world far more sure of their daily gall and wormwood than they were of their daily bread.
Where the martial races poured out their lives, where princes and chiefs gave themselves, their men, and their money, where the great traders subscribed to the funds, the loyal fraction of the Hindu intelligentsia, in Bengal and elsewhere, doubtless also contributed. But that loyal fraction was small. The intelligentsia's greater part, whatever its first position, grew early war-weary, early disaffected by war hardships, early infused with doubt as to the Allies' final victory, and soon came to see in the world-struggle now afoot only its own political opportunity to drive its knife into England.

It maintained its secret agents in Berlin, after France, having discovered their activities on her soil, flung them out. In America its workers connived with German agents against America and the Allied cause until the American Intelligence Department discovered their activities and flung them out. In India, after its initial hesitation, it used a busy press to fan sedition in the public mind; it attempted to induce mutiny in the army; and in the Viceroy's Legislative Council it tried to block the war funds.

In a word, while the Punjab and the Frontier Province, with grim resolution, were exhausting their manhood in recruitment after recruitment to replace the killed, the Hindu intelligentsia, safe at home, was doing almost its utmost to stab the fighting-man in the back and make his sacrifice a mockery.

"The most that this intelligentsia can claim, and some of them claimed it," wrote one who knows them well, "was that they might have done much more harm to the Government cause than they actually did; but they did all they dared."¹

Meantime, while the war was on, while the smoke was rolling, England had no time closely to scan friends' faces; she was fighting for her life. But when the war was over, when she could catch her breath and count her blessings, her heart welled up with gratitude for India's display of loyalty at her side on the fighting front. Whence in particular that display had come she took small thought to ask. India had been loyal, India had been gallant—that was all that England knew; and now her keen desire was to show her gratitude in convincing form.

Happily for England, happily for those who deserved all gratitude that England could display, the Punjab possessed during the war and the perilous years thereafter a great Governor. To the intuitive judgement, quick decision, and impartial firmness of a born executive, Sir Michael O'Dwyer added long experience and the gift of sympathetic understanding of all manly classes with whom he dealt. And now, in the matter of advising on the form that England's deserved recognition should take, no wisdom could have been surer than Sir Michael O'Dwyer's. For each element in his province he bespoke that which would give it, individually, most satisfaction. For the princes, high military rank, additions to their honours, additions to the number of guns in their salutes; for the soldiery, battle ribbons to pin on their breasts and grants of good land near their villages; for the disabled and for the fami-

¹Sir Reginald Craddock, The Dilemma in India, p. 163.
lies of the killed, liberal pensions and the respectful care of their government. Therewith the North-country was deeply content.

So much for the people and the soldiers of the North-country, and for an administrator who knew both soldiers and people and who dealt with facts. Now for the people and the intelligentsia of the rest of British India, and what them befell.

The people, as always, had little or nothing to say. The intelligentsia, as always, had much to say, and said it very loud. Having done all they dared to lose the war, having contributed nothing toward winning it, having risked nothing unless it were the risk of being hanged as traitors, they now stood forward as India’s representatives, demanding for themselves India’s reward for war service. Further, they named the form that reward must take—immediate political independence.

Immediate independence they could not have. The Queen’s Proclamation of 1858, still called by Indians their Magna Charta, pledged the Crown “to administer the government for the benefit of all our subjects resident” [in India]—not for the benefit of any selected class. That Proclamation was still binding upon England; and the present applicants for independence—“Swaraj”—had yet to betray the faintest interest in the welfare of any but their own small class, out of the entire Indian population.

Nevertheless their appeal fell upon friendly ears. “Surely,” said the typical Englishman—“surely we of the English tradition should feel great sympathy with men who, after centuries of alien rule, long to govern themselves!” And though Britain could not in honour forthwith abandon the so-widely-various Indian peoples into hands such as now were outstretched to seize them, this alternative was descried: To implant upon the country, bodily, the framework of a Western democratic machine; and in Western-type parliaments, as in forcing-houses, intensively to train the claimant class so that in a brief series of stages they might qualify as governors of their fellow men.

