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HIS EXCELLENCY THE EARL OF READING, VICEROY OF INDIA,
1921-26, in his robes as Grand Master of the Most Exalted Order of the
Star of India

RUFUS ISAACS
FIRST MARQUESS OF READING

P.C., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O.

By: His Son

THE MARQUESS OF READING, C.B.E., M.C., K.C., T.D.

1914-1935

With 12 Illustrations

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FOREWORD TO VOLUME II

IN the summer of 1959 the first volume of this Life, covering the "Years of Preparation," had been completed and I had good reason to expect that the second volume would be finished early in 1940. Since then more than five momentous years have passed, throughout the course of which other exacting preoccupations have prevented me from adding a single word.

But, if this book has stood still, events have not ; and both foreground and middle distance are now so densely thronged with new happenings that the once vivid background of a quarter of a century ago has perforce sunk into the shadows. Nevertheless, the story of the last twenty-one years of my father's career cannot yet have lost its savour.. For during that period he emerged from the narrower sphere of the law and domestic politics into the limitless arena of world affairs, and the variety and responsibility of the tasks allotted to him and the manner of his discharge of them still constitute a sum total of personal achievement rarely, if ever, equalled in our time.

As he grew old in years and rich in honours, his boyhood's zest for adventure never waned. His last scarcely audible words to me, spoken at the age of seventy-five and within a few hours of death, were wholly characteristic. "I am afraid," he said sadly, "that, when I am fit again, I shall have to give up some of my work instead of taking on anything new."

It may be that amongst all those young men who are now facing the uneasy transition from war to peace there will be some without wealth or influence but with courage, single-mindedness and devotion to their country's service who will be inspired to greater daring by his example.

In that hope I dedicate to them in particular this second volume, recording the "Years of Fulfilment."

My very grateful thanks are due to Sir Grimwood Mears, K.C.I.E., and Professor J. Coatman for their invaluable help, based largely upon their personal knowledge, in connection with the American and Indian sections respectively of this book, and also to my step-mother, the Dowager Marchioness of Reading, G.B.E., for agreeing and arranging that they should have access to my father's papers, bequeathed by him to us jointly.

CHAPTER I

L O R D C H I E F J U S T I C E

WHEN in 1913 Rufus Isaacs was appointed Lord Chief Justice of England, fifty-three crowded and various years of his life were already behind him.

For a quarter of a century he had toiled immensely hard in his ultimately and happily chosen profession. For nine years he had added to his work in the Courts the burden of membership of the House of Commons. For the last three years he had been a Law Officer of the Crown. The anxieties and rancours of the Marconi controversy were still fresh in his memory and had left their mark on his health and spirits. It might have been expected that as the newly created Lord Reading he would be content to sink back into the lofty detachment of the Bench and enjoy the fruits of his labours. But from the outset he was not, and he would never have become, reconciled to the role of spectator, from however splendid an eminence, of the enthralling pageant of the times.

Though he retained the Chief-Justiceship until 1921, during the war-years a succession of external tasks was pressed upon him which involved absences of increasing length from the Bench and contacts of growing intimacy with great affairs of state.

But the renewal of these contacts could only have one result. If he had begun to fret at his enforced isolation within a few months of his appointment, he inevitably chafed with heightened impatience after his return in 1919, until in 1921 his acceptance of the Viceroyalty set him free for ever from what he had come to regard as the bondage of the Bench. He had a deep veneration for his office and a feeling not far removed from awe that he had attained to the holding of it. But its relative inactivity was from the start irksome to him ; he pined for the arena rather than for the judge's box.

Nevertheless, he had no desire to be one of a mass of performers. It has been said elsewhere that he loved responsibility ; but his talents lay rather in assembling, marshalling and directing from above than in going down into the dust of the fray. The hard core of reserve in his nature, which rendered him most difficult of approach even by those nearest to him on personal and intimate subjects, made his Liberalism, in spite of the vast differ-

ence in their early education, more akin to the nineteenth century humanism of Mr. Asquith than to the twentieth century humanitarianism of Mr. Lloyd George. He could manipulate with extreme skill the minds of individuals, singly or collectively : he could never have walked 8rm-in-arm with a crowd.

His own early adventures and his long period of practice at the Bar had given him a luminous insight into other people's mental processes. His judgments of men and affairs were **swift**, decisive and wise; his personal charm was immense. Nor did he lack warmth or enthusiasm, but he so greatly hated over-exuberance of either in other people that he seemed to ration himself to a minimum display of both.

It was typical of his instinctive recoil from any form of public hysteria that in his personal relations with other men he shrank in horror from any attempt at back-slapping, shoulder-patting effusiveness as a gross intrusion upon his privacy.

Yet there was in him nothing of the recluse. He greatly relished the company of his fellow-men and women, provided always that they kept their distance, and his manifold and manifest social gifts were no less an asset to him as Ambassador and Viceroy in their full bloom than they had been to him as a rising young "silk" in their bud.

His gifts were in fact for high administration rather than for popular leadership and Fate was doubly kind in laying in his hands first the Ambassadorship to Washington and then the Viceroyalty of India, great offices in which his particular qualities found their widest scope and both of which he held at critical points of time.

To be British Ambassador to Washington at the climax of the 1914-1918 War and Viceroy of India at the inauguration of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms was to carry a load of responsibility that might well have daunted a less eager and resolute spirit.

But before he had attained to such heights he had done a vast amount of hard, intricate and unobtrusive work in the earlier stages of the war.

On June 28, 1914, whilst the Lord Chief Justice of England was making his first stately progress around the Oxford circuit, Ferdinand of Austria and his wife were assassinated in the remote Balkan township of Serajevo, and for the next four and a half years much of the civilized world was submerged in carnage and hatred.

As the sky darkened throughout the month of July, **Lord** Reading watched the situation with a double dread, the first, **that war** was inevitably coming and that Great Britain could **not escape**

from being involved, the second, that at the moment of **the** country's greatest trial he might be debarred by his judicial **office** from making any direct contribution to the national effort.

He had deep confidence in, and admiration for, the Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, but at an early stage he took the view that the forces which had already been released were beyond control and with the German invasion of Belgium horrifying **him** by its brutal outrage of the Law of Nations his support of the Cabinet decision to send an ultimatum to Germany was absolute.

He had long been seriously alarmed by the trend of Germany's policy, and in spite of his early and not unpleasant experiences at Hanover and Magdeburg he had no love for Germans. Their arrogance as a nation outraged his tolerance and their grossness as individuals offended his fastidiousness.

Sitting opposite him one day in 1911 in a Munich restaurant I was suddenly aware that his gaze was fixed in disgust on something behind me. I asked what he was looking at and he replied : *"There is a repulsive German over there eating French beans, and he is making a sort of symbolic rite of it, as if with each mouthful he was chewing up a bit of France. They are a frightening people."

As it happened, the outbreak of war on August 4, 1914, coincided with the beginning of the Long Vacation and the Lord Chief Justice had anyhow the next two months of freedom from the Courts in which to offer his services to the Government in whatever capacity might most usefully present itself.

Mr. Lloyd George as Chancellor of the Exchequer was battling with a number of novel and complex problems arising out of war-time finance, and he gratefully welcomed the help of his old friend and colleague at the Treasury, where Lord Reading was at once installed in a room of his own and plunged into the devising of emergency measures to meet the chaotic situation which prevailed and to dissipate the uncertainty which was its chief cause.

In the years before 1914 both Admiralty and War Office **had prepared** detailed arrangements to be put into prompt operation in the event of war. Moreover, suspicion of German intentions had been sufficiently acute to lead **to** prolonged **consultations between the British and** French General Staffs for the production **of a joint plan of** campaign, **in** case they should one day be **forced to take the** field as allies.

But on the economic side, which was to prove of scarcely less importance throughout the war, not only had no such **preliminary collaboration taken place between** England and France **but in London** itself no anticipatory steps had been taken to set **up** mach-

inery to cope with the urgent and unprecedented situations which were bound to accompany the outbreak of the first major European conflict for a hundred years involving British participation.

It was therefore only after the state of emergency had actually arisen and in the conditions of pressure, uncertainty and confusion accompanying it that expedients had to be hurriedly thought out in order to meet recurring difficulties for the solution of which there was no precedent and no preconceived remedy. For this task Lord Reading's knowledge and personal qualities were of immense value.

How or whence he had acquired his familiarity with the higher altitudes of finance must always remain something of a mystery.

His own experience of the City had been confined to a short and uncongenial apprenticeship in the family business and a shorter and more disastrous career on the Stock Exchange. It is true that his practice at the Bar had covered most of the important financial cases of the day and that in the course of them he had shown a great mastery of figures, especially in his conduct of the Whitaker Wright prosecution.

But these cases had involved examination of particular Stock Exchange transactions or Company promotions and the knowledge required of him had fallen far short of intimate acquaintance with the intricate and esoteric theories of high finance.

Yet, although he had never had either time or opportunity to make more than the most elementary study of an abstruse and controversial subject, his mind seemed to be capable of discerning and formulating its general principles with the same facility and clarity as in the more familiar field of the law. He was instinctively at his ease with its complexities and its technical terms came obediently to his tongue.

There were plenty of problems ready to his hand.

To a country like Great Britain largely dependent upon her export trade and to a City like London, then the acknowledged centre of the financial world, stability was vital, if the system which had been perfected in the course of long years of peace was to be maintained. But war is the antithesis of stability.

For the first three weeks of July the steadiness of the London money market indicated little apprehension of war. But the confidence was short-lived.

By the middle of the month the value of stocks had decreased by more than 10 per cent in Berlin and Vienna and within another week their further rapid decline showed clearly enough the march of events.

Thereupon the Paris Bourse suffered a sympathetic attack of nervousness, but the position in London was still unaffected and remained relatively normal until July 22. Then the conditions prevailing on the Continent began to have their effect, all the more swiftly for having been delayed, upon the London market, and, as mobilization of the armies spread over Europe, the whole structure of international finance shook.

A large part of the world's commerce was financed by means of Bills of Exchange on London.

At the end of July, 1914, the Banks had made loans to the amount of £100,000,000 to discount-houses and bill-brokers. They had also bought other Bills of an estimated aggregate value of not less than £200,000,000 and were holding them until maturity. In addition they had advanced to the Stock Exchange a sum in the neighbourhood of £50,000,000.

Vast as these figures were, they were in no way abnormal but represented the regular flow of business and in ordinary times would have been automatically adjusted along well-established lines. But the whole complex process which had been evolved in relation to such transactions depended upon the continuance of day-to-day world trade, if the obligations incurred were to be punctually met, and the entire machine was thrown out of gear by the abrupt and widespread interference with trade caused by the outbreak of war.

The stability upon which the City of London had for so long been able to reckon had vanished overnight, and neither previous experience nor Government guidance suggested methods of meeting a new and baffling situation.

The failure of remittances from abroad to cover the huge amounts outstanding on Bills produced a deadlock, some way of escape from which must be found without delay. Exchanges were collapsing as if, in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's own descriptive phrase, "a shell had broken an aqueduct."

Such was the prevalent confusion that, although the Argentine owed Great Britain £400,000,000, all commerce was so completely paralysed that Great Britain was unable to buy against this huge credit even a single ship-load of frozen meat.

On July 30 the Bank rate increased from 3 per cent to 4 per cent and on the next day jumped to 8 per cent. By August 1 it had reached 10 per cent, whilst the market discount rates were quoted at a purely nominal figure of $5\frac{1}{4}$ to $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

The situation could not be allowed to continue and the Government decided to act promptly and drastically, if somewhat belatedly, and to begin by summoning a conference of leading men

in the world of finance in order to hear their views and test their reactions to the measures which the Treasury was contemplating towards the restoration of confidence. In addition to Lord Reading two Conservative ex-Chancellors of the Exchequer, Lord St. Aidwyn (formerly Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) and Mr. Austen Chamberlain, had offered to place their knowledge and experience at the disposal of the Treasury and their services had been gratefully accepted.

Their action was a striking example of the unanimity of effort amongst British political parties which under the threat of war had already submerged the fierce discords and strident animosities of the last years of peace.

On August 1 representatives of Banks, commercial houses and the Stock Exchange assembled in conference with Mr. Lloyd George and the Governor of the Bank of England, Sir Walter (later Lord) Cunliffe, and as one result of this meeting a permanent Advisory Committee was constituted consisting of Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Lord St. Aidwyn, and Lord Revelstoke, head of the banking house of Baring, with a kind of Court of Appeal composed of Lord Reading and Sir John Bradbury of the Treasury, whose signature was to become so familiar on the new Treasury notes that they were commonly referred to as "Bradburys."

The overriding need was for a breathing-space in order to take full stock of the situation and initiate the necessary action to meet the emergency.

A series of steps of great importance therefore followed hard upon these first consultations, and in the devising of each one of them Lord Reading took a leading part.

On Sunday, August 2, a proclamation was issued deferring the payment of all Bills accepted before August 4 for a period of one month from the due date. On the next day, advantage was taken of the Bank Holiday to pass an Act rapidly through Parliament to prolong the holiday for three extra days in order to give a respite to the harassed Banks and to permit an opportunity for measures of relief to be concerted and executed.

On August 6, after war had been declared but before the additional Bank Holidays had expired, a general moratorium was proclaimed.

Meanwhile, as early as July 31 the extreme step of closing the Stock Exchange until further notice had already been taken, and on the same evening the Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith, had received a deputation of bankers whose mission was to urge upon him the advisability of suspending the Bank Act in order to allow the Bank of England to increase the total number of notes in circulation without the obligation to hold in reserve an equivalent

amount of gold. But this was not a proposal which could be lightly accepted, involving as it did psychological as well as economic considerations of great moment.

Though it was essential that there should be sufficient money in circulation to meet all reasonable requirements and so prevent any "run" on the Banks, the adoption of the course proposed might create so much public apprehension as to promote the very panic which it was designed to allay.

After much deliberation it was decided in the end to take powers to permit the bank to make the proposed issue, if it should ultimately prove essential and at the same time to make as an emergency measure an issue of Treasury notes in denominations of £1 and 10s., as distinct from Bank of England notes of denominations of £5 and upwards which had hitherto held the field, and to offer these new notes to the Banks to the extent of 20 per cent of their existing deposit and current accounts, interest upon them to be payable at Bank rate.

The necessary legislation was at once drafted and presented to Parliament and passed into law on August 6.

The primary object of the scheme for the issue of Treasury notes was to provide the Banks with the means of paying their customers in the event of abnormal demands being made upon their resources as soon as they reopened on August 7. The first issue of these notes was actually made on that day and as a wise precaution the Banks took in the aggregate notes to the value of some £13,000,000 on the Government's terms.

But the public showed so little sign of alarm and even made such substantial deposits that later on the same day it was decided to reduce the Bank-rate from 10 per cent to 6 per cent and on the following day to 5 per cent, at which figure it thenceforth remained.

These expedients by reassuring the public succeeded in giving welcome relief to the Banks, which began gradually to return the bulk of notes until by the end of the year they held no more of the original £13,000,000 than £170,000.

But if at least a temporary solution had been found for the Banks' difficulties, the problems of the bill-brokers and discount-houses remained.

Many of them had inevitably taken a despondent view of their prospects, some even to the extent of having to contemplate liquidation. Certainly their future must have been precarious without Treasury help, but on August 13 a scheme was announced which went a long way towards restoring the situation. For the **Government agreed** to guarantee the Bank of England against

any loss which it might incur by discounting any approved Bills accepted before August 4, a measure which had such prompt and beneficial effects in freeing the bill-brokers and discount houses from immediate anxiety that by the end of November the Bank had discounted Bills to the value of nearly £120,000,000.

The situation of the Stock Exchange had also to be faced. With this object an arrangement was made whereby those Banks which had made loans to members of the Stock Exchange before July 29 could obtain from the Bank of England advances up to 60 per cent of the value of the securities held by them against such loans.

At the same time the Banks were debarred from selling these securities on the market until one year after the conclusion of peace or the expiry of the newly passed Courts (Emergency Powers) Act, whichever should happen first. But in order that this restriction might not press too heavily upon them they were to be put in funds by the Government to enable them to tide over the interval.

Lord Reading was largely responsible for the conception of the Courts (Emergency Powers) Act and himself took a leading part in the actual drafting.

Its purpose, which was found to be of sufficient value to warrant its re-enactment in 1939, was to empower the Courts to defer the execution of judgments and the levying of distresses in circumstances which could be shown to be directly or indirectly attributable to the war.

Apart from the provision of these facilities the Banks were left free to make their own arrangements with the Stock Exchange, although it was agreed that the Stock Exchange should only be allowed to reopen with Treasury consent and under certain conditions to be imposed by it in the public interest.

The mere announcement of these plans went so far towards restoring confidence that not a single application was ever made by a Bank for this particular form of Government aid, nor was advantage ever taken of an analogous scheme whereby on the faith of a similar guarantee the Liverpool Cotton Exchange was enabled to resume business.

One other section of the commercial community required help, those provincial traders who had been in the habit of sending goods to the Continent on credit and without receiving Bills of Exchange in return. Here the Government offered assistance to the extent of 50 per cent of the amount involved, provided that the local Banks, who were best able to judge the moral integrity and financial stability of the individual applicants, agreed to

participate to the extent of 25 per cent. The need for some such arrangement was evidenced by the fact that by November applications to the value of £16,000,000 had been received.

In the devising and drafting of all these measures Lord Reading took a principal part, devoting the entire Long Vacation to this work to the exclusion of the holiday and cure upon which during the past strenuous years he had so greatly counted for relaxation and recuperation.

He himself always asserted that the value of a cure lay far more in the observance of a regular routine than in the absorption of nauseous waters, and his opinion seems to be borne out in his own case by the fact that, although for many years prior to 1914 he had considered himself dependent upon an annual visit to a Spa, after that date he scarcely ever visited another and was apparently none the worse. In spite of his abstemiousness, gout in the foot continued to affect him at intervals for the rest of his life, but no more frequently or severely than in the days when he had put himself to great trouble to avert it.

By the time when the Courts reopened in October the immediate crisis in the financial world had been largely overcome and he was able to resume his duties on the Bench. But each day as soon as the Courts rose he returned to his room in the Treasury and continued his efforts to unravel the tangled threads of war-time finance, thereby imposing a very heavy tax upon his endurance.

Nevertheless, until his first departure for America in September of 1915, he continued to subject himself to this double strain and to render services of such value that in June, 1915, they were recognized by his appointment as a Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath.

Mr. Lloyd George has himself paid public and generous tribute to Lord Reading's work at the Treasury: "I found Lord Reading invaluable," he writes in his Memoirs. "His knowledge of finance, his mastery of figures, his dexterity and his calm and sure judgment helped at many times."

Meanwhile in the Courts a number of novel and important points were already arising out of the special legislation necessitated by the war or the peculiar circumstances created by it, and as Lord Chief Justice he made it his business to preside, whenever possible, over the Tribunals before which they were argued.

The first of these cases came before the Court of Criminal Appeal consisting of Lord Reading and Justices Darling, Banks, **Lush** and Atkin, in December, 1914, and was concerned with the

conduct at the outbreak of war of a certain Mr. Ahlers, a British subject who held the appointment of German Consul at Sunderland.

Mr. Ahlers had in his capacity as consul assisted German subjects of military age to return from England to Germany on August 5, 1914, the day after war against Germany had been officially declared.

He was accordingly arrested and prosecuted for high treason on the charge that he "with force of arms, unlawfully, maliciously and traitorously was adhering to, aiding and comforting the German Emperor against our Lord the King," tried before Mr. Justice Shearman at Durham Assizes, found guilty and sentenced to death.

At the trial the Judge told the jury that, if they found on the evidence that the prisoner had thus assisted the King's enemies at a time when he knew that war had been declared, it was their duty to find him guilty and that it was no defence for him to say that he believed that he was lawfully entitled to act as he did.

But the Court of Criminal Appeal took the view that this direction was insufficient and unduly prejudicial to the prisoner, and that the jury should also have been told to consider whether the prisoner's acts were done by him with the intention of assisting the King's enemies or whether he acted without any evil intention and in the belief that it was his duty as their Consul to assist German subjects to return to Germany, in which case he would not be guilty.

There was some support for such a belief on Ahlers's part, since it was at least arguable that the modern practice of nations was that after the declaration of war enemy subjects were allowed a reasonable time for departure, a principle to which effect had actually been given by an Order made by the Home Secretary under the Aliens Restriction Act of 1914 and published on August 6, whereby alien enemies were given until August 11 to embark at certain ports, amongst which Sunderland was not included, without first obtaining a permit.

The Lord Chief Justice, in giving the judgment of the Court, called attention to this vital omission from the summing up and announced the decision that in the circumstances the conviction must be quashed.

This result clearly indicated that the Courts were not to be deflected from the enforcement of strict justice by any extraneous consideration of personal or popular prejudice.

So long a time had passed since England had been involved in a major European war and so many changes had taken place since those days alike in the jurisprudence and the commerce of the country that great importance was attached to the civil case

of *Porter v. Freudenberg*, for the hearing of which by the Court of Appeal the Lord Chief Justice presided over a very strong court including the then Master of the Rolls, Lord Cozens-Hardy, and five Lords-Justices of Appeal in January of 1915.

The case raised the whole question of the status of an alien enemy in relation to civil actions in time of war, his right to sue and his liability to be sued in the English Courts, his right, if sued, to enter an appearance to and defend the action, and his right to appeal in the event of a decision being given against him.

These were obviously matters of urgent practical interest to the whole world of commerce and finance, and the Court was fortunately able to give a unanimous decision, the Lord Chief Justice delivering one authoritative judgment on behalf of them all.

He began by laying down the test for this purpose of a person being an alien enemy as being not his nationality but the place where he resides or carries on business, holding that a person voluntarily resident in, or carrying on business in, an enemy country must be regarded as an alien enemy, whatever his actual nationality may be.

As to the general position in regard to litigation, the Court decided that an alien enemy, unless he be within the realm by licence of the King, cannot sue in the English Courts ; that an alien enemy may be sued in the King's Courts and, if so sued, has a right to enter an appearance and defend the action and also to appeal against any decision given against him ' but that an alien enemy who was plaintiff in an action commenced before the outbreak of war has no right of appeal during the continuance of the war, his right being suspended until the conclusion of peace.

This decision failed to find favour with a clamorous section of the Press, which chose to consider it unduly favourable to the alien enemy and was further incensed by another decision given shortly afterwards in the case of the *Continental Tyre & Rubber (Great Britain) Ltd. v. Daimler Co., Ltd.* by the same Court, which again showed⁴ its determination not to be swayed by any considerations of partiality or expediency in the interpretation of the law.

The Continental Tyre Company was incorporated and carried on business in England, having been formed by a German Company to promote the sale in the United Kingdom of tyres made by the German Company in Germany. All its directors were German subjects resident in Germany and, with one exception, the whole of the 25,000 £1 shares representing its capital were held by German subjects resident in Germany.

Nevertheless, in the opinion of the majority of the Court, from

which one Lord-Justice dissented, the Company did not change its character of an English Company because on the outbreak of war all the shareholders and directors resided in an enemy country and became alien enemies, and once a corporation has been created in accordance with the requirements of English law it is an English Company, notwithstanding that all its shareholders may be aliens. A payment of a debt to the Plaintiff Company was therefore not a payment to the enemy alien shareholders or for their benefit.

"Justice," said the Lord Chief Justice in delivering the majority judgment, "should not be hindered by mere technicality, but substance must not be treated as form or swept aside as technicality because that course might appear convenient in a particular case."

To avoid breaking intermittently into the subsequent narrative it may be preferable to refer at once to those other cases of outstanding interest with which he was concerned as Lord Chief Justice during the war, rather than to intersperse mention of them in their strict chronological order.

At the end of 1915 he presided over a Court of three Judges to hear an Information of a kind typical of uncertain times and certain mentalities, which attracted considerable popular attention on account of the personalities involved. Any connection, real or imaginary, near or remote, with Germany was not unnaturally an object of suspicion in those days and amongst other manifestations of the current temper was the laying of this Information by Sir George Makgill against Sir Ernest Cassel and Sir Edgar Speyer, two members of the Privy Council of German birth, calling upon them to show by what right they claimed to retain their Privy Councillorships after the coming into force of the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act of 1914.

Both were men of influential position alike in the City and in Society.

Sir Ernest Cassel, who had been naturalized as long ago as 1878 and had been sworn of the Privy Council in 1902, had by his own industry and perspicacity made a very large fortune mainly in connection with enterprises in Turkey and the Near East. He had built Brook House, a magnificent residence on the corner of Park Lane and Upper Brook Street, and filled it with pictures and furniture on an equally handsome scale, and there and at Six Mile Bottom near Newmarket, he enjoyed entertaining his friends in the years before the war. He was not one of those merely rich men whose houses are frequented by a number of people purely or mainly for the entertainment provided. Though he might appear to strangers to be somewhat tyrannical and

dogmatic, he was genuinely liked by his many friends for his kindness, wisdom and generosity.

Short, stocky and bearded with a shrewd and penetrating eye, he had been a familiar figure in London for many years and was known to have been a trusted intimate of the late King Edward VII.

Sir Edgar Speyer had also made a large fortune. Through his firm of Speyer Brothers he had close connections with New York and was one of the leading figures in the world of finance.

He and his talented American wife had also been increasingly prominent in musical circles, giving numerous parties at their house in Grosvenor Street and taking a keen interest in the Covent Garden Opera season, of which they were munificent supporters.

Unlike Sir Ernest Cassel, whose devotion to England was deep-rooted and manifested itself in many forms, Sir Edgar Speyer was unable at the outbreak of war to forget his German origins and after having voiced opinions which brought him swift and inevitable unpopularity he left this country for New York, where he thenceforward established his permanent home.

In this state of affairs his counsel at the hearing was in the unenviable situation of having to confess that his client had already offered to resign his membership of the Privy Council and that, although His Majesty had not been pleased to accept his resignation, in all the circumstances he felt that it would be inconsistent for him to lay claim before the Court to an honour of which he had already asked to be relieved.

Apart from this announcement the hearing consisted in long and technical arguments as to the proper construction of the various relevant statutes, the Court finally ruling that the disqualification of aliens for membership of the Privy Council which had been contained in the Act of Settlement had been abolished by the Naturalization Act of 1870 and was not revived by the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act of 1914.

Sir Ernest and Sir Edgar were therefore both entitled to remain Privy Councillors, so far as the law was concerned.

Of all the trials over which Lord Reading presided during the war years the one which chiefly caught the public imagination and excited the most widespread interest was that of Sir Roger Casement for High Treason in the summer of 1916.

Sir Roger was an Irishman who had had a not undistinguished career in the Consular Service and had at one time achieved considerable prominence as the result of his exposure of the scandalous conditions in which labour was employed on the Putumayo rubber

plantations. For his services in that connection he had received from the King the honour of a K.C.M.G.

But for some while the grievances of Ireland had been the predominant theme in his mind and had succeeded in warping his whole outlook. His former loyalty had soured into hatred and his one idea was to help his country to shake off what he regarded as the British yoke.

The war furnished him with his chance.

In the belief that Ireland had everything to gain from England's defeat he somehow made his way into Germany and commenced the traitorous activities which were to end in his execution.

He had conceived it to be his mission to raise from amongst Irishmen serving in the British Army who had been taken prisoner by the Germans a force to be employed under German command in the liberation of Ireland, a project which naturally found favour with the German authorities as likely to create additional difficulties for the British.

Arrangements were accordingly made for all Irish prisoners of war to be collected and kindly treated in the camp at Lahn Limburg, where in due course Casement arrived to address them. He had strong cards to play, for under the guise of a perverted patriotism he was able at least to promise freedom to men who were captives and food to men who were hungry. He expounded to them his thesis that Irishmen had every reason to take up arms on the German side and assured them that those who volunteered would be sent to Berlin and handsomely entertained by the German Government until the moment should come when Germany won a sea battle and it was feasible to land them on Irish soil, there to fight against their British oppressors.

In the improbable event of Germany losing the war, they were each to be given a bonus of £10 to £20 and provided with a passage to America, an undertaking as to the value of which the United States Immigration authorities can scarcely have been consulted in advance.

It is to the lasting credit of his audience that this ignoble appeal failed. Only a handful responded and in revenge for the obduracy of the rest conditions in the camp rapidly deteriorated.

After this fiasco, Casement retired into obscurity until Good Friday, April 20, 1916.

On that night an attempt was made to land arms and ammunition on the Irish coast near Tralee from a vessel disguised as a neutral merchantman, but actually a German auxiliary craft, as well as from a German submarine.

But a local farmer had seen a suspicious light at sea and on

going down to the shore to investigate had come upon a collapsible boat filled with an assortment of incriminating stores. From the beach footprints led inland and by 4 a.m. Casement had been discovered in hiding in a Danish ruin only a few hundred yards from his landing-place, and was under arrest, together with a renegade private of the Royal Irish Rifles, who had apparently accompanied him on his voyage as a member of the "Irish Brigade."

As he was being taken away, Casement dropped a piece of paper which was promptly retrieved by a boy and proved to be a clumsy code. He was brought to England and, on June 26, tried before the Lord Chief Justice and Justices Avory and Horridge and a jury for high treason.

The Attorney-General (Sir F. E. Smith) conducted the prosecution, whilst Sergeant Sullivan led for the defence. There was little dispute as to the facts. It was not denied by the defence that Casement had gone to Germany and with the assistance of the authorities had endeavoured to secure recruits for the Irish Brigade.

But the somewhat fragile contention was put forward that this Brigade, so far from being intended to fight against the British during the war, was only being formed to oppose the Ulster volunteers after the conclusion of peace.

It could not hope to prevail against the recurrent evidence that Casement had in fact told the men that, if Germany won a sea battle, they were to be landed in Ireland, a statement which was blatantly inconsistent with the pretext that they were not intended for use until after hostilities with Germany had ceased.

Casement had, however, been charged with "adhering to the King's enemies elsewhere than in the King's realm, to wit in the Empire of Germany," and a lengthy and learned legal argument ensued as to whether under a Statute of Edward III* the crime of high treason could be committed outside the King's dominions, the Court eventually holding that it could.

After a trial lasting four days, the end of the third being marked by the unfortunate collapse in Court of Sergeant Sullivan through overstrain in the middle of his speech for the defence, the jury returned a verdict of guilty and Casement himself before being sentenced to death read a verbose and involved but intermittently eloquent harangue in vindication of his actions. His appeal to the Court of Criminal Appeal was dismissed on July 18, and on August 5 he was hanged.

Though his own attempt at a landing had proved abortive, it had obviously been a preconcerted signal for a larger rising, since

within three days of his arrest there broke out in Dublin the "Easter Rebellion" with all its grim consequences of bloodshed, destruction and rancour.

In addition to these cases the war brought its inevitable crop of spy-trials, several of which took place before the Lord Chief Justice, sitting "in camera" as is the practice in such cases, in order to withhold from the enemy information which might prove valuable to him.

Thus Lord Reading continued to discharge the duties of his great office. But already in the autumn of 1915 came the first of his war-time journeys to the United States on behalf of the British Government.

He had no previous acquaintance with that country but in the course of a visit of only a few weeks' duration he was able in some degree to familiarize himself with the complex American picture and to establish personal relations with a number of outstanding figures in American public life which were not only to be of the utmost value to him on his subsequent visits, but were undoubtedly in large measure responsible for his selection first as High Commissioner and later as Ambassador during the period after America's entry into the war.

Though his original mission was primarily financial in character, it called at the same time for highly diplomatic handling, not only of the combined Anglo-French team of which he was the head but also of the many problems facing a delegation of belligerents in a still resolutely neutral country.

With Europe in the throes of war not only on land but by sea the position of neutrals, and especially of those possessing a considerable merchant marine, became charged with difficulties actual and potential. There was always the possibility of a serious incident developing from an unexpected quarter and ceaseless vigilance was required.

But in addition to the danger of interference with their carrying trade neutrals were also faced with a complete dislocation of their normal commercial relations. The situation of the United States in this respect was one of peculiar delicacy.

Largely self-supporting, she had in addition a vast surplus of such commodities as grain, cotton, copper, iron and steel, as well as of other raw materials and manufactured goods in excess of her internal requirements, which she had been in the habit of exporting. By 1913 her overseas trade had brought her in a revenue of nearly £500,000,000, a very large item in the balance-sheet of even the wealthiest country, and cessation or indeed any substantial diminution of the volume of her exports would be

pregnant with the possibilities of grave financial and economic disturbance.

At the moment when war broke out in 1914 the balance of international obligations was momentarily such that the United States found herself in the position of a debtor to Great Britain to the extent of some £90,000,000. This was by no means an unusual situation and in normal times would have been automatically adjusted by shipments of grain, cotton and other exports during the remaining months of the year.

But if those shipments were for one reason or another rendered impossible, then there could be no escape from a dislocation of trade too formidable in extent and unpredictable in duration to be viewed without serious apprehension. If failure to find a market for the grain and cotton crops would hit hardest the West and the South, nevertheless its direct repercussions might well have a highly damaging effect on the nation as a whole.

It was therefore necessary for Americans to take stock of their position and the results of their inventory were not wholly reassuring.

In addition to the adverse trade-balance a further sum of £16,000,000 was owed by the City of New York in repayment of current bills maturing in London and Paris. How was this heavy burden of indebtedness to be discharged, if there were to be no customers for exportable surpluses? and, even if there were customers, would it be possible to transport the goods to them? The prospects were dubious. Great Britain from the moment war was declared was in unchallengeable command of the seas and it required no special acumen to realize that, even if her enemies were not in a position to make purchases on the same scale as her own, she could not sit idly by and watch large consignments of goods crossing the Atlantic for delivery to them.

Those countries of Europe not yet involved in the War were in comparison with the combatants negligible customers, even if they had been proof against the natural nervousness of neutrals in war-time in engaging in extensive over-seas trade with all its added perils. The finding of adequate markets for American exports would therefore in itself be an almost impossible task, and if they were found, there remained the apparently insuperable difficulty of transport.

The entire mercantile marine of Germany and Austria had disappeared from the seas.

Of the 45,000,000 tons of world shipping in 1914 Great Britain had more than 20,000,000, but the probability was that **she would require to retain a large portion of it in home waters,**

at least for a considerable time to come. The United States possessed no more than 1,000,000 tons of her own.

As presented to American minds by financiers, industrialists and Press the future was regrettably uncertain. The splendid fabric of prosperity and plenty, in which they took so much legitimate pride, seemed to be threatened with the partial subsidence of its economic foundations.

Americans had had no experience as a great industrial nation of the effects of widespread European War. Their impressive organization in finance and industry was still young and had not been subjected to so testing a period as now lay ahead. It might be that after all they had built too far and too fast, and that their creation would not be able to withstand the strains and stresses of external pressure.

Signs of dejection and alarm began to appear, challenging the optimism of those who continued to point out that all over Europe hundreds and thousands of men had been withdrawn from productive employment for military service, that as a result innumerable workshops and factories were faced with a largely decreased output, and that there was consequently an opening for America not only to maintain but vastly to increase her export trade. There were even grim prophecies of wholesale unemployment, poverty and distress.

Few voices were raised to emphasize the huge scale and the infinite complexity of modern warfare and to foretell that within a few months there would be an unprecedented demand for American goods, or that the vital needs of the Allied Powers would be such that they would be constrained, at however great a sacrifice, to provide the necessary tonnage for the conveyance from America of the supplies purchased by them there.

But by November the whole outlook for the United States had changed and a vista of swelling prosperity had begun to open before gratified American eyes. The clouds of depression were lifting and instead of contemplating a bleak and cheerless future the people of the United States could look forward to increasing affluence.

So steadily did the sky clear that by January of 1915 the whole of Great Britain's credit balance of £90,000,000 had been wiped out and the City of New York's loan paid off without inconvenience. America heaved a sigh of satisfaction and relief and rolled up her sleeves for the task of coping with the flood of orders pouring in from the Allied Powers for almost every necessity of civilized human life.

Throughout the spring and summer of 1915 the flood continued

with unabated force, accompanied by a parallel stream of gold. In March and in June large consignments of gold arrived in **New** York from Europe as evidence of the substantial excess which by that time exports from the United States had attained over her imports. The Midas-touch of other people's war was beginning to gild the whole American scene. But however reviving the inflow of this golden stream might be to the United States, there was serious anxiety at its source.

In spite of the immense reputation of Great Britain for financial stability, no one at that stage could foretell with any certainty the outcome of the War. The issue of naval and military operations was not the only factor to be considered. The financial front had also to be taken into account, for the theory had been widely disseminated and was in many quarters firmly accepted that the cost of modern warfare was such that bankruptcy was likely to bring it to a swifter and more summary end than defeat in the field. Huge as might be Great Britain's financial resources, the Central Powers had the immense advantage of operating on interior lines and of being largely self-supporting, so that they were relieved from much of the expenditure of money and time and trouble that inevitably harassed an island dependent upon imports for the major part of its food-supply and compelled to maintain a numerous and growing Expeditionary Force upon foreign, though in the main friendly, soil. It was, therefore, scarcely surprising that the value of the pound sterling, sensitive to all these disturbing considerations, continued to fall in New York, or that the franc should be subject to a sympathetic and even more rapid decline. Moreover, the steady depreciation in the value of the pound in the one great neutral financial centre necessarily involved a corresponding decrease in the prestige enjoyed by the Allied Powers throughout the world, a matter of the most serious concern when the allegiance of several countries later involved in active hostilities on one side or the other was still fluctuating.

Nor were only moral considerations involved, for there was the pressing practical difficulty that, as payment for all purchases in the United States had to be made in dollars, the amount of pounds and francs to be provided in discharge of these constantly maturing debts increased progressively as the two European currencies fell. Unless some rapid and effectual steps could be taken to arrest the downward movement, the time must come in the not very remote future when the Allies would be compelled to cease buying in America, not because their requirements had reached saturation point but because the cost had become **wholly prohibitive**.

This was a situation which could not be viewed with equanimity by either buyer or seller. For Great Britain and France such a predicament might well prove disastrous. Everything hung on their ability to furnish the daily needs of their armed forces in food-stuffs and munitions of war and at the same time to satisfy the demands of the civilian population for the necessities of life. If they failed in either respect, defeat could at best be temporarily averted and must in the long run be inevitable. Luckily for the Allies, as time went on not a few influential Americans came to realize that, unless they themselves were ready to stimulate its regular flow, the stream of prosperity would shortly cease. But there were many difficulties.

Great Britain and France were fortunate that the representation of their financial interests in the United States was in the hands of the partners of the famous firm of J. P. Morgan & Co., whose combined experience, courage and far-sightedness were placed unreservedly at the disposal of the Allied Powers from the early months of the War and contributed in no small measure to their ultimate success.

Until the day in the spring of 1917 when America entered the War the situation in that country of the acknowledged agents of two of the great Allied Powers was beset with difficulties and dangers. But the partners never wavered in their determination or faltered in their devotion to the cause which they upheld, though they never forgot that their primary concern was with the interests of their own country.

For them it was no mere question of business, however important and engrossing ; their sympathies and their hearts were with the ideals for which they believed the Allies to be fighting, and they spared no effort to ensure, so far as lay within their powers, that those ideals should prevail.

One of the leading partners, Mr. H. P. Davison, had visited England and France in the winter of 1914-15 and had discussed the financial situation of the Allies with Lord Cunliffe, the Governor of the Bank of England, and with Messrs. Morgan's Paris partner, Mr. Herman Harjes.

During Mr. Davison's stay in London Mr. Lloyd George had enquired of him whether Messrs. Morgan were likely to be in a position in case of need to arrange by the middle of 1915 for some form of American assistance in the financial operations of the British Government, and Mr. Davison had expressed his firm's readiness to do everything possible. In the early part of 1915 the British Treasury had contrived, though not without difficulty, to maintain adequate cash balances in New York, but by the summer

it had become apparent that the only method by which the Allied Powers could hope to continue to finance their purchases in the United States was by raising a loan on the spot.

On November 5, 1914, the National City Bank had lent the French Government £2,000,000 and in March of 1915 the German Government had sold in New York and Philadelphia short-term bonds for a like amount, but these figures were negligible beside the requirements of the Allies in August of the latter year. By 1915 the War was costing Great Britain alone £3,500,000 a day with every prospect of a steady increase in that already fantastic figure. Stupendous orders had been placed in America and the amounts then due or shortly to fall due together with the anticipated future obligations were not likely to fall short of the vast sum of £100,000,000.

To meet this situation Messrs. Morgan at the instigation of Mr. Davison, who in the summer of 1915 was again in England for the purpose of conferring with the British authorities upon future financial policy, made confidential enquiries as to the practicability of raising a loan in the United States on the security of notes of Great Britain and France and as to the amount likely to be obtainable. The result was far from encouraging. Messrs. Morgan reported by cable to London on August 18, 1915, that only three or four favourable replies had been received and that the maximum amount likely to be forthcoming did not exceed £20,000,000, though they believed themselves able to place that sum at 5 per cent interest on the security of British Government notes to be issued at 98£ and repayable at the end of one year.

This was a very long way from the response for which the British Government had hoped. The figure which they had in mind as adequate to their own and the French Government's joint needs had been in the neighbourhood not of £20,000,000 but of £200,000,000 and Messrs. Morgan's news was received with something like consternation. Anxious conferences between the British and French Governments could produce only one suggestion, that a mission consisting of representatives of both countries should be sent to the United States without delay to **try** the method of direct personal approach.

Obviously no easy or enviable task lay before the delegation.

The preliminary soundings had produced an almost derisory result, though Messrs. Morgan's approaches had been made in strict confidence. Now the whole plan would have to be made public, **and** its publication would be the signal for every group, **faction, society or** association throughout the United States which

sympathized with the Central Powers or disliked Great Britain to combine against its success.

Not only was there a considerable element of German-origin amongst the population of the United States, of whose furious opposition there could be no doubt \$ there was also the large Irish element, especially in the big cities, who, if not active adherents of Sinn Fein, were at least no friends of England.

A Presidential Election was due to take place in March of 1916 and these sections of the population, representing an aggregate of votes which Mr. Wilson in offering himself for re-election could not afford to disregard, would undoubtedly bring every possible pressure to bear upon Washington formally to forbid or at any rate authoritatively to discountenance the raising of the loan.

Indeed, such a drastic step as the laying of an embargo upon the Mission's activities would not have been out of harmony with the official policy of the State Department during the first year of the War.

When hostilities broke out, Mr. William Jennings Bryan was Secretary of State. He was by conviction a fervent and almost fanatical pacifist, who had since his accession to office devoted himself to persuading the nations of the world to enter into a peace-pact in a form of his own devising. He had also for some years before 1914 strenuously advocated the refusal by neutrals of all loans to belligerents as one of the most effective methods of checking war, and the events of August, 1914, gave him the opportunity to put his principles into practice.