Some years earlier, one of the bravest of Indian intellectuals had written these words in connection with the Swarajist demand:

“It is no question of intellectual ability at all. We Indians have got to establish a tradition of ability to rule, of moral fitness, before we can with safety claim as a people, or even as classes, greater powers and rights. It is the toll we must pay for our own past history.”

As to the history of the more immediate past, it is useless to deny that British India, today, in view of the care and opportunities bestowed upon her during the past three-quarters of a century, is the world’s greatest phenomenon in backwardness. During that period such progress as she has made has in the main been achieved in spite of flaccid inertia or active resistance on the part of the majority beneficiary; and by dint of such wiles, persuasions and devoted hard work on the part of the alien in the land as a patient nurse may devise to win to reason and self-help an obstinate, fractions and undeveloped child.

1 Miss Cornelia Sorabji, B.C.L. quoted in India, Minto and Morley, by Mary, Countess of Minto, p. 246.
The word “progress,” as above used, is meant to betoken, not necessarily adoption of any foreign or debatable standard but, rather, advance against enemies so primal that they must be recognized as such with regard to any grade or form of life: Starvation, thirst, disease, death. British India’s social lag, increasingly a threat to the whole family of nations, is due, at base, neither to economic nor to political causes, but, as has already been affirmed, to the inhibitions of the Hindu religion. “You cannot think of a social question affecting the Hindu community,” wrote one of the foremost of Hindu statesmen, “that is not bound up with religious considerations.” Those considerations represent an obstacle such as no government of our times has elsewhere been forced to face.

As to the Constitutional Reforms in India, this is not the place to describe their course. Still less is it here presumed to question their wisdom nor to surmise their ultimate result. But this it is safe to assert: If instinct, genius and will for good government exist anywhere in mankind, they are lodged with the British, whom India burdens with an appalling job.

Let us, rather, go back to pick up the story of Terrorism in India, already touched upon, an example of the Hindu barrier. The cult, as we have seen, was started in Bombay Presidency, about twenty-seven years ago, by a Brahmin politician called Tilak. Tilak, to launch his work, hit upon a typical artifice: It happened that in the city of Poona bubonic plague had broken out in an epidemic of unusual violence; and that Government, fighting it, had undertaken a house-to-house search for rats. But the agency of rats as plague-spreaders was as yet unknown to the people; a fact in which Tilak, himself a man of education and the owner of a newspaper, saw his golden chance.

Behold, he could cry to a populace already unnerved by the onslaught of death—behold a Government so infamous that, not content with violating the sacred privacy of the Hindu home, it must, to satisfy its malice, reach up to heaven itself and pull down upon our helpless Hindu people the wrath of the holy gods! You die today because of the fury of Ganesha. Is not his earthly vehicle the rat? (See No. 268.)

This combination of charges, between rage and fear, drove the Hindus of Poona frantic. The English Plague Commissioner, Mr. Rand, whom Tilak had especially attacked, and a British officer who was helping in the work of mercy, were forthwith set upon and murdered in the open street. Tilak then went to jail for a year, while the more immediate assassins went to the gallows. But his virus lived on and spread far afield.

Barindra Ghose, born in 1880, was the son of a Hindu doctor of medicine living and practising in England. When he was one year old the child was brought to India. There he came under the influence of an elder brother who filled his adolescent mind with hatred of the Government of the land. In his twenty-second year Barindra made that hatred his dedication; he would teach young India to reject the oppressor’s yoke; to which end he started on a missionary tour of Bengal. But, to his pain, young Bengal received his gospel coldly. The

1 Sir Surendranath Banerjea, A Nation in the Making, p. 306.
youths to whom he preached belonged to a non-martial race. They had long lived in peace and saw no reason now to believe they lay under the heel of a cruel despot that should be attacked with bullets and bombs. For Barindra the atmosphere was repellent.

But four years later, in 1905, that atmosphere suddenly changed:

Bengal, at that time, contained a population of 78,000,000 people, under one Lieutenant-Governor. For administrative efficiency the burden was unwieldy. Government therefore decided to split the province into two parts—East and West Bengal, each having its own Governor. Sane as the plan sounded, its fruit was instant madness. Taking the territory as a whole, Hindus out-numbered Muslims therein; but, divided as it was now, although the western half retained its Hindu complexion, eastern Bengal became a province with a Muslim majority. The sudden bitterness that this discovery aroused in the Bengali Hindu breast surpassed all imagining. Their Motherland, dismembered by the hand of the Alien! The outrage aroused frenzies of a patriotism whose existence had been little discernible during the previous seven centuries. Also came the Russo-Japanese War, with its outcome of victory for the farther Asiatic. These two elements together produced a tinder ready to blaze on high from Barindra Ghose’s torch.

Back then he came and preached again to the youngsters. Had they no manhood, no religion? Did they not hear their Mother Kali calling—calling for the blood of the foreigner? Obedient to her voice, strong in her strength, striking stealthily here and there, let them kill as her Thugs had killed—as Mother Kali loves killing—let them spill before her altar the blood of the White Goat, (the British) her sweetest oblation. So at last were founded those Terrorist societies that today honeycomb the province.

The original grievance disappeared in 1911, when Hindu outcry was pacified by the reunion of Bengal’s divided sections. Administration’s burden was then lightened by cutting off, from her western side, the district of Bihar and Orissa, thereby making a second province in which the majority of the Hindu over the Muslim was as 8 to 1, and in whose severance from Bengal Hindu patriotism therefore saw no great harm. So was sacrificed the short-lived Islamic advantage—yet without achieving peace; for Barindra’s work had crept ahead.

Barindra directed several newspapers, whose sole contents were clever falsehoods regarding the acts of the Government, and incitements to murder Government servants. Also Barindra kept in Calcutta a secret garden where he and his young disciples, all sworn before Kali’s shrine, collected arms and explosives and manufactured infernal machines. One of their first efforts—frustrated—was an attempt to blow up the Lieutenant-Governor’s special train; but other essays reaped their sheaves, including the killing of two English ladies as they sat in their carriage on an afternoon drive. The string of perpetrated crimes, long as it became, would have been much longer but for the skilful work of the police, both British and Indian. Then, in 1908, Barindra and thirty-seven of his gang were arrested and sent up for trial. That trial was utilized by the terrorist organization as an object-lesson to the public. In the course of it
one of the gang who turned King's evidence was murdered in prison; next a police officer identified with the investigation was shot dead in the streets of Calcutta; next, the Public Prosecutor, an Indian lawyer, was murdered in the court precincts; and last, during session in the High Court, an Indian Deputy Superintendent of Police in charge of the case was murdered just outside the Court of the Chief Justice of Bengal. By means such as these the organization has succeeded in making it impossible to handle Terrorist crime by ordinary procedure; scarcely a native witness can be found today who will face the risk of giving open testimony. After a protracted trial, Barindra and three others were sentenced to transportation for life—a sentence later remitted, leaving them free to resume their interrupted labours—having in the meantime enjoyed the comfortable assurance that their crop was being cultivated by their lieutenants at large.

Those who care to follow the blood-soaked trail may do so in various unimpeachable sources. Of these not the least impressive is the speech of a Bengali Hindu political, the Honourable Sir Nripendra Sircar, Law Member of the Government of India, delivered in the Legislative Assembly in Delhi on March 29, 1935. In defiance of marked uneasiness and resentment on the part of Hindu members present in the House, the speaker, with courage and faithfulness, outlines the history, giving names and dates, of fifty-six terrorist outrages. He shows the merciless debauchery of immature girls—girls under their fifteenth year, as well as of boys, to procure by such hands the assassination of individuals or of numbers of persons at a time. He shows the system of gang robberies, train wrecks, and attacks upon banks or upon innocent Indian villages, all usually involving murder, by which the Terrorists get their funds. He impresses upon his fellow legislators, as he proceeds from horror to horror, that he is by no means exhausting the list, but merely calling to their attention certain specimen cases whose judicial records are easily available to them all. He points to the degenerate state of public morality, in which such deadly growth has not only gone uncondemned, but has actually been cheered ahead by the praise of the press, of political parties, and of public men. He proves that the Congress itself, the great Swarajist political organization, in more than thirty of its committees has been actually officered by the planners and perpetrators of Terrorist murders. And he points out that although the movement goes through periodic phases of surface quiescence, its strength is steadily increasing today. He deplors Government's past leniency—its "mistaken relaxation of pressure" such as in 1930 gave the revolutionaries an opportunity of which they made "full use." And, tracing history from earlier days, he shows how Gandhi, whom he absolves from wilful intent or instigation, actually bestowed upon Terrorism its great initial aid. Gandhi, it will be remembered, in his Non-Coöperation campaign, called boys, en masse, out of schools, colleges, and universities, set a spirit of defiance in their hearts, and threw them idle upon the streets. His avowed purpose, in this and other campaigns, was simply to inculcate disrespect for the law of the land. "Sedition is my religion," he later proclaimed. But the force he invoked would not, as even he
knew (cf. No. 335) remain obedient to his control. Says Sir Nripendra Sircar: “When the spirit of defiance of constituted authority and the spirit of lawlessness were engendered in these hundreds of boys from schools and colleges, as also other persons, this led to a change in mentality which . . . in Bengal resulted in a deliberate departure from the path of non-violence”.