Within a few days of August 4 Mr. H. P. Davison of Messrs. Morgan telephoned from New York to the State Department, asking for an indication as to the view which the Government would take in regard to loans to the belligerents. Mr. Bryan at once consulted his Assistant Secretary of State, Mr. Robert Lansing, an expert in International Law, who informed him that all the precedents were in favour of such loans, that they had never been regarded as breaches of neutrality, and that they had frequently been sought by belligerents and granted by neutrals in the past. This answer did not fit comfortably into Mr. Bryan's scheme of things, but, undeterred by Mr. Lansing's precedents, he decided to evolve a new doctrine of his own. On August 10, 1914, he wrote to the President : "Money is the worst of all contrabands, because it commands everything else. . . . We are the one great nation which is not involved and our refusal to loan to any belligerent would naturally tend to hasten a conclusion of the War," and a few days later he attended at the White House for a discussion of the subject.

Mr. Wilson and Mr. Bryan at that stage found themselves in agreement. The President, anxious that Americans should observe neutrality "in thought and deed," accepted the Secretary of State's novel interpretation of International Law, and on August 15 Messrs. Morgan were officially informed in reply to their enquiry that "in the judgment of this Government loans by American Bankers to any foreign nation which is at War are inconsistent with the true spirit of neutrality."

This doctrine, which still remained the official attitude of Washington in August, 1915, seemed likely to be perhaps the most menacing of all obstacles in the way of the proposed Anglo-French delegation. For until it was overruled or ignored their hands were firmly tied.

The decision having been made in London and Paris to send a joint Mission to investigate the possibilities on the spot, the next problem was to select suitable representatives from each country.

Much would necessarily depend upon the personality of the leader of the Mission. In relation to the President, the Administration, the Press and the public it would be his task to speak on behalf of his colleagues ; he would be the outstanding figure and progress would be largely regulated by the atmosphere which he was able to create and maintain.

He must be not only financial expert but statesman, holding a high position in his own country and capable of dealing with important personages in America on a footing of equality and at the same time able to win the confidence and respect of the public at large.

Although Lord Reading was performing his judicial duties, he had continued to give much time to the problems arising from day to day at the Treasury and had thus kept in close touch with the financial situation.

In this way and through his friendship with Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George he had throughout been kept informed not only of the daily incidents of the fighting but of the larger diplomatic, strategic and economic considerations without which a thorough grasp of the financial situation was impossible.

It was therefore to him that Mr. Lloyd George's mind at once turned as marked out for leadership of the Mission. He had been closely associated with the Treasury from the outbreak of the War ; he was an ex-Cabinet Minister and at the moment Lord Chief Justice, and would thus be able to deal with the leading men of America with all the prestige of his great office behind him ; he was a shrewd and experienced negotiator ; he was endowed with

a handsome presence and a potent personal charm. Moreover, he possessed one attribute calculated to make an instant and overwhelming appeal to the American public ; he had from small beginnings achieved remarkable success.

There were two possible difficulties, but both of them were waved aside. He was a Jew and in the United States with its large Jewish community Jews were not everywhere received with unalloyed cordiality. He was Lord Chief Justice and could not fairly be asked to surrender his high position in order to undertake a journey of a few weeks to America, but there was no precedent for the holder of that office being "seconded for duty" in connection with affairs wholly extraneous to the Law.

L The Jewish aspect was never regarded as a serious obstacle.

As regards his position as Lord Chief Justice, if the proposal was without precedent, so were the times, and neither he himself nor Mr. Lloyd George was by temperament inclined to attach excessive value to precedents.

It was accordingly without hesitation that Lord Reading accepted Mr. Lloyd George's invitation to lead the Mission, though his eyes were fully open to the difficulties and perhaps even dangers involved.

Before the announcement was published he consulted his brother judges and received their approval of his temporary absence, Mr. Justice Darling, as senior puisne judge of the King's Bench Division, agreeing to officiate as Chief Justice until his return.

The next step was to choose his associates in the British Delegation. He was anxious that they should be selected from amongst those with whom he had already worked in close co-operation at the Treasury and at his request the Chancellor of the Exchequer invited Sir Edward Holden, Bart., (afterwards Lord Holden) and Sir Henry Babington-Smith, K.C.B., C.S.I., to serve as his colleagues, with Mr. (afterwards Sir) Basil Blackett, C.B., as Secretary to the Mission. They formed a powerful combination. Sir Edward Holden was Managing Director of the London City & Midland Bank and a man of wide experience in finance. His appointment was designed to make a special appeal to the Southern States, since he was regarded as the leading British authority on the finance of cotton and was deeply and actively interested in the expansion of that industry.

Sir Henry Babington-Smith had fulfilled the early promise of his schooldays at Eton by a highly distinguished and varied career in the public service.

Originally in the Treasury, he had been for the five years **from**

1894 to 1899 Private Secretary to his father-in-law, the Earl of Elgin, during the latter's tenure of the Viceroyalty of India. Since then he had represented Great Britain at a series of congresses on financial matters, including the Ottoman Public Debt, and had been Secretary to the Post Office from 1905 to 1909, when he was appointed President of the National Bank of Turkey. At a later period (1918-19) he was to be Assistant High Commissioner for Great Britain in the United States, and his final contribution to the service of his country was the discharge of the arduous duties of Chairman of the Railways Amalgamation Tribunal from 1921 to 1923. He died in 1924.

Mr. Basil Blackett, who was to be again closely associated with Lord Reading at the Washington Embassy and afterwards as Finance Member of the Viceroy's Council in India, was at that time a Treasury' official with a brilliant record, both academic and professional.

He had already paid an official visit to the United States in company with Sir George Paish, the economist, in October of 1914, and had established promising contacts with American men of affairs, who had liked his personality and admired his breadth of vision and clarity of mind.

His presence would be a valuable asset to the Mission as both a storehouse of expert knowledge and a key to many doors.

The French representatives were Monsieur Octave Hombert, an official of the Quai d'Orsay, trim, precise and determined, and Monsieur Ernest Mallet of the Banque Mallet, one of the 'hereditary' regents of the Banque de France. He was descended from a family of Swiss origin which had come to France in the eighteenth century to help Necker in his superhuman struggle to disentangle and re-establish the finances of the "ancien regime/" and for nearly a century the name had never been absent from the list of regents of the Bank.

The party sailed from England on September 1, 1915, in the S.S. *Lapland*. Their departure was kept secret, for once at sea they were exposed to considerable perils. Lady Reading, who had raised no objection to her husband's acceptance of the task, though she was perfectly aware of the element of danger involved, characteristically made no direct reference to this aspect of the undertaking but confined herself to presenting him on his departure with a pneumatic waistcoat for use in the event of the ship being sunk by enemy action, a garment which out of deference to the donor accompanied him on each of his subsequent voyages to and from America, but always at the bottom of his trunk.

It **was** not until they were almost in sight of New York that

the news of their coming was published, in the United States. Even then the name of the ship was not announced, but rumour fastened upon the *Lapland* and great prominence was given in the newspapers to a supposed German plot to sink her by strewing bombs on her course, or, if that failed, either to ram her with a launch as she approached Sandy Hook or to board her with an armed party and kidnap the members of the Mission.

Actually the voyage was disturbed by no untoward excitement. Destroyers were sent from the Brooklyn Navy Yard to convoy the ship into harbour and she berthed safely on September 10.

But the credence given to these rumours shows how strong was known to be the opposition to the Mission's arrival, and readers of such books as Count Bernstorff's *My Three Years in America* and Captain von Rintelen's *The Dark Invader* will realize that Germany had agents in the United States whose daring and ruthlessness would stop at nothing.

During their ten days at sea Lord Reading and his colleagues had every opportunity to discuss the position and to decide upon their plan of campaign. Not that the position offered scope for prolonged deliberation; it was only too plain.

Both Great Britain and France were in very real and urgent need of American credits. Without the money they would be unable to pay for the material required by them from the United States for the prosecution of the War. Without that material they might be in danger of ultimate collapse and defeat. A sum of £200,000,000, astronomical though the figure might seem, would be in no way in excess of their needs. Anything less than £100,000,000 would be equivalent to the failure of the Mission.

Moreover, the terms of the offer must be sufficiently attractive to commend it to the American investors, without being so lavish as unduly to burden the Allies.

As regards interest it was decided that in the last resort they must go to 5 per cent, provided the loan was not repayable for five years. There was also the question of security for repayment. It was known in the United States that American securities to the value of not less than £600,000,000 were held in Great Britain, and it would no doubt be expected, if not demanded, that a proportion of these should be deposited as collateral security. It would come as a shock to the American Press and public when it became known that, so far from contemplating any such course, the Mission intended to offer no other security than the promise of their two Governments to repay. For, however admirable the intentions of Great Britain and France, the fact remained that the issue of the war was not yet by any means certain and that they

might not be in a position to meet their obligations, anyhow on the due date, if they were defeated in the field and forced to accept a dictated peace.

The tactical approach to their problem was therefore a fruitful subject for deliberation amongst the Mission.

There were difficulties in plenty, but they had one solid and significant asset \$ although they were coming to ask Americans for a large loan, the whole of it was to be spent in America.

There were already a number of American producers of the infinite range of articles required by nations at war who were steadily acquiring wealth. Large sums of money were in circulation, and the figures of trade-returns were rapidly increasing. Many factories had been converted for the production of war-supplies so as to qualify for their share in the rich harvest. But this Golden Age could only last so long as the Allies were able to pay for the goods. If they were forced by lack of funds to cut down orders in America and confine them to such articles as could not be procured elsewhere, a large part of this artificially erected structure of prosperity might crumble, to be replaced by dislocation and depression which would not necessarily cease with the end of the War.

If, therefore, America agreed to subscribe to the loan, it would not only be to the great advantage of the Allies but to her own best interests as well.

Nevertheless, all these plans and deliberations were futile and would remain so, unless the Government of the United States was prepared to abrogate Mr. Bryan's doctrine of the "true spirit of neutrality" and leave the Mission a free hand. Failing such a reversal of policy, they might as well never have made the journey and would have no alternative but to pack up again and sail for home.

But since Mr. Bryan's declaration of faith of August, 1914, the position had not been allowed to remain static. He himself had resigned in June, 1915, and had been succeeded by his former second-in-command, Mr. Robert Lansing. The new Secretary of State had throughout been anxious as to the probable consequences of his chief's policy, foreseeing that, as time went on, mere force of circumstances must result in the United States becoming always more deeply involved in economic relations with the Allies. He realized also that the Allies' existing financial resources were not inexhaustible and that, if the present volume of trade with all its gratifying effect upon the United States was to continue and even to increase, the time would come when a substantial loan must be raised.

Already in October, 1914, he had prepared a note for the President in which, after pointing out that it was the policy of foreign Governments to increase their already abnormal purchasing, he added that "the buying is necessarily for cash, and it is of such magnitude that the cash credits of the European Governments are being fast depleted." After explaining that some manufacturers, as well as the agents of certain of the foreign Governments, were urging upon the banks the absolute necessity of providing temporary credits and that the banks were disposed to accede to these representations, he concluded by stressing the vital importance of "keeping our foreign trade at the time of our greatest need and greatest opportunity."

The President made no written reply to this document, but it is at least significant that the financial operations already referred to were carried out on behalf of the French Government in November, 1914, and of the German Government in March, 1915, without official protest or hindrance, though both were in flagrant contravention of the "true spirit of neutrality" as conceived by Mr. Bryan. Indeed, they went far towards making his position untenable, though the immediate cause of his resignation was the President's second note to Germany on the sinking of the *Lusitania* which was couched in terms regarded by the Secretary of State as unduly bellicose and likely to precipitate the United States into war.

No sooner was Mr. Bryan's resignation accepted than Mr. Lansing again took up the loan question with the President. By this time the existing economic conditions had strengthened his hand. The sudden incidence of prosperity was as yet by no means general but was localized in a few areas, and while these waxed fat, other parts of the immense territory of the United States were experiencing leaner times, especially in the South. There was cotton in abundance and the Allies were in pressing need of it, but dearth of money and of tonnage was bringing their purchases to a standstill. Moreover, if the position was most acute in the South, the same conditions obtained in varying degrees in other States, where the Allies were not only ready but eager to place orders for seemingly endless quantities of material and foodstuffs, if steps could be taken to ease the financial strain.

With this aspect of the situation not only the State Department but the Treasury was deeply concerned and Mr. Lansing found his views shared by Mr. McAdoo, the Secretary to the Treasury, who on August 21, 1915, wrote a long, vigorous and anxious letter to the President, pointing out that, "unless American credits were forthcoming, British and French purchases would have to be cur-

tailed and the prosperity of American industry would be checked." Anticipating the purpose of the subsequent Loan Mission, he expressed the view that the Bryan doctrine was both illogical and inconsistent and that it was imperative that Great Britain should establish without delay a credit of at least £100,000,000 in the United States. Coming from the man who was at the moment in charge of the United States Treasury, this was a pronouncement of the first importance.

But though the President's insistence upon rigid neutrality had been temporarily shaken by the incident of the *Lusitania*, he still kept silent, and it was then Mr. Lansing's turn to renew the approach to the subject from the angle of the State Department. On September 6 he predicted in a memorandum to the President that, unless the Anglo-French delegates then already on the high seas were given facilities to raise the required loan, a stoppage of trade would ensue, resulting in "numerous failures, financial demoralization and general unrest and suffering: amongst the labouring classes."

This combined operation at last had its effect. Apart from all other considerations Mr. Wilson profoundly believed in his own mission to guide the United States through the troublous times by which they were beset, and in this belief was convinced that it was essential to the country's interests that he should be re-elected in the following year to a second term of office. It may well be that he came to realize that an election held in the midst of an acute slump which, as his opponents would not be slow to point out, lie himself might easily have averted, was not likely to result in his return.

On September 7 he accordingly gave an interview to Mr. Lansing and Mr. McAdoo, and though no official "communiqué" was ever issued and the Bryan ruling was never formally set aside, after-events seemed to prove that the President agreed with his advisers that it should henceforth be treated as a dead letter and that no stumbling-block should be placed by the Administration in the Anglo-French representatives' path.

But these supremely important developments were still unknown to Lord Reading and his colleagues when the *Lapland* reached New York. So far as they were aware, their first and most fundamental task would be to induce the authorities at Washington to reopen this vital issue.

In place of the threatened German boarding-party Mr. J. P. Morgan and his partner, Mr. Henry P. Davison, were waiting for them on arrival, with an invitation to meet some fifty prominent **American bankers in Mr. Morgan's library the same afternoon.**

It was fortunate for Lord Reading on his first visit to the United States that amongst his friends in England were Mr. and Mrs. "Lulu" (afterwards Viscount and Viscountess) Harcourt and Mrs. Harcourt's brother and sister-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Burns. For Mrs. Harcourt and Mr. Burns were cousins of Mr. J. P. Morgan and Lord Reading had already met him frequently at their houses, so that they began their close association on terms of mutual regard.

Hard upon the heels of these first visitors followed a flock of Pressmen in search of news. But Lord Reading had been warned of the intensive bombardment which was likely to await him and he was not to be led into answering questions at large. Demands for a statement from him produced nothing more sensational than a cautious typewritten document. "The object of the visit of the Mission is to consult with American bankers and others as to the best means to be adopted for regulating the exchanges between New York, London and Paris, in order that the commerce and industry of the three countries may suffer as little as possible during the course of the War."

This was indeed an under-statement of the position, for the situation of the exchange had become a matter of real anxiety in both London and Paris. On the day on which the Mission sailed from England the pound sterling had dropped to \$4.50, a fall of about one-sixteenth, whilst the franc had depreciated by nearly one-sixth. It was thus obvious that the Mission must move swiftly and that upon the success or failure of their enterprise might depend the whole vital question of future supplies from the United States.

Neither the purpose nor the importance of the visit was lost upon the American Press. From the moment of the Mission's arrival they became front-page news and columns of every paper were filled with speculations as to the amount for which they would ask, the terms of the proposed loan and especially the nature of the collateral security, the likelihood of a veto by the United States Government, and the expected opposition from pro-Germans and Irish. Even the controversy with Germany over the sinking by a German submarine of **the S.S. Arabic, whilst on a voyage** to America and therefore innocent of any cargo destined for **the Allies**, the destruction of the S.S. *Hesperia* and the dismissal of Dr. Dumba, the Austrian Ambassador, took second place to **the "Billion Dollar Loan."**

Pressing as was their task, the Mission did not feel **that they** could immediately start work without spending a few days in getting their bearings, for **it was essential that they should**

accurately gauge public opinion, not in New York alone but throughout the United States.

The time devoted to this preliminary investigation of the situation and to the perusal of the Press as a whole was well-spent. As a result, the members of the Mission and their advisers decided that the two objects to be placed in the foreground were the maintenance of the exchange as nearly as possible at a par rate and the purchase of essential foodstuffs. It was no part of their duty or of their desire to attempt to hoodwink the American people, but they were entitled to put their case as attractively as possible, if only in order to avoid unnecessary controversy and consequent delay. From that point of view it would be impolitic to lay too much stress upon the purchase of munitions, though Great Britain and France could not hope to manufacture them in sufficient quantities to meet the needs of the armies in the field, and it was to America alone that they could look for additional supplies. But in the then temper of American public opinion, assailed as it was from many sides by peace societies and German societies, insistence upon the question of munitions would only hinder the general project. On September 13 an announcement was made which embodied the decisions reached during the previous days' conferences.

" 'We are not in a position to make a statement at the present time because we are studying the conditions in New York and elsewhere in relation to the American Exchange in London and Paris. We have received a very considerable number of persons, prominent bankers and other gentlemen, who are interested in the stability of exchange. . . . The sudden and considerable drop in the exchange naturally disturbs commercial relations between the countries. You have in the United States a very large surplus of foodstuffs and other materials you want to export. We, on the other hand, want to import many of those things from you. Nothing is more difficult for commercial men than to arrange a fixed price when exchange is as unstable as at the present time."

The non-committal terms of this statement, valuable as they were in stressing the opportunities for the sale of American produce which would be created by the success of the loan, created no particular stir, but a further item of news published on the same day caused a considerable sensation. For it became known that Great Britain and France did not propose to offer any collateral security for the loan which they sought. Opinion in the United States had throughout expected the members of the Mission to offer as collateral security at least a portion of the

American securities held in their respective countries \$ and although the news of their intention to make no such offer was accompanied by pronouncements emanating from prominent bankers and reinforced by the assertion that Great Britain and France had never in their history failed to keep their engagements, the first reaction of public opinion was unfavourable. There was, however, the important consideration that, although disappointment might be expressed in certain sections of the American Press at the failure to offer the deposit of security, the pro-German papers, which had represented Great Britain and France as grovelling on their knees before American capitalists, received a severe shock when the fact became known that the members of the Mission had arrived in America with the determination to ask for the loan on no more tangible security than a mere promise by their two countries to pay.

Amongst the most valuable of the pronouncements from American bankers was one by Mr. J. J. Hill, the railroad-builder and financier from St. Paul, Minnesota. His part of the country was by no means entirely friendly to the Allies' cause but it was extremely concerned about four hundred million bushels of wheat which were awaiting buyers, and it was to represent the view of his own district that he had come specially to New York. On September 14 he published a statement in which he said :

"The maintenance of a stable rate of exchange, which can be done by establishment in this country of a very large credit account for Great Britain to be drawn against the purchase of foodstuffs, is of far more importance to the United States than to England. It is not too much to say that upon this the prosperity of the American farmer depends.

"It is most essential to the prosperity of our people that our wheat should get to market and find a purchaser. . . . A foreign trade of this magnitude cannot possibly be conducted by means of export of gold. We do not need the gold, which might, if it continues to come in such quantities, demoralize rather than benefit our system of currency and credit. Transactions of this size in war as well as in peace must be carried on through the organization of international credit."

He went on to predict that, if there was no loan, a paralysis of commerce would result and that it would become impossible to sell in any part of the world the immense surplus of cereals, meat and cotton which in normal times would have been exported to Europe, as well as all the other commodities which up till then had been eagerly bought by the Allies. He regarded the loan as

a simple and businesslike measure of self-protection for the American public.

This statement put the position from the American point of view in its clearest and most effective form, emphasizing the advantages to be derived from the raising of the loan.

But opposition was not lacking. Mr. Bryan, seeing in the loan, as he had seen in the second *Lusitania* note, the danger of provoking a declaration of war by Germany, emerged from his retirement in order to utter the warning that "we cannot afford to jeopardize our neutrality for any money considerations. If Europe wants American money, then let it send back American securities instead of asking our people to share the risks of war."

All over the country societies, either fanatically pacifist or frankly pro-German, were holding meetings of protest and passing resolutions. At Baltimore on September 13 the Independent Citizens of Maryland passed a resolution declaring the existence of "a nefarious plot to rob the American people," and resolved that "we thirty thousand true American citizens solemnly declare our abhorrence of the unpatriotic and pro-British scheme and earnestly call on the President of the United States and the Secretary of State to thwart this evil conspiracy."

The banks which were thought likely to participate in the loan also became the object of attack. An Association known as "The Friends of Peace," the pro-German sympathies of which were very thinly disguised, sent telegrams to Mr. Morgan and Mr. J. H. Forgan, President of the First National Bank of Chicago, who was at the moment in New York, urging that the best reason why no loan should be made "is that the events in Europe show the Allies will be defeated." Germany, the world-power of the future, would by reason of the loan become the enemy of American finance and of American business. "Now is the time for American business to lay the foundations for future friendly relations with Germany."

At the same time the Executive Committee of the National Industrial Peace Conference recommended all Americans to withdraw their deposits from such banks as did not promise "to remain free from any affiliation with war-mongers or their undertakings."

Irishmen were directors of many banks in the West and along the Pacific coast and a considerable number of them were willing to co-operate with pro-German elements in order to embarrass Great Britain, while politicians with pro-German constituents fell into line and harassed the President. Letters and telegrams in vast numbers were sent to the White House, to bank officials and to members of the Mission, the contents of which ranged

from mere abuse to threats of murder. So violent was the propaganda that the authorities requested the members of the Mission not to disclose their intended movements and each was closely-guarded by detectives. When no response came from the President and negotiations were *seen* to be proceeding with an increasing number of bankers, a scheme was evolved by the opponents of the loan which lent a touch of comedy to their campaign. The gist of the proposal was that the pro-Germans should open their purses and subscribe for the benefit of Germany exactly the amount which the Allies were trying to borrow. It was conceded that there was no possible means of transmitting the money to Germany, so that it was destined to lie idle until the end of the war with the loss of £5,000,000 a year in interest, but the originators of the plan hoped that the withdrawal of so large a sum from the banks and from circulation would dry up the markets to the detriment of the Anglo-French loan. It was, however, too much to expect of human nature : the scheme was still-born.

But even if so idealistic a plan was unlikely to attain success, there was no abatement of the agitation against the loan. On September 14 the newspapers spoke of the German propaganda against it as more widespread than any like undertaking in the United States since the war began and threatening to stop at nothing to gain its end, and the Associated Press summed up the situation by saying that the campaign "appears to-day to assume the proportions of a country-wide plot, threatening even the personal safety of members of the Anglo-French Commission."

But just at the moment when the storm of hostile propaganda reached its climax the clouds began to lift. The first sign that the sky was clearing was the issue of a semi-official announcement that the United States Government would neither approve nor disapprove the loan. Such a statement of policy at least removed once and for all the danger of the Government imposing its veto upon the raising of a loan on any terms and left the Mission a clear field, free from the fear of being, if not completely frustrated, at least continually hampered by official interference. Moreover, it served to emphasize the growing conviction amongst the public that the loan was a necessary credit for the support of American trade by seeming to indicate that the President and the Administration at least did not dissent from the popular view. But opposition was still vehement and vocal and the President made no public statement of his own attitude. Although he may have believed the loan to be essential in the interests of the United States, he was still reluctant even to appear to deviate from absolute neutrality.

Lord Reading fully realized the President's difficulties in publicly blessing the proposed loan and was grateful for the liberty of action accorded to him. The American public were coming to realize that it would be to their own great advantage that the loan should be raised. The next step was to point the moral by conveying to them the probable course of events if the project failed, and with that purpose every opportunity was taken by the members of the Mission in interviews and in private conversations to indicate that in the event of no loan being made the whole future policy of Great Britain and France in regard to purchases would have to be drastically revised. It would still be necessary to buy in America a limited range of goods, chiefly munitions, which could not be procured elsewhere, and for these purchases payment would be made in gold. But in face of the difficulties of exchange it would no longer be possible to place orders for the great mass of commodities, such as cereals, cotton and meat. In future supplies would have to be obtained from Canada, the Argentine, India and Egypt, where the same obstacles were not present.

The course of events thus prophesied was incontestably true, and business men in all parts of America were forced to recognize its inevitability and to see in it a powerful confirmation of the views expressed by Mr. J. J. Hill to which reference has already been made.

In the South, in the Middle West and in Chicago the atmosphere was steadily becoming more favourable. The millions whose livelihood depended upon the continued sale of the main commodities soon grasped the fact that the welcome stream of orders was likely to sin-ink to a mere trickle, if not to dry up altogether, unless the way of the potential customers was smoothed. The further millions engaged in the manufacture of all the articles ancillary to the conduct of the War or required by the civilian population in the Allied countries found themselves suddenly faced with the possibility of a far less rosy future than the recent trend of trade had led them to expect. Unemployment and distress, which seemed so remote, might after all only be lurking round the next corner, ready to emerge if the Allies were compelled to divert the main stream of their purchases into other channels.

Public opinion was thus swinging steadily towards a favourable reception of the loan, but a decision was urgent and the Mission could not afford to wait. The members were spending long hours at the Hotel Biltmore, where they had established their headquarters, in daily consultation with the Morgan partners, who

were in turn in frequent conference with representatives of the leading New York banks and banking houses. The Mission had arrived in the United States with a broad understanding of the position but perhaps with unduly optimistic ideas of the readiness of the American public to subscribe to an Anglo-French loan of almost unlimited extent at a moderate rate of interest, and they had been obliged at the outset largely to revise their plans.

The Morgan partners, who at an early stage had insisted that in view of the importance of the transaction to American as well as to Allied interests they would accept no remuneration for the vast amount of work involved, had sounded a wide range of expert opinion in financial circles as to the largest sum that could be asked for with a reasonable prospect of success, and they were obliged as a result of their enquiries to impress upon Lord Reading and his colleagues that the figure of £200,000,000 originally contemplated was utterly out of the question and that the maximum sum which they could recommend with any confidence was only £100,000,000.

They had no precedent of any value to guide them, since no loan operations on a large scale had ever before been conducted by a foreign Government in the United States, while the American Government itself had sought no considerable internal loan since the Civil War half-a-century earlier. But they had a lifelong experience of the idiosyncrasies of the American investor, who not only was unaccustomed to subscribing to any foreign enterprise and liked his money to remain at home, but habitually put his faith and his funds into visible and tangible securities and real estate, from which he expected a return of not less than 6 per cent. A loan of so gigantic a size, unsupported by collateral security and depending for repayment solely upon the promise of two nations engaged at the moment in a war on an unprecedented scale and of uncertain duration, the ultimate result of which no man could foretell, might well be looked upon as too hazardous a speculation for the popular taste. Weighing up all these factors in the light of their local knowledge, Messrs. Morgan insisted that, if they were to be responsible for its issue, the loan must be strictly limited in amount and obviously attractive in character.

Lord Reading, on the other hand, was naturally concerned to obtain the largest possible sum at the lowest possible rate. Disappointed in his hopes of raising the amount originally in the minds of the Mission, he clung for a time to the figure of £150,000,000, but the Morgan partners resolutely refused to entertain any sum in excess of £100,000,000 and in the face of their experience and

his inexperience of American conditions he was compelled to give way.

But before that stage was reached the negotiations had been complicated by a transient but costly difference between the British representatives and their French colleagues. As Mr. T. W. Lamont, one of the Morgan partners, put the position years afterwards in his evidence before the Special Committee of the Senate investigating the Munitions Industry : ". . . after only three or four days of negotiation we made an outright proposition to try to form a syndicate for \$500,000,000 at a point and a half more for the British Government than they afterwards secured. At that point the French threw a monkey-wrench into the situation by demanding \$750,000,000, and Lord Reading, the head of the Commission, was undoubtedly having a very difficult time and there was a lot of pulling and hauling over that item, because, as it afterwards turned out, it lost a point and a half to the British Government and delayed the operation."

Thereafter discussion revolved mainly about three matters of paramount importance, the price at which the proposed bonds should be offered to the public, the date at which the loan should mature, and the rate of interest which it should bear.

In their preliminary discussions amongst themselves the members of the Mission had contemplated a rate of interest of 4½ per cent or at the worst 4J per cent, but the Morgan partners were convinced that to offer a lower rate than 5 per cent was to invite failure and on this point also Lord Reading was in the end reluctantly forced to give way as the only means of releasing the negotiations from deadlock.

Final agreement was reached on September 25 and on the 28th the terms were announced by Lord Reading. "I am now/' he said, "in a position to make an announcement as to our proceedings. The discussions between the Anglo-French financial Commission and the American bankers have resulted in the formation of a definite arrangement for a loan to the British and French Governments to be issued in this country on a broad and popular basis. The proceeds of the loan will be employed exclusively in America for the purpose of making the rate of exchange more stable, thereby helping to maintain the volume of American exports. The arrangement contemplates the issue of \$500,000,000 five-year 5 per cent bonds, constituting a direct joint and several obligation of the British and French Governments as regards both capital and interest. No other external loan has been issued by either of these Governments, apart from notes from the French Treasury to a limited amount, maturing in the next six months.

"The bonds will be repayable at the end of five years or convertible at the option of the holder into 4J per cent bonds of the two Governments repayable not earlier than 15 years and not later than 25 years from the present time by the two Governments jointly and severally.

"The bonds will be issued to the public at 98, yielding approximately 5£ per cent to the investor.

"The work of offering this loan will be carried out by a Syndicate which J. P. Morgan & Co. and a large Group of American bankers and financial houses will at once set about to form.

"Such Group will include representatives throughout the country and all members of the Syndicate will be on precisely the same footing. This Syndicate, whose business it will be to arrange that every investor shall have an opportunity to subscribe to the issue, will contract to purchase the loan from the two Governments at 96.*'

In his statement Lord Reading was at pains to make no reference to the urgent needs of the Allies or to appeal for sympathy for their cause, but to restrict himself to emphasizing the advantages accruing to American trade in general from the proposed issue and the benefits to be derived by individual American investors from participation in it. Selecting this aspect as the one most likely to commend the proposals to the public, he concentrated upon it to the exclusion of all secondary considerations.

Immediately after the conclusion of the agreement with Messrs. Morgan on September 25, Mr. H. P. Davison had suggested that as a strategic move Lord Reading and some of his colleagues should pay a visit to Chicago as the great banking and commercial centre of the Middle West, more especially as over half of the proceeds of the projected loan were to be spent in the Mississippi valley.

But there were manifest risks attaching to such a visit. Chicago was the centre of a region which contained a strong pro-German element and many of the inhabitants of the neighbouring States were German either by birth or descent and had relatives fighting in the German forces.

The officials of the leading Chicago banks were therefore justifiably alarmed lest, if they agreed to participate in the loan, their numerous customers with German sympathies would at once withdraw their deposits. They accordingly came to the conclusion that prudence demanded their abstention from active support and their refusal to associate themselves with the Eastern banks as underwriters.

The sole important institution in Chicago to form **and** to

proclaim the contrary opinion was the Central Trust Company of Illinois, which under the guidance of Charles G. Dawes, later as General Dawes, Vice-President of the United States and subsequently Ambassador to the Court of St. James's, unhesitatingly declared itself in favour of the loan and determined to do everything in its power to promote its successful issue.

Moreover, if sentimental considerations did not predispose the people of Chicago to welcome the proposed loan, there was a still more acute material reason for their hostility.

The position in time of war of neutral ships carrying cargo primarily consigned to neutral countries but ultimately intended for the belligerents had gravely exercised the minds of international lawyers in the years prior to 1914. It is probable that Germany took the view that Great Britain would not accept the risk of embroilment with neutral countries involved in the stopping and searching of their ships and in the confiscation of such goods as were proved to the satisfaction of the British Courts to be destined for the Central Powers. But the British Government had no intention of allowing their chief asset, the command of the seas, to be wasted by a blockade which permitted ships loaded with articles vital to the effective prosecution of the War by Britain's enemies to sail blithely into neutral ports under the eyes of the British Navy would be a mere farce. It was therefore decided to apply the doctrine of continuous voyage, whatever danger of disputes with neutral countries such a course might involve, and to regard all goods ultimately intended for the Central Powers as legitimate prize, without reference to the nationality of the ship in which they were being carried or the port to which they were primarily consigned.

The application of this principle inevitably led to sharp controversy with the United States, and it was in great measure due to the cordial personal relations existing between the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, and the American Ambassador in London, Mr. Walter Hines Page, that an open breach was averted.

American public opinion viewed the policy of Great Britain with bitter resentment and it was peculiarly unfortunate that shortly before Lord Reading's visit to Chicago the British Navy had seized consignments of goods dispatched from that city to the value of some £5,000,000, which had been duly condemned by the Prize Court to confiscation as being intended for enemy use.

Important business interests in Chicago were outraged by this occurrence and, although it was entirely outside the scope of Lord Reading's Mission to deal with such questions of international

law, it was obvious that the incident had so tainted the air that he could not hope to escape some interrogation on the subject during his stay.

But the journey to and fro and the actual visit passed off safely and smoothly.

Moreover, Chicago decided that its tradition of hospitality demanded that a banquet should be offered to the distinguished visitor, though the authorities were at pains to emphasize that the invitation was extended to the Lord Chief Justice of England rather than to the Head of the Anglo-French loan Mission.

Mr. Lamont of Messrs. Morgan, who had been delegated to accompany the visitors, has recorded his impressions of this banquet in his biography of his friend and partner, Henry P. Davison, who died in 1922.

The Chicago audience started out by way of being exceedingly cold to Lord Reading, [he writes] and when he was introduced to speak he was greeted with a respectful, but not a warm-hearted, clapping of hands.

Lord Reading did not attempt to talk very much about the loan ; he spoke of it, to be sure, he pointed it out as a necessity, if the purchases of his Government were to continue on a large scale from our farmers and merchants. But he did not ask for Chicago's co-operation. What he did say was more effective. He declared that it was a rare privilege to him to be in Chicago, and he went on to describe how, years before, he had come near making his home in Chicago. It seems that as a growing lad, just finished with his schooling, he had determined to come to America to make his way in the world. He had decided to settle in Chicago. His trunk was packed and he was about to sail from Liverpool, when suddenly the death of a near relative changed all his plans and kept him in Europe. And, as Lord Reading told the story of how nearly he had become a fellow-citizen of his hearers, there crept a something in his voice that was as if he were saying in words—although he did not say it in words—just about this, "Ah, my friends, who knows but that, if instead of stopping in humble England, pursuing the dull round of the Law and finally attaining a mere Lord Chief Justiceship, I might have come out here, have settled in your midst, have become one of your leading men of business—who knows, I say, but that I should have been a happier and at least a better man to-day !"

The speech was a triumphant success and at its close the diners "sighed with the satisfaction of gratified sentiment, stormed the speaker with applause and leaned over and allowed to their neighbours that Lord Reading was a fine man and would have made a great Chicagoan."

He left Chicago on the return journey to New York on September 30.

During his stay the awkward question of the doctrine of continuous voyage had inevitably intruded itself in the course of various interviews, but he had made it clear that he was in no way charged to deal with this problem, which must be discussed and resolved through the usual diplomatic channels. He had already adopted the same attitude immediately after his arrival in the United States, when he had labelled as preposterous a report in the Press to the effect that he was to take up the matter with the State Department on behalf of the British Government. The irate financiers and commercial men of Chicago were therefore obliged to reconcile themselves to his refusal to express any view upon the controversy, but were at least mollified by the patience and courtesy with which he listened to their expostulations.

On his return to New York he found the Morgan partners wrestling with the gigantic task of mobilizing the banking community to underwrite the entire issue of \$500,000,000. No comparable enterprise had ever before been carried out \$ the organization required for the mere distribution of the bonds was on a huge scale, the Group in its final form including 1,570 members from all parts of the United States with 61 Banks, Trust Companies and Investment Houses in New York as managers of the whole undertaking. But public opinion was already strongly in favour of the loan and amongst the names of individuals reported as having subscribed were those of John D. Rockefeller, William K. Yandefbilt, James J. Hill, Cleveland H. Dodge and Charles M. Schwab.

From all over the country applications were being received for membership of the distributing Group and each application had to be separately considered by Messrs. Morgan and their associates and either accepted or rejected on its merits.

On the evening of the day of their arrival from Chicago Lord Reading and the other members of the Mission attended another banquet, this time as the guests of the Pilgrims Society) with Mr. Choate, a former Ambassador in London and a stalwart friend of England, in the chair. Here, since the Pilgrims Society exists for the promotion of cordial relations between Great Britain and the United States, there was less constraint than had marked the early stages of the Chicago banquet, and Mr. Choate in a characteristically apt and eloquent speech made no secret as to where his sympathies lay. "Lord Reading," he said, "is going home with \$500,000,000 in his pocket. He has dealt splendidly with the American people," and Lord Reading in his reply

declared: "We feel to-night we are at home. We came as strangers and you have received us as relatives. You have clasped us to your hearts and made us realize more than ever what the great bond of humanity is."

Shortly afterwards the members of the Mission were paid the notable compliment of being invited to be present as guests of honour at the New York Chamber of Commerce, whose members, though predominantly pro-Ally, naturally included a few men of contrary sympathies. This invitation was offered as, in the words of the President of the Chamber, "a recognition due from the Chamber of Commerce to the very eminent character in the domain of finance of the distinguished gentlemen who are our guests, and also of the great services which, in serving their own country, they have rendered to ours."

These last words stressed exactly the aspect of his mission which Lord Reading had striven to emphasize from the outset and it was an immense satisfaction to hear it thus publicly endorsed before so influential an audience.

On October 7 Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, the British Ambassador in Washington, wrote to Sir Edward Grey :

The chief event of the moment is the success of the loan. It is believed that the amount asked for had been oversubscribed by about £40,000,000 sterling. However that may be, the fact of its success is surprising. A short time ago the conditions seemed very hostile. . . . But still the fact remains that the loan has been successfully floated to a degree without parallel in American financial history. . . . The greatest credit should be given to Lord Reading and his colleagues. Lord Reading's speech at the Pilgrim's Dinner was admirable and had a most excellent effect. He succeeded by what he said and still more by what he did not say.

On October 13 the British Parliament passed into law the American Loan Bill giving power to the Treasury to raise in the United States in conjunction with the French Government any sum not exceeding \$500,000,000 and the French Chamber took a similar course.

Meanwhile the Morgan Group had been making satisfactory headway in their task and by the time that the loan had been authorized by the legislatures of the two Allied nations they were ready for the formal signature of the necessary agreements. The ceremony took place on October 14 at the J. P. Morgan building in the presence of a large concourse of bankers, who greeted with spontaneous applause the signing by Lord Reading and Monsieur Hombert of the first of the sixty-one copies, one

for each manager of the underwriting syndicate, to which they were obliged to put their names,

"I desire to express our sincere gratitude," said Lord Reading in response to this decorous demonstration. "This is not an occasion on which to make a speech. However, I do feel on behalf of the British Government that it is incumbent on us to say that we are very much indebted to all who have aided. May I add that after we had given a close study to conditions here, after making ourselves acquainted with the difficulties of a transaction in this country where the people were unacquainted with external loans, we sought advice and it was given to us honestly and conscientiously, not only in the best interests of our own country, but, we believe, in the best interests of the United States."

How wise and accurate that advice had been was made manifest on the following day, which was the date fixed for applications to underwrite the loan. Applications were received to the value of \$512,276,200, a notable vindication of the refusal of Mr. Morgan and his partners at the outset to associate themselves with any attempt to raise a larger sum than \$500,000,000.

Nor was their assistance confined to the giving of good advice. The final commitment of Messrs. Morgan and of Messrs. Drexel & Co., including the personal participation of the partners in both houses, reached an enormous figure. For a short time Messrs. Morgan's interest had been even more colossal. At the ceremony of signing on the 14th agreements covering a very large amount were not yet to hand, and there was no certainty that this formidable gap would ever wholly be filled. Nevertheless, Messrs. Morgan assumed full responsibility for the deficiency in order that the matter might be concluded on that day and the members of the Mission be free to sail for home.

"The firm must, regardless of the risk, commit itself to do this task," said Mr. Morgan to his partners. "I have faith that the necessary participations will be forthcoming to help us out, whether they come from the sky, or the earth, or the waters under the earth." It was a decision in the grand manner and fortunately his and his partners' faith was justified in the event.

Immediately after the signing of the agreements Lord Pleading paid a hasty visit to Washington, where he made for the first time the acquaintance of President Wilson, with whom he was to have so many fateful interviews before the end of the War, and had the honour of sitting for a short while with the Chief Justice and his colleagues on the Bench of the Supreme Court.

On the evening of October 15 he and the other members of the Mission sailed for home, secure in the knowledge that they

had successfully discharged their arduous task and that at least for some time ahead the Allied Governments were relieved from anxiety on financial grounds. Purchases could continue to be made on an immense scale. The armed forces could still be supplied with their manifold needs and the civilian population assured against want. The Mission had worked at high pressure and in spite of occasionally divergent views and minor internal crises had maintained the most cordial personal relations, not only amongst themselves but with all those with whom they had come into contact, a happy state of affairs the credit for which was by general consent predominantly due to the energy, tact, patience and courage of the Chairman.

On October 25 Sir Cecil Spring-Rice cabled to Sir Edward Grey :

It was to a very large extent due to the personal qualities of Lord Reading that the operation of floating the loan was brought to a successful conclusion. . . . In case it became necessary again to send over a financial commission to this country Lord Reading's experience would be of the greatest service and he made an impression upon all who met him such as is rare in the case of visiting Englishmen.

Thus ended Lord Reading's first appearance as a *Chef de Mission* and his first visit to the United States, two fields in which he was to labour with even more fruitful results in the later* years of the War.

It only remains to add that interest on the loan was punctually paid on the due dates and the principal sum repaid in full in October, 1920.

For the time being Lord Reading returned to the Law Courts, though rather sadly, since his experiences in America had whetted his appetite for the conduct of great affairs.

Nevertheless, his knowledge of the financial situation and his recent contact with many of the leading personalities in the United States led to his being continuously called into consultation by the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer and being kept closely in touch with events. He was created a Viscount in June, 1916.

In the autumn of 1915 President Wilson became anxious to make a vigorous effort towards the restoration of peace and to offer his services to this end.

Colonel House, the President's confidant and frequent emissary, was accordingly dispatched on a mission to sound opinion on the subject in the capitals of the belligerents and to discover on what sort of terms the respective Governments might be prepared to treat.

He reached London at the close of his not very productive tour in February of 1916 and, owing to his acquaintance with Lord Reading, it was at a dinner at Lord Reading's house in Curzon Street that he was given the opportunity of discussing the abortive project with Mr. Asquith, Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Balfour and Sir Edward Grey.

In the middle of 1916 the success of Lord Reading's financial mission to America seemed for a time likely to involve him in yet another journey.