The work of Barindra Ghose had prepared labourers for the harvest. The work of Gandhi threw the harvest wide open to their scythes. The Hindu youth of Bengal fell like ripe wheat before those sinister hands.

Terrorism’s purpose in India, boldly announced at first as the overthrow of existing British Government, is now the overthrow of any non-Communist government of India, by multiplication of single murders, by mass killings, or by whatever means may suit conditions as they arise. Europeans are no longer necessarily its victims, but rather, any persons attempting to operate governmental functions. And this fact, long foreseen by some few Indian observers, is today rousing startled recognition on the threshold of the new Constitution and its wide transference of governmental functions into Indian hands. At the moment of this writing—September, 1935, a period of quiescence exists. But its transitory nature is understood and openly proclaimed. Of this fact we may here be content with one curious evidence. It comes between the covers of a little reprint of Sir Nripendra Sircar’s speech, just quoted. The pamphlet, published in Calcutta, June 4, 1935, carries a foreword by none other than Barindra Ghose himself, father of the whole Bengali Terrorist movement. Because of Ghose’s record it is impossible, now, to accept at sight his unsupported word as to his present motive. But here, tragic enough as they stand, are his words themselves:

“... I had been instrumental in plunging my country in this morass of blood and intrigue and now I would give every drop of blood in me to make young India retrace her steps. . . . No Swaraj or civilised government of any description will be possible if the cult of the bomb and revolver gets the upper hand. . . . In a world tortured with hatred and passion it is for India to ring true to the Divine in man. . . . If England conquered India she gave her a new outlook, a rebirth, so to say, out of six centuries of creeping apathy and death. She was the chosen instrument of God for a new awakening. Terrorism will only lead us into a blind alley, confusing the issue before us and set back the clock of India’s progress.”

But it is too late, now, by any repentance, however sincere, to undo the life-work of Barindra Ghose. Trained Terrorists are today a standard Bengal product, thence distributed over the land. In all that province, writes a Police Intelligence authority of the first rank, “there is scarcely an educational institution of any standing in which there is not a Terrorist group under the control of the main leaders, with the result that murders are now committed by youths unknown to the police.” Attempting to explain the peculiar susceptibility of Bengali boys to the doctrine of murderous hatred poured into their minds, this authority points to their physique and stamina, notably inferior to those of up-country Indians; to the enervating climate of Bengal; to the financial struggle that most of them must face to get through their
scholastic years; to their strain in passing examinations and getting degrees; to their conviction that a professional or clerkly career alone is worth having, and the fact that such employment, because of overcrowding, is hard to find; to their intense sensitiveness and emotionalism; to their mental disarray that sets them for ever on the watch to imagine and resent slights and insults where none exist; and—continually found, to their vow to the goddess Kali, by which they are profoundly gripped.

And then, from the same high source, this: “The first point I would like to impress on you is that terrorism, like, indeed, civil disobedience, is essentially a Hindu movement.”¹

Those last few words pull their reader up standing, face to face with historic fact: Since Muhammad Khilji’s day, through the day of Clive, down to the Great War of 1914-18, the Bengali Hindu has persistently shown himself of the stuff that can never confront an enemy in open warfare. And yet the quality of courage exists in him—as the ghastly Terrorist record shows. If only he need not face his enemy—if only he may creep up behind and take his enemy in the back, he can risk almost certain capture and forfeiture of life. In other words, having in him the makings of a man, his manhood has been twisted out of shape.