After the sinking by the enemy of H.M.S. *Hampshire* and the consequent drowning of Lord Kitchener whilst on his way to Russia the question arose of sending someone else in his place.

Mr. Lloyd George was of opinion that such a visit was of great importance and proposed that Field-Marshal Sir William Robertson, then Chief of the Imperial General Staff, should go.

The Field-Marshal would of course have been admirably equipped to discuss all military questions, but he was not versed in financial matters and the suggestion was therefore advanced that he should be accompanied by Lord Reading, who had full knowledge of that aspect. Sir William Robertson was, however, strongly of the opinion that his absence from England at that particular moment was highly inadvisable and in the end his view prevailed.

Though he was, as always, willing to go, if he could be of service, Lord Reading had no regrets at the abandonment of the project. He did not feel that the atmosphere of the Russian capital would be propitious to his task or that he would be able to deal with the Czarist Ministers on the same terms of mutual frankness and confidence as had served him so well in the United States.

At the end of 1916 events of great moment to the future conduct of the War were taking shape at home.

For some time past the conviction had been growing amongst some members of the Cabinet that Mr. Asquith was by temperament unsuited to hold the office of Prime Minister in war-time.

In the inner circle of Ministers expression was first given to this view by Sir Edward Carson, but by the middle of 1916 Mr. Lloyd George had found himself driven to the same opinion, that Mr. Asquith lacked the necessary buoyancy, decision and driving-power and that a change must be made in the direction of affairs.

So strongly did he feel in the matter that he was seriously contemplating resignation, an extreme course, from which he was ultimately deterred by his friends and in particular by Lord **Reading.**

For some months the existing position was allowed to continue but towards the end of the year the malcontents felt that it could be allowed to drift no longer.

Proposals were therefore laid before Mr. Asquith for a reorganization of the machinery of the War Cabinet and the setting up of a small War Committee of three persons, amongst whom the Prime Minister was not to be included, though the Committee was to be under his direct supervision and reference could be made to him in cases of doubt or divergence of view.

But Mr. Asquith would not contemplate the establishment of any "such Committee unless the Prime Minister was to preside over its sittings, holding that the proposal in its original form "relegated him to the position of an irresponsible spectator of the War."

Much negotiation followed without any satisfactory solution being found, and on December 5 Mr. Asquith brought matters to a head by tendering his resignation to the King.

Mr. Bonar Law was sent for and advised His Majesty to invite Mr. Balfour to form a Government, but Mr. Balfour could not see his way to accept and Mr. Bonar Law himself was unwilling to undertake the burden.

In the end, therefore, Mr. Lloyd George was summoned and entrusted With the task which he was to discharge with so much vision and vigour until the end of the War.

Lord Reading found himself on personal grounds in a difficult and painful situation. Mr. Asquith had been his leader and had shewn conspicuous confidence in and loyalty to him. It was he who had chosen him first as Solicitor and then as Attorney-General and finally as Lord Chief Justice ; and contact between them had continued frequently ever since the outbreak of war.

Moreover, Lord Reading was on terms of warm friendship with both Mr. and Mrs. Asquith and had spent in talk or at the bridge-table many delightful and stimulating hours in their company.

It was therefore a real sorrow to him to find himself gradually forced into line with the advocates of a change. But the evidence pointed in his view inexorably in one direction, and he could not allow private affection to conflict with public interests.

Nevertheless, his regard for Mr. Asquith's fine brain, great experience and ripeness of judgment was such that he was most eager that they should remain at the nation's disposal. His hope was that Mr. Asquith would recognize the inevitable and be willing to continue to serve in the high and dignified office of Lord Chancellor. But it was not to be.

His refusal to consider a subordinate position, however lofty, after eight years of supremacy was not confined to service under his own former lieutenant, Mr. Lloyd George. He was equally unwilling to accept office under Mr. Balfour or Mr. Bonar Law.

Lord Reading had striven hard to attain his object and his failure was a deep disappointment to him, especially as his part in the negotiations led to a temporary estrangement between him and Mr. and Mrs. Asquith which he keenly regretted.

CHAPTER II

II I G II C O M M I S S I O N E R

LORD READING'S success on the Anglo-French Loan Mission had been so marked that it was almost inevitable that he should before long be swept once more into the current of great events.

The declaration of war by America in April of 1917 had an immediate influence upon the relations between that country and Great Britain.

Now America had a prime need for the produce of her own markets and her own manufactures in order to equip and maintain the great armies which she immediately set out to raise.

And in order that the United States Treasury might be in a position to pay for the vast range and quantity of articles required it was obvious that internal loans would have to be raised.

It was equally clear that the process of raising those loans would have prompt and far-reaching effects upon Allied financial arrangements in the United States and that, dependent as the Allies must to a large extent remain upon supplies obtained from the United States, the allocation of available resources between Allied needs on the one hand and America's own requirements on the other would call for the most careful consideration at the outset and the most constant examination thereafter.

Moreover, with the entry of America into the War the number of persons sent over from this country on behalf of the various Government departments interested in finance and purchasing underwent a great increase and their work demanded central co-ordination and supervision on the spot, such as the already over-laden Embassy was not in a position to offer.

The British Government therefore decided to send Lord Northcliffe as High Commissioner to perform these diverse

functions, a task to which he applied himself with characteristic energy and capacity.

But he himself was the first to recognize that he did not feel at home in the intricate financial situation which held the centre of the stage.

Chief amongst the problems of this type was the baffling question of the Demand Loan with its numerous ramifications and recurrent crises.

Soon after August, 1914, both Great Britain and France were obliged to commence making large purchases in the United States, not only for the prosecution of the War but also for the maintenance of the civil population, and, their needs being similar, the two belligerent countries frequently found themselves in keen and unfortunate competition.

It was Mr. H. P. Davison of Messrs. Morgan & Co. who conceived the idea of putting an end to this chaotic and ruinous procedure by the establishment of a single buying agency which should be responsible for at least the greater part of the purchases made in the United States on behalf of Great Britain or France. With this object he visited England in November, 1914, and succeeded in persuading the British Government of the advantages of his plan and in making an agreement whereby his firm became the chief purchasing agents for Britain. Even then France required time to consider the proposal and it was not until May of 1915, when Mr. J. P. Morgan visited Paris, that M. Ribot, the Minister of Finance, was in a position to sign a similar contract on behalf of France.

By August, 1917, when at their own suggestion Messrs. Morgan's agency terminated in view of the fresh arrangements required by America's entry into the war, the firm had purchased goods on behalf of Great Britain to the value of nearly £400,000,000 and on behalf of France £200,000,000, with a consequent saving to both countries which defied calculation.

So far as Great Britain was concerned, by February, 1915, she was already spending hugely in the United States. In the main Messrs. Morgan as her agents were kept in funds by shipments of gold and by sales of British-owned American securities. But, as the daily outflow increased, it became necessary to ask Messrs. Morgan to agree to a system whereby they advanced money to meet the American suppliers' accounts as they fell due for payment, whether Great Britain's account with their firm was at the moment in credit or not. Messrs. Morgan having expressed their readiness thus to make advances as the need arose, the British Government began to lodge with them collateral security

which over a period of time reached a total of some £140,000,000. This Messrs. Morgan would of course be entitled to sell at any moment, either in whole or in part, in the event of the British Government's failure to repay the amount of the loan after due demand had been made.

Thus the "Demand Loan" came into an existence which was not to be finally terminated until July, 1919, In the interval it was to prove of immense value to Great Britain, but to cause to Lord Reading and his colleagues much anxious thought. It was, though not openly discussed, one of the matters always in his mind during the visit of the Anglo-French Loan Mission in the autumn of 1915. It was probably one of the chief reasons for his selection for and acceptance of the office of High Commissioner in 1917. It was a source of recurrent anxiety throughout his subsequent Ambassadorship.

Lord Northcliffe, who wrestled with it as High Commissioner early in 1917, named it "the Sea Serpent/" since it was always appearing suddenly in unexpected places, seemed on each occasion to have increased in size, and invariably caused general despondency and alarm.

The £100,000,000 obtained in America by the 1915 Mission was divisible equally between Great Britain and France. Of the British share of £50,000,000 no less than £56,000,000 was paid over at once to Messrs. Morgan in respect of the Demand Loan. But by September, 1916, the Loan had again mounted to £42,000,000, liquidated by the sale by Great Britain of notes to the value of £50,000,000 secured by high grade collateral securities. In October and November, 1916, it was leaping up by an average of £500,000 a day and a further issue of notes to the value of some £60,000,000 became necessary in order to keep Great Britain's indebtedness within bounds. Nevertheless, by May, 1917, it had reached the tremendous total of approximately £80,000,000. This formidable figure had necessarily been a source of grave concern to the British Government.

Apart from all other considerations there was always a possibility that at some moment America might be compelled by German aggressiveness to enter the war as a belligerent on the side of the Allies. In that case the question of liquidating the Demand Loan as promptly as possible would assume great and urgent importance.

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States Government into the commodity and money markets on an extensive scale would certainly not lead to a reduction in prices.

It was therefore highly advisable that, if means could be found, the Demand Loan should be paid off without delay.

As a last resort there was always the collateral security, but to attempt to put it on the market might well have most damaging results. Any operation of so major a character was calculated to dry up sources which the United States Government would itself be anxious to tap. Moreover, the securities would carry a higher rate of interest than any national War Loan could hope to offer and would thus gravely affect the prospects of its success. There was also always the possibility that the investing public in a country on the brink of war might hesitate to buy except at prices which would fail to realize the required total.

Early in 1917 the British Government was itself contemplating the issue of a market loan out of the proceeds of which the Demand Loan was to be repaid, but abandoned the project in deference to the views expressed by the United States Treasury.

But before any alternative scheme had been devised, the Demand Loan suddenly became the storm-centre of a sharp controversy.

On April 6, 1917, America entered the war.

On April 8 the late Sir Richard Crawford, then Commercial Attache at the British Embassy in Washington, had an interview with Mr. McAdoo at which he understood the Secretary to the Treasury to promise in definite terms that the sum necessary to pay off the Demand Loan should be advanced to the British Government out of the proceeds of the first United States public loan to be issued. He further regarded this promise as having been explicitly repeated by two other high American officials on the following day.

Mr. Balfour and Lord Cunliffe, arriving in America on April 22, in their turn interviewed Mr. McAdoo towards the end of the month and understood him to reiterate in general terms his undertaking that the necessary \$400,000,000 (£80,000,000) would be advanced on July 1. The glad news was conveyed to Messrs. Morgan and received by them with natural satisfaction.

On the strength of this assurance Messrs. Morgan took no further action until June 28, when, since no communication of any kind had been received from the United States Treasury, Mr. Davison thought it well to call upon Mr. Oscar T. Crosby, the Assistant-Secretary, and make certain that the money would be forthcoming within the next two or three days.

At this interview he was informed that no such promise had

ever been given and that **Mr. McAdoo** had not gone further than to agree to the amount of the Demand Loan being **included in the total figure of British** financial requirements which was to be submitted for his consideration, and from this attitude Mr. McAdoo never receded an inch during all the subsequent discussions.

Not unnaturally, consternation ensued. Interview succeeded interview 5 cable followed upon cable. Sir Hardman Lever, who had been since the previous January head of the British Financial Mission in the United States and had actually accompanied **Mr. Balfour** and **Lord Cunliffe** at their interview with Mr. McAdoo in **April**, battled manfully with the *impasse* in Washington. Mr. Balfour and Lord Cunliffe, who had by then returned to England, in conjunction with Mr. Bonar Law, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Lord Reading, whose experience of financial matters in America and knowledge of the personalities involved in the dispute were indispensable in this connection, took up the question with Mr. Page, the American Ambassador in London.

It is not easy to understand how the parties to the original interviews could have arrived at such diametrically opposed versions of conversations of paramount importance. It is almost as hard to appreciate why no written record of so vital a decision was **drawn** up at the time and signed. Sir Hardman Lever did indeed urge that course upon Mr. Balfour, who, however, took the view that to prepare and present such a document might be regarded as in some way reflecting upon Mr. McAdoo's good faith and refused to authorize a step which would at a later stage have saved an infinity of wearing and inconclusive argument.

By the end of June, 1917, the Demand Loan controversy, acute and embarrassing as it was, had been overshadowed by a far more critical situation. Ever since the outbreak of war the British Government had been spending on a truly colossal scale in the United States, apparently under the comfortable belief that its resources were inexhaustible. Moreover, Great Britain had been carrying gigantic financial burdens on behalf of her Allies, **having lent** between April 1 and July 14, 1917, over £78,000,000 to Russia and over **£50,000,000** to France. Warnings that such **prodigality could** not continue indefinitely had been uttered in **authoritative** quarters **both in** England and in America but little heed had been paid.

Now the **British** Government suddenly realized that the Allies were confronted with a possibility of the exhaustion of their financial resources. Indeed, if America had not entered the **War** in **April of 1917** and within the next three months made substantial advances to Great Britain and the other Allies, the

disquieting symptoms might have shown themselves at an earlier date.

On June 28 Mr. Page, the United States Ambassador in London, was asked to attend what he later described as "a fearful financial conference" with Mr. Balfour, Mr. Bonar Law and their financial advisers, the alarming purport of which he at once communicated to Mr. Lansing, the Secretary of State.

An explanatory telegram to Sir Cecil Spring-Rice was also dispatched and formed the basis of a letter from Mr. Colville Barclay, Counsellor at the British Embassy, to Mr. Lansing, in which it was stated that "it appears indeed to Mr. Balfour that the United States Treasury do not realize how perilous the situation truly is, namely that there is danger that the ability of His Majesty's Government to effect payments in America from to-day onwards will be in jeopardy.

"The effect which will be produced on the progress of the war by a collapse of the exchange will be no less disastrous than a great military reverse. . . ,

"It is to be remembered that His Majesty's Government have, single-handed, borne the burden for nearly three years of financing the whole of the Allied Powers, and have never failed to furnish them with the monies which were indispensable to enable them to meet their actual liabilities. . . ."

In addition to these urgent representations through diplomatic channels first Sir Hardman Lever and then Lord Northcliffe approached Mr. McAdoo, though without result except to throw him into a state of doubt as to the credentials of the various persons who sought to deal with him.

At the end of a long message sent on July 12 to Mr. Page he enquired, not without justifiable asperity : "Am I to understand that Lord Northcliffe has been designated financial agent of the British Government, and that he will conduct all negotiations? I am really confused by the number of people who undertake to speak for the British Government."

On the 20th came a memorandum from Mr. Bonar Law to Mr. McAdoo, in which, while gratefully acknowledging that America had lent to Great Britain herself some £137,000,000 between April 1 and July 14 of the current year, he drew attention to the fact that America had during that period advanced to the Allies excluding Great Britain the sum of £90,000,000, but Great Britain herself had advanced them nearly £194,000,000, and further pointed out that, whereas the United States had limited assistance to expenditure incurred by the Allies in America, Great Britain had supported the burden of their purchases in all

parts of the world. Moreover, the British Exchequer had been forced to spend between April 1 and July 14 the colossal sum of £825,109,000, less than one-sixth of which had been met by American aid, while over the entire period from April 1 of 1914 until that moment her total expenditure had attained the fabulous total of £5,161,471,000.

The memorandum concluded by confirming Lord Northcliffe's position as the authority to conduct all financial negotiations on behalf of Great Britain, but added: "Lord Northcliffe has, however, suggested that the United States Government would themselves prefer that someone with political experience, such as an ex-Cabinet Minister, should be asked to cross to the United States for the purpose of dealing with the financial situation. If this is the desire of the United States Government, His Majesty's Government will gladly comply with it."

This suggestion was the genesis of Lord Reading's visit as High Commissioner in September, 1917. The first proposal to meet Lord Northcliffe's suggestion had been that Mr. Bonar Law should undertake the journey, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer felt strongly that he could not properly absent himself at so critical a moment.

It was therefore decided to invite Lord Reading to accept the task, which was likely to be limited in duration and would therefore not involve his absence from the Courts for an undue length of time.

With the approval of his brother Judges lie gladly agreed and set off in September on his second visit to the United States, accompanied on this occasion by General Swinton and also by Mr. J. M. (now Lord) Keynes to give expert aid on behalf of the Treasury. The financial problems were likely to be the new High Commissioner's major preoccupation, and they were not confined to the United States but extended to Canada as well.

There was also the responsibility for the placing of orders for vast amounts of foodstuffs, especially cereals, meat, bacon, cheese and fats, and for munitions of many kinds, as well as for the general direction of the activities of the different British missions functioning throughout the United States.

By the end of July, 1917, Mr. McAdoo had defined his position in regard to the promise which the various British representatives concerned had understood him to give in regard to the provision by the United States Treasury of sufficient funds to pay off the Demand Loan out of the proceeds of the first Liberty Loan issued by the United States Government. His contention was that he **had** never given any such promise and indeed could not have

done so in view of his responsibilities both to the President, whose previous assent was required by the relevant Act of Congress before any part of the £600,000,000 set aside for the Allies could be paid over, and also to Congress itself, since during the Committee stage of the Bill he had given an oral undertaking that no part of the money allocated to the Allies should be used for the discharge of obligations already incurred by them. This attitude was unreservedly accepted by the British Government and no more was heard of an unfortunate controversy.

But the question remained whether as the result of a fresh approach Mr. McAdoo might either be able to give some assurance of help or be willing to acquiesce in some plan for the gradual liquidation of the loan. The task of sounding him on the matter was entrusted to Mr. Lamont of Messrs. Morgan, who found the Secretary to the Treasury anxious to help but beset by requests for money on all sides. After some discussion Mr. McAdoo suggested that a start should be made in selling the collateral security, expressing himself as ready to risk the adverse effect of such an operation upon the prospects of his second Liberty Loan, which was then in process of preparation, and it was finally agreed that Messrs. Morgan should begin to sell, though even if they were able to liquidate £1,000,000 a week, the end could not be reached for nearly two years.

Mr. McAdoo also suggested the possibility of a note issue by Great Britain, and this plan after much correspondence was ultimately adopted, 90 day bills being issued to the extent of £24,000,000 and the proceeds applied in reduction of the Demand Loan.

At the same interview Mr. McAdoo mentioned that some £13,000,000 might be available for payment to Great Britain if the United States decided to take over certain British-owned ships which were in course of construction in American shipyards.

Another very delicate problem was thus raised.

Shortly before Lord Reading left for the United States as High Commissioner in the early autumn of 1917, Mr. Balfour opened up a discussion with Mr. Page concerning these ships, a subject upon which he had already touched in conversations with the Shipping Board during his visit to America.

In placing the order for their construction in American shipyards the British Government had been guided wholly by the overwhelming need of the moment and had not paused to contemplate the possible effects of their action after the end of the War. They were required with ever-increasing urgency and their delivery was impatiently awaited.

But the United States also wanted them, and in addition there was a not inconsiderable volume of American opinion which looked forward apprehensively to a great preponderance of the British over the American mercantile marine when normal trading came to be resumed and their liking for such a prospect was not enhanced by the reflection that some of the British ships would have been built in America.

Mr. Balfour pressed for the ships to be handed over on completion, pointing out that Great Britain had not requisitioned any Allied tonnage under construction in her own shipyards, that her losses in ships had been immensely heavy, and that unless she obtained the ships ordered in America she would be in difficulties in tiding over the critical period which must elapse before her own extended building-programme bore full fruit.

He therefore represented to Mr. Page that the British Government would "feel much gratified if the United States Government thought it consistent with the claims of their own national interests to allow the ships to remain in their present ownership," an essay in diplomatic understatement which gave little indication of the British Government's vital concern.

He added that he had already told the United States Shipping Board that Great Britain placed complete reliance upon the justice and goodwill of the authorities in Washington, and to that attitude she still adhered.

But on September 7, while Lord Reading was actually on his way across the Atlantic, Mr. Lansing, the Secretary of State, indicated reasons which compelled the United States to take over the ships and, although the decision caused much anxiety and some heart-burning, it was accepted without question by the British Government.

Great Britain had spent on these ships in America the sum of £17,200,000, and when the United States Government decided to requisition them, they of course became liable to refund that amount. But both Mr. Lansing and Mr. McAdoo manifested a tendency not to regard the transaction as a mere payment of a debt but to claim some right to specify the manner in which the money so paid over should be applied.

This was one of the first questions which fell to be discussed by Lord Reading after his arrival as High Commissioner, and here the cordial friendship which he had formed with Mr. McAdoo during his earlier visit proved of the utmost value.

Mr. McAdoo has himself put on record the opinion that

Reading was peculiarly fitted for this Mission (the High Commissionership). Like Lord Cunliffe, who had returned meanwhile to England,

was thoroughly informed about financial matters. He had a keen and penetrating mind. He saw the problem in the large and it was a great relief to me to have a man of his fine ability, common-sense and good judgment with whom to discuss the complicated questions that were constantly arising. Reading was a handsome man with a charming personality. Our relations were soon established on a plane of complete candour and confidence.

Sir Cecil Spring-Rice noted at the same time that "several bankers told me that Reading's mission was most useful and that he was exceedingly adroit. His reputation for cleverness was very high indeed—so high that there was a good deal of anxiety expressed lest he should 'put one over' on Mr. McAdoo."

The bankers had no need to be anxious. It was not Lord Reading's method of conducting negotiations to attempt to hoodwink or overreach those with whom he was dealing. As a matter both of temperament and of policy he much preferred the "candour and confidence" with which Mr. McAdoo rightly credited him. But he could be conciliatory without being weak, and although he was willing to listen to Mr. McAdoo's suggestions for the disposal of the £17,200,000, he stated the position firmly and clearly in a letter of November 1 that "from the first it has been assumed by my Government that any moneys reimbursed in respect of its expenditure on ships would be applicable to a special purpose, viz., the reduction of the call loan or overdraft which originally stood at close upon £80,000,000, and I have always understood that the matter was discussed with you on that basis."

On this aspect of the question Lord Reading carried his point with Mr. McAdoo, but Mr. Lansing was taking his stand upon slightly different ground and was insisting that as the price of consent to the money paid being thus applied in reduction of the Demand Loan the United States Government should be subrogated to the rights of the British Government in respect of a part of the collateral security proportionate to the amount of the reduction.

This contention Lord Reading regarded as wholly inadmissible. The money represented the reimbursement of sums already expended by Great Britain and she was entitled to receive it unconditionally and to apply it as she might think fit.

Mr. Lansing's claim was in truth unsupported either by law or by equity and it was promptly abandoned.

These were matters the handling of which required the most delicate touch and Lord Northcliffe, who was in the best position to judge, paid handsome tribute to Lord Reading's success.

In my opinion, [lie wrote] anyone not possessed of Reading's charm, ability and tact in dealing with these difficult people could not have brought off this achievement. By his frankness and lack of concealment, his sympathy and understanding for their worry over the daily Allied demands for money and trouble with politicians and the Press, Reading will, I am convinced, do all that any man can do for us.

Meanwhile, Lord Reading had been closely engaged with the Canadian situation.

Within a few days of his arrival on September 12 he had asked Sir Thomas White, the Dominion Finance Minister, to come down to Washington for consultation. British imports from both Canada and the United States had for so long exceeded her exports by a wide margin that the question of exchange was causing serious apprehension and there was even a possibility that it might result in the compulsory cessation of British purchasing in Canada.

The position in the United States was slightly different but that very difference was an added complication in the Canadian picture. For the United States had made generous advances to Great Britain and France, which enabled purchases in the United States to continue, but at the same time had stipulated that these advances should only be applied in payment of debts incurred within the United States, which meant that funds with which to meet accounts for purchases made in Canada must be provided from other sources.

By June, 1917, the outlook was disquieting in the extreme. Great Britain had been buying foodstuffs from Canada on a huge scale as well as spending there some £8,000,000 a month on munitions. But, unless the financial situation could be improved, there would have to be a drastic cut in British orders and the first evidence of difficulties came in June when Great Britain ceased to buy Canadian cheese.

The effect upon the flourishing cheese industry was rapid and, if unchecked, likely to prove calamitous, but the Dominion Government restored the situation by advancing a sum of £8,000,000 spread over the period from June to December. This was, however, only a partial and temporary remedy and the unwelcome prospect remained of reductions in orders for other agricultural products and for munitions of war.

By the time when Lord Reading and Sir Thomas White met the position was starkly clear ; if Canada wished purchases to continue at the existing or perhaps even an increased rate, she must contrive to supply generous credits. Otherwise the future was bleak for Great Britain and even bleaker for Canada.

Lord Reading found Sir Thomas fully alive to the dangers implicit in the situation and on his return to Canada the Dominion Finance Minister met the Canadian Bankers Association and other interested parties on September 21 and laid the problem before them.

As the result of this discussion the banks agreed to provide £15,000,000 credit for purchases of meat and bacon and a few days later by agreement between Lord Reading and Sir Thomas a temporary loan of a further sum of £16,000,000 was made for payment for wheat at Western points of delivery. The sorely needed wheat was thus free to be moved across to the Eastern seaboard, the British Government undertaking to repay on its arrival there the banks responsible for the loan.

A very substantial step forward had thus been taken. But the rule imposed by the United States Treasury that advances made by it to Great Britain must be spent in the United States was still bearing so hardly upon both Great Britain and Canada that Sir Thomas White has himself recorded the opinion that "finance in Canada had, in a sense, broken down because the British were not allowed to use, except in a closely restricted amount, moneys they were borrowing from the American Treasury."

Lord Reading therefore decided immediately upon arrival to take up this question with Mr. McAdoo, and to concentrate at the outset upon its application to munitions.

In order to fulfil the very extensive orders for munitions placed by Great Britain in Canada the Canadian manufacturers were pouring money into the United States in payment for the necessary raw materials.

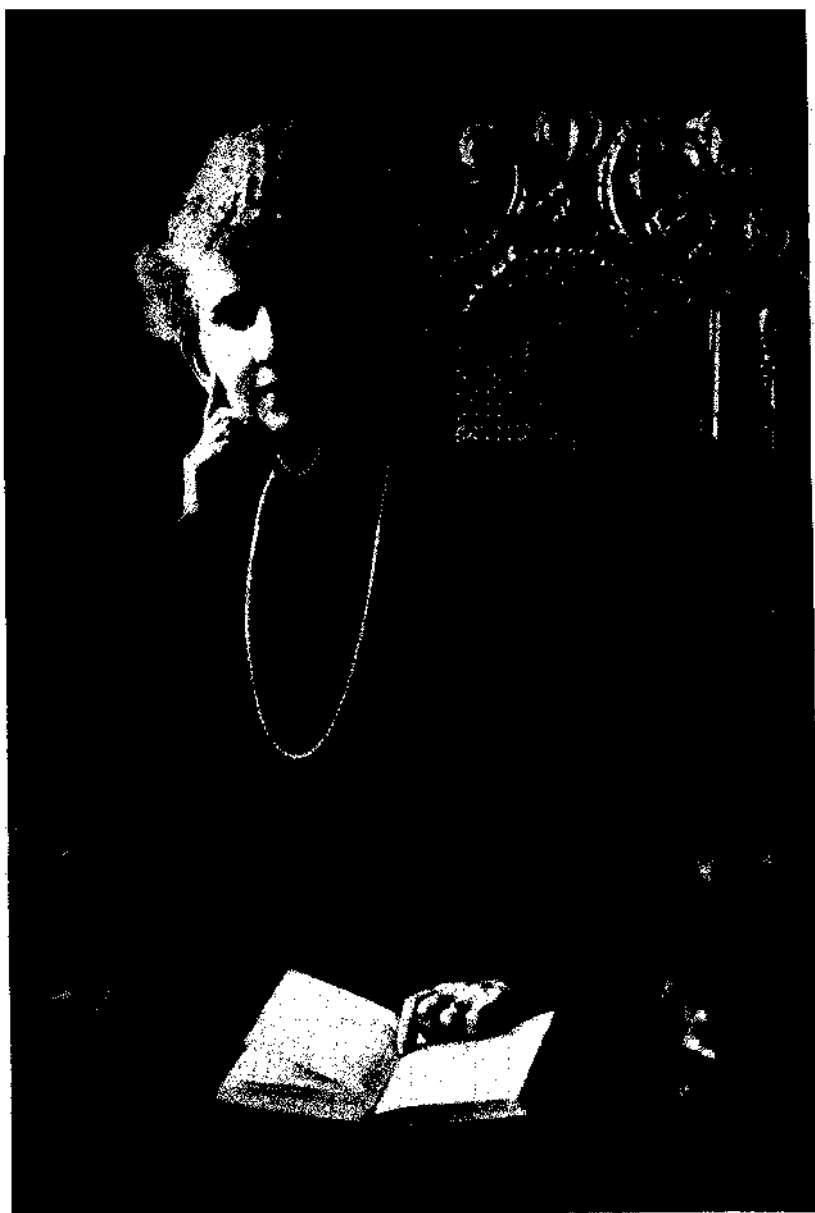
Ultimately this money had to be found by Great Britain, but it would be an immense help in tiding over immediate difficulties both to Great Britain and to Canada if the United States authorities would agree that American producers of raw materials destined for Canada should in the first instance be paid out of advances made to Great Britain by the United States.

Mr. McAdoo, who was throughout determined to throw the whole weight of United States co-operation into the war, was favourably impressed by the proposal, and when Lord Reading saw the President on September 21 the arrangement was finally approved.

Encouraged by this success Lord Reading was emboldened to suggest that the same principle should be applied to the financing of meat contracts, and this extension was also sanctioned in due course.



THE ANGLO-FRENCH LOAN MISSION IN CONFERENCE IN NEW YORK, 1915
{Left to right} Sir H. Babington-Smith, M. Octave Hombert, Lord Reading, Sir E. Holden, M. Mallet, Mr. Basil Blackett



ALICE, FIRST MARCHIONESS OF READING

The tension was greatly relaxed by these concessions on the part of the United States Treasury, which were in fact as beneficial to the United States as to Great Britain or Canada.

These matters satisfactorily concluded, Lord Reading went on October 12 to Ottawa, his avowed purpose being to urge the Canadian Government to raise an internal loan to be used not merely in meeting the cost to Canada of her contribution to the War but also in establishing more substantial credits in Canada for use by Great Britain.

Sir Thomas White after discussion with Lord Reading decided to appeal to the public to subscribe.

A "Victory Loan" was announced with a target-figure of £30,000,000, the proceeds of which were to be applied to war purposes only and to be spent exclusively in Canada.

This loan achieved a phenomenal success, the amount of over £80,000,000 being rapidly subscribed.

On December 2 Sir Thomas White issued a statement that "the success of this loan was vital to Canada. We have now the means of carrying on the War and for the establishment of needed credits for Great Britain. This means that business will be maintained and will help in turn to support the War," a prophecy which was proved accurate by the increased and generous scale of the advances made by Canada to Great Britain until the close of hostilities.

His immediate task in the United States and Canada being concluded, Lord Reading returned to England early in November and on the 24th of that month was received by the King, when it was announced that an Earldom had been conferred upon him in recognition of the value of his services.

He had expected to return to the Bench, but it was officially stated that he would continue to assist the British War Cabinet in financial matters and in that capacity would attend the Allied Conference fixed for November 29 in Paris.

Meanwhile, the Demand Loan continued to dog his footsteps. At the end of November he was in close touch with Mr. Crosby, Assistant Secretary to the United States Treasury, who had arrived in London, when the familiar question again came up for discussion.

Mr. Crosby had on instructions made unsuccessful efforts to arrange the diversion of the money for the ships to meet a debt to the Du Pont Company falling due on December 15, but he himself was in favour of its use to satisfy the £18,800,000 worth of British notes due to mature on February 1, 1918.

Lord Reading was also gravely exercised in mind **about these**

maturities, for he and Mr. Lamont, who was also in England, were being pressed by the American representatives in London to devise some form of new security issue to take up the notes. But Mr. Lamont insisted that no such operation could be contemplated unless the state of the security markets completely changed. Mr. McAdoo's two Liberty Loans had by their phenomenal success pre-empted practically all the money available in the United States for investment.

Nevertheless, in spite of the obviously unfavourable prospects created by this drain on private resources, consideration was given to the possibility of Great Britain raising the required sum by means of a short-term loan, and at an interview between Mr. Crosby, Mr. Bonar Law and Lord Reading in London on November 16 the British representatives expressed willingness to agree to pay an increased rate of interest. But expert financial opinion in America condemned the plan, since, before American investors could be tempted to subscribe, the interest would have had to be so high as to cause grave injury to British credit.

On November 21 Lord Reading had an interview with Messrs. Morgan, Grenfell & Co., the allied house of Messrs. J. P. Morgan & Co. in London, to whom he communicated the decision of the British Government in regard to the application of the £17,200,000 to be received from the United States Government in payment for the requisitioned ships. Just before his departure from America he had informed Mr. McAdoo by letter of November 1 of the attitude which he believed that the British Government would adopt in the matter, and on his arrival in England the Government approved the terms of that letter without alteration. The British point of view, as expressed by Lord Reading to Messrs. Morgan, Grenfell & Co., was conveyed by them to Messrs. Morgan in New York by a cable dated November 23.

Status of our demand loan. Had a very satisfactory interview this morning with Lord Reading, who says this:— "We have promised you by word of mouth, if not in writing, that, when we receive those monies from shipping, they shall be turned over to you to be applied to the demand loan. We regard that as a commitment which we will fulfil. We shall explain to your Treasury that those are monies which have already been hypothecated, so to speak, to the loan. If you yourselves deem it wise to try to meet some of Crosby's views and return to him a part of those shipping monies or hold it in reserve for other maturities of the British Treasury, that is entirely an affair between you and Crosby, and we wish to be understood as not urging you in the slightest degree to such an end."

Mr. Lansing, the Secretary of State, had throughout taken the view that it was for the British Government to meet the February, 1918, maturities without help from the United States, and the month of December, 1917, was consequently a period of great anxiety for Sir Hardman Lever, who was left alone in charge of British financial interests in America. The sum of £18,800,000 required for the purpose was relatively small, scarcely exceeding two days' cost of the War, but it was simply not available. Early in the New Year, however, the United States Government, influenced by the fact that Great Britain had already expended over £5,000,000,000 in what was now a joint enterprise and impressed by the necessity for maintaining British credit, decided to advance the amount.

In consideration of this advance the British Government agreed to refrain during the continuance of the War from selling, pledging or otherwise dealing in the United States with any securities owned by or deposited with the British Treasury, except with the approval of the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States. The practical effect of this agreement was that from February till the end of July, 1918, no sales of collateral took place and during that period the Demand Loan was frozen. On July 30, 1918, it stood at a figure of no more than £25,600,000, a reduction highly creditable to the British Treasury.

But Lord Reading was not destined to escape easily from the tentacles of the Demand Loan, for on January 7, 1918, his appointment was announced as Ambassador Extraordinary and High Commissioner on Special Mission to the United States.

CHAPTER III

A M B A S S A D O R

DURING Lord Reading's two previous visits his relations with Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, the British Ambassador at Washington, had been both correct and cordial.

The Anglo-French loan mission had been a self-contained task which the Embassy had neither the means nor the desire to undertake.

The High Commissionership had been concerned with financial and commercial questions which scarcely encroached upon the established diplomatic preserves.

Such causes of friction as might have arisen were in any case

eliminated by Lord Reading's punctilious care not to over-shadow the position of the Ambassador and the Ambassador's eagerness to put no obstacle in the way of measures directed to attain more swift and certain victory in the War.

The Diplomatic Service constituted so close a corporation that it can never have entered Lord Reading's mind that even under the pressure of war conditions he might be called upon to undertake the office of Ambassador. To appoint anyone not a diplomat *de carriire* was most exceptional, and even if by chance or by compulsion a vacancy should occur, he had neither expectation nor ambition to succeed to the post. But for some time past there had been steadily growing in official circles in both Washington and London a conviction that a change must be made at the British Embassy.

Sir Cecil Spring-Rice had spent his life in the diplomatic service and in each of the several countries to which his duties had called him he had implanted in the minds of many friends the memory of a rare being of charming courtesy and polished wit, whose devotion to his own country was never warped by insularity and whose appreciation of the differing traditions, habits of life and culture of other countries was never tainted by condescension. Prior to his appointment as Ambassador at Washington in the spring of 1913 he had already served there from 1887 to 1895 almost without a break and had made a host of friends throughout America, between whom and himself there existed enduring ties of affection, confidence and regard.

It was small wonder that he attracted friendships. He was a brilliant scholar with a wide range of literary gifts, not only in prose but in verse from light and topical improvisations to solemn and noble inspirations. The best known example of the latter class, / *vow to thee, my country*, was sung at the Memorial Service to Lord Reading, with whom it had always been an especial favourite. He was also an accomplished linguist with French, German and Russian at his ready command and a prophet of almost uncanny foresight in world-affairs. Moreover, he combined with the urbanity of an ambassador an impish sense of humour which the formalities of official life never succeeded in stifling for long.

Shortly after his arrival at the Washington Embassy in the spring of 1913 he was found to be suffering from an obscure disease and was obliged to take six months' leave of absence. By December he had recovered sufficiently to resume the not too arduous duties of an ambassador in peace-time, but on the outbreak of war it soon became apparent that his illness had irreparably

affected his nervous system, which gave increasing evidence of inability to stand the new and unexampled strain.

In his official position he was perpetually harassed by questions arising out of the enforcement by the British Navy of the "black list" and the blockade of Germany at the expense of American industry and shipping, a policy the pursuance of which aroused such bitter resentment throughout the United States that there was serious talk of an embargo upon exports to Great Britain as a measure of retaliation, and in the opinion of the Ambassador at one moment a declaration of war against her was not impossible.

In addition, social life in a city where sympathies were divided, however unequally, between the combatants became daily more difficult.

Overwhelmed by the intricacies and dangers of the situation, Sir Cecil gave vent inside the Embassy to "wild outbursts of temper which startled arid frightened/" and although these paroxysms were swiftly spent and his subsequent apologies disarmed rancour by their frankness, an atmosphere so charged with electricity was scarcely conducive to harmonious collaboration in circumstances of great stress.

Moreover, he did not confine his outbursts to the staff of the Embassy but in a moment of exasperation during an interview with Colonel House "talked so many different ways in almost the same sentence" that Colonel House concluded that he was too upset for any profitable conversation and promptly took his leave.

A single incident of this kind might be excused in the prevailing atmosphere, but the recurrence of such explosions could only strain still further the already tense relations between Great Britain and the United States.

A stream of barbed epigrams issuing from the Embassy did nothing to soften the atmosphere. Such thrusts as "Mr. Wilson is the shepherd of his people and Mr.——is his crook" were not well received.

Colonel House, who strove throughout to resolve difficulties and preserve friendship between the two countries, therefore thought it necessary to acquaint Sir Edward Grey by letter in July of 1915 of the added friction created by the Ambassador's temperament, and finally, on the President's instructions, he proceeded to London in December in order to inform the British Government that "we could not deal with the highly excitable invalid they had to represent them."

These were strong words, but before a final decision was taken a voice which commanded reverential affection from all Americans was raised on the Ambassador's behalf. The veteran Lord Bryce

intervened and in conversation with Colonel House so far succeeded in explaining the Ambassador's difficulties and soothing the ruffled feelings of the President's intermediary as to induce him to return to America without having obtained, or even formally demanded, Sir Cecil's recall.

Fortunately from that point the tension between the United States and Great Britain began to relax. The sinking of the *Lusitama* in May of 1915, and of the *Arabic*, the *Hesperia* and the *Sussex*, the exploits of U.55, the concentration of German reservists in Mexico, the machinations of Bernstorff and Dumba, all helped to divert American hostility from Great Britain to the Central Powers. Public opinion began to recognize that, while the blockade and the "black list" might injure American trade, the policy adopted by Germany constituted not only a sinister threat to the lives of American citizens but an arrogant affront to the national honour of the United States.

Distrust of Germany became henceforth the dominant influence upon the President's mind and policy. Nevertheless, he shared with his advisers a fixed conviction that the British Ambassador had neither the physical health nor the mental stamina to represent his country in times so out of joint.

In the President's judgment it was essential that Sir Cecil should be replaced, and not by another professional diplomat but by some man of outstanding position in his own country and of large experience in dealing with problems of the diversity, magnitude and intricacy of those which formed the daily currency of Anglo-American exchange of views during those crucial months.

It was no reflection upon the capability of the diplomatic service that no person of sufficient standing could be found within its ranks. The times were exceptional and Lord Reading's recent experience of America was unequalled. He was by then on terms of personal friendship and mutual trust with all the men at the head of affairs in America from the President downwards ; he was in the close confidence of the Prime Minister and the members of the British Cabinet ; he had been throughout the War kept fully informed of the inner history of every happening ; he had two successful missions to the United States already to his credit and, ironically enough, no one had paid warmer tribute to his acceptability and achievements than the man whom he was now called upon to replace.

Mr. Balfour was therefore insistent in urging him to accept the appointment. But there were difficulties to be weighed. He had already been forced to neglect his judicial duties. Was it fair on his colleagues that he should again absent himself, this

time for a period of uncertain duration? Was it possible for one man to hold at the same time the offices of Lord Chief Justice and Ambassador? How would social and political Washington receive him when he arrived to supersede their tried and beloved friend? What would be the reactions of the Embassy staff itself to the introduction of a man from outside the sacred confines of the Service into one of its most exalted posts? Would Lady Reading's frail health be able to withstand the exacting demands of the position of Ambassador?

All these were questions to be carefully considered, but they were speedily answered. The Judges were agreeable; the times required no nice scrutiny of precedent; Lady Reading was resolved to take the risk.

For the rest, he must rely upon his own personality to overcome any prejudice against him in his new role and upon the general determination to cast aside all considerations other than the attainment of victory for the common cause.

When in December, 1917, the British Government finally decided that Sir Cecil must be replaced by someone more fully possessed of exact and up-to-date information on the situation, military, economic and political, of Great Britain and her Allies than was possible for a man who had had no personal contact with Europe since the already remote days of 1913 and could not hope to realize from a distance the incredible changes wrought by three years of war, the uncongenial duty of conveying to the Ambassador the order for his return fell to Mr. Balfour, who strove to soften the force of the blow by every means at his felicitous command. Sir Cecil, instead of being formally recalled, was invited to visit England for the purpose of consultation with the Foreign Office. But the subterfuge was too transparent; the same cable which gave the invitation conveyed the news that Lord Reading had been appointed to take his place. Sir Cecil can scarcely have been surprised. In the previous April, during Mr. Balfour's visit to America, he had discussed the whole position with him and had told him that in the changed circumstances he would await instructions as to whether or not he was to remain in Washington.

Moreover, he recognized that the times were so unprecedented as to require abnormal treatment. "When the Heavens open," he wrote on his departure to one of his staff, "the wise man gives up keeping chickens and takes to ducks."

But, though he might from an objective angle acknowledge the wisdom and even the necessity of the change, the blow, when it fell, was overwhelming and, as the event was soon to prove,

mortal. On January 5, 1918, he had his last interview with the President, to whom he communicated the terms of Mr. Balfour's cable and pointed out how essential it was to have someone in Washington who had been in recent and close touch with the British Government and was in a position to exercise control not only over the Embassy but over the 2,000 people engaged in the manifold activities of the British War Mission to the United States.