Against the judgement of the world, and still more against his own gnawing and crazing sense of inferiority, the Bengali Hindu needs defence. That defence he possesses in powerful form, if ever he can bring himself to use it. It lies in the fact that he is the child of uncounted generations of child-born parents, who have gradually evolved a peculiar and falling level on which the race survives. Hindu Bengal is the stronghold and breeding-ground of child-motherhood, today undiminished by recent civil law; its victims cannot justly be held accountable for their condition, their thoughts, or their deeds as those are held accountable to whom equipment for life, nervous and physical, has been dealt out fairly and normally at the start of the game. The evidence is overwhelming.²

From this point, and finally, we turn to the theme on which this review began—the position of the Muslim in India. Long there the master, his mastery, it appears, is now gone beyond recall. For those qualities that once insured his dominance count as nothing in the voting-booth. Up in the North-country, over in Sind, he still displays the strong transmontane blood of the old invaders. Elsewhere, as in Bengal, he is the son of converts from Hinduism, stiffened with little if any infusion of the conquerors’ blood. But that conversion occurred many generations back, and Islam, wherever implanted upon native races, acts as a definite formative and differentiator. Of itself, it holds its own, absorbing nothing from any other religion that may surround it. Nowhere in the Islamic mind has there been room for that subconscious idea of inferiority that destroys the Hindu balance. Searching for the cause of this self-protective strength, we find, aside from the long history of material dominance, a definite and simple creed, easily grasped, without mysteries, and resting for its authority on one Book avail-

ⁱ Italics are mine, K. M.
² See Volume Two, digest of the Age of Consent Committee’s Report, Katherine Mayo, New York, 1911.

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able to all—a creed that inspires intense devotion, rising in crises to heights of fire. Hinduism offends it today as it offended nine hundred years ago, not only in its ultra-idolatry, but in social practices such as those that have just been reviewed. The cult of the goddess Kali, in itself a blasphemy, produces the cult of Terrorism. The worship of the god Siva has fruitage in other forms that outrage Muslim thought.

Yet as long as the British hand, and it alone, grasped the helm of Government, the Muslim in his self-imposed retirement (cf. ante p. 29), could keep a quiet mind. For he knew that impartial justice would be dealt to him under the laws of the land, and that the State would guard his interests equally with those of other men. But, apace with the growth of the Reforms, Muslim peace has fled. The new parliamentary bodies, both Central and Provincial, were made mainly elective. Over most of India, therefore, the majority vote must always be Hindu. As the Reforms develop, the powers of these bodies increase and the control of great Government departments, with all their patronage, passes more and more into Hindu hands. Witnessing this process, the Muslim of late years has exerted himself to overcome his educational handicap and gain access to the political arena in order to fight for his rights. Yet, in a future to be determined by majority votes, he feels his position desperate. When he thinks how much Hindu majorities would weigh in a purely Indian India, he smiles as Mahmoud of Ghazni, as Babur, as Muhammad Khilji would smile. The sword is a weapon that he has always understood. But to be held down by Britain's still-sovereign hand while the Hindu, by count of heads alone, decides his fate is no smiling matter.

"If it comes to that," as one Muslim writer recently put it, "we have but two choices—to abandon our all and leave the country for ever; or to submit to lose our culture and to see our children, body and soul, pass under the Hindu yoke."

The Muslim in general has no desire for Britain's withdrawal from India. On the contrary, standing staunch behind the suzerain power, he has kept apart from revolutionary agitations, steadily denouncing the various types of disorder inspired by the Hindu political.

At the first Round Table Conference, in London, in 1931, Gandhi, with the Hindu political world behind him, tested Islamic resistance to his leadership, and found it adamant. He could neither buy nor persuade the Muslim members of that Conference to give him control of Islam in India, whether for war upon the Government or for submergence of itself. Neither could he induce them, though the price he offered was high, to desert the cause of the Untouchables for Islamic gain; and thereby hangs a gallant tale, buried in the records of the Round Table Conference.1

Bitterly resentful of his failure, Gandhi returned to India just in time for the annual meeting of his own political party's Congress. There, at Karachi, he permitted himself an explosion. Up to that moment the session, dominated as always by the Hindus, had concerned itself almost entirely with Hindu problems, "reference to the Muslim claims being either