Then, having said farewell to their friends and packed up their personal possessions, he and Lady Spring-Rice left for Ottawa to stay for a while with the Governor-General of Canada and the Duchess of Devonshire.

At 11 o'clock on the night of February 15 he was in the smoking-room laughing and joking with various members of the Duke's staff. Two hours later Lady Spring-Rice heard a moaning sound in his room and went in to find him unconscious. In a few minutes he was dead.

Meanwhile on February 1 Lord and Lady Reading had left London on a cold, foggy and cheerless morning, accompanied by the four members of their personal staff, Mr. Hubert Montgomery, C.B., Mr. Grimwood Mears, Major-General E. D. Swinton, C.B., D.S.O., and Lt.-Col. Charles Kennedy Craufurd-Stuart, C.B.E., D.S.O. Mr. (later Sir Hubert) Montgomery, then one of the rising men at the Foreign Office, and afterwards successively Assistant-Marshall of the Diplomatic Corps and His Majesty's Minister at the Hague, was to act as private secretary. Mr. Grimwood Mears (later K.C.I.E. and Chief Justice of the High Court of Allahabad) had known Lord Reading for many years at the Bar.

Major-General Swinton, later Sir Ernest Swinton, and Chichele Professor of Military History at Oxford, was already well known both as the author of *The Green Curve* and other books under the pseudonym of *Ole Luk Oie*, and also as one of those closely concerned with the development of the tank as a weapon of war. He had already accompanied Lord Reading to America during his High Commissionership.

It was to be the function of Mr. Mears and General Swinton to "'devil" for the Ambassador in civil and military matters respectively. Lt.-Col. Craufurd-Stuart, an Indian Army officer wjio was later Lord Reading's Military Secretary during the first years of his Viceroyalty, was to act in a capacity akin to Comptroller of the Household, superintending the social side of their lives, accompanying them upon journeys and ministering generally to their comfort.

The ocean was in unfriendly mood and the *Olympic* rolled

with increasing violence. Five German submarines were reported to be in the neighbourhood and the Captain was compelled to steer a zigzag course till well out of the danger-zone. Lady Reading, as was her habit at sea, took promptly to her bed and remained there throughout the voyage. The remainder of the party struggled gallantly, but conditions seemed to make an unkind point of being worst at meal-times and it was not long before the Ambassador, who had gained immunity from sea-sickness forty years before in a hard school, found himself alone at the table.

Nor did the weather moderate in mid-ocean. One night an immense wave hit the ship broadside on with such force that she shivered throughout her length and seemed momentarily to be lifted clear of the sea, while the Captain was smothered with water as he stood on the bridge eighty feet above sea-level.

On another night Lord Reading insisted upon exploring every deck of the *Olympic* in order to reconstitute for the benefit of certain of his staff the detailed story of the sinking of the ill-fated *Titanic* ; a feat of memory which his companions regarded in the light of the hazards of their own voyage as unnecessarily macabre.

On a third he took the opportunity of a collection on behalf of Merchant Seamen's charities to pay tribute to the heroic services being rendered by these men in trawlers, drifters, and mine-sweepers in circumstances of extreme and constant peril and to recall with pride the fact that he himself had once been for a short time "an inconspicuous member of that noble fraternity."

In the end and to the general relief New York was reached. The *Olympic* berthed late at night but not too late to discourage a horde of pressmen and camera-men from flocking on board, clamouring for a statement and a photograph. Lord Reading followed his usual practice and presented to the reporters a document containing as much as he was for the moment prepared to say.

I am indeed glad to find myself once again, and for the third time since the beginning of the War, in America. It is barely three months since I sailed for England, and I return this time charged with many and varied duties, which I should scarcely have had the courage to undertake had I not known from past experience that my Government could implicitly rely upon the cordial goodwill of the American people and their complete co-operation with the Allies in all measures necessary for the vigorous prosecution of the War.

I am sure you will fully understand that I cannot make any statement in my official capacity until I have been received by your President. Moreover, I am not yet acquainted with what has happened since I

left England on February 1. I may nevertheless be permitted to say that the recent pronouncements upon War aims of your President and of the British Prime Minister, which are substantially in accord and are accepted by the Allies, have been received with complete unanimity by the British people.

You know how vastly the answers made by the German Government have differed from their professions when entering into the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk. But those utterances have now left no shadow of doubt that the German Government is waging this war for the conquest of nations and territory and for military domination of the world. There can be but one answer for the free and democratic nations united in the struggle against the common enemy. It is to continue to put forth all their powers and to employ all their resources to resist this attempt at military despotism and finally to bring about a just and lasting peace. Such a peace alone will give security against wanton aggression and the violation of treaties and will ensure liberty and justice for all nations. Let me impress on you that when I left England the determination to carry the War through to the end was as fixed as ever.

The British people are ready to face the critical months before us, perhaps the most critical of the War, with grim tenacity. They are prepared to endure whatever suffering or privation or sacrifice may be necessary to obtain the only possible conclusion of this War. That the American people are equally prepared to make every effort to bring about this result is the surest guarantee that the cause is just and the aim is righteous.

The announcement of his appointment had been most favourably received by the American Press and public as well as in official circles.

Writing to the President on January 16, 1918, Mr. Page, the American Ambassador in London, said :

You know Lord Reading and have taken measure of him, but the following facts and gossip may interest you :

He is one of the ablest Englishmen living—everybody concedes that. See and compare the view taken of Disraeli, the other Hebrew Earl, by his political enemies. As between the two my judgment would be in favour of Reading. He is not so spectacular as old Dizzy was, but he is far sounder. I doubt if Dizzy was honest, and Reading is. He is one of the most brilliant and able members of the Bar. He has himself told me that he worked for years from early hours to early hours again, day in and day out—a prodigy of industry. He became skilful, especially in financial cases, and his fees were prodigious.

Lord Reading does not give up the Lord Chief Justiceship. He remarked to me the other day that his Ambassadorship would be temporary. Lady Reading told Mrs. Page that they expected to be gone only three months. But I take it that he will not return till the end of the War.

... I think there is no doubt that to do a concrete job Lord Reading will succeed, during war-time, better than any man who was considered for the post. But if when the War is over Lord Grey should go, we should have the best possible representative of English tradition and English character.

Mr. Page was here mingling shrewd analysis with true prophecy, for Lord Grey was to succeed Lord Reading as Ambassador in Washington in June, 1919, though he was unhappily by then a tired and stricken man, no more than a brave shadow of the statesman who from his window in the Foreign Office had watched the lights extinguished over Europe, as the darkness of war fell in August, 1914.

They found on their arrival that the residential portion of the Embassy in Connecticut Avenue was in so bad a state of repair as to be virtually uninhabitable.

A spacious house in Massachusetts Avenue had therefore to be rented and speedily adapted to their needs. It was situated in a convenient locality and amongst their near neighbours were Mr. and Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, with whom they were soon well acquainted.

The staff of the Embassy which awaited their coming was a highly competent one, including the Counsellor, Mr. Colville Barclay, later Sir Colville and Minister to Sweden, Mr. Malcolm Robertson, later Sir Malcolm and Ambassador to the Argentine, and Mr. Robert Hudson, afterwards Minister of Agriculture, with Sir Henry Babington-Smith who had remained on in the United States after Lord Reading's return in the autumn of the previous year.

But those amongst them who were members of the Diplomatic Service had been so greatly disturbed at the appointment of an Ambassador from outside the Service that they had at first felt some resentment at the establishing of a precedent likely, if extended, to block their own and their colleagues' advancement to the higher posts in their profession.

They were, however, wise enough after the first flush of indignation to recognize that the times were without parallel and justified departure from normal usage, and, having accepted the situation, they devoted themselves to serving the new Ambassador with unqualified loyalty and zeal. But the tempo of work in the Embassy increased with such vigour that at the outset they found themselves somewhat breathless and bewildered.

Lord Reading at once settled down to cope with the major problems awaiting him, the supply and transport of foodstuffs to

Europe, the shipment of American troops to France and their utilization after landing there, and the advisability and practicability of intervention in Russia. In addition there was the shorter-lived but, while it lasted, almost equally vital question of meeting the deficiencies in the supply of silver in India and the old familiar "Sea Serpent" of the Demand Loan.

There were also the supervision of the activities of the large British mission in the United States, the normal routine duties of an Embassy and numbers of official and semi-official functions requiring his attendance. And of the making of speeches there was no end.

Each of Lord Reading's departures for America since the outbreak of the War had taken place at a grave moment and on both occasions the mission entrusted to him had been of far-reaching consequence to the Allied cause.

Yet they sank into insignificance by comparison with the burden of responsibility with which he was charged as Ambassador, for it required no very discerning eye to realize that on the Western Front operations on an unequalled scale and of doubtful outcome were shortly to commence, with a corresponding intensification of the manifold problems of supply of men, munitions and food.

Ever since August of 1914 the complexities and vagaries of the strategical situation had been such that even the most expert and instructed intelligence was hard put to it to forecast with any certainty the events of the next few weeks.

But by February of 1918 no such profound insight was needed to appreciate the position and prophesy its immediate developments. For once the fog of war had been largely dispelled and the picture presented itself with stark and menacing clarity. Two outstanding factors dominated the scene ; Russia was out of the War and America was in it. But though at first glance it might have appeared that the entry of America more than compensated for the exit of Russia, the matter was in reality not so simple. The vast unwieldy Russian Army had disintegrated but the immense reserves of American man-power were not yet organized to take its place. There was a time-lag, only too obvious to the German High Command and pregnant with the possibilities of disaster to the Allied armies. For the collapse of Russia had set free substantial forces to be transported by the Germans from the Eastern to the Western Front, where they would inevitably be used for a great offensive designed to obliterate the Allied armies before an effective American Army could take the field in their support. At what exact point on the long and sparsely held line in France

or Flanders the blow would fall could not be exactly predicted. But that it would fall somewhere was manifest, and where it fell every reserve of men, munitions and material would be needed to counter it.

The outlook was scarcely encouraging. For the first time since the War began the Germans had a greater number of divisions on the Western Front than the combined forces of Britain and France could muster. The elimination of Russia from the struggle had heightened the "morale" of Germany and had exercised a correspondingly depressing influence upon the Allies, while the unrestricted activities of the U-boats were having potent effect upon British shipping, with the result that food-supplies for the civilian population were diminishing to a disquieting extent.

Moreover, though America had been by that time in the War for nearly a year, her initial lack of preparedness had been so complete that she was still represented in France by a mere handful of men and her organization of transport and food-supplies was still inadequate to the demands of a critical situation in which time was the decisive force.

When the new Ambassador sailed, he was under no delusions as to either the magnitude or the urgency of the task ahead of him. His conversations with Ministers before his departure and his perusal of files during the voyage brought home to him the incontrovertible fact that upon his shoulders lay an appreciable measure of the responsibility for defeat or victory.

The results of American participation in the War as an actual combatant had so far been disappointing to her allies.

The subject of the supply of foodstuffs, especially cereals and fats, and the provision of transport both by rail and by sea to carry them from the interior of the United States to the Atlantic seaboard and thence to their destination in Europe required grave and instant discussion with the Administration. As the result of the information given him before he left London Lord Reading decided to concentrate in the first place upon this problem as being the most urgent of all those awaiting him. For there was good reason to believe that, unless vastly increased shipments of cereals could be made from the United States in the immediate future, by March there would be no more than six weeks' stocks in the United Kingdom and there would be a real danger of the situation becoming desperate. In France and Italy the position was even more critical.

Partly owing to the shortage of cargo-space but mainly to the immense demands upon the American railroads, Mr. Hoover,

who was in charge of food-supply, had been unable to send anything like the promised quantities. December and January shipments showed a deficiency of no less than 900,000 tons on the expected deliveries ; the February figures seemed likely to disclose a further shortage of 500,000 tons. Already the French and Italian soldiers had been obliged to accept an unwelcome reduction in rations. If this state of affairs were allowed to continue during the next three months, first Italy, then France and finally Great Britain would be unable to furnish either her armed forces or her civilian population with sufficient food and by June the Central Powers would be triumphant. All the years of sacrifice, all the colossal expenditure of men and money and material would have come to nothing 5 the ideals which had inspired and sustained the Allies' effort would have been overthrown and they would be forced to plead for an humiliating peace, not as the result of defeat in the field, not even on account of the exhaustion of all existing sources of food-supply, but solely because the vast stocks which had been accumulated could not be made available for use.

After spending the first few days in the necessary visits of ceremony, first to the White House to present his credentials and then to his diplomatic colleagues and to the members of the Administration, on February 18 Lord Reading settled down to master the details of the cereal situation and the co-related railway situation, the outlines of which were already ever-present in his mind.

After some hours devoted to an examination of the figures he determined to focus all his powers upon an effort to assist in solving the difficulties.

But his approach must be circumspect. Questions as persistent as they were inconvenient were being asked by the American press and public about the causes of the apparent delay in the production of essential materials of war. Many sections of the population were becoming infected with doubts as to the adequacy of the national organization to meet the demands upon it, and the Republicans in particular, free from the restraints of responsibility, were loudly proclaiming that inertia ruled in each of the four major departments, War, Railroads, food and Ship-building. As a consequence the men at the head of affairs were becoming restive under the sting of criticism from internal sources and were certainly not likely to be more amenable to any representation from outside which might seem to reflect upon their capacity. It was therefore necessary for Lord Reading to move with the utmost caution if he was not to destroy his greatest asset, the cordial personal relations existing between himself and

the harassed members of the Administration. But he knew them well enough to be sure that they were genuinely resolved to throw all the limitless resources of America into the common stock, and that they would be prepared to take any steps, however drastic, if he could sufficiently impress upon them from his own close and recent contact with the European situation that time was the predominant factor and that at all costs the speed of production and transportation must be increased.

Nevertheless matters could not be allowed to drift placidly along the normal diplomatic channels. On the morning of the day following his examination of the details of the problem Lord Reading invited Count Cellere, the Italian Ambassador, and Monsieur *Andri* Tardieu, the French High Commissioner, to call upon him and discuss the situation. They confirmed the accuracy of the information already at his disposal, and so impressed were they by his knowledge of the subject and by the urgency of taking it in hand that they begged him to assume the whole responsibility and to take all steps and make all decisions on behalf of their Governments as well as his own without delaying progress by referring to them. To this course he assented and after he had outlined his plan of campaign it was agreed that the first act should be to send a joint letter to Mr. McAdoo, who was not only Secretary to the Treasury but also Director-General of Railroads, a post created by the President when in December of 1917 he had taken over by proclamation all the railroads of the United States.

The office was no sinecure. The extraordinary traffic of 1916 and 1917 had gradually disorganized the railroad system, upon which vast calls had been made. Mr. McAdoo himself described what he took over as a "run-down, confused, chaotic mess, an entire industry that was sliding rapidly downhill. It was anaemic, under-nourished and subject to alarming attacks of heart failure. I knew there was an instant need of restoratives or the patient's condition would grow even worse." Up to April, 1917, the railroads had been able fairly to cope with the situation, but by the end of the year money was wanted not in trickles and dribbles but by hundreds of millions for new equipment, locomotives and cars. The President himself was more concerned over the condition of the railroads than over any other problem of the Administration and he had good cause for his anxiety, since in the previous November a crucial point had been reached at which it seemed •that the existing congestion throughout the railroad system might shortly become inextricable.

Mr. McAdoo was faced with an unenviable heritage, but in

such time as he had been able to spare from his exacting duties at the Treasury he had made some advance towards restoring order out of chaos. Yet vast quantities of precious foodstuffs were scattered all over the huge area of the country in warehouses and on trucks, waiting to be transported to the seaboard.

Car-shortage was amongst the most serious difficulties. A practice had grown up, rational enough in the days when imports and exports were fairly balanced, by which cars loaded with goods for export were run down to the coast and there allowed to wait until such time as they could be loaded with imported goods for the return journey. But in the abnormal conditions of the War years the volume of imports was negligible in comparison with that of exports, and the inevitable result followed that already by the spring of 1918 some 145,000 cars were estimated to be standing empty and idle at Eastern terminals, while goods in sufficient quantity to fill every one of them were awaiting transport in the interior. This hold-up went to the root of the matter and must be tackled first.

After his interview with his French and Italian colleagues Lord Reading sat down to draft the vital letter with his own hand, exerting all his powers of advocacy, of marshalling arguments and presenting them in cogent and acceptable form, of tactful approach to the individual sensibilities of the person to whom he appealed. After much thought and many preliminary drafts the document was ready j signed on its way by Count Cellere and Monsieur Tardieu, it was delivered to Mr. McAdoo by hand.

We are instructed by our Governments [it began] to point out to you in the most urgent manner, the disastrous situation which is likely to arise within a short time in our three countries, if the exportation of cereals to France remains during the next two months at the level of the last few weeks. In England there is a situation which especially concerns her, that is, with regard to fats.

We are on the verge of a great battle \$ the first condition for victory is that the soldiers and the civil population be able to eat.

Our Governments have done for that purpose everything which was in their power: severe rationing of consumption, suppression of every importation not strictly necessary, even a perilous reduction in importation of war material.

Thanks to this effort, we shall have in February and March in the American ports all the ship-tonnage necessary to execute the cereals programme, viz., two million tons for the two months.

Unfortunately the railroads situation is such that the cereals do not reach the wharves.

In December and January, the cereals bought and ready to be shipped (outside the stock of 235,000 tons in ports on December 1) amounted to 1,647,600 tons. The railways were able to transport only 785,000, that is, a deficit in transport of 862,000 tons.

There then followed detailed figures for February which showed that on the evening of the 19th no less than 1,053,000 tons could not be carried to the sea-board for lack of cars.

We know [continued the letter] and our Governments know the many difficulties which confront the railroad Administration and which they endeavour energetically to overcome.

But it is precisely the knowledge of these difficulties, on the one hand, and on the other the dangerous position in which our three countries will find themselves in the midst of this great fight, which prompts us to ask you to take, in view of a situation that is exceptionally serious, measures likewise exceptional.

There then followed a series of concrete suggestions: that the railroad companies of the West should supply priority box-cars, that their passage on certain specified routes should be accelerated, that grain should be carried in full train-loads, that the huge quantity of empty cars lying idle in the East should be at once returned to the grain-producing States of the West, and finally that stocks of cereals should be accumulated at the ports of shipment.

But if all these measures, which we beg you to take most urgently, are indispensable, our opinion, after a thorough study of the question, is that they will not be sufficient to obtain in proper time the necessary result.

After referring to 150,000 tons of meat held up at Chicago by absence of available transport the letter resumed :

Of course it is for the American Government to decide what remedies can and should be adopted. Nevertheless, as we are bringing the difficulties to you for solution, we may be asked whether we have any suggestions to meet the present conditions, and we venture, therefore, to make our submissions for your consideration and better judgment. . . .

. . . Our view is that if in the next two months we could reach, if not surpass, a shipment of 1,100,000 tons per month by occasional or partial restrictions on all railway traffic other than carriage of food-stuffs to the sea-board the disaster of a serious shortage of food in our countries would be avoided and time will thus be obtained to devise other means of rapid railway transport productive of less public inconvenience.

In Europe several times, and especially when the German offensive in Italy took place, we have been induced to adopt similar methods for our railroads. We feel certain that the United States Government will not hesitate to do what its partners have done. Indeed, the huge effort which America is making for our common victory's sake has now come to a decisive hour.

At any cost, the special necessities for the next few months must be provided for, preceding the arrival in Europe of the Argentine crop and of the first spring wheat supplies.

During this short but all important period the winning of the great battle now impending will depend upon the actual traffic of the American railroads.

We are confident that the United States Government will meet the very grave crisis thus explained with a readiness such as has always been shown by them to obtain from their citizens the momentary sacrifice which is imperatively necessary to our success.

The letter affords an admirable illustration of Lord Reading's diplomatic methods, the restrained and lucid presentation of the problem, the ready recognition of its difficulties and of the efforts already made towards their solution, the delicately conveyed suggestions as to additional measures to be taken, and the final confident call to the United States not to fail her Allies at the moment of their greatest trial.

It had its instant effect. Mr. McAdoo, who lacked neither courage nor energy nor decision, at once came to the Embassy to discuss at greater length the points outlined in the letter. Overworked as he was, he could not possibly superintend the detailed execution of the plan, but he had been invested by the President with autocratic powers over every railroad and he at once agreed to place the control of food-traffic in the brilliantly capable hands of one man. Mr. Conrad E. Spens, who possessed great driving power and intimate experience of railroads, was appointed to the post with authority to hold up every kind of traffic to any extent and without any regard to the convenience of the public.

He at once appreciated that the key to the whole situation was to be found in Lord Reading's proposal to give priority to foodstuffs over every other type of traffic, and within a few hours of his appointment he was rapidly and ruthlessly exercising his authority. The cars which had been stagnating for months at Eastern terminals were sent speeding back to the West, while from the Western depots long trains laden only with grain and meat roared back towards the Eastern sea-board along tracks specially cleared to give them right of way. The deadlock was at an end.

But there was one more obstacle. In the conditions of terrific

pressure in which the Food Controller's department was working, prompt and exact information as to the places in which grain was lying in bulk and awaiting transport was not always being furnished to the railroads. This state of affairs necessarily involved the loss of precious time and Lord Reading once more undertook at the request of his colleagues to deal with it on their joint behalf.

On February 22 he drafted a letter, again also signed by the French and Italian ambassadors, to Mr. Hoover in which, after informing him that the 150,000 tons of meat products stranded at Chicago were at last being moved to the coast by special trains and that that anxious problem was consequently in process of solution, he emphasized Mr. McAdoo's undertaking that he was prepared to go to any lengths to overcome the difficulties of carrying food to the sea-board and that, if he were kept informed of the places where grain was collected, he would see that it was picked up without delay. Mr. Hoover was further told that the three Ambassadors had given Mr. McAdoo their assurances that they would supply him with the particulars required and also with details of the ship-tonnage capacity from time to time available at the various ports, and would further advise him where cars were specially needed and where there was any hitch in the smooth carrying out of his orders. February was already too far advanced for the figures for that month to undergo any marked improvement, but they repeated the figure of 1,100,000 tons for March which had been given by Lord Reading to Mr. McAdoo, adding that they had already got together the necessary shipping but that they were now met by the probability of being unable to procure sufficient grain to load full cargoes, a situation which would be nothing short of a calamity.

The letter concluded by pressing Mr. Hoover to put at their immediate disposal no less than 300,000 tons of wheat from the reserves under his hands.

Thereupon a meeting took place between Mr. Hoover and Mr. McAdoo, as a result of which both men concentrated upon putting forth an intense and combined effort, placing the needs of the Allies before every other consideration. At a moment when shipbuilders were clamouring for deliveries of material Mr. McAdoo was holding up for weeks in sidings nearly 9,000 cars laden with steel and other heavy goods to let the food trains go by. Every manufacturer was besieging his office by letter, cable or telephone, if not in person, and the delay and inconvenience to passenger traffic was extreme. But he never wavered, while day and night the grain-cars sped Eastward towards the sea.

Mr. Hoover was no less dynamic in action. When asked by

Lord Reading for practically his entire reserve supply of wheat, he at first hesitated, pleading his responsibility to the American people. But after pacing the Ambassador's room for several tense minutes, he finally turned to him with the promise that the full quantity should be placed at his disposal, and he was as good as his word. Whereas in February only 576[^]583 tons had been supplied, the figures for March, April and May were 891,236, 877,161 and 713,003 tons respectively, the decrease in the last month being due only to the overriding necessity of carrying across the Atlantic every available American soldier and to the utter impossibility of securing tonnage for both troops and food. But by that time the food situation had been greatly eased and it was possible to limit the shipment of cereals for June and July to 500,000 tons a month without danger of shortage.

The action of the three Ambassadors, initiated and carried out by Lord Reading on their joint behalf, thus brought rapid and welcome relief to their hard-pressed countries. But no effort on their part could have availed without the brave and resolute co-operation of Mr. McAdoo and Mr. Hoover, who had accepted so readily the proposals made to them and striven so forcefully to put them into effect.

The confidence placed by his diplomatic colleagues in Lord Reading within a few days of his arrival as Ambassador indicates not only that he had not lost his power of mastering a new and intricate subject at high speed but also that during his previous visits he had already established a high reputation in Washington as negotiator and man of affairs.

The next major problem to be faced was the not less urgent and even more delicate question of the future of the American Expeditionary Force on its arrival in France.

By the end of 1917 the wastage of man-power had become so serious a factor as to dominate all other considerations on the Allied side.

Even without the collapse of Russia the prospect would have been sombre enough; with this added complication it was positively alarming.

It was plain that both the French and the British armies would be compelled during the coming year substantially to reduce the number of divisions in the field owing to their inability to replace casualties, if heavy fighting took place.

There could be no doubt that America had an almost inexhaustible supply of men to throw into the contest in the **course** of time. But time was the decisive factor and the one vital question, upon the answer to which hung the whole issue of the

War, was the extent to which America could make good the deficiency in man-power before it was too late.

The reply seemed to depend upon a speedy and satisfactory solution of the three main problems of training, equipment and transport. But there was another factor to be considered. Major-General Pershing, the Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Force, had arrived in France with his staff in July of 1917, to await the coming of his army and to arrange for their accommodation and final training before they could take their place in the line. It was only natural that General Pershing's mind should be captured by the vision of a vast and awe-inspiring army, self-confident and self-contained, American from Commander-in-Chief to Company-cook, moving with relentless and overwhelming power to the final extinction of its enemies. Nor was it to be expected that the great majority of his staff would be slow to respond to his lead.

But the American High Command was not alone in taking this view. The American public was of the same mind, and a substantial portion of that public was in process of being gradually transformed into the mighty American army of General Pershing's vision. They too expected to find themselves part of one tremendous and magnificent entity, grouped under their own flag, led by their own commanders, dedicating their collective triumphs to the greater glory of the United States.

But the Allied commanders, while recognizing American sentiments as wholly natural and legitimate, were constrained by the pressure of dire reality to urge upon General Pershing a far less satisfying and spectacular conception of the role to be played by his troops in the general scheme.

The task of building up an army in the United States had been attended by many difficulties, unforeseen or under-estimated, and delay in the provision of camp accommodation and equipment had dislocated the entire training programme.

Criticism of the Administration was especially vocal on this topic, for the public had apparently thought to see a host of troops, completely trained and equipped, spring Pallas-like from the head of an American Zeus immediately after the declaration of war. But if criticism was exaggerated, it was not entirely groundless.

General Pershing himself recorded that three months after his arrival in France there was "little apparent progress against the day when an American Army should be in the front line" and attributed the delay to the policy of constructing large cantonments before calling out men and assembling them for training.

In November, 1917, he reported to the Secretary for War

that there were 169 Allied divisions on the Western Front, of which only two were American and those not yet suitable for offensive action. In the following February he admitted to being "depressed to think that ten months had elapsed since our entry into the War and we were just barely ready with one division of 25,000 men."

Not a single American-built aeroplane was likely to be available in France before May, and it was improbable that the troops would be fully armed with Browning and Vickers guns until September.

Meanwhile the peace of Brest-Litovsk had eliminated Russia from the struggle and Germany was concentrating every available man on the Western Front for a last terrific effort to break through the opposing lines and sweep on to the Channel ports and victory.

President Wilson was largely unmoved by a line of criticism which he regarded as factious and prejudiced. He viewed in its proper proportions the complexity of the problem of organizing a huge and wholly unprepared nation for war. But he was none the less alive to the urgency of the situation and ready to welcome any outside advice towards the solution of the accumulated difficulties.

Sir William Wiseman, an Intelligence Officer of great talents, attached to the Washington Embassy, informed him that Lord Reading was to consult with the United States Government as to the measures to be taken for the advancement of the common cause and "to place at his disposal—in so far as one man could—our experience in deciding these matters," and the President expressed himself as delighted at Lord Reading's appointment and thought his advice would be most useful.

But the new Ambassador's functions were not confined to giving counsel; he was charged in addition with the equally essential task of eliciting from the President an expression of policy as to the use to be made of the American forces when they ultimately reached France. Was Mr. Wilson behind General Pershing in his desire to build up by degrees a vast and homogeneous army? or was he so much alive to the ominous realities of the situation as to be ready to discard all questions of prestige and order that the American troops might on arrival be brigaded piecemeal with French and British, so as to make good without delay the deficiencies in man-power of those nations which had already suffered the wastage of three and a half years of battle on many fronts?

The President was by virtue of his office in supreme command

of all the forces of the United States and the ultimate answer to this crucial question was in his hands, though he would obviously be reluctant to place himself in a situation in which he would be compelled to overrule the commander in the field.

Moreover, it was highly important that public opinion in the States should be encouraged eagerly and unitedly to support the War by the spectacle of an American army coming into being under its own leaders and its own flag. If formations were to be broken up amongst the Allies, it would be difficult to sustain the "morale" of those at home by news of their individual exploits, and in addition such a course would be regarded in many quarters as evidence that the American military machine had broken down and would thus intensify the volume of criticism.

There was also the further difficulty that, remote as they were in distance from the seat of war, the American people might be slow to appreciate the necessity for so drastic a step, while the demands of secrecy would prevent a full explanation of the military reasons behind it from being published.

Lord Reading's own task was additionally complicated by the consideration that popular resentment in America at the summary dissolution of their cherished Expeditionary Force would be much more acute if the plans were made in advance as part of a pre-arranged policy urged by the British and French Governments than if they were carried out as the result of orders given on the spot by General Pershing in face of a sudden emergency.

By a fortunate chance Lord Reading had been fully cognisant of this problem from its inception and had actually been the means of transmitting to the President through Colonel House the first proposals for the incorporation of American personnel in the British forces.

Whilst he was in Paris in December of 1917, he had received from the Prime Minister a letter dated on the 2nd of that month, in which he enclosed a memorandum by Field-Marshal Sir William Robertson, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, which he requested Lord Reading to communicate to Colonel House and urge its acceptance.

This memorandum, starting from the obvious premise that Germany was likely to try to gain a final decision in the Spring and that Italy was weak, France afflicted by diminishing manpower and Great Britain wholly unable to keep her divisions even approximately up to strength during the coming summer, while it would certainly take the United States many months to put an appreciable force of trained divisions into the field, went on to inquire whether America would be prepared to help, as a tern-

porary measure, on lines other than the mere dispatching of whole divisions, as had hitherto been contemplated.

The actual proposal was that in addition to, and without interfering with, the preparation of entire formations America should send over sufficient infantry to provide one company in as many British battalions as possible, or, as an alternative, to supply one American to replace one British battalion in as many brigades as possible, on the understanding that, when the immediate emergency was at an end, they could be recalled, if it were so desired, and absorbed into American divisions. There was nothing unorthodox or devious in raising the question with the President through the channel of Colonel House rather than directly with General Pershing. It had far too many and too grave political implications within the United States to be regarded as a purely military matter with which the Administration had no concern. Colonel House, who was then in Paris, received the proposal cordially and undertook to submit it first to General Pershing and then on his return to America to the President himself.

Meanwhile Sir Douglas Haig had been informed of these moves and in conversation with General Bliss, the American representative on the Supreme War Council, had himself adumbrated a slightly different scheme by which American battalions should be introduced at the outset at the rate of one per brigade into selected British divisions, which would be gradually Americanized, the British divisional and brigade commanders and staffs being retained until at least 50 per cent of the troops were American, and the British personnel thus displaced being used to bring other British formations up to strength.

The disadvantage of this suggestion, as the C.I.G.S. was quick to see, was that, while apparently strengthening the British forces, it was actually using them as a framework on which to build up the component parts of an independent American army. However, General Pershing, whose tenacity of purpose was great, clung to his desire to be self-contained and found himself unable to accept the British Commander-in-Chief's plan. Nor did Sir William Robertson's idea, as conveyed to the President by Colonel House, meet with any more favourable response. Its only result was that the Secretary for War telegraphed by the President's orders to General Pershing authority to make the final decision, after consultation with the French and British Commanders-in-Chief, as to the advisability of some form of amalgamation of American with British and French units. This was in fact a different scheme again, since it envisaged the use, not of additional

drafts, but of the personnel of existing formations for absorption into the Allied forces and thus involved a delay in the assembling of General Pershing's Army which he was little likely to welcome. Thus far much thought, breath and ink had been expended and no progress made. Accordingly the C.I.G.S. decided himself to discuss the matter with General Pershing, with whom he had interviews, at which the British Shipping Controller, Sir James (afterwards Lord) Maclay was also present, in Paris on January 9 and 10, 1918.

Sir William Robertson's main object was to persuade General Pershing to fall in with the British War Cabinet's original proposal that priority should be given to bringing over infantry, additional to those required for the divisions then in course of formation in America, to take their place as complete battalions in British brigades. Of the 45 divisions then being formed it was unlikely that more than 15 would be in France by June or more than 30 by the end of the year, leaving a residue of 15 not available until well into 1919, by which time the War might well have been lost. The C.I.G.S. therefore pressed the American commander to deplete these 15 of their infantry, whose presence in France to reinforce the Allied front was urgently required.

General Pershing reiterated his policy of bringing over complete divisions, in order that all the obvious advantages of national identity might be preserved. Sir William Robertson, ably seconded by Sir James Maclay, pointed out that the overwhelming need was for more men at the earliest possible moment and that infantry by themselves could be shipped five times more quickly than a complete division with all its cumbersome paraphernalia of transport, guns and stores of every kind. But General Pershing was unable to agree, though he did go so far as to suggest one alternative plan which on account of the delay which would be involved in putting it into execution the C.I.G.S. was unwilling to entertain.

With each day that passed the moment for the launching of the inevitable German offensive drew nearer. Matters could be allowed to drift no longer, and on January 14 the War Cabinet decided that the Prime Minister should send a personal message to the President, through Colonel House, again urging the proposals regarding the suggested incorporation of American troops into British divisions.

In pursuance of this decision a cable drafted by the C.I.G.S. was dispatched on January 15 by the Prime Minister to Colonel House in the following terms :—

With reference to the proposal I sent you through Lord Reading for employing American companies or battalions in British formations, as time presses and no decision has yet been reached, I sent Sir W. Robertson last week to see General Pershing. Latter says he cannot himself decide but must refer to Washington. As you know, Lord Reading starts shortly and is bringing over full particulars of my proposal. I hope that, if it cannot be accepted now, it will not be rejected till he has been heard.

- Briefly situation is, that Germans are bringing over divisions from Russia as fast as they can, and strain upon us in assisting France and supporting Italy during the next six months will be such as to cause us grave anxiety, more particularly as we are coming to the end of our resources in man-power. Any additional assistance which America can give during that period will be invaluable. We have examined the question of sea-transport carefully and find that by making temporary sacrifices in our food imports we could bring over about 150,000 American infantry, that is 1,500 battalions, during the next three or four months, without in any way interfering with present arrangements for bringing over American divisions. We can arrange to feed these battalions, to supply all additional equipment, and to provide necessary training facilities. If these battalions were temporarily incorporated in British formations, it would give us invaluable aid during the next critical six months. Later in the year they could, if desired, be withdrawn and incorporated in American divisions. If the amount of shipping were allotted to bringing American divisions with full equipment over, not more than three could be brought, and further the time required to train divisions for the field is much longer than for companies or battalions. My Government does not feel justified in asking our people to bear the great additional sacrifices which diversion of shipping will entail for the sake of the assistance of three divisions at a distant date.

Pershing put forward an alternative, namely, that we should make good our shortage of men by withdrawing all British battalions from a certain number of our divisions and replacing them with American battalions, but this would put these divisions out of action for the long time necessary to train your infantry to work in co-operation with our guns, engineers, etc., and the military situation would not admit of this. I trust President will give earnest consideration to my proposal, as it appears to me vital to our cause that America should make herself effectively felt during the first half of this year. M. Clemenceau informed Robertson that he quite understands that language is a difficulty regarding the incorporation of American battalions with French formations and that he had no desire to press for it but hoped that the British proposal would be accepted.

No reply to this appeal had been received when on January 50 a meeting took place at Versailles, attended by the Prime Minister himself, Lord Milner, the Secretary of State for War, Sir Douglas Haig and Sir William Robertson on the one side and

Generals Pershing and Bliss on the other to discuss once more the well worn topic, at the end of which an agreement was signed between Mr. Lloyd George and General Pershing.

This agreement established something of a compromise between the rival schools of thought, the British Government agreeing to bring over American divisions intact in the ships which had been intended by it for the transportation of infantry alone and General Pershing accepting the principle that the infantry of these divisions should be sent to British formations for training purposes and that in the course of their training they might be put into the line as part of British brigades.

There were to be six of these supplementary divisions, making a total of some 150,000 men, 60,000 of whom were to arrive monthly in France for the next two and a half months.

There for the moment the matter rested. But early on March 21 the foundations of all such agreements were blown to pieces by the German guns. Out of the morning mist wave after wave of German infantry was hurled against the frail barrier of General Gough's Vth army at St. Quentin. The great offensive, long and anxiously awaited, had begun. The attack, launched on the right of the British front, was taken up from the Somme to the Yser and beneath the terrific pressure the line, unduly extended and inadequately manned, wavered and recoiled, while into the gaps poured apparently inexhaustible masses of German troops, making with all speed for the vital Channel ports.

Every available reinforcement was rushed into the battle-zone both from the back areas and from England, but as the days passed the German host was still rolling irresistibly toward Amiens and the sea. In the end the initial success of the onslaught was the main cause of its failure. It had moved too fast and too far; it was beyond reach of supply of ammunition and food; its momentum was spent and it came slowly and sullenly to rest.

But the interval was filled with ceaseless anxiety for all those responsible for the conduct of affairs on the side of the Allies. The crisis of the War was upon them.

The Prime Minister, whose impregnable optimism was so great an asset, not only to himself in his position of immense responsibility but to all those about him and indeed to the Allied forces and peoples in general, was compelled by the news from the front to take the gravest view of the situation. The figures of killed, wounded and prisoners were formidable in the extreme and they could no longer be replaced by drafts from home. Only in the United States was a source of man-power to be found capable of filling the ranks.

Accordingly on March 25 he dispatched to Lord Reading, now in America, a cable emphasizing the critical nature of the position and the instant need for action by the President before it was too late.

You should explain to President that we are engaged in what may well prove to be decisive battle of the War. The Germans are concentrating the greater part of their available forces against the British front and are pushing their attacks with the greatest determination. We have every hope of checking them, but our losses have been very heavy and will be heavier. This is only the beginning of the campaign of 1918, and we have to look to the future. In the present state of our man-power resources we cannot keep our divisions supplied with drafts for more than a short time at the present rate of loss, and we shall be helpless to assist our Allies if, as is very probable, the enemy turns against them later. We have the divisional cadres ready with all necessary services and what we require is men to help us keep them filled. You should appeal to President to drop all questions of interpretation of past agreements and send over infantry as fast as possible without transport or other encumbrances. The situation is undoubtedly critical and if America delays now she may be too late.

As soon as the message had been decoded the Ambassador ordered his car and, having told Lady Reading the gist of the news, set out for the White House on his most momentous errand. What passed between him and the President during the next few minutes might decide the whole issue of the War. If he was successful, sufficient reinforcements would be available to tide over the vital moment and in all probability, with the limitless reserves of American man-power thrown increasingly into the scale, to hold on till ultimate victory. But if he failed?

Even his self-control had been unequal to hiding his anxiety. The sense that something tremendous was afoot communicated itself to all the Embassy staff. The suspense of waiting for the Ambassador's return was almost intolerable; the rooms seemed to suffocate them and one after another stole out into the night air of Washington to pace-up and down in the open until news came. Even Lady Reading, whose health forbade her to be out walking at night, was found to his horror by Grimwood Mears tramping impatiently up and down the street like the others and protestingly escorted indoors.

Fortunately access to the President was always available to Lord Reading and within a few moments of leaving the Embassy he had laid the Prime Minister's cable before him. The President read it and acknowledged the gravity of the situation. Lord

Reading said that an immediate decision on the lines proposed was perhaps the only plan that would save the Allies. The President said that he would do anything that he was asked. Lord Reading asked him to send a direct order that American troops were to be brigaded with British and French troops in France. The President was silent for a moment. Then he replied that under the constitution he had power to decide without discussion with any of his Cabinet and that he had determined to give the necessary orders.

There was no more to be said. In those few moments and by that almost curt conversation the scales had been finally weighted against the enemy. Only as he accompanied his visitor to the door did Mr. Wilson relax for an instant his customary reserve. Laying his hand on Lord Reading's shoulder, he delivered himself of a speech as heartening in fervour as it was startling in form. "Mr. Ambassador," said the President, "I'll do my damndest!"

As the lights of Lord Reading's car were seen returning, the Embassy staff crowded into the hall to learn without delay the result of his interview. Half-an-hour ago he had walked silently and gravely out, seeming to carry upon his shoulders an almost insupportable burden. Now he raced up the steps, smiling and erect. There was no need for speech, and with a sigh of inexpressible relief the staff went back to their work.

The news, communicated at once to England, transformed the whole situation, and Mr. Balfour in conveying his personal gratitude to Colonel House was only voicing the feelings of all those in the Allied countries who understood the momentousness and the magnanimity of the President's action.

May I personally express to you [he cabled] my very great appreciation of the whole response which the President has made to our urgent request for American help in this crisis. ... I would like you to know that it is realized here how great a sacrifice had been made by America by allowing her battalions to be incorporated in British Divisions.

The President's promise having been given, the next question was how it could be most swiftly and effectively implemented.

Mr. Newton D. Baker, the American Secretary for War, was at that moment conveniently in London and in an interview with him on March 26 Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Balfour begged him, first, to **obtain** the President's assent to four American divisions **being at once** put into the line to relieve the French, and secondly, **that instead of** the available tonnage being used for transporting **the six complete** divisions, as had been arranged, it should in **the**

changed circumstances be employed exclusively in carrying infantry. Mr. Baker lost no time in submitting these pleas to the President, who agreed to both proposals, and on the very next day, March 27, after consultation with General Pershing and General Bliss the necessary orders were issued.

So rapidly had events moved since Lord Reading's fateful visit to the President that the harassed statesmen and soldiers of the Allies began to breathe again.

Even those sections of American opinion most hostile in principle to the course adopted by the President had been for the moment silenced by the grim logic of necessity.

But difficulties were not yet at an end, though the people of the United States were becoming daily more enthusiastic for the War. Amongst Lord Reading's most important duties as Ambassador was that of keeping his own Government informed, not only of the course of events but of the trend of opinion in the country to which he was accredited -; and on March 27 he took advantage of the momentary lull to dispatch a cable to Mr. Balfour, interpreting with shrewd psychological insight the reactions of the American nation to the new German offensive.

The effect of the great battle on American public opinion is wholly advantageous to the Allies' cause. Nothing has occurred since America entered the War which has stirred more fully the national feeling or united the people so thoroughly against Germany. The display of German military power is a shock to America, and the people at large realize for the first time that the Allies in general, and England in particular, have been standing between her and German militarism. It has produced a feeling of admiration and sympathy for the British quite contrary to the usual attitude. The people of America are for the War, and anxious to know how they can most effectively help. They have realized, as it were, in a flash their own military shortcomings and the time they have lost since they entered the War. This has already produced an outburst in the Press and Congress, which, naturally enough, takes the form of an attack on the Administration. All this will be to the good, and should mean really important speeding up of the American effort, unless the attack on the Administration grows too bitter and assumes party lines. Our public men and Press, while they can point out the need for quick and effective American help, should avoid any comments which might seem to reflect on the Administration. To the Administration the battle has been no less of a shock. They had hoped and believed that the effect of the President's speeches had been to strengthen the Liberal Party in Germany and sap the morale of the army and the influence of the military party. To-day they are very-conscious of their delusion and realize that there is no hope that speeches and propaganda will turn the German people against their military

party or detach Austria from Germany. At last they face the fact that, if Germany is to be beaten, she must be beaten by force.

This summary laid particular stress upon the initial remoteness of the American mind from the realities of the situation. The immensity of the United States, the intervening breadth of the Atlantic, the unfamiliarity with European countries, combined to make the American public slow to grasp the tremendous fact that it was at war and served even to blunt the edge of the Administration's awareness of the desperate need for haste.

The task of striving to awaken them to the overwhelming urgency of the situation and of convincing them that every day was of vital moment laid upon Lord Reading an immense burden.

But the President had not forgotten his promise. In the first days of April, after consultation with Lord Reading and with his own military and shipping advisers, he determined to increase at once the American effort and by the use of every ton of space to ship a minimum of 120,000 troops a month to France.

Immediately the old question arose : would these troops be available, as soon as their final training had been completed, to reinforce the French and British in the Line ? ' or were they to be held in reserve until the great American Army was ready to take the field ?

General Pershing, nothing if not consistent, again urged his objections to the breaking up of American formations amongst the Allies. During April and May his rigid attitude at the meetings of the Supreme War Council was a source of much concern, and already on April 10 Lord Reading was obliged to go to the President and inform him of the divergence of view between the American Commander-in-Chief and his colleagues at Versailles.

The President, faced with the unpleasant possibility of having to overrule his own Commander-in-Chief, was non-committal but insisted that he attached the greatest weight to the decisions of the Supreme War Council, from which Lord Reading inferred "that he means to lean upon the Council to support him if he has to override the views of Pershing."

No doubt the President was anxious to take no drastic decision until his Secretary for War, who was then on the high seas, had returned from Europe and had reported upon the situation.

But immediately after Mr. Baker's arrival a long consultation between him and the President took place, from which there emerged a memorandum covering the various points raised by Lord Reading with the President during the Secretary of War's absence. It was at once communicated to Lord Reading, who

viewed one, and that the most important, passage in it with serious disappointment and alarm. After his interview with the President on April 11 he had understood that a firm undertaking had been given that 120,000 troops a month should be dispatched and he had greatly cheered his own Government by conveying to them the good news. But the latest document was far less explicit. "It is hoped and on the basis of study it is so far believed that total number of troops transported will be 120,000 a month'-' had scarcely the ring of either conviction or finality.

Nor was this the only disappointing passage. Hopes had been cherished, though on somewhat flimsy grounds, that the President would entrust the use of these troops either to the Supreme War Council or to General Foch, now Generalissimo in the West. The memorandum exploded any such idea, laying it down that "these troops will, under direction and at the discretion of General Pershing, be assigned for training and use with British, French or American divisions, as exigencies require from time to time."

Lord Reading at once sought an interview with Mr. Baker and told him that he had hoped that the memorandum would give definite assurances that the figure of 120,000 infantry and machine-gunners would be attained and that they would be placed at the disposal of General Foch or the Supreme War Council.

The Secretary for War, while pointing out the domestic difficulties implicit in putting American troops under foreign commanders, nevertheless indicated that General Pershing would no doubt be greatly influenced in his use of these troops by the wishes of the Supreme War Council and that no importance was to be attached to the words "it is hoped" in the memorandum ; the intention to send the promised number stood firm.

Lord Reading, guided and sustained throughout these shifting and arduous negotiations by the memory of the President's pledge, never wavered in his conviction that Mr. Wilson would adhere not only to the strict letter but also to the whole spirit of his undertaking and was only making an unpalatable situation easier for General Pershing.

He therefore urged upon his own Government the wisdom of accepting the memorandum without comment or cavil, a policy with which the Prime Minister promptly complied.

At this time, April 23, General Pershing was actually in London and the opportunity of his presence was seized by Lord Milner, the Secretary of State for War, to make a supreme effort to disentangle the threads of a situation growing daily more

involved and to settle, at least for the next few months, the question of the number of American troops to be transported and the order of priority to be followed.

After long discussion an agreement was reached, but unhappily, far from clearing the atmosphere, it only reopened the whole long controversy in an exacerbated form.

The Milner-Pershing agreement had the merit of providing that infantry, machine-gunners, engineers and signallers of six divisions were to be sent over during the month of May. Its vice lay in the stipulation that any excess tonnage should be used to transport the remaining troops necessary to make up these divisions, including in particular the appropriate artillery, and that after May the system was to be continued of shipping artillery and other units of a division at the earliest possible moment after the departure of its infantry, so that American formations might be completely organized on arrival in France.

In order that General Pershing's objective might be free from all doubt the agreement stated in terms that "it is contemplated that American divisions and corps, when trained and organized, shall be utilized under the American commander-in-chief in an American group."

Lord Reading was greatly distressed by this turn of events.

The authorities with whom he was dealing in Washington had shewn themselves fully alive to the requirements of a critical situation and single-minded in their determination to contribute help in its most effective form, even at the cost of overruling the commander-in-chief in the field. The new arrangement meant the vindication of General Pershing's policy with all the inevitable delay involved, for neither the President nor the Secretary for War could reasonably be asked to give him orders which were in conflict with the agreement come to between him and Lord Milner.

If the British Secretary of State for War was satisfied with the terms, the American Administration could scarcely condemn them as inadequate to the needs of the Allies. But Lord Reading was confident that they were in fact inadequate in view of the perils of the situation, and he was deeply perturbed lest from their acceptance by Lord Milner the President and his advisers should infer that the military position was less hazardous than had been so forcibly represented to them and should conclude that the Ambassador himself had been guilty of over-colouring the picture in order to obtain their assent to emergency measures which, had they known the true position, they would never have approved.

For once Lord Reading was at a loss to deal with the situation

but after taking time for reflection he sent a cable home as moderate in tone as his strong feelings on the subject allowed :

I need not tell you how disappointed I am that the agreement with Secretary Baker has now been modified so materially by the new agreement between Lord Milner and General Pershing. I can only conjecture reasons for the change and of course Lord Milner is in the best position to judge, but the result is distinctly unfortunate, for whilst I have been pressing your views on this side . . . negotiations have proceeded on your side and an agreement has been made which does not make it easier for me in the future to make arrangements affecting the military assistance to be given. Of course the new agreement must be worked here to the best advantage and if any change be desired, it must, it seems to me, come from your side. The authorities here did what we asked of them. . . .

So deeply puzzled and distressed was he that he also cabled to Sir William Wiseman, who was then in Paris, saying that he did not yet understand why the modification in the original agreement had been made and that he must have some explanation.

But Lord Reading was not alone in his dislike of the new plan.

A meeting of the Supreme War Council took place at Abbeville on May 2, at which General Foch, who was equally little enamoured of the Milner-Pershing arrangement and anxious to get back to the position which had existed before it came into being, made a grave and eloquent statement of his views :

I have been selected as Commander-in-Chief of the Allied armies by the Governments of the United States, France and Great Britain. It is impossible for me, therefore, not to consider that at this, the most perilous moment of the greatest battle in the War, I have a right to state my views as to how American infantry should be sent to France. Fully aware of the heavy responsibility resting on me at the time when the greatest German offensive threatens both Paris and our communications with England by way of Calais and Boulogne, I want it to be clearly understood that each of the Governments should assume on its part the share of responsibility belonging to it.

In my conscience, I deem it of absolute necessity that there arrive monthly from America in France during at least the months of May, June and July, by right of priority, 120,000 American infantry men and machine-gunners. I even consider that, if tonnage allows it, as we have been led to understand it may, it would be highly desirable that this amount be surpassed. For the greater the amount of American infantry able to appear, without loss of time, on the battlefields, the more rapid and decisive will be the success of the Allied armies. . . .

I must categorically ask the Supreme War Council . . . to decide on this request, and to be so good as to have it submitted to the President of the United States.

I would not have it thought that I fail to take into consideration the observations of General Pershing, who desires to bring over to France, as soon as possible, the complements that will allow him to perfect the formation of a great American army of which he is the chief, and which we await with our most earnest wishes. But, on the one hand, my request can only cause a delay of a small number of weeks, and on the other my imperious duty as a soldier and Commander-in-Chief obliges me to declare that, when the German army is prosecuting the greatest offensive in this war before Amiens and Ypres, so slight a postponement cannot "be taken into consideration when the issue of the war itself may depend upon the success of the enemy before the two aforementioned objectives.

After the enormous loss which it has suffered with splendid valour the British army has just had ten of its divisions suppressed, and in order definitely to stop the German armies it is not enough to replace them : new forces in infantry and machine-gunners are necessary to us *without any delay*. If one remembers that the American troops will need on landing some rapid supplementary instruction, the urgency of the contemplated decision becomes even more apparent.

Let each of the interested Governments at this hour, the gravest of all, be inspired only by its duty towards the great cause of which we are all the servants. I have stated the measures which, as Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies, I feel bound to submit to the Governments of the United States, France and Great Britain ; it pertains to these Governments to decide.

This language, dignified, stern and forceful, was well calculated to appeal to President Wilson and it is significant that from then onwards the Milner-Pershing agreement seems to have been allowed in practice to fade into the background, although it was never formally rescinded.

The text of General Foch's statement in the form of a memorandum was presented to Mr. Wilson by Monsieur Jusserand, the French Ambassador in Washington, on May 8, during an interview which Mr. Baker also attended ; and, as Lord Reading subsequently reported to London, "the President seemed in complete accord with it and took the view that in effect it was being carried out. The (French) Ambassador told me that the President was of the same mind as originally when the requests were made to him, both at your insistence and the French Government's, for the 480,000 men."

The President made no reference at this interview to the

shipment of troops other than infantry and machine-gunners and the French Ambassador thought it wise not to raise the question.

Lord Reading's advice to the British Cabinet was to continue to press for the infantry and, if matters had not righted themselves before then, to obtain from the Supreme War Council at its next meeting early in June a formal decision based upon General Foch's views. "I am sure a decision affirming his view would be endorsed by the President," cabled Lord Reading. "To put it quite plainly, it seems to be necessary for the President to have a recorded decision of the Supreme War Council endorsing General Foch's proposal before he could place himself in disagreement with General Pershing."

This advice commended itself to the authorities at home and the Prime Minister in his reply to Lord Reading stated that "we are adopting your suggestion and trying to arrange for meeting of Supreme War Council beginning June. War Cabinet wishes me to say that your assistance in this vital matter has been invaluable. I do not know how we should get on without you."

Matters had at last reached a point at which in the eighth week of the German offensive the Ambassador could congratulate himself that the difficulties arising from the Milner-Pershing agreement were in process of silent and satisfactory solution and that the President was prepared to take any action, however drastic, to implement his original undertaking. But at that precise moment a new bombshell fell from the skies.

On May 11 Sir Robert Borden, Prime Minister of Canada, received in the ordinary course a document purporting to emanate from the British War Cabinet and intended for issue to the Press. It was curiously worded and unusually bombastic in tone, but this internal evidence of lack of authenticity apparently failed to arouse suspicion in Canada and the message was duly released for publication.

The gist of it was to the effect that American troops were not to be used in the fighting-line until America had built up a complete self-supporting army, and the apparently official announcement of the adoption of this policy created an immediate and immense sensation throughout the United States and Canada, and most particularly in the British Embassy at Washington.

Lord Reading was satisfied that the document was spurious but he realized that it might none the less have highly damaging consequences and without waiting to communicate with London he at once issued on his own responsibility a vigorous disavowal.

The statement attributed to the British War Cabinet to the effect that the Allies "are so confident that, having been given the choice of a small immediate American army for defence or waiting until they are reinforced by a complete, powerful, self-supporting American army, they have chosen the latter" is diametrically opposed to all information received by me from the British War Cabinet and to all requests which I have been asked by them to make to the United States Administration.

I am quite in the dark as to the origin of the statement at present. All I can say is that I am convinced that the document has not been issued with the knowledge of the Prime Minister or the British War Cabinet.

How serious a view he took of the matter is evidenced by a cable dispatched by him on May 15 to London, asking for information as to the circumstances in which the message came to be sent out and concluding :

In view of official telegrams I have had from London and personal messages from Prime Minister, it is inconceivable to me that the statement should have been issued with any authority. If it had been so issued, I could not remain British Representative here. It is obvious a glaring blunder has been committed and I trust recurrence will be prevented by strong measures. It is a most unfortunate mistake, more particularly because, even when corrected, it sets the public mind working in the direction of a complete American Army instead of acquiescing in the present position.

The provenance of the offending message was never very satisfactorily explained. It was said to have been compiled by some official of the Ministry of Information who had misinterpreted the purport of a memorandum supplied by the War Office. But it was at least made plain that it was neither accurate nor authentic and Lord Reading was able to issue a further and more formal statement "that the telegram sent through Ottawa did not emanate from the British War Cabinet, and is totally at variance with their views. Lord Reading is officially informed that the statement was made without any knowledge of the Prime Minister or of the British Cabinet."

The harm which might have been done by such an announcement was thus largely and speedily discounted. The United States Government recognized from the first that a gross error had been committed, and though a few newspapers were quick to welcome the supposed new policy as gratifying to the American Army and public, the more general sentiment was faithful to the view that it was **the** duty of America to discard national pride and ambition **in favour of** furnishing prompt aid to the Allies in whatever **form it might be required.**

This quite unnecessary incident out of the way, the Ambassador was able to turn again to his dominant preoccupation, the number of American troops available for shipment to France. The estimate for May was highly satisfactory, contemplating as it did the dispatch of about 155,000 infantry and some 70,000 men of other arms, but a new difficulty was already discernible in the offing. It appeared that, though the programme for June and July could be fulfilled on the existing basis, after the end of July no more men would be available till September, since General Pershing had decided that a period of at least five months' training was essential before troops proceeded overseas. The War Department had not hitherto rigidly enforced this ruling but it could obviously not continue, even intermittently, to disregard it.

Nevertheless, it was of the utmost importance that such a limitation should not be allowed to stand, and Lord Reading reported towards the end of May that in his belief, if General Foch insisted upon more infantry for the next few months, the President would support him, more particularly if the Supreme War Council adopted the same view, but that the required figure could not possibly be reached unless the existing ban upon the shipment of men with less than five months' training was lifted.

But before these steps could be taken Secretary Baker largely anticipated them by modifying the Milner-Pershing agreement in favour of his own original plan to the extent of promising 150,000 infantry in each of the months of June and July and a substantial quota in August as well.

It was thus apparent that the President and Mr. Baker were determined to go quietly ahead with their programme of sending *men* to France in numbers even in excess of the promised 120,000 a month, in the faith that pressure of events would smooth out all difficulties and that, when once the troops had arrived, General Pershing would reach an amicable agreement with his colleagues as to their most effective use.

This was the attitude which Lord Reading had always believed likely to prevail. On May 8 he had informed the Prime Minister that,

Where we have not seen with the same eye is that here I have all along been convinced that the President would make his view prevail in the end, whereas you and those associated with you at home and at Abbeville seemed to assume that the final word would be with General Pershing. I quite understand your point, that the latter is the man on the spot to whom discretion is entrusted. Nevertheless, the President's view would predominate.

The whole controversy illustrated once more a situation which had for months past been causing great concern to the statesmen charged with the conduct of the War on behalf of the Allies. General Pershing was a soldier whose primary task was to command the American Expeditionary Force in the field, but he was constantly being asked to give his time and thought to political questions of great moment in regard to which he himself would have been the last person to claim the necessary experience. The resulting difficulties were an embarrassment to him and to those with whom he had to deal and as early as May 4, just after the conclusion of the Milner-Pershing agreement, Mr. Lloyd George had communicated to Lord Reading a proposal designed to meet the case.

Our experience in this matter [the Milner-Pershing agreement] strengthens my belief that it is absolutely imperative that there should be some man of first-class political authority on this side who has the confidence of the President and who can deal with Governments of Allies on equal terms. It is really not fair to General Pershing to expect him to decide these questions. In this case it means practically asking a General who is not trained to estimate political considerations to hand part of his army to another General. This is a responsibility that ought to be taken by a civilian authority. I do not believe that we shall ever get Allied arrangements working satisfactorily until there is a civilian of first rank with real powers on this side. I have not the slightest doubt, for instance, that if Colonel House had been present at Supreme War Council Meetings, things would have been settled to satisfaction, not only of British and French Governments, but of American Army as well.

Lord Reading himself saw more disadvantages than advantages in the scheme. Apart from the inherent objection to sending someone to Europe to treat with the Allied Governments on equal terms, with all that such a step involved in delegation of the President's authority, there was the overriding difficulty of finding the person to whom the President would be willing to entrust such plenary powers.

The Prime Minister had mentioned Colonel House, but Lord Reading was in doubt whether he could go so far beyond submitting the proposal to the President in general terms as to venture to suggest a definite name.

He himself had unbounded faith in the President and he was desperately anxious that, if matters came to a head, Mr. Wilson should have the final decisive word with General Pershing, unhampered by any intermediary.

If the President's representative sided with General¹ Pershing,

the President himself would be in a gravely embarrassing position. If his representative differed from the General, there would be the unfortunate spectacle of open dissension amongst the American participants in the deliberations of the Supreme War Council. Either situation was to be avoided by every possible means. But it was the Ambassador's duty to put aside his personal views and he accordingly laid the proposal, including the suggested name, before the President on behalf of the British Government at an interview on May 22.

Lord Reading subsequently reported that the President was not favourably impressed by the idea.

The President said he found it difficult to appreciate the usefulness of Colonel House at this meeting [the next meeting of the Supreme War Council], as the question to be decided was entirely for the military advisers and for General Foch, the Commander-in-Chief. He evidently will pay the greatest attention to the recommendations of General Foch, not only because of the latter's position with the assent of the Allies, but also because the President feels a special responsibility as regards General Foch's advice, as he has from the first been in favour of unity of command.

The President said that the ultimate question for him will be : What is the opinion of the Commander-in-Chief ? and neither Colonel House nor any political representative could assist him in ascertaining the answer.

But the long-drawn-out discussions were at last nearing the end.

A meeting of the Supreme War Council had been fixed for June 3, and as the day approached Lord Reading became more and more anxious that that body should arrive at a final decision. On May 29 he cabled to the Prime Minister, urging that the Council should pass a formal resolution affirming General Foch's view, which should be communicated to the President. "If General Pershing wishes to raise objection, let it come from him to his own Government."

The President and the country behind him were pledged to three main principles, unity of command on the Western Front, the dispatch of every available man to Europe and the ultimate creation of an autonomous American Army in France.

In order to achieve these aims the President, who like many other people was in some doubt as to the exact relation of the Supreme War Council to the Generalissimo, was prepared to accept and to support the recommendations of either or both. He was naturally reluctant to overrule his own Commander-in-Chief, both on grounds of loyalty and from a realization that the man

on the spot was in the best position to decide. But he was still prepared, if necessary, to take even this drastic step, whatever the consequences might have been.

June 5 was a momentous day in the history of this controversy and thus of the whole War, for the three Prime Ministers, Mr. Lloyd George, Monsieur Clemenceau and Signor Orlando, decided that even heavier guns than the Supreme War Council were required and that they would themselves send a joint message to the President.

We desire [ran the text of the cable] to express our warmest thanks to President Wilson for remarkable promptness with which American aid in excess of what at one time seemed practicable has been rendered to Allies during the past month to meet a great emergency. The crisis, however, still continues. General Foch has presented to us a statement of the utmost gravity which points out that numerical superiority of enemy in France, where 162 Allied divisions now oppose 200 German divisions, is very heavy and that, as there is no possibility of British and French increasing number of their divisions (on the contrary they are put to extreme straits to keep them up) there is a great danger of war being lost unless numerical inferiority of Allies can be remedied as rapidly as possible by advent of American troops. He therefore urges with utmost insistence that maximum possible number of infantry and machine guns, in which respects shortage of men on side of Allies is most marked, should continue to be shipped from America in months of June and July to avert immediate danger of an Allied defeat in present campaign owing to Allied reserves being exhausted before those of the enemy. . . .

We are satisfied that General Foch, who is conducting present campaign with consummate ability and on whose military judgment we continue to place most absolute reliance, is not over-estimating needs of case and we feel confidence that U.S.G. will do everything that can be done both to meet needs of immediate situation and to proceed with continuous raising of fresh levies calculated to provide as soon as possible numerical superiority which Commander-in-Chief of Allied forces regards as essential to ultimate victory.

As Lord Reading had foreseen, the pressure of events was by now becoming too strong for General Pershing to adhere to his earlier standpoint and as a result of the meeting of June 3 his appreciation of the true situation led him to accede to all the Allied requests.

Satisfactory arrangements were concluded between him and General Foch and Lord Milner for the supply of American troops for **June** and July. .

As regards June, absolute priority was to be given to 170,000

combat troops without artillery, ammunition or supplies, but it **was** hoped that the actual total for the month would not fall short of 250,000.

As regards the balance over and above the 170,000, 25,000 men were to be sent to work the railways at the request of the French Government and the composition of the remainder was to be settled by General Pershing himself.

As regards July a similar aggregate plan was to be aimed at, with 140,000 priority troops.

General Pershing also recognized that the emergency was such as to justify the raising of his embargo upon the shipment of men with less than five months' training.

His agreement was thus full and handsome and in the long run immensely advantageous not only to the Allies but to the American forces. For when the time did come for a great American army to take the field as a separate entity, many of the troops had already undergone the testing ordeal of actual warfare and the officers, both staff and regimental[^] had gained invaluable experience which otherwise they could only have acquired at heavy cost to themselves and their men.

Between April 1 and July 51, 1918, no less than 950,000 American troops were safely sent across to France, and from June to September the monthly average was in excess of 280,000 *men*. After valiant exploits by them in July and August at Beaumont Hamel, Soissons and Chateau Thierry, on September 12 General Pershing's long and sedulously cherished dream was realized and a superb American Army 450,000 strong, provided by the Allies with ample artillery and supported by American and Allied planes, moved forward against the S. Mihiel Salient. The ultimate issue of the War was no longer in doubt.

Whilst problem piled relentlessly upon problem, perhaps the most vexatious and protracted of all was that of intervention in Russia, which was well under way when Lord Reading reached America, caused him perpetual anxiety throughout his stay and was still largely unsolved at his final departure.

As early as the autumn of 1916 Russia was showing signs **of** disintegration as a fighting force, and the process, once begun, continued to gather rapid momentum.

By November, 1917, events had moved so fast and so far that Czarism had been overthrown, the short-lived and ineffective Provisional Government had come and gone, and a Soviet Republic **had** been proclaimed.

On November 8 the All Russia Congress of Soviets **placed Lenin, who had by then arrived in Russia from Switzerland,**

at the head of the Government and a fortnight later the end of hostilities against Germany was announced. This was a unilateral act and it was not until December 15 that the Germans, believing that matters had taken a turn favourable to their designs, granted an armistice.

From the military point of view they saw in the withdrawal of Russia from the War their grand opportunity to transfer divisions from the Eastern to the Western Front and thus to assemble overwhelming strength for the great assault on the Allied lines planned for the coming Spring. There were also large numbers of German and Austrian prisoners of war scattered throughout Russia who could be collected and utilized for further military service.

From the closely related economic point of view, they expected to find available in Russia and Siberia supplies on so immense a scale as not only to defeat the blockade by providing for their immediate needs for the duration of the War but also to form so inexhaustible a storehouse for their future requirements as to enable them, if the forthcoming offensive failed, to make peace with Great Britain and France even at the cost of the surrender of Alsace and Lorraine.

If Germany could establish and maintain a stranglehold on these resources, she might well be in a position within ten years of the conclusion of peace to throw down a fresh challenge for the domination of Europe. Accordingly, as soon as the Russian resistance collapsed, intensive German exploitation began.

So far as the Allies were concerned, their main object was to decide upon the most effective means of immobilizing the German forces in Russia and of preventing them from making use either of the natural resources of the country or of the vast stores of munitions and other supplies furnished by the Allies which had been accumulated in particular at the ports of Vladivostok, Archangel and Murmansk.

But it was easier for them to appreciate the problem than to arrive at a mutually acceptable plan of campaign. It was one of those situations in which everyone was agreed that something should be done and only too anxious that someone else should do it.

Great Britain and France shared the view that armed intervention was the only effective course, but, having their own hands already over-full, desired to persuade Japan to undertake the operation on behalf of all the Allies. Urgent measures were required and Japan was conveniently placed to start immediate action at Vladivostok. Moreover, her more energetic and extensive participation in the War was calculated to exercise a depressing

effect upon German "morale", especially if she were prepared to advance as far into the interior as Cheliabinsk, where her presence would produce a military problem of real gravity for Germany.

But there were enormous difficulties in the way. If there was one topic upon which all different shades of Russian opinion were in accord, it was that Japan had designs upon acquiring a permanent foothold in Siberia \$ and if there was one situation calculated to unite all parties in Russia in resistance to a common enemy, it was the prospect of Japan taking steps, even at the request of the Allies, to land troops at Vladivostok.

Moreover, both the President and the people of the United States had a profound and inveterate distrust of Japanese motives and it was in the highest degree improbable that they would assent to an exclusively Japanese force operating in Siberia.

It was with this delicate and complex aspect of the problem that Lord Reading was to be closely concerned throughout the period of his Ambassadorship.

Shortly before his departure from England the British Government had taken two important steps \$ it had decided to send back to Russia Mr. (now Sir) R. H. Bruce Lockhart, who had been in the British Consul-General's office in Moscow from 1912 to 1917, to establish unofficial relations with the still unrecognized Russian Government, and it had instructed Mr. Colville Barclay, charge d'affaires at Washington, to urge upon the United States authorities the advantages of inviting Japan to occupy the Siberian railway as mandatory for the Allies.

The proposal was unlikely to receive a cordial welcome. The President, Colonel House and the State Department were at one in their desire to keep Japan out of Siberia, contending with great force that no military gain could be expected from Japanese intervention proportionate to the risk involved of throwing Russia into the arms of Germany and thereby defeating the whole purpose of the plan.

This aspect of the question had not escaped the notice of the British Government, though they were inclined to the opinion that the Japanese were anyhow contemplating operations in Siberia and that it was better that they should conduct them as mandatories than purely on their own account. Cables from Mr. Balfour both to the Washington Embassy and to Colonel House strongly pressed this view.

But Colonel House was wholly unconvinced and in a letter to the President reiterated the opinion that to send Japanese troops into Siberia would be a profound error of policy and would only serve to kindle bitter hostility to the Allies on the part of the

Russian Government and to rouse all the Slavs of Europe against them.

Lord Reading's task was not made easier by his own deep-seated doubts of the sincerity and disinterestedness of the Japanese, but his instructions were urgent and explicit. The need to assail Germany's position in Russia was of prime importance and the policy which it was his task to press upon President Wilson of armed intervention by Japan under some measure of Allied control seemed to offer the only possible solution.

The President was at first implacably opposed to the plan but within a few days a change had come over the situation in Russia which compelled him to reconsider his view.

Although an armistice had been granted by the Germans as long ago as December 15, 1917, no actual terms of peace had been presented at that stage. When they were subsequently produced, they were found to be so onerous that the Russians refused to sign and contented themselves with declaring the position to be one of "no war and no peace." But the Germans were not prepared to allow matters to remain indefinitely at that equivocal stage and, deciding that coercion was the only remedy, on February 18, 1918, they commenced to advance into Russia on a wide front. The move met with instant success, for the Russian Government, foreseeing that a continuance of the operations could only result in the overthrow of their "regime" and the establishment of a bourgeois government under German protection, gave in and on March 3 signed at Brest-Litovsk the treaty containing Germany's enlarged demands, which was due for ratification a fortnight later.

Meanwhile the Allies, without waiting for American approval, had requested Japan to act as their mandatory in Siberia, a course which, however necessary for the avoidance of further delay, certainly did not facilitate Lord Reading's task.

Notes and cables began to increase and multiply. On February 28 the President drafted a note in which he stated that "the Government of the United States had not thought it wise to join the Governments of the Entente in asking the Japanese Government to act in Siberia. It has no objection to that request being made . . .", and although this somewhat tepid expression of policy was not officially sent to the Allied Ambassadors, its terms were communicated to them by the State Department.

Colonel House was, however, still adamant in his hostility to the proposal and on March 4 he cabled with the President's **approval to Mr. Balfour a message which left no room for doubt as to his views:**

I feel that the proposed Japanese action in Siberia may be the greatest misfortune that has yet befallen the Allies. . . . It would be entirely unfair not to warn you of the dangers of the plan, so far as public opinion in the United States is concerned.

Lord Reading's path was thus beset with difficulties. Nor did the aloofness of the United States go unobserved by the Japanese Government, who formally enquired of the British Government whether this attitude was in any degree due to doubts as to the honesty of purpose of Japan, a pertinent but embarrassing question which could not be left unanswered for long and could receive adequate reply only from the President himself.

Whatever may have been his suspicions that the original plan for Japanese intervention had emanated direct from Tokio for the purpose of giving a cloak of respectability to Japanese designs upon the Maritime Provinces of Siberia, President Wilson found himself under the diplomatic necessity of withdrawing his earlier Note of February 28. On March 5 he issued a substituted document for circulation both to the Allies and to Japan, in which he set out that the United States Government "shares with the Governments of the Entente the view that, if invasion is deemed wise, the Government of Japan is in the best situation to undertake it and could accomplish it most efficiently. It has, moreover, the utmost confidence in the Japanese Government and would be entirely willing, so far as its own feelings towards that Government are concerned, to entrust the enterprise to it."

But after this placatory preamble he went on to cast the gravest doubts upon the wisdom of any such course of action, so that, although Japanese *amour propre* may have been soothed, agreement on the general question was as remote as ever.

"On the same day on which the President issued his note Mr. Bruce-Lockhart had an interview in Moscow with Trotsky, who indicated to him that the Soviet Government would even then refuse to ratify the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk on the due date, if it could count upon effective aid from the Allies, provided always that such aid did not take the form of a Japanese incursion into Siberia, against the irreparable effects of which upon the Russian attitude to the Allies Mr. Bruce-Lockhart warned his Government in plain and emphatic language.

Nevertheless on March 17 Mr. Balfour cabled to Lord Reading a message for communication to the President in the name of the Entente Governments, again urging him to agree to intervention by the Japanese. But the President, now fortified by tha

views of both his Ambassador in Moscow and the Commander-in-Chief of his Asiatic Fleet, refused to shift his ground.

On March 21 the great German attack, the imminence of which had made it impossible for the Allied Governments to comply with Trotsky's request for aid, was launched on the Western Front, and in face of the critical situation created by its initial success the President was led for the first time to reconsider his attitude towards the Far Eastern project, though he was even now only disposed to give it his reluctant blessing if an invitation to take the proposed action could be obtained from the Soviet Government, a condition precedent with which he had already toyed on more than one occasion during the previous weeks.

At last Lord Reading saw some prospect of a favourable outcome to the long and wearing negotiations which would give a welcome gleam of sunlight amidst the prevailing despondency.

Undoubtedly the present battle has modified their (the President's and Colonel House's) views on this as on other subjects [he cabled to Mr. Balfour on March 27]. House is inclined to agree that, apart from the intrinsic value of the scheme, it may be advisable and even necessary to put it into effect for the sake of the Allied morale. At the same time he remains unconvinced as to the real value of the expedition and believes the President will be the same. House points out that his real objection to the scheme is his firm belief that in the end it will prove of far more value to Germany than to ourselves. He foresees the danger that the Germans, by means of skilful propaganda, will be able to arm and organize considerable Russian forces to oppose the Japanese and, acting thus as "saviours of the country", obtain an influence which they otherwise would not have over large parts of Russia. He asks what practical effect a comparatively small Japanese army in Northern Siberia can have on the main theatre of war in France. Unless the Japanese can put in a really big force, he doubts whether they can advance far enough to have the slightest moral effect. He says that no estimate has yet been given as to what maximum force the Japanese could or would employ, and how far they themselves estimate such a force could push along the Trans-Siberian Railroad. Also it is evident the Japanese will require financial and material assistance from the United States. No estimate has been given as to what amount of assistance they will require. In his opinion, a great deal depends on the answers to these two questions. If you can give us some information on these two points, we will press the matter strongly with the President. The argument that will probably most appeal to him is the necessity of helping Allied morale at the present moment and the danger of refusing Japanese assistance, even though we doubt the actual effect such assistance will have on the military operations of the enemy. I pointed out to him that, now that

German morale was so high, it would damp their enthusiasm to know that America will redouble her efforts to help in the West and that Japan with America and the Allies is intervening in the East. He agreed that it would show the Germans that the struggle was not finished. He wondered whether it would be possible to get, even unofficially, some expression of Russian assent to Japanese and American and Allied intervention. . . . This question shows disposition always to revert to making assent of Russia indispensable feature of American policy. Nevertheless I do not think it hopeless at this moment to press for American co-operation without this assent.

But Lord Reading was over-sanguine as to the depth of the impression made by the German break-through, anyhow upon Colonel House, who in one of his rare moments of failure accurately to appreciate a situation informed Mr. Balfour two days later that he had discussed the whole problem again with the President, who hoped that nothing would be done for the moment in view of the uncertainty of the situation, and added the surprising comment that "there seems no reason for immediate action and the situation may possibly clear itself a little later and we would know better what to do."

At least Lord Reading knew only too well what to do, however irksome might be the prospect of doing it. When the President had once given a decision, he was inclined to show impatience at any suggestion that he should reconsider it, regarding such an invitation as implying that he had made up his mind in the first place without due thought and care. Months had already passed in an inconclusive exchange of views \$ the urgency for action had become infinitely more pressing ; but the question must now be left to lie dormant until new events emerged.

It was not until towards the end of April that fresh developments made it possible to reopen discussions.

Mr. Bruce-Lockhart, as the result of frequent talks with both Lenin and Trotsky, had informed the British Foreign Office that the Soviet Government had been so seriously alarmed by the German advance on the Western Front that they were in a mood to agree to action by the Allies in the event of the German forces resuming the offensive in Russia, though the difficulty remained **that** the Germans, being close at hand, could attack Petrograd and Moscow long before the Allies could offer any effective aid. Mr. Balfour thereupon cabled on April 23 to Lord Reading, requesting him to see Colonel House and explain to him that "in my view situation is entirely altered by apparent willingness of Trotsky to invite Allied assistance against German aggression." **Actually a** new proposal was taking shape for an inter-Allied **expedition instead** of an exclusively Japanese one, and when Lord

Reading met Colonel House on April 24 he was able not only to tell him that the British Government believed that Trotsky would agree to such a plan but to persuade him of the necessity for prompt action. Matters were at long last beginning to move, for on the same day Colonel House prepared a memorandum for the President, recapitulating the arguments used by Lord Reading at their interview and insisting that:

It thus becomes of the greatest urgency to re-establish an Allied front in Russia . . . Japan would clearly have to furnish the greater part of any considerable military force which might be used, but it is desirable that all the Allies should participate.

The British War Cabinet are anxious to learn whether The President would be disposed to agree to the following course of action :—

1. Great Britain and the United States to make a simultaneous proposal to the Bolshevik Government on the lines indicated, an undertaking to be given for the withdrawal of all Allied forces at the conclusion of hostilities.

2. An American force . . . to be sent to the Far East.

The suggested plan is one of urgent importance. . . . The problem of Russia is one of pressing urgency.

Before consulting the other Allied Powers the British Government think the most important step is to ascertain whether the President concurs in these proposals, for without his concurrence the British Government would not care to proceed further with them.

Colonel House had advanced a long way in a short time since his expression of opinion a month before that there seemed no reason for immediate action.

This far more realistic and co-operative attitude encouraged Lord Reading to venture to reopen the whole question with the President himself, whom he saw on the next day and before the delivery of Colonel House's summary of the situation.

The President was dubious both of Trotsky's reliability and of the strength of his position in the Soviet Government, but on the major question of intervention he was in a more acquiescent frame of mind. He even went so far as to discuss the possible size of the forces to be sent to Siberia by the United States and remarked that a favourable opportunity of discovering the Japanese attitude would be afforded by the arrival of the new Japanese Ambassador, Viscount Ishii, the next day, though he expressed doubts as to whether Japan would consent to intervene at all if her forces were to be accompanied by contingents from other Powers. The President's suspicions as to the stability of Trotsky's position were well founded. Trotsky had been furiously engaged in creating the new Red Army and was anxious to try out his

creation against the Germans, but Lenin was determinedly pacifist and he was by far the stronger man of the two.

Events also were developing in Lenin's favour, for the Germans, in difficulties in the Ukraine, eager to reinforce the Western Front, lacking the materials to re-establish the derelict Russian industries, and anxious for tranquillity in Central Russia in order that they might be free to exploit the riches of the Southern regions and the Caucasus, began to adopt a far more conciliatory attitude. And as German truculence diminished, so the prospects of an invitation from the Soviet Government to the Allies decreased.

Thereupon President Wilson, who had set great store by the Russian Government regularizing the proposed campaign by extending a request to the Allies for help, again hardened in his opposition to the whole scheme, and it was with the most pessimistic expectations that, forewarned by Colonel House, Lord Reading again raised the subject with him on May 22. On the next day he reported to London the negative outcome of the discussion.

At my interview with the President yesterday I again represented your views on intervention in Russia. As I expected, I found the President quite decided in the opinion that the moment was inopportune, in other words that he did not think the circumstances sufficiently warranted the proposed action. . . . I asked the President whether in the present circumstances he was of opinion that no action should be taken or whether he proposed any other operation. His answer was that he much regretted it but saw no alternative at the moment other than an anxious watching of the situation. . . .

The position in Washington, which not so long before had shown signs of progress, was thus static again, but throughout the month of May Mr. Bruce-Lockhart had been steadily coming round to the conviction that intervention was essential, even if no invitation was forthcoming, and on May 28, at the urgent insistence of the French, Italian and American representatives in Moscow, he cabled to London an emphatic expression of their unanimous views. But he again warned the British Government of the Russians' inveterate dislike and distrust of the Japanese.

Mr. Bruce-Lockhart noted that, having at last been satisfied by German assurance that they had no intention of advancing further into Central Russia, the Russians had begun a campaign against Allied intervention, and that this *rapprochement* between the German and Soviet Governments created a situation fraught with immense danger.

It was, however, easier to advocate intervention than to effect it. The Japanese diplomats in London and Washington were expressing surprise at the extended character of the operations proposed to them, protesting the necessity of further careful consultation with their Government before any final decision could be given. The Russians seemed on one day to be toying with the idea of inviting Allied help and on the next to be inclining towards the Germans' outstretched arms. The President had once more entrenched himself on his old ground of no intervention without invitation.

Lprd Reading was again driven to reluctant waiting, lest by excessive and inopportune persistence he should mar his friendly relations with the President and Colonel House. It soon became evident that whatever hope of an invitation from the Russian Government might ever have existed had disappeared for good. Early in June an invitation to the Allies from the Congress of Russian Social Revolutionaries produced so fierce an attack upon that party by the Russian Government as to leave no room for doubt as to their hostility to foreign aid. The Soviet Government now declared themselves convinced that intervention would be synonymous with reaction. They were further confirmed in their opposition by rumours that an invasion of Siberia was to be undertaken by Japanese and even by Chinese troops, and in particular they were strongly influenced by an entirely new factor in the situation.

War against Russia had from the outset been unpopular with the Slavs included amongst the heterogeneous population of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and in the course of the fighting some 500,000 had deserted, from amongst whom Dr. Masaryk, the Czech leader and subsequent first President of Czecho-Slovakia, had, with the consent of the Russian Provisional Government, formed an army immediately after the downfall of the Tsarist regime in March, 1917.

By the spring of 1918 this force, numbering some 120,000 men, was in the Ukraine and the Soviet Government agreed to transport them across Siberia to Vladivostok on condition that the Allies would provide ships to convey them to France, where they were willing to fight against the Germans on the faith of a guarantee of the ultimate deliverance of their country from Austrian rule.

By April, 1918, large numbers of Czecho-Slovaks were waiting at Vladivostok for ships, which were continually promised but never arrived. Finally, their patience exhausted, they began to create disturbances on so serious a scale as to lead Great Britain

and Japan to land forces to quell the outbreak, in spite of Soviet protests at this violation of their territory.

But this incident was only the overture to graver trouble. At the end of May 12,000 Czecho-Slovaks were already in Vladivostok but many more were held up along the railway in the interior. Meanwhile the Russians had apparently come to the conclusion that the delay in the arrival of the transports was deliberate and that the Allies' real intention was not to send the Czecho-Slovak army to France but to employ it on the spot to reinforce the Japanese in an invasion of Siberia. The Czecho-Slovaks, on the other hand, were convinced that the Soviet Government had decided under German pressure to intern them and thus prevent their transference to the Western Front. Mutual distrust first simmered and then boiled over ; on May 26 the Czecho-Slovaks seized the important centre of Cheliabinsk, towards which the Entente Powers had been striving for so long to impel Japan.

Within a few weeks the Czecho-Slovaks were in control of large sections of the Trans-Siberian Railway between Penza and Irkutsk, had disarmed the local garrisons of the Red Army, seized Samara, Kazan and Simbirsk on the Volga, and seemed determined to fight their way through to the Far Eastern sea-board.

This sudden development gave a fresh turn to the situation and a new impetus to the policy of intervention. From that moment discussions on the side of the Allies proceeded mainly on the basis already contemplated with alarm by the Soviet Government, that the Czecho-Slovaks should now be used not in France but in Siberia.

It almost seemed as if something definite were about to happen, especially when the Supreme War Council at Versailles took a hand and after reviewing the whole situation in Russia passed a resolution embodying their views.

Japanese Intervention.

Supreme War Council took note of agreement reached that morning by Foreign Ministers of France, Great Britain and Italy to approach Japanese Government on the subject of action in Siberia, the common desiderata of the aforesaid Powers being:

- A. that Japan should promise to*respect territorial integrity of Russia-;
- B. that she should take no side in the internal politics of the country ;
- C. that she should advance as far West as possible for the purpose of encountering the Germans.

The Foreign Ministers had further agreed that, if Japan were willing to intervene on these conditions, a further effort should then be made to procure President Wilson's assent.