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1 See also Professor John Coatman's penetrating Years of Destiny, Jonathan Cape, London, 1932, pp. 354-355.
patronizing or contemptuous." But now Gandhi, in one sudden outburst, laid bare his spirit of the day. India, he said, must prepare for civil war, even though it end in the disappearance of one people, if such extermination be necessary in order to rid the country of Britain's order-imposing hand.\footnote{New York Times, April 11, 1932. "Community," the word he employed rather than "people," is used in India to signify religious divisions—as "the Muslim Community."}

The threat was not lost upon Muslim India, but it evoked no new fear. Riots, in augmenting numbers, had already shown Islam's widespread sense of danger afoot. Now they were still further to increase. Of these later disturbances may be cited, as an example, that which occurred in Karachi in March, 1935.

A Hindu agent provocateur had published a scurrilous pamphlet attacking the Prophet of Islam. For the act, which roused intense wrath in the Muslim population, the offender was sentenced to a term of imprisonment by a Court of Law. Appealing the sentence, he was brought back into court, where by word of mouth he repeated his language. A Muslim in the court-room, frenzied by what, to him, was an unbearable blasphemy, drew a revolver, shot the blasphemer dead, surrendered for punishment, and himself received sentence of death.

Muslim sentiment recognized the justice of that sentence; nevertheless, it saw in the condemned a defender of the Faith, however misguided, and anti-Hindu feeling blazed high. Abdul Qayum, the convicted man, was duly executed, and his body given to his family for interment. The family, villagers living some four miles from Karachi, tried to bury their dead quietly. But their work was interrupted by gathering crowds, and presently 20,000 Muslims, excited to a dangerous pitch, had taken up the body and started to carry it in procession back through the city.

Now it happened that Karachi at that moment was overcrowded with Hindu devotees assembling to celebrate a certain noisy religious festival called Holi. If the Muslim procession, carrying its dead, should enter the city under these conditions, it would mean a hideous clash and much loss of life. But at that argument for caution, Muslim excitement, instead of sobering, leaped up beyond all restraint. Police commands fell upon deaf ears. British troops were called out, and two platoons of the Royal Sussex advanced at the double up the road, bayonets fixed. But bayonets meant nothing. Only bullets could check the onrush now. The troops fired. Forty-seven men were killed, 134 wounded, before that unarmed mob so much as wavered.

The incident was painfully felt throughout Islam in India; but Muslim and Hindu alike believed that the worst outbreak in India's modern history was narrowly escaped that day. As for the author of the scurrilous pamphlet and the organization whose member he was, their end was probably attained when they had spilled Muslim blood by British guns. Enough work like that, and the Hindu-Muslim question might be solved to their liking. The obstinate Muslim might be swept from their path without resort, on their part, to the awkward neces-
sity of facing his ire. From this fate may Islam escape! May it never, through religious susceptibilities gradually baited beyond endurance, in one fierce madness so challenge the King-Emperor’s peace as to become a virtual suicide on the bayonets of infinitely reluctant British soldiery.

Alternately, however, is there hope of escape from slow effacement by the ballot-box? “If they cannot find help in Delhi, they will turn to Kabul,” a recent writer has said. But the vista, that way, is thick with shadows lurking in the dark.

It would be a thousand pities if the foregoing sketch were to convey the impression of an over-simplified picture in black and white, of sheep and goats. Let it be emphasized, therefore, on the one hand, that the new Muslim political tide has cast up into leaders’ place not only honest men, but also cheap adventurers to whom Islam’s perplexity means nothing but adventurers’ luck; and, on the other hand, that with many of the most prominent and able Hindu political leaders, orthodox Brahminic Hinduism means, as a creed, little or nothing at all. Let it be recognized, too, that amongst the political lights on both sides are those who privately, not publicly, say: “A curse on the opposite camp! We hate and loathe them, but we must live beside them. Therefore let us not push things to extremes.”