As it was believed that the Germans were contemplating in the immediate future a drive towards Murmansk, where a British force under Admiral Kemp had landed earlier in the year, and also towards Archangel, it was decided to ask the National Czechoslovak Council to maintain a small force to assist in the defence of those ports, while the Allies again made efforts to arrange for the shipment of the remainder from Vladivostok.

Armed with a summary of these resolutions, Lord Reading waited upon the President on June 8, only to find him prepared to send an American force to Murmansk but still resolutely opposed to any proposal for action in the Vladivostok area which might adversely affect relations between Russia and the United States. Significantly, the President made no mention of Japan, though it seems probable that his deep distrust of that country was throughout one of the chief grounds for his reluctance to move.

Nevertheless towards the middle of June, when Lord Reading was thoroughly perplexed as to his next step, the President himself conceived an entirely novel scheme. His mind began to work upon the project of sending to Vladivostok an Allied Relief Commission with Mr. Hoover at its head, accompanied by sufficient troops to afford it protection, in order that the Allies might contribute supplies of food and other stores and Mr. Hoover might lend his unrivalled experience to help the Russians to reorganize their own resources to better advantage. The President intended that, as soon as the Commission was prepared to start, the Soviet Government should be asked to invite it to come, and he believed that they would find great difficulty in refusing. Probably, once Mr. Hoover was on the spot, the President would have been largely guided by his advice and, if he had reported that armed intervention, even preponderatingly Japanese, would be acceptable to the Russian people, the President would have favoured the plan.

The reason behind this sudden change of policy was to be found no further afield than in America itself. A President, as Mr. Wilson was fond of saying, "has to keep his ear to the ground," and at that moment a press-campaign was in progress against what was thought to be the inertia of the Administration and had already assumed such formidable proportions as to be a serious embarrassment. Moreover, persuasion to take some definite action was now being exercised by Mr. Francis, the American Ambassador in Moscow, and other American officials, as well as by Dr. Masaryk, the Czecho-Slovak leader, who was then in the

United States. In addition the French Government, which had always strongly supported the policy of intervention and was becoming most uneasy at the continual delays, sent over General Berthelot, who had recently left Russia, ostensibly to advise the American Army on training questions but actually to lay before the President the military aspect of intervention.

The General conceived the problem as exclusively military in character. The Germans, disappointed in their quest for food-stuffs within the area of Russia then under their control, were intent upon securing the supplies obtainable from Siberia, and it was the Allies' business to prevent them. He did not consider that a larger force was necessary than five or six Japanese divisions, one American division, a British brigade and such troops as the French and Italians could muster for the purpose, since he was convinced that large numbers of Russian volunteers would flock to lend their aid. But he regarded the proposed operations as an absolute necessity for the future strategical conduct of the War and he hoped that they might prove the prelude to a far more extensive campaign against Germany on the part of Japan.

The interview between General Berthelot and the President took place on June 17. Mr. Wilson was greatly interested and remarked that, as the Allies had now nominated General Foch as Generalissimo, he would not set the bad example of not following his advice or abiding by his decisions.

General Berthelot and Dr. Masaryk both made a deep impression on the President's mind, which had been rendered more receptive in advance by the vigorous Press campaign.

On June 20 Mr. Balfour joined in these successive representations to Mr. Wilson by cabling his view that "unless Russia can reconstitute herself as a military power in the East against the time when the Allied armies are withdrawn, nothing can prevent the complete absorption of her resources by the Central Powers, which would imply world domination by Germany, and the only means by which resurrection of Russia can be brought about is by immediate allied military intervention in that theatre."

Colonel House also resumed his activities in the matter. Having discussed the whole position with Lord Reading on June 17 and 21, he wrote to the President: "I believe something must be done immediately about Russia, otherwise it will become the prey of Germany. It has now become a question of days rather than months." He then proceeded to discuss the proposal to send Mr. Hoover and outlined a speech to be made by the President to Congress on the subject, adding by way of considerable overstatement, "Lord Reading is enthusiastic over this plan."

Actually Lord Reading was not greatly attracted by the scheme to substitute a civil commission for a military force, but he was prepared to accept it rather than see matters remain at a standstill when the need for instant action was overwhelming.

Still the President remained obdurate, until on June 27 he received a cable direct from General Foch, to whom his remark to General Berthelot had no doubt been promptly conveyed.

In my opinion [stated the Generalissimo] the sending by you of American troops to Russia is justified, for no appreciable diminution of the number of troops to be sent to France will result therefrom. I conceive the expedition to Siberia as having to be mainly formed with Japanese elements. The Allies' contingents would be reduced to modest numbers ; some 12,000 men or thereabouts. America could supply at once two regiments and the Allies the rest. Under those conditions the American troops sent to France would only be reduced in an insignificant way.

More than ever, in the interest of military success in Europe, I consider the expedition to Siberia as a very important factor for victory, provided action be immediate on account of the season being already advanced. I take the liberty of insisting on this last point.

By this time American public opinion had been thoroughly awakened to the need for prompt steps of some kind being taken in Russia but it had not shewn a definite preference for any one course, though hostility to Japanese action had markedly decreased.

The President continued to ponder, wondering into what unpredictable difficulties the United States might be ultimately led by his acceptance of the adventure of intervention. He was reported as "anxious but unconvinced," and early in July was still writing to Colonel House : "I have been sweating blood over the question what is right and feasible to do in Russia."

Lord Reading realized once again that an appearance of too much zeal on his part, especially in the form of too frequent interviews, might only precipitate a decision contrary to the policy of the Allies. He was therefore obliged to walk delicately and to take, rather than make, his opportunities for urging his Government's views upon the President.

Meanwhile he felt it necessary to summarize for the Prime Minister the considerations which were influencing opinion in the United States and on July 12 sent him a cable containing "observation for your personal information on the attitude of the President and the public here generally regarding Russia."

The overthrow of the Czar and establishment of a republic was welcomed with the utmost enthusiasm in America. The sympathy and

hope for the new republic was, I believe, far stronger and more genuine here than in Europe. Ever since the question of intervention was first discussed, Americans have feared that the interventionist movement would be controlled by friends of the old Imperial regime, and, however disguised, intervention would eventually prove to be a reactionary weapon and an anti-republican influence. Further, the President is apprehensive lest any intervention should be converted into an anti-Soviet movement and an interference with the right of Russians to choose their own form of government.

Americans have observed that some of the strongest supporters of intervention have been men with conservative views and some of its strongest opponents the more advanced liberals. . . .

I would suggest that in addition to any military officers, you should also send to Siberia a labour or socialist delegation headed by some prominent labour leader. I think this would have a good effect in Russia, but I am quite certain it would have a most excellent effect here and be in itself an answer to much of the present doubt and criticism. We should take care to reassure opinion here in order to carry the President with us in any further movement that may become necessary. At present his intention is to help the Czecho-Slovaks, but nevertheless, as I read his mind, it is still opposed to intervention and somewhat apprehensive lest the step he is now willing to take should lead him into a much more extended policy. It is for this reason I think it is important to give a liberal turn to our assistance to Russia. Of course, we should inform and consult him before sending such a delegation. The very proposal would, I believe, be helpful.

In reply, Mr. Lloyd George expressed himself as attracted to the principle of Lord Reading's suggestion for sending labour or socialist representatives, but hampered by the practical difficulty of finding suitable men. There was also the obstacle of language to be overcome. "If, however, the President proposed to send powerful political delegation, representative of the Allies, but in which the United States should take leading part, we would certainly send liberal or labour representatives to accompany it."

Lord Reading was due to leave America at the end of July to consult with the Cabinet in London and was therefore most anxious to obtain from the President before his departure approval for a definite course of action. But before he could ask for a final interview, he received an *aide-memoire* prepared by Mr. Wilson himself which showed him as still confirmed in his original view that military intervention was likely to do more harm than good. In his considered view, so long as the situation on the Western front remained critical, it was injudicious to divert troops from France to another theatre of war. He was prepared to assent to

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"modest and experimental" operations at Murmansk and Vladivostok, but he and the Government of the United States were now firmly opposed to intervention on any substantial scale.

But the problem of the Czechs remained. Their plight, coupled with the growing vehemence of American public opinion, required that some steps, however "modest and experimental," should be taken without delay. Mr. Wilson accordingly so far overcame his doubts of the Japanese as to enquire whether they would agree to send a contingent to Vladivostok in conjunction with the United States, and after some slight delay the Japanese announced their readiness to land such a force, though they refused to entertain the more extensive project of an advance up to the Urals which had been the desire of the British Cabinet.

On July 23 Lord Reading was in New York on his way to embark for England. Ever since his arrival in the previous February the Russian question had been amongst his most pressing and constant preoccupations. He had dealt with innumerable cables on the subject, discussed it time and again with Colonel House and the State Department, and seized every propitious opening to raise it with the President himself. After nearly six months of difficulties, disappointments and delays there was at last a prospect of action, albeit within narrow limits. He could leave without feeling that all his efforts had been fruitless, though he was still fearful of the consequences of delay. On the very eve of sailing he found time to write to Mr. Polk, the Assistant Secretary of State at Washington,

My reports from. Siberia and Russia strongly emphasize the need for immediate action. I confess that the delay is rather on my mind, as I am sure it is on yours, so I hope the Japanese will hurry. It would be a dreadful reflection if the Czecho-Slovaks met with a disaster which could have been avoided by prompter assistance.

The matter was now for the time being out of his hands, but on his return to America in March of 1919, over four months after the Armistice, a conflict was still raging in Siberia.

Early in August of 1918 the Russians began to seize the war material originally sent by the Allies to Archangel for use by the Czarist army and to sell it to the Germans. Thereupon a British force which had been at Murmansk since the previous March captured Archangel by a surprise attack and other British troops landed at Vladivostok, closely followed by French, Japanese and American forces and afterwards supplemented by contingents from other Allied nations. **Later** in the same month this mixed **force moved** forward as **far** as **Lake** Baikal and effected a junction **with**

the Czecho-Slovak army. It has been estimated that by the spring of 1919 some 55,000 Czecho-Slovaks, 28,000 Japanese, 12,000 Poles, 7,500 Americans, 4,000 each of Canadians, Serbians and Roumanians, 2,000 Italians, 1,600 British and 750 French had been assembled on the spot and were still learning the lesson that Siberia is a country easier to invade than to evacuate.

It was not until January, 1920, that the Allied forces left Archangel, while the Japanese remained in and about Vladivostok until 1925. But if after so much preliminary labour little was in the end effected by the operations in Siberia, it must not be forgotten that the collapse of resistance by Germany and her allies came with wholly unexpected swiftness and thoroughness in the autumn of 1918 and thus averted the possibility of the very danger against which the Siberian diversion was intended to provide.

With these major problems of Anglo-American relations there was interwoven immediately on Lord Reading's arrival a question of temporary, though, so long as it lasted, very real importance which gave him his first contact with Indian affairs and incidentally reflected the greatest credit upon the driving power and public spirit of all those concerned in its prompt and successful solution.

Ever since the outbreak of war the export trade of India with the Allies and with the United States had been steadily increasing, until by the end of 1917 very substantial quantities of jute, hides, cotton, wheat and other grains were involved. Now the expansion of the market for these primary articles necessitated in the early stages of most transactions the making of payments to an ever larger number of producers, who were in the vast majority of cases uneducated peasants with a resolute preference for being paid in silver rather than in notes. India possessed a paper as well as a metal currency, but although the note-issue had been widely extended to meet the requirements of war conditions, it was only tolerated in the conditions of the time on the terms that all notes were instantly convertible into specie on demand.

From July, 1914 to the end of 1917 the total value of the notes in circulation increased by 43 per cent, while the silver backing, which should have risen proportionately, in fact decreased over the same period from a figure of 45 per cent on the whole note issue to one of 15 per cent.

An extremely hazardous position was thus created and was not improved by the acute scarcity of silver as a purchasable commodity.

The Government of India had certainly not been taken unawares. For a long time before the situation showed signs of coming to a head they had been seeking by every means in their power to buy silver in competition with other countries whose

demands for it were similarly inflated, as well as with private purchasers until private imports were prohibited. But world-production had substantially fallen, largely owing to the effect of disturbed local conditions upon the output of the silver-mines of Mexico, while prices had risen from between 26 and 29 pence an ounce in 1913-14 to 55 pence an ounce in September of 1917.

So urgent was the call for increased supplies in India that, although since the outbreak of war she had absorbed nearly two-thirds of the total production from all sources, she still found her wants largely unsatisfied and a perilously narrow margin of silver rupees available for the redemption of notes.

With the growing volume of trade between India and the United States American importers, including the Government, began to experience grave difficulties in obtaining the rupee-exchange required to finance their purchases, and at the end of May, 1917, the American Ambassador in London referred in particular to the difficulties of payment for purchases of jute.

An investigation of the whole problem was thereupon undertaken, the results of which were highly disturbing to American opinion, for it became manifest that, if India was to be furnished with supplies of silver in anything like the quantities needed to ensure the smooth working of trade, the only possible source from which they could be provided was the silver held by the United States Government as security for its silver certificates and already minted into dollars.

When the proposal was first mooted, the authorities at Washington firmly refused to entertain it. Such a step was opposed to national sentiment, contrary to precedent and might even be regarded as undermining the financial stability of the country. But in the following months every other possible expedient was critically examined and eventually rejected, while the situation in India moved rapidly from bad to worse, until at the end of 1917 the Government of the United States were forced to the conclusion that the maintenance of India's trade was so vital to America and the Allies that adoption of the original proposal must at least be discussed as a war-time emergency measure in the absence of any acceptable alternative.

This was the stage at which the matter had arrived at the time when the British Cabinet decided to send Lord Reading as Ambassador to Washington.

The campaign in Mesopotamia had imposed and was still imposing a severe strain upon the Indian financial system and raised many other formidable difficulties as well, while inside India an outbreak of violent revolutionary conspiracies was causing

grave concern to the Administration. But overshadowing every other'preoccupation was the insistent problem of the provision of silver. If the necessary supplies were not forthcoming the result would be a general failure of the note circulation, the consequences of which must be disastrous to the further prosecution of the War.

News in India travels by swift and mysterious ways. If in one or two places the holder of a note found himself unable to obtain the desired silver in exchange, it would not be long before millions of credulous and illiterate people believed that both the Government of India and Great Britain herself were bankrupt. There would be plenty of agitators eager to seize upon and embellish the rumour until panic ensued. There would be a run upon the banks 5 manufacturers and agriculturists would withhold their goods, the flourishing export trade would melt away; and India's invaluable military and economic contribution would cease, if not finally, at least for an indefinite period at the most crucial stage of the War.

It was therefore with great satisfaction that Mr. Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, learnt of Lord Reading's impending return to America, for he realized that with his knowledge of financial matters and his excellent personal relations with the heads of the United States Treasury and with the President the new Ambassador was the ideal man to take up this pressing question in Washington. Accordingly just before his departure Lord Reading attended a long conference with Mr. Bonar Law, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Montagu, at which the whole problem was reviewed with special emphasis upon the importance of the time factor. Lord Reading was of course prepared to deal with the matter, but he was already overburdened with problems to be digested on the voyage and discussed on arrival, and, knowing little of Indian affairs, he insisted **that** if he was to engage in a race against time in connection with the silver question, he must be accompanied by a specialist on **Indian** finance. By good fortune such an expert was available in the person of Mr. (now Sir James) Brunyate, C.S.L., C.L.E., who **had had** 25 years' experience of India, seven of them as a Member of the Governor-General's Legislative Council, had been from 1913 to 1917 Secretary to the Finance Department of the Government of **India**, and was then serving as a Member of the Secretary of State's Council at the India Office in London.

Mr. Brunyate's functions were to be two-fold, first, **to supply the Ambassador with detailed information, to keep him posted as to the course of events in India and to prepare such "brief" as**

he might require for interviews with the Secretary of the Treasury or the President himself, and secondly, to establish direct contacts immediately on arrival with the Treasury officials and to furnish them and Members of Congress with all particulars as to India's financial problem and its relation to America, to the Allies and to the general conduct of the War.

On reaching Washington he therefore at once got into touch with Mr. R. C. Leffingwell, a man of outstanding position who had been invited by Mr. McAdoo to put his services at the disposal of the Government and was then serving as an Assistant-Secretary of State. It was to him that this question of the Mint Silver had been assigned and he had taken part in all the negotiations which had been proceeding since June of the previous year. It was therefore only necessary to acquaint him with the developments which had taken place in the situation during the past few weeks.

But before committing himself Mr. Leffingwell very reasonably required an assurance on one point: if India did not get the silver, was a crash inevitable? To this direct question Mr. Brunyate gave a cautious but cogent reply. It could not be said with certainty that there would be a crash. The chance was perhaps one in five, but even so was it worth taking? Moreover, the risk of a crash would be greatly increased if the German armies scored an initial success in the offensive which was then being prepared in Prance, especially if the attack coincided with a phase of specially acute shortage of metal currency in India. "Very well," said Mr. Leffingwell, "that settles it. Whenever we have taken a chance in this war, it has always gone against us. That must not happen this time."

But before any proposal could be put into operation, it would be necessary for an Act to be passed by Congress and it was therefore essential to instruct those who would be called upon to vote on the measure in the realities of an exceptional situation, the ramifications of which they could scarcely be expected to appreciate of their own knowledge.

The actual negotiations began in a favourable atmosphere, for both parties not only were united in a common desire for the efficient prosecution of the War but shared a mutual interest in the particular proposals under consideration.

But although the British representatives knew that the position in India was highly precarious, they were not yet aware that a breakdown was imminent, while from the American point of view their concern with the matter, though real enough, did not appear to be a matter of immediate urgency. There were other legislative projects on the stocks which were recognized as having

prior claims: some considerable delay was therefore to be expected before the necessary measure could be introduced and even then its passage might be controversial and prolonged. But the course of events ruled out any such leisurely programme. By February messages from India showed that the currency situation was rapidly deteriorating and was causing intense anxiety, and Lord Reading realized that some instant action was necessary in order to tide over the period which must elapse before the Bill could become law.

He accordingly sought an interview with Mr. McAdoo and Mr. Leffingwell, at which in response to his urgent representations they agreed to sell to the Government of India as an emergency measure six million ounces of Mint silver not yet converted into coinage, in advance of any supplies which might subsequently be authorized from the dollar reserve.

To their agreement only one condition was attached, to which Lord Reading at once assented, that he should give a written assurance of the necessity for immediate help, in order that at a later stage the document might "be produced in Congress if public attention had meanwhile been called to the transaction.*¹ By March 5 the United States Government were ready to dispatch the consignment, and so urgent was the Government of India's need that they sent a special ship to meet it at the Pacific seaboard and transport it to India without delay.

This preliminary transaction was of great value in two respects ; it established a precedent in America and it gave a measure of hope in India. The arrival of the six million ounces could not have been more opportune, for early in April the situation in India passed with unexpected suddenness from ominous uncertainty to recognizable crisis. The seat of the trouble was in Bombay, where on the reopening of the banks after the Easter holidays the silver balance stood at the equivalent of £867,000, only to be reduced within the next three days to £127,000. Simultaneously difficulties arose in Madras, where the currency office closed on April 12 with a balance of no more than £7,000 in silver, and in Rangoon, where on the same date one tenderer of a note was actually refused silver in exchange.

At both these places the situation was saved by the providential incidence of local holidays, which required the closing of offices and enabled the respite to be used in collecting for issue any rupees which could be found lying in treasuries or sub-treasuries.

All over India a frenzied game of General Post was in progress, with the specie being moved backwards and forwards in small amounts by any and every mode of transport, wherever the

sorely needed rupees could be scraped together. In one centre the authorities were even driven to gain time by adopting the ingenious device of declaring a Saturday as a special local holiday in order that together with Friday, which happened to be a general holiday, and the subsequent Sunday they might secure three uninterrupted days of grace. But such expedients could not avert for long an openly admitted breakdown. The melting away of the silver reserves was only too manifest from the depressing weekly returns of the Paper Currency Department, and the public were now demanding silver for their notes with an insistence perilously close to panic.

It would have had an immense and immediate effect in steadying opinion in India if Lord Reading had been able to communicate to the Indian Government some reassuring message as to the probability of the prompt passage of the Bill through Congress and the benefits to be derived by India from its enactment. But the Bill had only been introduced on April 9, and any pronouncement by Lord Reading at that stage would at once have been vigorously assailed as an attempt to prejudice the issue by interfering with the freedom of the United States Legislature. The Bill, which had been presented primarily as a matter of concern to America, was a complicated measure and in spite of Mr. Brunyate's assiduous efforts to state the Indian case to Members of Congress and to answer their multifarious questions, it still bristled with opportunities for controversy and consequent delay.

But the currency position in India was on the point of collapse and some immediate action was required if it was to be saved even at almost the twelfth hour.

On April 11, while Lord Reading was in Chicago, Mr. Brunyate, on receiving the details of coin absorption in India during the first week of the month, was so much alarmed by the situation disclosed that he hastened to the Treasury and there communicated the figures and explained their significance. In response to his representations the Treasury authorities agreed to part with a further quantity of two million ounces of Mint silver for immediate dispatch, but this step, however welcome, was again only a palliative ; the one hope of permanent relief lay in the rapid passage of the Bill.

Both Lord Reading and Mr. Brunyate feared that at any moment the Government of India might be driven to declare the inconvertibility of the large note-issue, and that the consequences of such an announcement would not only bring into operation in India all the disastrous possibilities which had been discussed before their departure from London but also lead Congress to

abandon the proposed legislation, when once its prime purpose of **the** maintenance of convertibility had failed.

After a day of great anxiety the Ambassador decided on the evening of April 13 to cable to London the suggestion that he should be authorized to urge the United States Government to push the Bill through Congress by every means in their power on the express ground of India's dire need, and by a coincidence at the very moment a cable was on its way to him from London announcing that the Government of India now regarded inconvertibility as "practically inevitable."

Accordingly on April 15 Lord Reading saw Mr. Leffingwell to urge upon him the necessity for the Bill to be passed with the Utmost expedition, and Mr. Leffingwell, in Lord Reading's own words, "while not concealing from himself or from me the serious difficulties, showed ready and helpful appreciation of the urgency of the crisis, and at once set in motion the proceedings which resulted in the complete passage of the Bill (on which nothing but formal action had then been taken) within one week from the date of our meeting. I am informed that such expedition is without precedent in the history of legislation in the United States."

For a moment during the passage of the Bill opposition to it threatened to become open and clamorous, but at that juncture the President himself moved.

As Lord Reading reported to London, "In the end the factor which closed discussion and precluded further amendment was a formal message from the President urging the immediate passage of the Bill in the form in which it had left the Senate as a war measure of national importance."

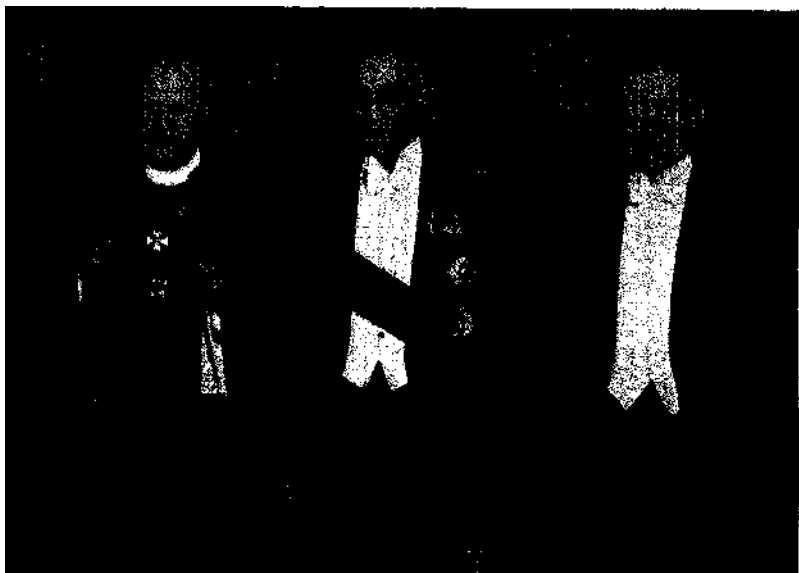
Congress loyally followed his lead and on April 23 the Pittman Act, as it had come to be called after its chief sponsor, Senator Pittman, came into force.

From that moment the situation in India was saved, for although for some months to come the position was still very difficult and at one time the rupee backing of the notes fell to only 5 per cent of those in circulation, it was now known that, as the official report of the Indian Currency Department records, "the arrivals of silver were merely a question of transport and, therefore, of time."

Once the prospect of this relief was assured, the Currency Department so far regained public confidence as to be able by various expedients to tide over the necessarily long interval required for defacing the dollars in America, shipping them to India and there coining them into rupees.



Lord Heading was selected for the post of Viceroy of India by Mr. Lloyd George when head of the Coalition Government. They are seen together at Chequers in 1921



AT AN ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION DINNER
with the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Lang) and the American Ambassador
(General Dawes)



WITH H.R.H. THE, PRINCE OF WALES
at the unveiling at Delhi in 1922 of *the* All-India Memorial to
King Edward VII

Eventually some 200 million fine ounces of silver were acquired by the Government of India under the Pittman Act.

As soon as the news that the Bill had become law reached England, the Prime Minister sent to the India Office the draft of a cable for transmission to Lord Reading.

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April 23. His Majesty's Government desire you to convey personally to the President, in whatever terms you judge most suitable, a cordial expression of their thanks for the timely assistance rendered by the expeditious passage of the Silver Legislation. They are well aware that nothing but the combined goodwill of the United States Government, the Legislature and the American people could have brought about this fortunate result.

It was a particular satisfaction to Lord Reading that on his strong recommendation the King conferred upon Mr. Brunyate the K.C.S.I, in recognition of the success which had attended the discharge of his special task.

Throughout all this time the "sea-serpent" of the Demand Loan had continued intermittently to rear its unwelcome head.

At the end of 1917 Mr. McAdoo had put forward the very reasonable request that in return for finding the necessary money the United States Treasury should be subrogated to the rights of the holders of the British notes due to mature in the following February.

Mr. Bonar Law, however, found himself in some difficulty for political reasons in assenting to any such direct pledging of securities. In a cable of January 28 he informed Mr. McAdoo that he feared that it was "bound to cause unfavourable comment in this country, and that I shall have to face British Parliamentary crisis for consenting to a precedent for which it will be pointed out there is no parallel in our own dealings with Allies." Nevertheless, he was so deeply appreciative of the assistance given by the United States Treasury in this otherwise apparently insoluble problem that he expressed himself as reluctant to object to the condition if Mr. McAdoo regarded it as useful to him in meeting his own political troubles.

Mr. McAdoo dealt with the situation in his usual generous spirit. He replied that in view of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's opinion he was constrained, though with great reluctance, to defer to his wishes, adding that the sole object of his original suggestion had been to promote and serve the common cause. On February 6, 1918, Mr. Bonar Law replied in an equally friendly tone, **saying that** he feared that his first cable had been misunderstood.

I intended last paragraph to mean that I left myself entirely in your hands. The last thing I should have thought of would have been that I should make conditions as to financial assistance accorded us by the United States Government. You have to bear great burden of Allied finance in the United States and you rightly rely on our co-operation in every way and to leave you a free hand as to proper solution of current problems.

I am giving instructions that you are to be subrogated to lien of former lenders upon securities previously pledged to holders of one year notes and that these securities as well as other securities pledged to secure overdraft be dealt with according to your instructions.

Mr. McAdoo in reply expressed his "profound appreciation of your acceptance of my views" and added that "this action on your part will greatly strengthen my hands in the heavy task of making provision for your and our financial needs."

A list of the securities covered by this arrangement was duly supplied to the United States Treasury, but no request for their actual deposit was ever made and none were in fact deposited.

Lord Reading arrived in Washington as Ambassador immediately after this interchange of cables and was in time to discuss with the authorities there the scope and effect of them.

Apparently the Chancellor's assurance, conveyed in very general terms, had revived in the minds of some Treasury officials in Washington the hope that the principle of subrogation could be extended to include the £17,200,000 due for the ships. But, as Mr. Leffingwell told the United States Senate Committee on the Munitions Industry in his evidence many years later, "if so, the hope was promptly extinguished by Lord Reading upon *hU* return to Washington. Lord Reading's talks with our Treasury and the talks of other British Treasury representatives with our Treasury resulted in a thorough understanding between the Secretary of the Treasury and his assistants on the one hand and the British Treasury and its representatives on the other hand."

The cordial relations established by this clarification are well illustrated by the circumstances attending the British negotiations at the end of February for a loan of £10,000,000 in Holland. This loan had naturally to be supported by security, and on February 27 Lord Reading wrote to Mr. McAdoo, enquiring whether he saw any objection to the use for this purpose of a part of the securities under the control of the British Treasury which were then in the United States. Mr. McAdoo at once agreed to the proposal, recognizing that any loan obtained by Great Britain was a contribution to the common cause. His personal confidence in Lord Reading and the harmony of their

collaboration is shown by the same incident, for in asking that he should be told exactly which securities the British Treasury desired to earmark for the purpose, he added that, if the matter were pressing, he would not insist upon this stipulation, but would be quite content to leave it to Lord Reading to decide.

The next financial obstacle to be surmounted consisted of the September 1, 1918, maturities, for the discharge of which a sum of £40,000,000 had to be provided. Early in the month of June Mr. McAdoo and Mr. Crosby, who had by then returned from England, discussed the position with Lord Reading and in a letter of June 15 Mr. Crosby reminded him that Mr. McAdoo had expressed the hope at their interview that arrangements would be made for the necessary funds to be forthcoming through banking channels.

Thereupon Lord Reading once again turned to Mr. Morgan, but the result of their conversation in Washington was not encouraging, since the former difficulty that the Liberty Loans had left little money free for investment still persisted, and the rate of interest offered in order to commend any new loan operation by the British Government to the American public would have to be excessively high. For the moment Mr. Morgan could do no more than undertake to think the matter over and to send a considered opinion in writing after his return to New York.

But the United States Treasury was not yet "weary of well-doing/' On July 16 Lord Reading had an interview with Mr. Leffingwell, who was in charge during Mr. McAdoo's temporary absence, at which he pointed out the difficulties which had emerged from his discussion with Mr. Morgan and promised to send on a copy of Mr. Morgan's considered opinion when it arrived.

Mr. Leffingwell was in the position of having to answer two baffling but vital questions : could the United States afford to allow Great Britain's credit to be impaired by the flotation of a loan upon damagingly onerous terms ? and could any source be found from which to pay off the Demand Loan, the liquidation of which was a condition precedent to the making of any new issue ?

Without even waiting for the reinforcement of Mr. Morgan's views, he came to his own conclusion and on July 17 telegraphed to Mr. McAdoo :

Reading will probably not be able to wait until your return. May I tell him that, if it becomes necessary, we will deal with September 1 maturity on lines similar to those adopted February 1 ? After making enquiry . . . I am satisfied that we shall have to do this and I think it would be very helpful . . . if I could give this assurance at this time.

On the same day on which this telegram was dispatched Lord

Reading received Mr. Morgan's promised letter, which confirmed his own view that a new issue was impracticable but made proposals for the formation of a syndicate to handle the matter, if the Demand Loan could first be paid off, though Mr. Morgan expressed the sincere hope that some other way would be found of obtaining the money at less cost and added his deep regrets at "being forced to give such a discouraging answer to your question."

A copy of this letter was duly forwarded without comment to Mr. Leffingwell. On July 19 Mr. McAdoo telegraphed his permission for the proposed assurances to be given and Mr. Leffingwell, in handing on the good news to Lord Reading, took the opportunity to clarify the situation as regards the Demand Loan. "Mr. Morgan told me," he wrote, "that if this were done [money advanced by the United States Treasury to meet the September maturities], and if his firm had permission to liquidate the call loan gradually through sales of collateral pledged as security for it, made in consultation with you and the United States Treasury, the call loan need give us no further concern."

The effect of these decisions was highly beneficial in every direction. It came as a great relief to the British Treasury and lifted a heavy weight of anxiety from the minds of Lord Reading and Sir Hardman Lever. The removal of the ban on the selling of collateral was most satisfactory both to the British Government and to Messrs. Morgan, while the United States Treasury reaped great advantage from the arrangement that Great Britain would in future take care of the Demand Loan without having recourse to America. From the gradual reduction in the amount of the Demand Loan and the meeting of the September maturities two favourable consequences were likely to emerge j in the first place, more money would be available in the hands of investors for the forthcoming further Liberty Loan, and in the second place the credit of Great Britain would be materially enhanced.

In recognition of this happy state of affairs on July 29, within a few days of sailing for home, Lord Reading conveyed to the Secretary of the Treasury a message of gratitude from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to which he appended his own tribute to Mr. McAdoo's generous co-operation.

British Embassy,
Washington,
July 29, 1918.

The Honourable W. G. McAdoo.

My dear Mr. Secretary,

&., The Chancellor of the Exchequer desires me to express his **warm thanks** to you **for the** assistance you have decided **to give the British**

Treasury in the matter of the maturity of September 1, It is a great satisfaction to him to know that you share his views that the terms proposed by Messrs. Morgan were impossible of acceptance by the British Government. Indeed he never had any doubts but that you would come to this conclusion. Nevertheless it is a relief to him to know your decision so promptly, and he trusts that you will understand how much he appreciates your action.

May I, my dear Mr. Secretary, add my own expression of appreciation of the assistance you are giving the British Treasury at this moment. May I also say how much I regret that I shall not be at Washington when you return and that our meeting must be deferred for a while.

I am, my dear Mr. Secretary,

Cordially and sincerely yours,

READING.

Moreover, on arrival in London on August 9 he gave to Mr. Bonar Law a much fuller account of all that had transpired in connection with the September maturities than had been possible from the other side of the Atlantic, with the result that the Chancellor amplified his earlier message by a personal expression of thanks to Mr. McAdoo for the part which he had played.

On this note of concord and congratulation terminated the last major Anglo-American financial operation carried out during the course of actual hostilities.

By the time the next maturities fell due the situation had entirely changed as the result of the Armistice.

Once the embargo upon the sale of collateral had been removed as the result of the negotiations between Lord Reading and Mr. LefBngwell at the end of July, 1918, this collateral was liquidated in as orderly and unobtrusive a manner as possible in order not unduly to disturb the market. The process continued for close upon a year, until on July 24, 1919, Messrs. Morgan were able to inform Messrs. Morgan, Grenfell with genuine delight that

You will be very glad to know that the call loan is no more. The last of it was paid to-day.

Please inform Lord Reading with my congratulations, also Sir Hardman Lever. They will both know how glad we are here. It is a wonderful achievement to have it all paid without recourse to our Government.

Thus the monster was finally scotched.

Although these momentous problems have necessarily been treated here as if they had been self-contained, so that the separate continuity of each might be preserved, in practice they were of course proceeding concurrently and so multiplied the

demands upon the Ambassador's mind and energy as **to make of** the social aspect of his duties, which he would otherwise have greatly enjoyed, a not inconsiderable burden.

But Washington, both official and unofficial, was vastly hospitable and, although by the evening he was often very tired, it was important to his task that he should attend as many functions as possible in order to maintain and increase his contacts.

Normally most approachable by anyone who knew his material and did not waste time on irrelevancies, he was now subjected to so severe a nervous strain that anyhow the junior members of his staff showed no great alacrity to take papers into his room. Indeed there were stories of the more timorous amongst them shivering outside his door until seized by two of their colleagues and forcibly propelled into the presence.

To Lady Reading after many years of semi-invalidism the effort required to lead the crowded life of Washington was immense, but she had the reward of knowing that her presence there was invaluable to him, since it provided for him, just as later in India, the only opportunity for relaxation and privacy that came his way. Moreover, she played her part nobly on the social side as well, spending much thought and care on every detail of entertaining at the Embassy, accompanying the Ambassador everywhere **and** establishing her own friendships with the ladies of the Corps diplomatique and of Washington society.

It was something of a mystery and all of a triumph that she contrived to emerge almost overnight from her sequestered existence in London into the full glare of official life in Washington, apparently equipped for the experience at every point. But she had natural dignity and no affectation; she always appeared at her ease and could put other people at theirs; she had an unfaltering taste in the choice of clothes and she wore them with that impeccable "finish" of which American women are themselves the greatest exponents.

Washington is not a big city and their social orbit necessarily revolved largely amongst the same people, their diplomatic colleagues, the members of the Administration, Senators, heads of visiting Missions, with many of whom they were able from frequent contact to establish relations of friendship.

Nor were they alone in their knowledge of their fellow-guests.

There was a particular couple renowned for their generous appetites and one evening, as Lord and Lady Reading got out of their car on arrival for a dinner-party, he said to the Embassy chauffeur: "Be back here at 10.15." "No use my coming **that**

early, Mr. Ambassador," replied the chauffeur. "The meat-eaters are here !"

In addition to looking after her husband's comfort Lady Reading "mothered" most of the staff, who repaid her efforts with their devoted allegiance and Lord Reading himself was scarcely more delighted than they when after their return to England Lady Reading was created a Dame Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire in recognition of her valuable work as Ambassadress.

Amongst their more intimate friends in Washington were Mr. John W. Davis, then Solicitor-General, and his wife, and it was a great joy to them when in 1919 Mr. Davis was appointed American Ambassador to the Court of St. James's and he and Mrs. Davis took up their residence in London.

Lord Reading had for some time been convinced of the importance of renewing personal contacts with those in England who were directing the shifting phases of the War, and as soon as General Pershing's change of attitude had ensured the steady supply of American troops to France, he applied for permission to return home for purposes of consultation, especially in regard to the situation in Russia.

In assenting to the proposal Mr. Balfour took the occasion to pay a very high tribute.

I cannot express to you [he cabled] how much Prime Minister and I appreciate the work you are doing in U.S. From every quarter, whether Democratic or Republican, testimony arrives of great value of your services in your present position. We feel it is of highest national interest that you should prolong your period of appointment beyond that originally stipulated, though we fully understand greatness of sacrifice we ask you to make.

We cannot think in the circumstances the judiciary would insist on your early return to your high office, as, however great their deprivation may be, it is after all domestic, while duties you are now executing are essential to effective prosecution of the War and cannot be performed by another.

We therefore sincerely trust that you will consent to continue your Ambassadorship.

The publication of the news of Lord Reading's impending visit to London evoked laudatory comments upon his work throughout the American Press, from the general tone of which it was clear that in the short space of five months he had established for himself a prestige and an influence such as few, if any, Ambassadors, British or foreign, had ever enjoyed in the United States. **Indeed**, the *New York Evening Post* went so far as to

describe his appointment as one of the turning-points in the diplomacy of the Allies.

As those responsible for offering him the post had hoped, the American Government felt itself complimented by the selection of a man who already held one office of universally respected eminence and by his position in his own country combined with his personal qualities of mind and character he was able to acquire almost immediately upon his arrival a status amongst his colleagues of the Diplomatic Corps not usually accorded to a newcomer.

The experience gained during his two earlier visits proved invaluable, for he had in the course of them come so thoroughly to understand and to appreciate the American point of view as to be able to reconcile the American and the European outlook on many perplexing problems.

Moreover, when he came as Ambassador he possessed the immense advantage of having already formed relationships of mutual regard and confidence with all the leading personalities of American official life, and in particular with the President himself. Besides the President, Mr. Baker, Secretary for War, Mr. Daniel, Secretary for the Navy, Mr. McAdoo, Secretary to the Treasury, and Mr. Hoover were all upon terms of cordial friendship with him, and with Mr. Lansing, the Secretary of State, his personal contacts were peculiarly close.

In the normal course an Ambassador at Washington deals only with the State Department, the equivalent of the British Foreign Office, and all his approaches to other branches of Government must be made through that Department. But Lord Reading was fettered by no such restriction. He was not only Ambassador but High Commissioner as well and, as such, entitled to direct access to every body or individual officially engaged upon war work, and he was thus enabled to be in daily touch with all the men primarily responsible for America's gigantic effort, to discuss difficulties with them face to face and to dispense with the strangling routine of official correspondence.

Nor had he confined his activities to Government circles but had found time to deliver in New York, Chicago and other centres a series of speeches and addresses on British war aims and achievements which had constituted propaganda of the most effective kind.

In May, 1918, he had addressed the National Press Club, being introduced by ex-President Taft, and had delivered an address which might have been given with undiminished aptness **and** effect a quarter of a century later.

As time has passed and vision become clearer [he said in a notable passage], it is apparent that this titanic conflict is one in which you must inevitably have borne your part, for the struggle is not between nations but between two systems of government, the one where the individual exists for the greater glorification of the state or dynasty, which uses him merely as a pawn and makes him act in defiance of all the moral and ethical rules that should govern human beings, the other where the State exists for the protection of the weak and oppressed and the safeguarding of the rights and liberties of individuals and is based upon principles of morality which are the only safe guides for human conduct.

Under the latter system two great commonwealths have been evolved as steps in the development of the human race upon this earth. The one is sprung from the loins of the other, and with all the virility and enthusiasm of its young manhood is now fighting alongside the elder to vindicate those ideals to which both the British Empire and the American Republic are dedicated.

There is no essential difference either of purpose or of principle between those two great Commonwealths.

In June he had made something of a triumphal progress around the major Universities, receiving Honorary Degrees from Harvard, Yale, Columbia and Princeton, an aggregate of distinctions never before conferred upon any one man.

Harvard, the last to be visited, was the climax of a remarkable demonstration of which he had been the object during the previous ten days, and in acknowledging it he took the opportunity to expound a theme which had recently been much in his mind. Characterized by *The Times* as giving "a great impetus to a movement the future development and importance of which it is impossible to over-estimate," his topic was nothing less than a plea for a permanent Anglo-American Union to preserve the liberties of the world.

Our desire is to join you, to co-operate with you, to combine with you as fully as you will let us for the benefit of humanity, for the preservation of the liberties of the world, for the securing of justice among nations. Believing as we do and as you do, that we are animated in all our aims and purposes by the same faith in our fellow-men, in the justice and in the liberties of our fellow-men, in the worship of God and in the preservation of the spirit of pure and cleanly lives, and having as I verily believe, raised or helped to raise among the Allies the ideals of men, let us combine to keep them there, and ever continue to raise those ideals ever higher, so that in the end we may be joined together.

In that way we may transmit to our posterity, your descendants and ours, the same principles, the same ideals, the same determination, which will indeed make life better, purer, cleaner, juster, freer, for as long as we can work together.

Spoken by the British Ambassador, these were momentous words, to which he could never have given utterance if they had not represented more than his own individual views. Unhappily for the future peace of the world, though enthusiastically received by the immediate audience, they fell upon stony ground. But the same ground has now been enriched by much further suffering and sacrifice and they may yet bear fruit.

Summing up the burthen of the general chorus of praise *The Times* Washington correspondent wrote :

Much of the work which the British Ambassador has done must necessarily remain secret, but it is no exaggeration to say that in the critical period of the War, beginning with the German super-offensive last March, the name of Reading will be indelibly associated in history with that of President Wilson and General Foch in bringing unity of command and unity of action among the Entente Allies.

Washington expects Lord Reading back soon. He is the most helpful influence that has appeared in a generation in bringing the English-speaking democracies closer together. He has done more than any written pact or agreement ever could have done. He has brought about between the two Governments an understanding of the heart and the mind of their peoples.

The voyage home on a ship crowded with American troops happily produced no excitements such as in those times were only too frequent at sea and it gave to Lord and Lady Reading a few days of rest and peace which they had not enjoyed for many months. But immediately upon arrival Lord Reading, who had been so strenuously engaged in explaining England to America, turned his attention to the reverse side of the medal and busied himself in an effort to explain America to England. With this purpose he accepted an invitation to make a statement to *The Times* which appeared on August 14 under the title "America's Prompt Aid" and gave his own summary of the situation as he had found it on his arrival, watched and participated in it during his stay and left it on his departure.

After six months' absence in the United States I have returned for the purpose of conferring »with the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary, and the War Cabinet on various matters of importance which can be discussed more fully and more satisfactorily by word of mouth than by means of cable correspondence.

The events in America during this period have indeed been of supreme importance. They are proving a wonderful inspiration to us and our Allies and a most discouraging surprise to the enemy, for the

progress made in these few months by America is indeed marvellous. If I speak in terms of enthusiastic admiration, it is because none other would convey my thoughts. During these months my Allied colleagues and I have made many requests to the United States Administration. These have always been received with the most sympathetic consideration, and there is no room for doubt even in the most sceptical mind as to the whole-hearted desire of America to help the Allies to the best of their ability. The only question for the Administration always is, how best and when can this tiling be done.

It is no secret that when I left this country early in February the food situation in France, Italy and Great Britain was causing serious anxiety. That situation, however, has been very largely relieved by the indefatigable exertions of Mr. Hoover, cordially supported by the American people. It would be impossible to speak too highly of his efforts to provide foodstuffs for the Allies and of the way in which he invariably responded to the joint requests of my French and Italian colleagues and myself, who have throughout acted in the closest and most intimate co-operation. There came a time early in the year when wheat could not be supplied to the Allies from the United States unless the American people were willing themselves to go short. Mr. Hoover placed the facts before them. The response to the appeal for self-denial was immediate and remarkable, and enabled large shipments to be made at a time when, according to all calculations, there was no exportable surplus in America.

In the early months of the year, again, owing to the excessive cold, there were difficulties of apparently an insurmountable nature in the conveyance of foodstuffs by rail from the interior to the coast for shipment abroad. These were overcome by the energetic and courageous action of Mr. McAdoo, the Director-General of Railways (and also Secretary of the Treasury) who issued orders that the transport of food to seaboard for the Allies should have absolute precedence over all other traffic.

In regard to the production of new ships, which gave cause for grave anxiety six months ago, Mr. Hurley, with the assistance of Mr. Schwab, has made truly remarkable progress. The record of actual launchings and the number of ships placed in commission during the last two months and the prospects for the remaining months of the year inspire complete confidence that as the result of our joint efforts of construction and of our naval forces the submarine menace will not only continue to be held in check, but is doomed to failure. We must, however, never slacken our energies, for there is an ever-increasing demand for shipping in consequence of the continuous stream of American troops to France who must be fed and supplied.

To an ever-increasing degree America has given and is giving invaluable assistance in the prosecution of the War. The dull and undramatic period of preparation has passed and has given place to the harvest of production which is now being reaped.

In no direction, however, is the spirit of wholehearted co-operation

more striking than in the magnificent contribution which America has made and is continuing to make to the man-power of the Allies. When, in the grave anxieties of the end of March, at the request of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, I asked the President to order without delay the acceleration of the dispatch of American troops and to allow them to be trained and used with the French and British troops, his answer was an immediate and whole-hearted assent, his only limitation as to the numbers of men being the shipping capacity to carry them. It was an historic moment, which may in the future be regarded as the turning point of the War. Both the British and the French nations were quick to appreciate the generous spirit of this contribution, made so promptly and at so opportune a moment. It has proved of such value that Marshal Foch has been able to meet the great German attack by an Allied counter-offensive, and has not only wrested the initiative from the enemy, but has gained important victories.

My voyage home was made in a transport filled with fine stalwart specimens of American manhood. Their conduct was remarkably good, and earned the greatest praise of the British generals and other officers on board. One could not see those American soldiers without realizing that they were earnest, thoughtful men, intent upon acquitting themselves well for the sake of their country and inspired by the great ideals so well expressed by the President.

Once America has acquired knowledge of the situation, her material resources, her financial wealth, the brains and force of character of her millions, in fact, all the physical and moral forces of this giant among the nations, are turning in one direction—to the attainment of victory. The Americans are idealists ; they are also a business people. Having realized what victory and failure will mean to humanity, with their characteristic single-mindedness and power of concentration they are making the winning of this War their only business, and, if I know anything of them, having undertaken this task, they will persevere until their object is achieved.

I wish I could adequately convey to the British people the warm-hearted generosity of my reception as British Ambassador by the American people. It is given to me as British Representative, and is an expression of the admiration of the Americans for the part played by the British people in this War, Prejudices are giving way to a better understanding of the ideals animating both the American and British people, ideals that carry them along the same road, in the same direction, in whole-souled co-operation for the progress of humanity and the peace of the world.

A footnote to this impressive review of the American scene stated that Lord Reading's visit to London would not be of long duration and that, as soon as the conferences upon which he was engaged were concluded, he would return to the United States. Certainly that was his intention at the moment, but a series of

unexpected events culminating in the collapse of German resistance on the Western Front and the consequent consideration of the appropriate terms of peace most unfortunately led to successive postponements of his departure and it was ultimately not until February of the following year that he returned to Washington, and then only to wind up the affairs of his mission.

Meanwhile he was kept closely occupied. On August 21 at a largely attended luncheon in his honour given by the American Luncheon Club in London he delivered a warning against complacent optimism together with a prediction that, granted a sustained effort, nothing could now stop the final triumph of the Allied armies. The speech was widely reported both in England and in the United States.

The one striking feature of American institutions [he said in a passage which has not lost its force or truth with the passing of years], and of the American people which impresses you almost before you are on their shores is the all-abiding faith they have in democracy as the true system of all government. In their unalterable conviction autocracy is the enemy of mankind. Autocracy must always mean military despotism, and military despotism must rest upon the power to make war. The power to make war, exercised as a means to keep a government in power, inevitably means that war must ensue. It means, further, that the Government, beset by any difficulties, plots for war. The American people are convinced, as are we in this country, that no democracy, whatever may be said of what it might do in passion, ever sets out to plot for war. Therefore they came to the conclusion that it was necessary to engage in this War for the rescue of democracy as a system of government, with all that it involved for truth, for liberty, for justice prevailing amongst men.

At the end of the same month he spoke at a luncheon to Mr. Samuel Gompers, the stalwart President of the American Federation of Labour, who was on a visit to England, and paid tribute to him as one of the best friends and staunchest supporters of the Allied cause, who not only spoke the views of the working people of the United States but had the courage to lead their opinion.

At the beginning of September he went to France and on the 3rd visited General Pershing at his headquarters, lunched with Monsieur Tardieu, his former colleague as French High Commissioner in Washington, called during the afternoon upon General Foch and was greatly cheered and considerably amused by the picturesque and forcible utterances of that famous soldier.

On the next day he went to Juvigny, and in the semi-darkness of a deep dug-out near the front line addressed a gathering of

American troops in a speech which by the spontaneous simplicity of its tribute to the spirit of America at war produced so great an effect upon his hearers that it was ordered by the American High Command to be printed and distributed throughout the American Expeditionary Force under the title : *In Our Hour of Need*.

On his way back to England he motored through the zone of the British Armies to visit G.H.Q. at Montreuil, stopping to have tea with me at the Headquarters of a Division, on the staff of which I was then serving near Noeux-les-Mines. He returned home in the company of Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Edwin Montagu and Lord Riddell in a destroyer, H.M.S. *Termagant*, which crossed the Channel at full speed, cutting through the waves and sending up columns of sea on either side. Lord Reading was in his element and it was only out of deference to his fellow-passengers that he ultimately went below. His enjoyment of such experiences was immense and he never missed an opportunity to make the crossing by this means, but his enthusiasm was not shared by the majority of his colleagues. Mr. Balfour in particular did not relish the sea. On one occasion when they were crossing together in a destroyer and the Channel was at its most turbulent, Lord Reading went below to enquire how his companion was faring, only to be greeted by a faint groan and the plaintive enquiry : "Is there *no* chance of a submarine ?"

Immediately on arrival from America Lord Reading had had offices put at his disposal in the building in Whitehall Gardens occupied by the offices of the War Cabinet. Here he was besieged by people anxious to take advantage of his judgment and experience in the solution of their problems, many of which were quite unfamiliar to him and entailed prolonged study of papers and the expenditure of much time and thought. Those of his staff who had returned with him from the United States begged him to spare himself as he was obviously over-tired, but he replied that he could not refuse help to anyone.

On October 51 he was at Versailles and on the next day conferred at length with Colonel House, returning to England on November 6. He was unhappy at being absent from his post in Washington but unable to free himself from fresh daily preoccupations in London, more especially since it was plain that it was now only a question of days before the end of the War must come.

The end of the year 1918 saw the "Coupon" General Election, at which Mr. Lloyd George's Government were returned to power with an immense majority. The election campaign was marked by the inflammatory crudities inseparable from a moment when

the feelings of the electorate had been relentlessly worked upon by four years of intensive propaganda. The mind of the nation was intent upon two main purposes, to "hang the Kaiser" and to "make Germany pay," and such few voices as spoke more sober councils were drowned in the prevailing uproar.

Not that the politicians were entirely to blame. They could not, even if they would, have stilled the popular clamour of the day, and, being powerless to lead, were obliged to follow. But at the time the majority no doubt believed that both items in the programme were feasible, and the plan to try the Kaiser for his responsibility for the War at least advanced to a stage at which Lord Reading was approached as to his willingness in principle to preside over any tribunal which might be set up for the purpose. He was, however, too conscious of the many legal obstacles and too sceptical of the ultimate practicability of the scheme to commit himself until a more concrete proposition had been laid before him. His hesitation was justified, for in the end difficulties proved insurmountable and the matter proceeded no further.

On Boxing Day President Wilson on his way to the Peace Conference landed in England for an intensive and triumphal visit. Lord Reading was amongst those to welcome him officially at Dover and was present on the next day at a luncheon given by the Prime Minister, Lady Reading at the same time entertaining Mrs. Wilson at Curzon Street. He also attended the presentation of an address to the President by the City of London and both Lord and Lady Reading were amongst the guests at the State Dinner at Buckingham Palace in honour of the visitors.

Early in January, 1919, the Allied and Associated Governments decided to establish a Supreme Council of Supply and Relief to deal with the problems of food, finance, shipping and the re-victualling of liberated enemy territory. The British representatives on this Council were Lord Reading and Sir John Beale, a solicitor with wide experience of commerce and especially of railways. Lord Reading accordingly crossed to Paris early in the month with the advance-guard of the British delegation to the Peace Conference.

There is no doubt that it was a mistake on his part to allow himself to be persuaded to undertake this task as well as a mistake on the part of the British Government to exercise the persuasion.

He had already been absent from his post in Washington since the previous August, and if the position of Ambassador was important enough to justify his selection to hold it, it was also important enough to require his presence on the spot.

Washington, which had viewed as an entirely reasonable **step**

his return to England on what was expected to be a brief visit for consultation, failed to understand the causes of the continued **delay** in the resumption of his duties. The United States Administration not only found itself hampered by the absence of the chief figure from the British Embassy but also felt itself slighted by the British Government's apparent view that at so vital a moment as the end of the War the British Ambassador was more profitably employed in Paris than in Washington.

Moreover, Lord Reading himself was in no condition to assume fresh and unfamiliar burdens. He had been for some time past shewing evident traces of over-work, but his sojourn in England had afforded him no such respite as his health demanded.

He found the atmosphere of Peace Congress Paris thoroughly uncongenial and from the moment of his arrival his first thought was how to extricate himself from it at the earliest possible moment. His only satisfaction was that his American colleague on the Supreme Council was Mr. Herbert Hoover, with whom he had already worked on terms of such close and friendly co-operation.

Early in February he handed over his duties to Viscount Sumner, his old opponent during the Valencia commission on his honeymoon more than thirty years before, and returned to London, where he was so exhausted that a period of complete rest was ordained.

But it was of shorter duration than he needed, for pressure for his presence in Washington was becoming increasingly strong and vocal.

America had responded enthusiastically to Lord Reading's appointment and during his tenure of his office he had established a commanding position in Washington. Public opinion was therefore both puzzled and affronted by his continued absence.

The position was put with clarity and force in a leading article in *The Times* of February 14.

Lord Reading left Washington as long ago as last July, for a flying visit home, and he has been detained until this week by a series of unexpected duties in London and Paris. Doubtless these duties have been of great importance to the affairs of the Allies. But his failure to return to the United States has not prevented serious heart-searchings among our friends across the Atlantic. There is abundant evidence of dissatisfaction there that during the last six critical months the Embassy in Washington should have been left without a head. The evidence has accumulated by every American mail until it is obvious that, however much modern means of swift intercourse may have impaired the independence and hence the prestige of Ambassadors, Americans are convinced that their local conditions require, as one of the key-stones of really

satisfactory Anglo-American relations, a first-class British representative in Washington.

Lord and Lady Reading sailed again for New York on February 21, but their stay was short and in the main devoted to clearing up outstanding matters.

After a long series of farewell functions they reached England again on May 9, Lord Grey of Fallodon succeeding to the post of Ambassador to the United States, and Lord Reading once more resumed his seat in the Courts after an official welcome by Bench and Bar.

On May 21 the Prime Minister addressed to Lord Reading a letter of thanks which was widely published in the Press.

MY DEAR LORD CHIEF JUSTICE,

At the moment when you are about to resume your judicial duties, I wish on behalf of His Majesty's Government to express to you the deep appreciation which we all feel for the manner in which you have discharged the all-important mission which was entrusted to you, and for the conspicuous service which you have rendered to the Empire while acting as His Majesty's Ambassador and Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States.

No mere formal words can give proper recognition for this service. Under strong pressure from the Government, and with great reluctance, you gave up your duties as Lord Chief Justice in order to undertake a mission which has been of singular complexity and extremely arduous. When the time comes for the history of those most critical years of the War to be written, the leading part which you played in co-ordinating the war-effort of the United States and the other Allies, and above all, in helping to bring about that dramatic movement of the American Army to Europe in the spring and summer of 1918, which contributed so strikingly to the Allied victory in the later autumn, will be understood in its true perspective.

Your tact, energy and counsel have been of inestimable value to the Allied cause, and I have the best of reasons for knowing that you have won the same measure of confidence on the other side of the Atlantic that you enjoy in the British Isles.

The Government will greatly miss your advice and assistance in the various spheres in which you have rendered service during the War, and I can assure you that your return to your high judicial duties with the gratitude and goodwill of the nation and the Empire.

Believe me, ever sincerely,

D. LLOYD-GEORGE.

A few days later Mr. Balfour as Foreign Secretary addressed to

him a **long** and eulogistic letter on his own behalf, in the course of which he wrote :

The difficulties were great ; they were without precedent 5 they were quite outside ordinary diplomatic routine ; they involved most complicated questions of finance, shipping, food-supply, troop-transportation and armaments. Though they profoundly affected the fortunes of all the Allies, they had to be dealt with in the main between Great Britain and America, and you provided the most important personal link between the two great Associated Powers, [and in a later passage] : Perhaps as time goes on, your recollection of what you did through those strenuous months may gradually grow somewhat dim. Should this be so, you may easily refresh your memory, for the record of your achievements will assuredly find its place in every history of the Great War.

In January of 1920 he visited Reading for the gratifying purpose of receiving the freedom of the Borough, a gesture from his old constituency which gave him the deepest pleasure. He was accompanied by Mr. John W. Davis, his friend from Washington, who had by then been appointed American Ambassador in London and marked the occasion by a speech of his customary felicity and eloquence. It was Lord Reading's convinced opinion that of all the speakers he had heard Mr. Davis maintained the most consistently high standard, the effect of his speeches being enhanced by a handsome presence and charming voice.

During 1919 and 1920 his time in the Courts was mainly occupied in trying special Jury actions and in presiding in the Court of Criminal Appeal.

He also sat on one or two occasions as a member of the Tribunal for the hearing of cases before the House of Lords. Meanwhile he was resuming contact with the social life of London and, fortified by her experiences in Washington, Lady Reading was able to accompany him more frequently than in the past.

Save for a flickering rumour early in 1920 that he was to succeed Lord Derby as Ambassador in Paris, everything pointed to his continuing on his sedate way as Lord Chief Justice for the rest of his working life.

But Fate had not yet forgotten him.

CHAPTER IV

VICEROY. (I)

IN October, 1920, Mrs. Cohen, Lady Reading's mother, died at the age of 81, and her death had indirectly a great influence upon Lord Reading's subsequent career. Her husband had died in 1896 and for the last twenty-four years of her life she had had no permanent home, preferring to live in a series of hotels and to be thus freed from the cares of housekeeping. She had, however, few interests outside her immediate family with which to occupy her time and it accordingly became her habit at an early stage of her widowhood to visit each afternoon at least one of her three daughters in London. This routine almost invariably included a visit to Alice, whom her mother regarded as requiring particular attention on account of her indifferent health. If by some rare mischance her daughter was not at home, Mrs. Cohen strongly resented her absence. If other callers were announced, she was apt silently to indicate her view that they were unwelcome. In short, after her husband's death she exhibited in a wider field much the same despotic qualities as he had possessed and she had suppressed during his lifetime within their home. Her daughter was in the position that for reasons of health it was very often impossible for her to go out during the afternoon, so that she was of necessity there to be visited. Moreover, she was most deeply devoted to her mother, whose loneliness and lack of resource filled her with pity, and she was genuinely ready to abandon any other calls upon her time in order to provide the old lady with some measure of daily companionship.

The convention of the regular afternoon visit was thus imperceptibly established, neither mother nor daughter realizing that the effect of it was to impose upon the younger woman a habit of invalidism, escape from which became increasingly impossible as the years passed. Not that Lady Reading's ill health was exclusively, or even primarily, nervous in character or origin; the list of her many operations rules out any such diagnosis. But Washington indicated, and India was to reinforce the conclusion, that when circumstances drove her out of her habitual setting, she was able, though not without sustained effort and infinite courage, to lead at least a more normal life. And it may be that if she had been at greater liberty to order her days and had grown accustomed during her spells of relatively better health to **greater**

activity, a less exhausting struggle would have been required when the call came to undertake the heavy burdens of official life.

Nevertheless, even if in her own last years she came dimly to recognize something of the sacrifice which she had made to her mother, she never resented or regretted it, and if Mrs. Cohen had still been alive at the end of 1920, it is almost certain that Lady Reading would never have contemplated leaving England for five years and that Lord Reading would consequently never have been Viceroy.

But when Mrs. Cohen died in October, nothing was further from Lord or Lady Reading's mind than that they would ever be faced with any such decision.

On their return from America in May of the previous year, Lord Reading had resumed the duties of Lord Chief Justice with a very heavy heart.

It has already been noted that even in 1914 he had begun to be attacked by doubts as to the wisdom of his acceptance of the office, though circumstances had virtually forced the decision upon him.

Then came the upheaval of the War and his fresh and protracted immersion in great affairs of State of an interest and importance far exceeding any that he had hitherto handled, so that an even sterner effort of renunciation was required of him in 1919 to compel himself to leave again the swiftly flowing stream of political life for what he had come in spite of his respect for the office to regard as a depressingly safe and stagnant backwater.

Such resignation as he had been able to summon when first confronted with the enforced passivity of the Bench had altogether deserted him. He even chafed at the physical inactivity of sitting long hours in one place, complaining that it made him feel as if he were only fit to be wheeled up and down Brighton front in a bath-chair. Day after day in 1919 and 1920 he would come out of Court in a state of exasperation wholly at variance with his usual calm, muttering that he really could not be expected to go on trying trumpery "running down" cases for the rest of his life **and** that his patience was at an end.

Nevertheless, he continued to exercise towards the Bar that patience which is still gratefully associated by its members with his name. To one who had conducted so many outstanding cases **the** temptation to intervene and take the cross-examination of a witness out of the hands of an incompetent counsel was **very** strong. But he had set himself from the outset determinedly to

listen and be silent, and he rarely broke his rule in spite of the strain which it often imposed upon him.

He would, however, sometimes come into his room on the rising of the Court, gravely shaking his head, and say to me : "You know, it was awful to have to listen in silence to——cross-examining a witness this afternoon and fumbling all his points. If only I could have changed places with him for half an hour I" or "——has got a good case, but he will take all his bad points first and at such length that the jury will be thoroughly bored before he gets to the good ones. I've given him several hints but he won't take them, and it's not my job to do more. All the same it is painful to watch a good case being thrown away." He was like an old cricketer reduced to umpiring, performing his inactive task all day with alertness and impartiality, but at times passionately longing to seize a bat again and "have a go" at the bowling, just to show the youngsters how it ought to be played.

There were even moments of particular restlessness when he would debate the possibility of resigning his office and returning to the Bar in spite of the manifest difficulties of such a course. Nor was he alone in this ambition.

At the beginning of the Peace Conference in Paris in January, 1919, just after he had arrived at the Hotel Majestic, he and I went for a stroll in the adjacent *Bois*, where we soon met Lord Birkenhead, the still recently appointed Lord Chancellor, and Sir Gordon Hewart, the new Attorney-General, similarly engaged.

As we continued our walk together, Lord Birkenhead began to bemoan the fact that he would never again conduct a case in Court, when my father suddenly interrupted : "Look here, F.E., you and I are both too young to be stuck for the rest of our lives as Judges. Let's go back to the Bar." Lord Birkenhead was enchanted with the idea and at once set to work to discuss whether there was any more cogent reason than absence of precedent—which neither of them regarded as a reason—to prevent them from putting the plan into practice.

So absorbed were we all in the discussion that we stepped blindly off the kerb of a side-street just as a large car flashed round the corner. "Good God !" said Lord Birkenhead. "The Lord Chancellor, the Lord Chief Justice and the Attorney-General ; what a bag! And how grieved the Bar would have been!"

The incident at least served to remind them that their re-appearance as competitors in the Courts might not be too welcome to their successors and that, having made the best of their opportunities in their own day, they would now be wiser to leave the

field **open** to others. But they recurred to the topic more **than once** afterwards and always with regret that it must remain an unfulfilled dream.

Certainly Lord Reading was pining for more active occupation throughout 1920. Even during the blackest and most anxious days of the War he had remained outwardly cheerful and confident, whatever his inner doubts may at times have been. Now he became restless, irritable and depressed, finding his unaccustomed leisure to hang heavily upon his hands. As Lord Chief Justice he regarded himself as debarred even from taking part in debate in the House of Lords except on subjects of purely legal concern, and he had worked too hard for many years to have had the leisure to acquire outside interests or hobbies with which to fill his spare time. He felt himself caged and helpless, waiting his talents and his energies. He had disposed of Foxhill to Sir Hugo (later Lord) Hirst in 1918 and had not even a country-house to which to go for week-ends, while Walton Heath and Swinley Forest had largely lost their savour.

For the first time in sixty years the zest had gone out of life and he could see nothing ahead of him but stagnation and decay, when yet again a sudden and unpredictable change came over his personal fortunes, just as the outlook seemed most barren.

Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy of India, was due to complete his term of office in April of 1921 and speculation as to his successor was already rife. Obviously a man of exceptional gifts and experience would be required, for the situation in India was full of difficulties and dangers which were not likely to diminish in the immediate future, and whoever might be selected to preside over the government of that country for the next five years could look forward to constant anxiety, recurrent periods of acute crisis, and a weight of responsibility almost too heavy for the shoulders of any one man.

Various prominent personalities were canvassed in the Press, chief amongst them Sir Austen Chamberlain, Mr. Churchill and Lord Willingdon, who had already been a highly popular Governor of Bombay and was at the moment serving with equal success a further term of office in India as Governor of Madras.

But the Prime Minister kept his own counsel ; no official announcement had been made by Christmas and newspapers and public were becoming mystified by the silence, when suddenly Lord Reading's name began to be mentioned.

. It was perhaps strange that earlier attention had not been directed towards him, for his valuable services in America during the War and Mr. Lloyd George's personal confidence in him **were**

well known. But it may be that he was thought to be ruled out by his own age and his wife's ill-health.

Nevertheless it was to him that the Prime Minister eventually turned as being fitted by character and experience for so onerous a post.

When the tentative offer was made, Lord Reading found himself faced by a decision of immense gravity. The temptation to accept outright was strong. He was still as adventurous as ever at heart, and here was a prospect of adventure on a hitherto unimagined scale. He enjoyed responsibility, and here was the assurance of responsibility in full measure. He was tied to an uncongenial routine, and here was the certainty of release. And above all his personal predilections there was the knowledge that he was looked upon by the Prime Minister and his colleagues as the person best fitted to discharge a public duty of inestimable importance to the country and the Empire, and his whole instinct and desire was to put himself at once and unreservedly in their hands.

But the problem before him was not so simple. There were other serious considerations to be pondered before an answer could be given, and on a first survey they seemed well-nigh insurmountable.

There was his wife's health, upon which the life at the Washington Embassy had already made heavy demands. There was his own advancing age combined with no previous experience of prolonged residence in a hot climate. There were the enforced upheaval in their settled habits and the lengthy severance from their family and friends.

There was the necessity of surrendering his substantial salary and the subsequent right to a comfortable pension in order to assume a new office, to which no pension was attached, for a limited period during which he would probably not be able to save anything out of the emoluments, however large. There was indeed every likelihood that he would find himself out of pocket at the end of the time and under the necessity of finding new sources of income at the age of 66, with all the wear and tear of five years as Viceroy adding their cumulative weight to an already over-strenuous life. There was also the possibility of a final failure obliterating the earlier records of his hitherto successful career.

After the first impulse of eagerness to accept Lord Reading, having taken rapid stock of the situation, found himself reluctantly forced to acknowledge the formidable nature of the obstacles in the way of acceptance, and when he left the Prime Minister

matters stood upon the footing that he was to consult his wife and think over the other and lesser difficulties, but that on the whole the chances that he would ultimately feel free to go were very remote.

Mr. Lloyd George and the other ministers chiefly concerned were accordingly giving anxious and so far unproductive thought to finding a suitable substitute when a few days later Lord Reading telephoned to say that he had now carefully considered the whole proposition and wished to come and see the Prime Minister again. When he arrived, he announced to the general surprise and satisfaction that he was ready to accept.

As soon as she had heard of the offer, Lady Reading had determined that she was not going to stand in the way. Summoning her doctor privately before her husband could interview him and probably receive an unfavourable opinion, she persuaded him at least to say that he saw no reason why, if she exercised reasonable care and took with her an excellent nurse who had already looked after her several times, her health should be worse in India than in England. She herself fully realized the possible consequences and her attitude is best represented by her own words to me at the time : " It will be a marvellous experience, and if it does take a few years off the rest of my life, it will have been well worth while." In this gallant spirit she attacked her husband's doubts on her account, and, armed with the doctor's open verdict, overbore all his hesitations. It is good to know that she never regretted her choice.

The main stumbling-block was thus removed, but there remained the question of his physical fitness to endure the strain in unfamiliar conditions. On this point he decided to consult Lord Curzon, who was ill at the time but very ready to receive and advise him. Lord Reading accordingly went to call upon him in Carlton House Terrace, expecting from all he knew of that majestic personality to find him lying in a sumptuous room, surrounded by every outward and visible sign of luxury. To his amazement he was ushered into a small, almost bare, room, where Lord Curzon lay on the simplest of brass bedsteads, and his visitor was particularly surprised to note that even the hair-brushes were of the plainest wooden-backed sort. The whole setting was so sharp a contrast to everything that he had expected that it made a lasting impression upon his mind. But Lord Curzon, however ascetic his private tastes might be, was still capable of magnificence in outlook. "Climate?" he said. "The Viceroy has not to concern himself with climate. He goes where he wishes/* and fortified by this characteristic assurance Lord Reading swept

all the relatively minor objections aside. If he **and** his wife could **both be** reasonably certain that their health would last out, nothing else could be allowed to weigh in the scale against so exalted a position and so challenging a responsibility.

There was one further duty to be discharged before the appointment was made public. Squires, my old nurse and by then for many years my mother's maid, was well over 60 and suffering severely from rheumatism. It would be a wrench to part from her after more than thirty years, but it would be unfair to expect her to adapt herself at her age to so different a life so far away from home. She must be pensioned off. Fearing that their decision would be a great blow to her, neither my father nor my mother relished the prospect of breaking the news and each made vigorous attempts to persuade the other to undertake the task. Finally, when a suitable opportunity presented itself, my father with an heroic effort gave a deprecatory cough and plunged into speech. "Squires," said he, "her Ladyship and I feel obliged to tell you that we have decided to go to India." "Oh, have you, my Lord?" interposed Squires. "That will be very nice. I have always wanted to see India." The rest of my father's speech was never completed; indeed, there was no more to be said. She went and returned with them.

Lord Reading's appointment as Viceroy-Designate was officially announced on January 6, 1921, and was received with very general commendation, only the *Morning Post* criticizing it on the grounds that he was a Jew. In India the news was warmly welcomed and from the tone of the comments in the Press it was possible to observe that the Indian imagination had been vividly struck by the selection of a man who would bring to his new task all the prestige of the great office of Lord Chief Justice of England and all the qualities which tenure of it implied. Moreover, many of the Indian papers were quick to point out that, so far from his Jewish origin being a disadvantage, he should be specially well qualified on that account to understand the minds and ways of Eastern peoples.

He did not formally resign the Lord Chief Justiceship until March 7, but he never sat again for the trial of cases, passing the intervening weeks in reading as many books as possible, chosen mainly on Lord Curzon's advice, upon the whole vast subject of India, its peoples, its history, its geography, its government, its legal system and its religions, and interviewing in a room specially set aside for his use at the India Office all such as **were likely** to be able to add effectively to the store of **his** rapidly accumulating knowledge.

Much of his time was spent in private Gonclave with Mr. Edwin Montagu, the Secretary of State, whose experience at the India Office and first-hand knowledge of conditions in India itself made him an invaluable colleague. They were old friends and Lord Reading felt himself most fortunate in the prospect of being able to discount many of the normal difficulties of a Viceroy in dealing at long range with a Secretary of State by cable and correspondence, since he already understood so well the temper of Edwin Montagu's mind and knew him to possess Liberal views very similar to his own.

As soon as Lord Reading had finally made his decision, he became rejuvenated almost overnight. The weariness and the sense of frustration vanished and, as he set about preparing himself for his greatest adventure, he shed twenty years.

' He had not ridden since his marriage. Now he started again to ride each morning in the Row, since there would be State occasions in India on which he would have to appear on horseback and an early morning ride was likely to constitute his chief, if not his sole, form of exercise.

Nor was this the only accomplishment of his youth that he now determined to revive. Both he and Lady Reading were somewhat appalled by the prospect of endless evenings spent in fragmentary conversation with a series of people who would be brought up, presented, and after five minutes removed to make way for others. They therefore came to the conclusion that their life would be easier if they occasionally took the floor, when at least conversation would not be expected. They had both been excellent and enthusiastic dancers in their young days and now after an interval of thirty years they concentrated upon mastering the new dances which had since then come into fashion, and so successful were they that they thoroughly enjoyed the process.

Together they devoted themselves to saying good-bye to their friends and attending numerous official functions in their honour, while Lady Reading was also busily selecting cushions, lampshades and materials for hangings and chair-covers for the various vice-regal residences as well as choosing her own necessarily extensive array of clothes. On March 15 Lord Reading was received in audience by the King and kissed hands on his appointment, being invested with the insignia of a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Star of India and of the Order of the Indian Empire, of both which Orders the Viceroy is during his term of office *ex officio* Grand Master. The Order of the Crown of India was at the same time conferred upon Lady Reading.

On the next day there was an historic occasion in the Middle Temple Hall, a farewell dinner given to Lord Reading by **the**

Bench **and Bar** of England, at which Lord Birkenhead, the Lord Chancellor, presided and an immense and representative gathering of Judges and counsel was present.

In proposing the toast of the health of the guest of the evening Lord Birkenhead said that thirty-six years had passed since Lord Reading ate his first dinner in that Hall in order to qualify for membership of the Bar ; thirty-six years marked at every stage with success. Singling out three qualities as specially illustrative of Lord Reading's career, he said that the first was that of courtesy, a courtesy so exquisite that, while it was shown to everyone, it was perhaps most scrupulously shown to him who was most humble. The second quality was that of inexhaustible patience which Lord Reading never failed to exhibit in any case, whatever its characteristics. The third was a vehement and passionate desire to do justice. He had little doubt that those in whose hands the responsibility rested for selecting a Viceroy of India, at a moment in the history of that country by no means free from grave anxiety, had in their minds this last attribute of Lord Reading, and were influenced by a certainty of the impression that would be produced in the native mind by the knowledge that one of our greatest Judges, a man whose career had been synonymous in its practical application with the very conception of justice, was forsaking his judicial functions to go to India, with determination that during his tenure of office sympathy, at least, and a desire to do justice between class and class and man and man would be forthcoming. Lord Reading had lived a life rich in adventure, but his greatest adventure now awaited him, as he approached the dazzling East.

Lord Reading in reply to the toast assured his hearers that no honour could give him more pleasure than that of meeting his friends of the Bench and Bar that night. At the same time, no function he had attended had filled him with so much regret. He was leaving those among whom he had passed his life, and was laying down a position which he had occupied now for some years. He was consoled, however, by the thought that, when he returned after his period of Viceroyalty had elapsed, he would still find friends in the Temple, the Courts and elsewhere. The Lord Chancellor had referred to some qualities which Lord Birkenhead was good enough to say he possessed. He could conceive no qualities better for a judge than those of courtesy and patience, but when to this had been added that he had a passionate love of justice, the Lord Chancellor had said that which came closest to his heart. He hoped that he would continue to practise these qualities in the larger sphere to which he was now to be translated.

He was setting out on a task of great responsibility, and while he did not intend to dwell on this, he must say that he believed that the training he had had at the Bar would be the best help that could be afforded him in the years to come. Life at the Bar and on the Bench meant constant acquisition of knowledge of human affairs and of men. That was the best qualification with which a man could go to such a post as that which he was now about to fill. It was a great privilege to have the opportunity of leaving a position very high in this country and one which he loved, to go away to undertake new duties in India, of which he could claim to know but little. He felt encouraged and stimulated by the support given to him that night, and he prayed that when he returned he might have done something to justify the anticipations of his friends.

On the afternoon of March 18 they left London on the first stage of their long and thrilling journey, seen off by a crowd of friends and accompanied by Edwin Montagu and me as far as Dover, where they had planned to stay the night in order that Lady Reading might have time to recover from the strain of farewells before resuming their travels next day by the Bombay Express. At Marseilles they embarked upon the P. and O. S.S. *Kaisar-i-Hind*, on which their friend Lord Inchcape, the Chairman of the Line, had had every possible preparation made for their comfort, a whole range of cabins being demolished in order to provide each of them with a spacious bedroom and sitting-room and even a cow taken on board in order to supply Lady Reading with fresh milk.

They were accompanied by such members of their staff as were not already in India, Lt.-Col. Charles Kennedy Craufurd-Stuart, Military Secretary, Captain Ralph Burton and Flight-Lieutenant Reginald Leslie, A.D.C.s, Miss Yvonne Fitzroy, Secretary to Lady Reading, and Sister Meikle, her nurse. These were to be supplemented on arrival by Major Muir, Comptroller, Captain Fraser, Captain Campbell-Harris and Captain Lawrence, A.D.C.s, and as Surgeon to the Viceroy, Colonel (now Sir Thomas) Carey-Evans of the Indian Medical Service, who had married 'Mr. Lloyd George's eldest daughter, Olwen.

The voyage was uneventful and gratifyingly calm as far as Port Said, where they disembarked in order to spend a night in Cairo and give Lord Reading the opportunity to talk with those statesmen and administrators who were assembled there for a conference on the affairs of the Near and Middle East. The dinner-party at the Residency was a remarkable occasion, England being represented by Mr. Churchill, then Secretary of State for the

Colonies, India by Lord Reading, the Viceroy-designate, Egypt, Palestine and Mesopotamia by their respective High Commissioners, Lord Allenby, Sir Herbert Samuel and Sir Percy Cox, while the Governors of Cyprus and Somaliland and the Resident at Aden were also present.

On the next day they continued their voyage, making the journey from Ismailia to Suez on the Canal Company's launch, and on March 27 they entered Indian waters as they reached Aden. Here for the first time they were given a foretaste of the ceremonial which was to be their lot for the next five years. As Lord Reading stepped ashore, a salute of 51 guns was fired and the bands of the garrison broke into "God Save the King." Amongst the notabilities presented was an old gentleman of over 80, head of the local Jewish community established there for more than 2,000 years, whose heart Lord Reading completely won by greeting him in the only two appropriate Hebrew words that he knew : *Shalom aleichum*, "Peace be with you."

At sunset on April 1 the lights of Bombay became visible, but the ship only reached harbour after dark and lay off-shore all night in readiness for the State entry on the following day.

As the party leaned over the rails in the hot Indian night, wondering what might lie before them and speculating on the vast sub-continent brooding below the horizon, they were sharply recalled from romance to reality by Lady Reading's remark that "the Empress's necklace," the famous lights of Bombay, might at that distance just as well be Margate pier !

Early on the morning of April 2 they landed, passengers and crew of the ship uniting in "For he's a jolly good fellow" as the launch set out for the shore, where at the Apollo Bunder, "The Gateway of India," H.E. Sir George (later Lord) Lloyd, the Governor of Bombay, and Lady Lloyd were awaiting their arrival. There in a red-and-gold pavilion Sir Sassoon David, the President of the Bombay Municipal Corporation, welcomed Lord Reading in the name of one great oriental civilization as a member of another, though also the most distinguished figure in English public life of the day, and Lord Reading made his first speech on Indian soil, emphasizing the note struck by Sir Sassoon David and making further reference to the aspect of justice upon which he had repeatedly laid stress in his speeches before his departure from England. "I note especially," he said, "your sympathetic reference to the ancient race to which I belong, and I observe with pleasure that you state that your pride in welcoming me is enhanced by this circumstance. It is my only connection with the East until the present moment and this leads me to wonder

whether perhaps, by some fortunate almost indefinably subtle sub-consciousness, it may quicken and facilitate my understanding of the aims and aspirations, the trials and tribulations, the joys and sorrows of the Indian people, and assist me to catch the almost inarticulate cries and inaudible whispers of those multitudes who sometimes suffer most and yet find it difficult, if not impossible, to express their needs." And in a later passage : "As Viceroy I shall be privileged to practise justice in larger fields than in the courts of law. The justice now in my charge is not confined within statutes or law reports; it is a justice that is unfettered and has regard to all conditions and circumstances, and should be pursued in close alliance with sympathy and understanding. Above all it must be regardless of distinctions of race, creed or class."

The speech, straightforward, sincere and lofty, unadorned with any flights of rhetoric, made an excellent impression, and as Lord and Lady Reading drove off to Government House to meet Lord and Lady Chelmsford, they felt that a good beginning had been made. After a conversation with Lord Chelmsford, who then embarked for home, Lord Reading was sworn in at the University Convocation Hall and formally assumed the office of Viceroy, and that night there was a dinner of 140 people at Government House, at which he replied to the toast of his health proposed by Sir George Lloyd. Their first day in India had certainly not been idle.

Throughout their brief stay in Bombay their reception, not only at official gatherings but in the streets, was excellent, but Lord Reading was not deceived by such demonstrations, even in a stronghold of Mr. Gandhi's followers, into imagining that he had over-estimated the difficulties of his task.

The problems confronting him were indeed gigantic alike in scale and in complexity and he found himself flung abruptly into a maelstrom of controversies without pause for meditation or personal survey of conditions on the spot. He was setting out to take charge of the government of a huge sub-continent peopled by some 530,000,000 inhabitants of different and often fiercely conflicting races and creeds, speaking a multiplicity of tongues and exhibiting every variety of type from the fierce and illiterate Pathan of the North-west Frontier to the suave and cultured Brahmin of Madras, from the "untouchable" sweeper to the Rajput prince.

His primary duty would be to guide the first steps of this vast and heterogeneous population along the path towards ultimate self-government which had been marked out by the Government of India Act of 1919.

The Morley-Minto reforms had in the years preceding the War begun on a limited scale the process of associating Indians with the government of the country, but in this as in so many other fields the tempo of advance had been irresistibly accelerated by the War. In August of 1917 Mr. Montagu had made an historic pronouncement of policy which was ultimately given effective form by the Act of 1919, and in February of 1921 H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught had gone to India to open on behalf of the King-Emperor the first session of the Indian Legislature as devised by the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms.

The preamble to the Act laid it down as "the declared policy of Parliament to provide for the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the Indian Administration, and for the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in British India as an integral part of the Empire."

The new constitution was thus avowedly the overture to full parliamentary self-government, and for that reason alone the inauguration of the changes wrought by the 1919 Act marked a momentous new era, in which the success or failure of a great experiment would largely depend upon the wisdom, fortitude and patience of the Viceroy, whose own position was the corner-stone of the whole novel and elaborate edifice.

The constitutional scheme had been lengthily discussed and laboriously evolved. It was designed as an essay in gradualness, the underlying object being the progressive training of Indians in the art and practice of responsibility ; it visualized self-government as the ultimate goal and created specific machinery for its attainment.

Under the new Act the hierarchy of Indian government consisted of the British Parliament, acting through its agent the Secretary of State for India in Council, the Central Government of India and the Provincial Governments, and each component part was profoundly affected by the Reforms.

At first sight the powers of the Secretary of State might seem to have suffered little curtailment. He was still authorized to "superintend, direct and control all acts, operations and concerns which relate to the government or revenues of India." But the Act contained a provision, apparently paradoxical but in truth typical of the British genius for empiricism in constitution-making, that the Secretary of State might from time to time curtail his own powers. As conditions in India permitted, he was progressively to relax his control, subject to the approval of Parliament, by an almost automatic process.

Moreover, prior to the Reforms the Secretary of State had required that all Bills, other than those of a purely formal nature, which the Government of India proposed to introduce should first be reported to him, and instructions for the abandonment or modification of various measures had been freely issued. But under the new dispensation only such Bills had to be the subject of prior report as dealt with certain matters of vital concern, such as the discipline of His Majesty's Forces, public debt, customs duties or the like.

A further significant change was the appointment of a High Commissioner for India to take over a substantial portion of the agency duties hitherto discharged by the Secretary of State. It was obvious from the outset that, as time went on, the functions of this new officer as India's accredited representative in London must tend increasingly to expand and to encroach upon the former preserves of the Secretary of State.