But in recognizing these two facts, it is still more important to remember that the great body of Islam and the great body of Hinduism are alike in ardent orthodoxy; and that both are now complaining, with rising insistence, that no unorthodox legislator can possibly represent them in any parliament, nor make for them laws affecting their religious position that they can consent to obey. It remains, therefore, to be seen how far, as crises increase, non-orthodox counsellors of the middle way will be able to control the acts of their respective peoples and avert head-on collisions so often repeated that they end in attempted secession or in civil war.

Whether the problem be India’s, or England’s, or that of both in concert, it is a problem fraught with sadness for the onlooking Christian world. For it seems to involve the unhappy loss of the greatest potential bulwark against communistic anarchy today possessed by the Indian Empire. It seems to threaten the overwhelming or, worse, the spiritual debasement of a simple, devout, and brave people, a helpless and fiercely loyal people, today as ready as Mahmood of Ghazni was ready, as Joshua, Gideon, and David were ready, to throw away life itself for the honour of the One God, the Lord God of Israel, acknowledged alike and alone by them all.
In the story just told, we have followed Mahmoud of Ghazni, young soldier-king of Islam, out of his Afghan capital up and over the Himalayan passes, down into the plains of northern India—the Punjab—in his vowed crusade against the Hindu, the idolater, hitherto undisturbed worshipper of multi-million gods. We have seen him, after many victories, stake his all on one supreme challenge of faith, attacking the fortress of Somnath; because, within those impregnable walls lay the proudest shrine of the Lord of the Moon, the Hindu’s great god Siva. We have seen Mahmoud’s thousand-mile march, much of it over bone-dead, bone-bare desert, carrying on elephants and camels all food, water, and munitions of war for his army of 30,000 horsemen. And, under his sword and that of other Islamic kings and generals who followed him and ruled in India for seven hundred years, we have seen the Hindus’ idol-houses crash. From their fragments, we know, the conquering Muslims reared their own mosques—houses of prayer, of extreme outer dignity and of puritanic austerity within, dedicated to the worship of the One God, Who was acclaimed alike by Moses, by Christ, and by Muhammad, His Prophets all. We have observed the decadence of Muslim rule, after many centuries, and the consequent infow of anarchy, chaos and barbarism, and we have witnessed, out of that welter of woe, the rise of the British East India Company from a small private trading venture, through the hands of some of the greatest and most constructive administrators that the world has ever known, to a political power of such magnitude that it needs must merge in the power of the British Crown. And now, before dropping this historic thread, let us look at certain pictures that most intimately concern it.
2. Elephants carried Mahmoud's heavy munitions—elephants that, loving the comfort of water, as these do, would have suffered torment in the trackless sands on the road to Somnath.

3. Camels, two to each trooper, and 20,000 others, bearing water and supplies, followed that train. (See p. 5.)
4. Siva, Lord of the Moon, as worshipped in Mahmoud’s day and now, unchanging; in Somnath, however, Siva was represented only by his lingam. (See pp. 4-6.)

5. Part of the cloisters surrounding the courtyard of the Kutb Mosque. (See p. 8.) These pillars were assembled from fragments of demolished Hindu temples. The courtyard measures 942 by 108 feet. Notice the capital of the first pillar to the right. The Muslim always demolished the faces of gods or men on any carven stone that he used—according to the Second Commandment given to Moses. An Arabic inscription over the east gate of the mosque states that the wreckage of twenty-seven idol-houses furnished stone for the raising of this House of Prayer to the One God.
6. ELIHU YALE, Governor of Madras under the East India Company from 1687 to 1691, a native of Boston, Massachusetts, and a son of one of the original British settlers of New Haven. Yale University bears his name because of his gift of funds, earned as an officer in the East India Company's service, making possible the completion of the University's first building. This picture is photographed from the portrait now hanging in Government House, Madras. (See p. 19.)

7. Statue of JOSEPH FRANCOIS DUPEIX, Governor-General of the French establishment in India from 1742 to 1754. It is to be remarked that some centuries after Kutbuddin built his cloister pillars of fragments of destroyed Hindu temples, the French used the same material to make this pedestal. The statue stands in Pondicherry, still a French possession, on the east coast of Madras. (See p. 19.)

8. WARREN HASTINGS, Governor-General under the East India Company, 1774-85, and one of the greatest of mankind. To him India owes, amongst much else, the foundation of its modern legal code on its own ancient jurisprudence, both Muslim and Hindu; the principle of direct relations between the Princes and the Crown; the great Muslim College of Calcutta; and that stimulation of enquiry into Indian languages and literatures which first made generally possible to the Hindu himself a knowledge of his native classics.
9. LORD WILLIAM CAVENDISH-BENTINCK, Governor-General under the East India Company, 1828-35. To this one man, personally, belongs the credit of abolishing suttee—the burning alive of Hindu widows—in British India. To his militantly energetic support of his officers is also due the suppression of the Thuggee system of secret religious murder.

10. His Excellency the MARQUESS CURZON of Kedleston, Viceroy of India, 1898-1905. Seeker, guardian and preserver of India’s ancient monuments, to whose reverent and liberal care that country largely owes its own knowledge of its bygone glories.

We now return to the scene through which, in the year 1000 A.D., Mahmoud of Ghazni first entered India. Here it is as it looks today. And from this point we may follow the trail of current life, south, east and west, through an infinitely chequered country.
11. Mahmoud's Passes as they are today. These mountains are inhabited by independent tribes, Muslims all, who live as they have lived since history began, as professional fighters and raiders. They owe allegiance to no government, and their habitat is recognized by the British as Free Tribal Territory.

12. Some tribesmen live in houses such as this. Within the cave-like chamber a fire is burning, its smoke more or less successfully finding the little hole in the roof whence it should issue. Before the fire are deep-red Bokhara rugs and cushions, and thereon sitting, perhaps, the master of the house, gravely smoking his big pipe. The place looks neat and orderly.
A constant problem of the British defence of India's northern border is the handling of the independent tribesmen, who sometimes give serious trouble. One device is the formation of police forces within the tribe itself. The British agree with certain men, chosen from the tribe, to pay them a regular sum for keeping order amongst their fellows. The men provide their own weapons and are under no discipline.

Another highly useful device for keeping the tribesmen's minds off mischief has been to employ them for building roads through the mountains. Some of them earn so much money in that business that by the second season of work they arrive on the job in blev cars. These roads have proved great civilizers.

—and much road has been built, as the eye of the airplane reveals.
16. British Tommies crossing the Shingi Bridge, over the Tochi River, Waziristan.

17. Indian Army Regulars. Indian troops with British officers in upper ranks, on the march in Waziristan.
18. —has proved its power to supply such columns on the march, or outlying posts, with food, water, ammunition or whatever is needed in this wild country. This picture shows how a column 1000 strong, going through the Malakand Pass, in tribal territory north of Peshawar, was completely rationed for two days. Even eggs and bottles landed safe and sound. About eighty-pounds weight is carried in each container—a sort of stream-lined bomb provided with a shock-absorbing head and a parachute.

Malakand Pass was Alexander the Great's road into India, 300 B.C.

19. British Tommies for this work.
The Khyber Pass from end to end runs through the territory of the great Afridi tribe called the Zakka Khel, some 25,000 strong in fighting-men, keen Muslims all. Before the British came, the Zakka Khel amused themselves by seeing to it that no Hindu made that transit alive, unless, for their diversion, he dressed as a woman, or that he rode a donkey, the woman's mount, if he rode at all.

Now the Zakka Khel still police this Pass, but as subsidized officials of His Majesty's Government, acting as armed escorts for the caravans.

20. Here are three Zakka Khels of the Khyber Guards, beyond whom are seen a camel and some men of the caravan under escort.

21. A squad of the Guard, whose native Muslim officer is wearing his ribbon of Overseas service in the Great War.

22. A close-up of one of the caravaners—a friend, had time sufficed—going home to somewhere in Central Asia.

23. IN THE KHYBER PASS, looking north toward Afghanistan, and close to the Afghan frontier. Landi Khuano. British Army Cantonment, in the valley. Here a garrison of British troops is always maintained.
24. A typical Zakka Khel dwelling in the Khyber, surrounded by massive walls, and entered by a door stout enough to resist attack. Each house has its loopholed fighting-tower, whence watch is kept for enemy raids. When a feud springs up with a neighbour whose tower commands your fields you give up agriculture until you and yours have dealt with him and his, to a finish.

M. M. Newell

25. The fighting-man in his tower.

M. M. Newell

26. Shooting from this tower.

M. M. Newell