As regards the Central Government again the Act gave little indication of changes which were in fact fundamental. As the control of the Secretary of State was increasingly limited, the Indian Executive would inevitably be led to look more and more to the Legislature for support. This shifting of the centre of gravity was the keynote of the new order, and in its progressive realization lay the main purpose and achievement of Lord Reading's Viceroyalty. In the dual office of Viceroy and Governor-General were still centred immense powers and correspondingly huge responsibilities. The Viceroy was the King-Emperor's representative and in his name exercised the royal prerogative and performed the manifold ceremonial duties allotted to him. The Governor-General in Council was in a very real sense charged with the task of governing the country. He was himself the mainspring of the administration, presiding at the meetings of the Executive Council and concentrating in his own person powers of the utmost importance.

In many ways the position of the Governor-General at that time is comparable to that of the President of the United States, and before the rise of dictatorships in Europe probably no other two men in the world wielded such tremendous executive powers. For even though the business of administration was in each case carried out departmentally, members of the Administration in the case of the United States and of the Executive Council in the case of India were responsible not to the legislature but to the President and to the Governor-General in Council respectively.

Again, the President's power of veto was analogous to the Governor-General's powers of veto and certification. Parliament

had fixed upon the Governor-General express responsibility for the ' 'safety, tranquillity or interests of British India," and in laying upon him that weighty charge had rightly armed him with weapons suitable for its performance in the shape of the powers of veto, certification and appropriation.

By the power of veto the Governor-General was enabled to refuse his assent to any measure passed by the Legislature which he regarded as inimical to the interests of India.

By the power of certification he was enabled to pass into law any measure which in his opinion was essential to the good government of India, even though one or both of the chambers of the Legislature had rejected it.

Similarly, while on the financial side the powers of the Legislature, though not covering the whole field so as to include supplies for such services as the Army and the public debt, nevertheless entitled them to vote or refuse supplies over a wide range of subjects 5 here again the Governor-General had the power to appropriate any item which might be refused, if in his view the circumstances warranted such action on his part.

These formidable powers were not introduced as mere theoretical exercises in constitution-making. They were intended for use during an experimental period in cases of emergency such as arise so suddenly and so frequently in India, and as such Lord Reading was himself reluctantly forced to exercise them on two occasions. But their undemocratic character was qualified by a provision which required that the approval of the British Parliament must be obtained in any case in which the Governor-General had put them into operation before his action could have the force of law. The office of Governor-General was certainly no sinecure, especially at the moment when Lord Reading assumed it. For it was his task to supervise the smooth running of the new machinery and to ensure that it produced material which would in the course of time supply the foundations for the structure of complete self-government. Moreover, the difficulties were enhanced by his position as the point of contact between two often conflicting forces, the Imperial Government and the Indian Legislature, and the task of softening the asperities between them called for infinite tact and resource. And in the actual field of government it devolved upon him to take the initiative in political, financial and social policy and to supply a large measure of the driving force required to bring the proposals to fruition.

As regards the Executive Council, which prior to the Reforms had been confined to six members, one of whom must be an Indian, the numerical restriction was now abolished and no limit **was** set

to the number of Indians who might be appointed. Indeed, there were throughout Lord Reading's time three Indians out of six ordinary members, actually one more than the Montagu-Chelmsford Report had itself proposed.

The new Central Legislature consisted of two Chambers, the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly.

The Council of State was originally intended to be nothing more than a convenient body for passing measures which the Legislative Assembly could not be persuaded to accept, and provisions to clothe it with this character were incorporated in the 1919 Bill as first presented to Parliament. But the Joint Select Committee to which the Bill was referred were wise enough to hold strong views on the usefulness of Second Chambers and altered the constitution of the Council of State so as to make of it what they described as "a true second chamber." Their decision was obviously right in principle, since the greatest danger to the success of the Reforms lay in the possibility of their being speeded up under the influence of a doctrinaire nationalism more intent upon the rapid erection of a jerry-built edifice of self-government than upon the gradual laying of permanent foundations. In practice the Council of State has amply justified the sagacity of the Committee ; it has proved itself no mere ornament to the constitution, but an integral and effective part of it.

It was composed of sixty members, twenty-seven nominated by the Governor-General, of whom not more than twenty might be officials, and the remainder elected upon a franchise based in part on a high property qualification and in part upon public service. The character of the Council was clearly reflected in this franchise. It was designed to represent learning, experience of affairs, and rank and position in general, and to give a platform to those valuable elements which, as popular government advanced, might otherwise have been excluded from participation.

But valuable though the Council of State might be to the stability of Indian Government, it was in the Legislative Assembly that the real intricately patterned fabric of future self-government would be woven.

Here were to be seen the first stirrings of democracy in action, the first shadowy outlines of political parties, the first public essays in Parliamentary attack on and defence of the Government.

The representative character of the Assembly could not be denied, for of 140 members no more than 40 were nominated and of these a maximum of 26 might be officials. But the franchise, varying in different provinces and in different types of constituency, was of necessity still comparatively high, and out of a

total male adult population in British India of some 140,000,000 not more than one million were qualified to vote. Anything in the nature of adult suffrage would have been the sheerest folly, for the great majority of the people were not only illiterate but wholly unversed in the uses of electoral machinery.

A remarkable feature of Indian constituencies was their organization on a communal basis. Separate representation was provided for such sections of the population as Mahommedans in predominantly Hindu, and non-Mahommedans in predominantly Mahommedan areas, as well as for certain categories of Europeans and others. For example, Calcutta and its suburbs formed two non-Mahommedan constituencies and one Mahommedan, while the rural parts of Bengal were divided on similar lines.

The peculiar character of the constituencies was further emphasized by the creation of certain "special" ones to give representation to land-holding, industrial and university interests.

The powers conferred upon the Legislative Assembly were not only of great importance in themselves but were calculated to give to Indian politicians the opportunity to train themselves and to organize their forces for further progress.

A wide area of constructive legislation was open to the Assembly, especially in the social field, while in the domain of finance its powers were an immense advance on those placed in the hands of the Legislative Council under the Morley-Minto plan. Members of that Council could do no more than discuss the annual financial statement, ask questions and put forward recommendations devoid of all binding force. But under the new Act members of the Assembly had the right to vote or withhold all supplies, except for certain specified purposes such as defence, payment of interest on loans, and the salaries and pensions of such public servants as received their appointments from the King-Emperor or the Secretary of State, subject only to the power of appropriation vested in the Governor-General for use in emergencies.

It will thus be apparent that within the framework of the Central Government the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms had introduced fundamental changes, all tending in the one direction of ordered advance towards ultimate self-government.

In the provincial governments the changes were still more far-reaching, including as they did the novel principle of diarchy, which did not extend to the Central Government. Here again the authors of the constitution were consistently determined to prepare India for increased responsibilities.

One of the main difficulties with which they were faced was what has been called the "disarticulation" of India, the lack of

any homogeneous national consciousness, the complete separation in sentiment of one part from another and the entire absence of any realization of the unity of the country as a whole. Only where some substantial measure of community of aims and interests is present can responsible self-government be safely attempted, and there was every indication that India had not yet achieved that essential cohesion. It was therefore out of the question to apply the diarchic principle to the Central Government so long as the necessary conditions were unfulfilled. But a start had to be made towards the creation of such a spirit of unity, and it was with that purpose that diarchy was applied to the provincial governments, in order to give to Indians the opportunity to gain ministerial experience within a more limited sphere, where a considerable degree of homogeneity already existed. The obstacles presented by the divergence of interests and the variety of conditions, as well as by the activities of the many disruptive forces at work, ruled out the possibility of a successful application of the principle of diarchy to the whole country. It must first be tried in smaller and more manageable areas, and meanwhile the Central Government must discharge the task of ensuring such internal and external peace and security as would permit the experiment to be put into practice with a reasonable hope of success. Such areas could only be found in the provinces, where the existing efficient administrations supplied the firmly established tree upon which to graft the new strain.

It was therefore by the gradual development of responsible government in the provinces that the 1919 Constitution sought to achieve the education of the people in the working of democratic institutions by placing in the hands of their representatives the actual substance of power. Only by this process were men of diverse classes, creeds and communities likely to be brought to realize that, whatever differences might appear to separate them and whatever traditional feuds or cleavages might survive, nevertheless a point had been reached at which they must either weld themselves into one body politic or surrender indefinitely their claims to independent nationhood. Moreover, the principle of starting with the provinces was in conformity with the lessons of history, for much of the success achieved in the working of the constitutions of the British Dominions has been due to observance of the system of waiting until the provinces were fully developed and firmly established on a democratic basis before attempting to bring the Central Government under popular control.

"Diarchy" is a word coined to signify duality of rule, for it was by that method that the objective was to be attained. **Such**

subjects as properly belonged to the provincial, as distinct from the Central, Government were to be subdivided into "transferred" and "reserved". The transferred subjects, which with certain limitations normally included local government, medical administration, public health, education, public works, agriculture, veterinary services, development of industries and excise, were put under the control of ministers chosen from the elected members of the provincial councils and dependent upon them for support, inasmuch as these ministers could only carry out their policy with the approval of a majority of the Council.

The reserved subjects, rather more numerous than the transferred and covering such matters as law and order, administration of justice, land revenue, irrigation, and European, Anglo-Indian and certain branches of University education, were retained by the Governor-in-Council who was in a position to carry out his policy without reference to the Legislative Councils.

There were many obvious difficulties in the way of the smooth working of so artificial a system, the main theoretical criticism being based on the objection that the fabric of government was one and indivisible and that any attempt to introduce severance could only result in chaos and disaster. This line of attack had naturally been foreseen by all those who had taken part in the shaping of the new constitution, but after having examined every alternative proposal they had unanimously reverted to diarchy as being the only practicable method of leading India by stages to responsible government. All other solutions shared the fatal flaw that they made no provision for gradual preparation, and, though they were devised to give Indians a greater share in the higher duties of administration, they were unable to avoid a situation in which responsible government would have had to be undertaken at one step by people and politicians who had acquired no practical experience of that elusive art and whose real political education still lay ahead.

Only in the administration of the provincial finances was there no diarchy. In this field the unitary system prevailed and all revenues went into one purse, the strings of which were held by the finance department under the Finance Member, who was in every case not a Minister but one of the Executive Council.

In each province there was only one Chamber, the Legislative Council, varying in size from Bengal with 125 members to Assam with 53. Of these at least 70 per cent had to be elected and not more than 20 per cent might be officials.

The powers of the new Councils were extensive. They had been largely released from the necessity of obtaining the previous

sanction of the Central Government to provincial legislation, and they had been emancipated from certain hampering financial restraints.

As regards the Indian States also a step was taken towards a more united policy by the establishment of the Chamber of Princes, the main function of which was to provide a forum for the discussion of matters of common interest to the States or of mutual concern to the States and British India or the Empire at large.

It consisted of some hundred Princes, members in their own right, together with a small number of representative members chosen by a special form of election from amongst the lesser Princes. The meetings of the Chamber would enable the Princes as a body to observe the progress of events in British India and to discuss and shape their own policy in conformity with it. The wiser and more liberal-minded amongst them would be able to influence their peers to adopt more enlightened methods, and in the end a policy common to all the States might well emerge to keep them abreast of the growth of free institutions across their borders.

Such in outline was the new constitution conferred upon India by the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, a bold and far-sighted essay in the elements of representative government.

So complicated a mechanism would have been difficult enough to set in motion and to keep in good running order in a country eager, or even willing, to assist. But unfortunately in the India of 1921 no such spirit prevailed ; powerful forces were at work with the avowed object of sabotaging the machinery of government at every turn, and the prestige of the Administration was seriously and obviously impaired.

There even existed an uneasy alliance between the Hindu Swarajist, or Home Rule, party which followed Mr. Gandhi and the extreme Mahommedan faction whose leaders at the moment were the two fanatical agitator brothers, Mahommed and Shaukat Ali, founded upon a common hostility to the "Satanic" British "raj" and determined to resort to every method of attack from non-violent non-co-operation to brutal outrage.

Moreover, in addition to all these troubles the financial position of India was alarmingly unstable, the members of the Civil Service were suffering under a sense of grievance and insecurity, and a most dangerous and intractable movement was in progress amongst the Sikhs of the Punjab. Nor were there only internal problems. No final peace had been concluded with the Amir of Afghanistan after the war of 1919-20, and the attitude

of Great Britain in particular towards Turkey as exemplified by the Treaty of Sevres and its subsequent repercussions was having the worst possible effect upon the Moslems of India. It was therefore to the affairs of a turbulent and distracted country that, once the formalities of welcome were over, Lord Reading was called upon to address his mind.

His first action was characteristic of both his personal courage and his political insight. After a brief stay in Delhi and an even briefer one at Dehra Dun, where the Viceroy normally resided during the period required for the annual move of the Government of India from Delhi to Simla and where he left Lady Reading to rest, he himself set off for Lahore, capital of the Punjab, with the firm intention of obtaining a first-hand account of the Sikhs' grievances by visiting Amritsar, their sacred city, which as a result of General Dyer's exploits had for some time past been the storm-centre of India and the focus of bitter controversy at home. These grievances were genuine enough, for in the course of centuries control of many of the most famous and revered of the Sikh holy places had passed into the hands of men who were not even nominally Sikhs. In some cases these interlopers allowed practices such as smoking and hair-cutting, both rigorously prohibited by the Sikh religion, to be carried on within the actual precincts of the shrines, while others had gone so far as to erect idols and even "lingams" or phallic emblems within the temple areas, to the great wrath and dismay of all devout Sikhs. Moreover, these individuals appropriated to their own use the revenues of such renowned places of pilgrimage as the Panja Sahib in the Attock and Nankana Sahib in the Sheikhpura districts respectively, thereby providing themselves with an income in excess of that received by the rulers of some of the more important States.

In these circumstances it is not surprising that after the War an extensive and persistent agitation should have been started by the Sikhs for the introduction of long overdue reforms in their sacred places.

In the early stages the movement had been directed by genuine religious enthusiasts, but with its forcible capture by a band of Akalis, or Sikh religious warriors, towards the end of 1920 the control passed into the hands of political extremists, who developed an ingenious and baffling technique for the seizure of shrines and temples by carrying out the operation with mixed bands of professional agitators and ignorant devotees. But these raids met with resistance, and in February of 1921 there occurred at the Nankana Sahib temple a horrible massacre in which a band of some 130 invaders was slaughtered with every circumstance of

savagery by armed retainers of the priest. This atrocity was the main reason for Lord Reading's journey to the Punjab, since its effect had been to create a most serious situation by producing a huge increase in the numbers of the Akalis, most of whom, being simple-minded agriculturists, were easily persuaded by the leaders that the Government were really responsible for the massacre.

A central committee, the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak, was set up and under its direction there began a system of enrolment of Sikhs, both men and women, *intojathas* or bands, whose task it was to take forcible possession of shrines and to defy the Government, both actively and passively, whenever opportunity offered.

Moreover, at Amritsar the memory of General Dyer's machine-guns shooting down a defenceless crowd trapped in the Jalianwalla Bagh was still fresh and the humiliation of the punishments imposed by him on the inhabitants of the city still smouldered hotly. When Lord Reading reached Lahore, he found the Governor of the Punjab, Sir Edward Maclagan, strongly opposed to his continuing his journey to Amritsar, but he persisted in his determination and in the end was well justified by the results.

No announcement of his visit had been issued, but the news of his arrival quickly spread and as he drove slowly through the ancient narrow streets the populace thronged to roofs and windows and lined each side of the roadway to see and welcome him.

During his brief stay he was able to meet and talk with some of the leading men of the city and thus to establish those personal contacts to which he always attached prime importance.

His action in thus going unheralded and almost unattended to the centre of the Sikh troubles had far more than a local effect. It was regarded throughout India as a gesture of imaginative understanding and goodwill on the threshold of his career as Viceroy and was sincerely appreciated by all but the most irreconcilable elements.

On April 20 Lord and Lady Reading made their State entry into Simla, the summer capital. After crossing the plains in the sumptuous white-painted viceregal train they changed at Kalka into a smaller edition for the long 7,000 ft. climb up a mountain railway designed with incredible curves and innumerable tunnels to Summerhill Station, where the majority of the staff descended and were conveyed in rickshaws up the steep slope to Viceregal Lodge, while their Excellencies continued the journey to Simla Station itself in order that they might drive up in state-carriages, escorted by the scarlet-and-gold bodyguard, to what was to be their home for nearly half of the next five years.

Viceregal Lodge is a large, ugly and incongruous mansion,

built in the time of Lord Dufferin in the Scottish Baronial style and standing on a small plateau which falls steeply away on every side. But the interior is spacious and comfortable, and the views, in one direction over the remote and gigantic Himalayas and in the other over the distant plains with the Sutlej winding its majestic way across them, are unforgettable. Here all the notabilities of Simla were gathered on the lawns and in spite of the fatigue of their journey Lord and Lady Reading shook hands with each of 700 people.

Any detailed chronicle of the social and personal aspects of their lives during five crowded and enthralling years would be wearisomely repetitive in spite of the wealth of new experiences afforded to them.

But some sketch, however superficial and condensed, of those aspects must be given at the outset, if only as a contrast and a complement to the more stern, sombre and enduring events of the political scene.

The preliminaries of arrival at an end, Lord Reading settled down to grapple with his problems and Lady Reading to embellish the inside of the house with the aid of a store of materials brought from England supplemented by considerable local purchases. In Simla roads are few, steep and narrow, and the rickshaw is the only form of transport permitted except to the Viceroy, the Commander-in-Chief, the Governor of the Punjab and their respective ladies. Lady Reading's shopping expeditions to the Simla bazaars thus took on something of the air of a royal progress, two members of the body-guard ahead, a victoria and pair with two scarlet-and-gold clad servants on the box and two more standing behind, the A.D.C. in waiting on her Excellency following in a buggy, while two more of the body-guard brought up the rear. She would have preferred to do her shopping less obtrusively, but the maintenance of prestige demanded the retention of the whole cortege, and she was no more able to reduce it than was the Viceroy to dispense with the services of the watchmen who stood at intervals of 100 yards all along the railway-line whenever he travelled. The Princes insisted upon the practice being observed in their honour inside their own States ; the Viceroy could therefore not travel in less glory. But it always troubled him to see the men standing in the full blaze of the midday sun as his train passed, though he was entranced by the effect at night of the solitary bronze figures holding up flaming torches, and he delighted in making his occasional descents from Simla after dark, when the whole fantastic zigzag of the line could be thus traced upon the mountain-side below.

Their strenuous life in Simla made great demands upon both of them, for they were no longer young, they were wholly unaccustomed to living at a height, and, as ill luck would have it, the hot weather set in very early and the monsoon that year was very late, so that they suffered not a little from the heat and dust. Moreover, their days were so crowded with new people and fresh experiences as to impose a constant strain.

The routine of the Viceroy's days soon crystallized into permanent form. He still kept to his old habits of early rising. He rode for an hour each morning from seven to eight o'clock, and nothing but impenetrable mist or tropical rain could induce him to forgo his only exercise of the day. Simla offers few alternative routes but he never found his rides monotonous ; there were always fresh views, new effects of light, changing vegetation and an infinite variety of unfamiliar types of men and women to interest him.

As he himself put it in a letter to me :

This year seems especially prolific in wild flowers and I rejoice each morning in all the different varieties. Just at present the *Kud* [hill-side] is full of blossom, my favourites being the wild geraniums, orchids, dahlias and anemones. I am becoming a great nature-student in my dotage.

Breakfast was his one moment of real solitude, unless there were staying in the house guests whom he chose to ask to join him on the verandah outside his study, where the table was normally laid. From then onwards his day was carefully mapped out. Once a week, or more often in times of particular stress, there was a meeting of the Council at which he presided. The other mornings were devoted to giving interviews to, and receiving reports from, the high officials of his Government concerning the affairs of their respective departments. For luncheon he joined Lady Reading and the staff, and there were also almost invariably guests present, either staying in the house or invited from outside.

The afternoons were given up to more interviews, the reading of documents and dispatches, and occasionally the receiving of deputations or visitors of special importance. Now and then he would have to go into Simla to keep some engagement.

In the evenings, if there were no major functions such as a Levée, an Investiture, an official dinner or a ball and they were not engaged to dine with one of the members of Council or some other Simla dignitary, they were scarcely ever alone with their staff. There were dinners of varying sizes for people young and old, followed either by dancing or a cinema or bridge.

My wife and I visited my father and mother at Simla for six weeks in 1922 and again in 1924, and apart from his morning ride I do not remember a single occasion other than at the week-end during either visit on which my father ever left the house, even to go into the garden, except on public business of one kind or another. Nor was this virtual incarceration in any way exceptional. The volume of work which descended upon the Viceroy was so immense that it could only be tackled by almost ceaseless toil.

In dealing with his officials he was always as courteous and patient as he had been on the Bench and he was as quick to extract the real point from a file as he had been in former days from a brief. In other respects too his early training proved invaluable to him, though sometimes disconcerting to others. "Look upon me as a judge," he would say to an official who desired to convince him of the merits of a particular policy, "and argue your case before me," and he would sit back and listen with the impartial detachment of an ex-Lord Chief Justice, while his slightly overawed visitor marshalled and presented his arguments.

The self-control which he had acquired also stood him in good stead. He was often worried but never flurried and he never allowed himself to be rushed into a decision after insufficient thought or upon incomplete facts.

Moreover, he never lost the power, gained during his years at the Bar, of switching his mind away from his many pre-occupations when he had finished the day's work, a process which he called "putting up the shutters at closing time," and he was always astonishing his staff and guests by appearing at dinner in the gayest of humours after long hours of unbroken and anxious toil. The one ordeal that both he and Lady Reading most dreaded was the ceremony after dinners at which no entertainment was provided other than having a series of people brought up to them for a short conversation before giving way to the next comer.

Both found that this practice demanded extraordinary efforts at the end of a heavy day, for with each change a fresh topic had to be started, maintained and concluded within the space of a few minutes with people many of whom were complete strangers, and while they strove to avoid the more obvious trivialities, there was never time to find common ground.

They therefore did their best to ensure that, though they were powerless to control the situation when dining out, at Viceregal Lodge itself some form of after-dinner amusement should be

available, and they had good cause to be thankful for the happy thought which had led them to take dancing-lessons.

He found a perpetually effective distraction in Bridge, whenever the opportunity offered, but, though he was the most amiable and forgiving of partners and indeed was himself inclined to play with more dash than deliberation, there were those who were so impressed by the knowledge that they were in the presence of the Viceroy as to forget their normal skill, and one young lady, recruited in an emergency to make up a four, was sufficiently overawed by her surroundings to misdeal seven times in succession !

Lady Reading never played Bridge, but she had her own methods of escape, Coon-can, Rummy and even Happy Families, which was not only her own favourite but was equally popular with Governors, Generals and Members of Council, who vied with each other for the privilege of being allowed to play.

But the game had its perils. After one party she confessed to me : "I had General W. , the Gunner, brought up to me, and then Mrs. W . , the Gunner's wife, and then Miss W . , the Gunner's daughter, and if they had produced Master W . , the Gunner's son, I should have disgraced myself. But mercifully he was 'not at home'."

Her deafness naturally increased the tax which the practice of spasmodic conversation imposed upon her, with the constant need to re-attune her ear to different pitches of voice. But the A.D.C.s watched over her with vigilant solicitude and never forgot to set an example in speaking loudly enough for her to hear without effort. There was a famous occasion when she turned to a new and carefully coached A.D.C. who was in waiting upon her for the first time on the night of a dance, to enquire the name of a tune which had caught her fancy. At that moment the band elected to stop and in the ensuing instant of silence the voice of the A.D.C. was heard ringing through the room : " 'I Shall Remember Your Kisses,' Your Excellency, 'When You Have Forgotten My Name'." The effect was colossal! She, too, lived laborious days, struggling bravely first against an infection of the throat caused by the dust and then against sciatica brought on by the rains. Followed by a panting retinue of A.D.C.s and servants with the Comptroller at their head, all laden with rolls of material, books of patterns, lamp-shades and curtains, she worked steadily from room to room throughout the big, rambling house, transforming it as she went.

No detail was too insignificant for her attention. She would herself choose the appropriate flowers and shades for every dinner-

party and would carry out a careful inspection of their arrangement before going to dress.

But her duties were by no means confined to such domestic matters. There were always bazaars and sales of work to be opened, hospitals and other institutions to be visited, and prizes given away.

She soon discovered that hospital facilities for women and children in Simla were quite inadequate and with characteristic energy she set about collecting money and choosing a site for the hospital which now bears her name. The building and equipment of it were a constant source of interest to her and she was a frequent visitor to it after its completion.

She was also shocked at the poor physique of many of the infants whom she saw in the course of her travels about the country, and having, as an Indian journalist phrased it, "great love for milk-sucking babies," she proceeded to organize an All India Baby Week, which met with immediate success.

She was by virtue of her position at the head of all the more important charities of India, and there were numberless Committee Meetings to be attended and much correspondence to be read. Nevertheless, she found time to write to me every week of her five years' absence, except for a few occasions when she was seriously ill, and almost always sent in addition a more impersonal circular letter in her own hand for transmission to a number of her friends in turn, while her Secretary enclosed a typewritten commentary upon the week's events.

Together Lord and Lady Reading gave spontaneously of their best as host and hostess, for each had the gift of relaxing formality without inviting familiarity, and their obvious and genuine desire to see their guests enjoy themselves gave a stimulus to their parties not always to be found under official roofs. They kept the splendid state which the position of Viceroy required with dignity but without pomposity, and they certainly made an impressive couple on great occasions, she with her slim figure, fine carriage and lovely clothes, and he magnificent in Privy Councillor's full dress uniform with all his orders and decorations beneath the sumptuous azure velvet mantle of the Grand Master of the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India.

It was a strange experience for one who had not even served with them the apprenticeship of Washington to find myself on our first night in Simla walking in to dinner with my mother on my arm, my father escorting my wife in front of us, while the Viceregal band played "God Save the King" and some fifty Indian servants in scarlet-and-gold tunics and white-and-gold pugris raised their white-gloved hands to their foreheads in

obeisance. My mind inevitably leapt back to Broadhurst Gardens and I said to my mother : "You have travelled a long way," and she, following my thoughts, answered : "Yes, but those first years were good too. All this would have meant so much less without them." Perhaps that attitude of mind was the main secret of their personal success in India. They never lost either their sense of humour or their sense of proportion or forgot the long uphill road that lay behind them.

He was at times oppressed by the enforced isolation of his position. Except for the Commander-in-Chief the Viceroy can have no friends. He lives in too rarefied an atmosphere and is too much in the public eye to allow him to select favourites from among his Governors or Members of Council, and the mere consciousness that, although he can discuss his problems with others and invite their views, in the end the sole responsibility rests with him, in itself makes for loneliness.

Lord Reading was most fortunate in both his Commanders-in-Chief. He was sincerely attached to Lord Rawlinson, whose abounding vitality infected everyone with whom he came into contact. Wise in council, cheerful in the face of all difficulties, boyishly eager in everything he undertook, and devoted to the interests of the Army under his command, he was a colleague after the Viceroy's own heart, and his sudden and premature death in 1925 grieved him profoundly.

But he could have wished for no more congenial successor than Sir William (now Lord) Birdwood, whose knowledge of Indian life in general and the Indian Army in particular was immense. The greater part of his life had been spent amongst Indian troops ; he knew their problems, spoke their languages, and loved them for their bravery and simplicity. Even as Commander-in-Chief he would set off on foot for days on end, tramping the hills and visiting isolated posts and villages, while a foot-sore and weary A.D.C. less than half his age panted behind him. In him too the Viceroy found a most sympathetic character and valuable counsellor, with whom lie could work on terms of mutual understanding and regard.

He was throughout admirably served by the Members of his Council, both British and Indian, to whom he gave his fullest confidence in return. At the date of his arrival the Council was composed of Sir Malcolm Hailey, the present Lord Hailey, as Finance Member, Sir William Vincent as Home Member, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru as Law Member, Sir Thomas Holland responsible for Industries and Munitions, Sir B. N. Sarma for Agriculture and Public Works and Sir Mahommed Shafi for Education.

Subsequent changes during his period of office introduced Sir Charles Innes in charge of Railways and Communications and Sir Atul Chatterje in charge of Industries and Labour, whilst his old colleague from his American days, Sir Basil Blackett, came out in 1923 as Finance Member ; Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammad Habibulla took over the portfolio of Education ; Sir Mohammed Shafi, Sir B. N. Mitra and Mr. S. R. Das were in the later stages responsible for Law ; and Sir Alexander Muddiman, who had been the first President of the Council of State, assumed the control of Home affairs in 1924.

For the first five years of its existence the Legislative Assembly was presided over with great competence and dignity by Sir Frederick Whyte, whom Lord Reading had known in the House of Commons as the Liberal Member for Perth.

The Viceroy's closest relations were necessarily with the two chief members of his own Staff, his Private Secretary and his Military Secretary.

The first of his Private Secretaries, Mr. S. R. Hignell, I.C.S., had served Lord Chelmsford in a similar capacity. He continued to hold the office until March of 1922, when he was succeeded by Sir Geoffrey de Montmorency, who had been Chief Secretary to the Prince of Wales during his Indian Tour and was later to be Governor of the Punjab.

His first Military Secretary, Colonel C. K. Craufurd-Stuart, was later succeeded by Colonel R. B. Worgan, who had also been on the Prince's Staff in a similar capacity.

But in spite of these loyal and experienced collaborators it was upon his wife that Lord Reading chiefly relied to dispel his sense of isolation. With her, as with no one else, he could descend from his heights and resume contact with humanity, talking over with her not only his daily problems of State but the trivialities and comicalities of their lives and drawing upon their common store of memories of their family and friends at home, from whom in spite of occasional welcome visitors they felt themselves very far away. Both regretted in particular their long severance from their young grandchildren to whom they were devotedly attached.

Every morning after breakfast and every night before going to bed he would go to her room to talk over the events of the day in prospect or in retrospect, and he strove his utmost to keep free the half-hour in the afternoon when they could quietly have tea together in her sitting-room and he could relax the strain of his duties. Although before his time no Viceroy had ever left India during his term of office, there was no bar to the Vicereine coming home during the hot weather as often as she pleased,

and most of her predecessors had taken this opportunity of a respite. For Lady Reading it was particularly desirable on grounds of health, and one of the considerations which had prompted her husband to accept the position had been the knowledge that she would be free to come home from time to time for a rest.

But she would have none of it. She knew that, if she left him even for a few weeks, his one distraction from toil would disappear and he would seek refuge from his unrelieved loneliness by overworking even more than usual. She knew too that, however thoughtful and efficient the staff might be, there were things which she could do to add to her husband's comfort which would never occur to anyone else, and she was also determined that she was not going to leave him with a long programme of entertaining to fulfil without her presence to plan and supervise the arrangements in gross and in detail. She therefore refused to budge, turning a resolutely deaf ear alike to the whole-hearted entreaties of her doctor and the more half-hearted persuasion of her husband, who was secretly overjoyed at her intransigence.

But the pressure of life in Simla was substantially eased by occasional week-ends at the aptly named "Retreat," a small two-storied wooden house at Mashobra, some seven miles away and a thousand feet higher up, poised on a tiny plateau with a steep and wooded hillside behind and in front a shelving fall of land beyond which was ranged in the far distance the full majesty of the snow-clad Himalayas.

To this idyllic sanctuary they resorted as often as opportunity allowed, accompanied only by the minimum number of staff and servants and one or two carefully chosen guests. The accommodation was limited and primitive. There were no bathrooms, both bath and bath-water being borne upstairs by the servants. But there was a pleasant little garden with a large crimson *shamiana*, under which they sat and read and relaxed, and from time to time they would go for a sedate walk along the more level paths in the neighbourhood or up the Old Tibet road, meeting incoming caravans of mules with scarlet harness decked with blue beads and jingling bells in charge of smiling, slant-eyed boys.

Once they had arrived at Simla in April, they rarely made the long descent again before October, when the Government of India shifted its headquarters back to Delhi. But in 1921 and again in 1922 they broke their habit by visiting Sir Harcourt Butler, then Governor of the United Provinces, at his hill-station of Naini Tai, making in August the scorching journey across the plains.

Only in Simla did their daily lives take on a pattern of continuity. The move back to Delhi coincided with weather conditions which made travelling possible and the period of their residence there was frequently interrupted by visits to the governors of the various provinces and to the rulers of Indian States. Tradition especially prescribed a visit in December to Calcutta, still smarting at her dethronement from her status as the capital city, where courts and levees were held and they attended in state at the races, watched polo and inspected institutions, while the Viceroy took the opportunity to establish and maintain valuable contacts with the commercial community, both British and Indian.

Few visitors to India penetrated to the inaccessibility of Simla, since the weather in the months during which the summer-capital was occupied was not such as to encourage travelling about the country. Until the monsoon broke the heat was intense and the dust suffocating even in Simla itself, and when once the rains broke that august hill-top was apt to be swathed in perpetual mist; trees and shrubs dripped lugubriously; walls trickled with moisture; clothes developed patches of mould and shoes disintegrated under the combined attack of the damp and a particularly voracious brand of caterpillar known as the "woolly bear." It was scarcely the ideal climate for anyone as subject to rheumatism and sciatica as Lady Reading.

Their guests at Simla were therefore drawn almost entirely from those resident, permanently or temporarily, in the country, though occasionally some hardier spirit, in the same category with an Indian gentleman who described himself in a letter to the Viceroy as a "noted and famous world-trotter," made the long and vertiginous ascent. Among these was Mr. "Pussyfoot" Johnson, the renowned Prohibitionist, who was making a not too fruitful tour of India in support of his cherished doctrine. It so happened that on the day on which he was invited to luncheon there was no other male guest and Mr. Johnson as a good democrat having no settled conviction as to the right procedure on such occasions, but seeing the ladies of the party curtsy to their Excellencies on being presented, promptly followed their example, thereby imposing a considerable strain upon the self-control of their Excellencies and the staff.

Delhi was quite a different matter. During the cold weather there were constant arrivals from England to be entertained and amongst their close friends who came out on visits were Lord Reading's eldest brother, Harry Isaacs, and his wife, Sir Alfred and Lady Mond, Mr. Rufus Isaacs' first pupil, Sir Francis Oppenheimer, the Hon. Mrs. Ronald Greville, between whom and

both Lord and Lady Reading there existed a warm friendship, Edwina Ashley, now Lady Louis Mountbatten, and Megan Lloyd George, who to their great delight was with them for nearly a year.

At that date the New Delhi was still in process of construction and they inhabited the old Viceregal residence, built on a less titanic scale and in easier reach of the city.

Lord Reading remained to the end dubious as to the wisdom of the decision, taken in Lord Hardinge's time, to transfer the capital back to Delhi.

Though he appreciated its value as a gesture to Indian sentiment and historical tradition, he shook his head sadly at the constant stream of money poured into the building of a great new city on a desert site at a moment when the country's financial position was imposing drastic economies upon every other field of public expenditure.

The Viceroy set great store by the friendship of the Ruling Princes and was at pains to establish personal contacts with as many of them as possible, both by inviting them as his guests and by visiting them in their own states.

These visits, which both he and Lady Reading always greatly enjoyed, were governed by a strict code of ceremonial. On arrival at the station the Viceroy and Lady Reading were met by the Ruling Prince and his staff and driven with an escort of cavalry drawn from the local State Troops to whichever palace had been prepared for their accommodation. The Prince then withdrew, to return later in the morning to pay his ceremonial visit and to present *itr* and *pan*, gold and myrrh, in token of obedience, which the Viceroy touched to signify his acceptance of the offering.

Rigid etiquette governed this occasion. The Viceroy would take up his position on a carpet and, as the Prince was announced, would advance to meet him, the number of paces which he took being regulated by the number of guns to which the particular Prince was entitled by way of salute. The Viceroy then presented the members of his staff and the Prince departed.

Later in the day the Viceroy returned the visit, when the ceremony of offering *itr* and *pan* was again enacted, after which the notables of the State were presented to the Viceroy. In the evening there was usually a State Banquet at which the Viceroy and the Prince made speeches.

The remaining days were spent in inspecting the chief institutions of the State, in visiting places of historic interest, attending a review of the State Troops, and, if time and conditions allowed, taking part in a shoot.

Meanwhile Lady Reading visited the ladies of the Prince's

family in the Zenana and inspected schools, hospitals and welfare centres.

The routine did not differ greatly from State to State, but they were enabled by these visits to see many of the most famous and picturesque places in India, to make the acquaintance of some of her most remarkable men, and to be entertained with every circumstance of mediaeval splendour and much of modern comfort.

Amongst the Princes with whom in the course of their time in India they became on terms of real friendship were the late Maharajas of Bikaner, Alwar and Patiala, the Maharaja Scindia of Gwalior and the Jam Saheb of Nawanagar.

The Maharaja of Bikaner, of magnificent appearance, soldier, statesman and sportsman, with whom Lord Reading was already well acquainted through frequent meetings during the War and the subsequent Peace Conference, was always a welcome guest and an admirable host. He was the first Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes.

The Maharaja of Alwar, though ruler of a small and relatively unimportant State, was undoubtedly one of the most remarkable figures in India. Tall, with broad shoulders and slim waist, the contrast always accentuated by the cut of his clothes, which, whether of Indian or European style, were invariably made in Paris, clean-shaven, soft-voiced and with exquisite manners, he was a splendid shot, a first-class polo player and indeed a natural adept at all games in which swiftness of eye is required. He was also a master of sonorous English, a student of philosophy and religion, and credited by himself and others with psychic powers. He was, like the Maharaja of Bikaner, a Rajput, whose lineage is the proudest in India, and claimed for himself direct descent from the Sun, the emblem of which in diamonds he always wore in the front of a special velvet hat of his own devising.

He was reputed to be a hard, and at times a cruel, task-master, and certainly no one ever received more instantaneous obedience from those about him. A great stickler not only for precedence but for religious observance, he always wore white cotton gloves for fear that his hands might be denied by contact with something ritually unclean, and as an ultra-pious Hindu he insisted upon the removal from his rooms of all leather objects which might have derived from the cow, sacred to his faith. Some thought him a god, others a charlatan ; but, whichever may have been the right view, he deliberately made of himself a mysterious figure, at once attractive and repulsive, and, while discoursing upon universal brotherhood, revelled in the disquiet which he was able to inspire in most women and not a few men. Gifted, inscrutable,

ruthless and ambitious, after Lord Reading's day he fell a victim to his own worse qualities and was deposed, dying prematurely not long afterwards in Europe.

The Maharaja of Patiala was of a very different type. A huge, black-bearded Sikh, in spite of his gigantic weight he was a cricketer and polo-player of repute as well as a leading figure in the Chamber of Princes, as Chancellor of which he succeeded the Maharaja of Bikaner. His State being in the Punjab, he was a frequent visitor to Simla. The Maharaja Scindia of Gwalior, a Mahratta by origin, in addition to his talents as an enlightened ruler who did much for the advancement of his State, was possessed of an impish sense of fun which took delight in all manner of harmless practical jokes. Amongst his most cherished possessions was an electric toy train in silver which ran around the dinner-table, bearing to the guests cigars, cigarettes, and dessert.

He was also the proud owner of numberless sets of false teeth, but it was only on the rarest and most formal occasions that he consented to wear one of them, and his everyday conversation was consequently not easy to follow.

The Jam Saheb of Nawanagar was as popular a figure in India as "Ranji" had been during his cricketing days in England, and he was a particular favourite with both Lord and Lady Reading for his amiability, kindness and simplicity.

The first of their many visits to Indian States was paid at the end of their first season in Simla, when in October of 1921 they set out for Kashmir. The impression made upon them can best be described in Lady Reading's own words :

Such a wonderful journey ! A mixture of the wildest scenery and the simplest life together with the greatest luxury ; special train, Rolls Royce car, a horde of attendants, Reuter telegrams coming (far away under the shadow of the snow of the Himalayas) six times a day, reporting speeches, conferences and world news. We started Tuesday 11th October in our train and had 24 hours uneventful journey, as I always stay in my bed on these occasions and leave the rest to have 6 course luncheons and 8 course dinners. On Wednesday 12th through triumphal arches, past cheering school children we reached Murree where H.E. and I were the guests of General Sir W. and Lady Birdwood. Off early next morning, in a lovely Rolls Royce car to Ghari. I was so tired we had to come on later, but at Ghari, the entrance to Kashmir, we were met by the Maharaja's Private Secretaries in full Levee Uniform, who proffered the usual "mohur" or gold coin (equivalent to one pound) which we had to touch and return ; then on through a most wonderful country with such curves and twists—a precipice on one side only sheltered by small pieces of rock and on the other spreading hills covered

with wonderful autumn foliage. Just before 5 o'clock I said to H.E. "look up on the hill" ; we saw hundreds of little white tents on a plateau encircled on all four sides by the wooded slopes of the Himalayas.

A charming wooden bungalow for H.E. and all the ladies ; and tents for the staff, servants, etc., but *such tents*—each with its own little room for a bath and cretonne covered arm-chairs, the whole wonderfully got up, encircled by arbours and arches of coloured electric lights. A drawing-room tent for me with priceless carpets, the walls all of Kashmir shawls ; all the grounds laid out as for an Exhibition, with designs of hearts, clubs, spades and diamonds as flower beds and a wonderful fountain in the centre illuminated. But what I loved most of all was, as night fell the mountain opposite was lit up by 300 men carrying torches ; they moved in the shape of a horse-shoe (for luck) coming down from the mountain like will-o'-the-wisps. We struck camp early next morning, such a sight, a fleet of motor cars and lorries such as I have not seen since the war. A pilot car with the Military Secretary leading, Surgeon and nurse following on, then endless lorries, for we all take our beds, mattresses, blankets, pillows and all.

Our next stop was at Mohura Power Station—a wonderful electrical plant that supplies the entire valley. I did not go to see it, only H.E. and various people who met us, among them the Maharaja. This was an unofficial meeting ; he was hurried off by motor car to be dressed up and meet us in state 50 miles further on. The most lovely drive I have ever had in my life—imagine a splendid road, watered by natives with brass pitchers before we came along so that no dust should reach our august features, an ideal climate, cool breeze from the Himalayas where the snow lay thickly all the way on our right ; on our left the Jhelum river with cascades, waterfalls, the most luxurious vegetation all the way, mile after mile through an avenue of poplar trees like sentinels each side of road, not 5 ft. apart, so there was shade everywhere. Every few miles a tiny village mostly of mud huts, where we slowed down as all the school-children had holiday, had erected arches across the roads with Welcome and mottoes, the favourites "We welcome Their Excellencies", "Loyalty and Learning". This last was all over the place and nearly caused a rift as we *both* claimed *both* mottoes. At 12.45, we arrived at Shaking on borders of river, a most romantic spot with about 20 tents, each inscribed with our names, where we found maids with our gala dresses, and the officers their State Uniforms, also a large luncheon tent. I rested, we drove another short distance and on the quay met the Maharaja in State dress and decorations and his entire suite. We walked up and down the line in procession and then embarked. The boat was exactly like an enormous State barge in an old print, all scarlet, crimson and gold. It had about 30 men in front in scarlet with curious flat oars, and 2 barge masters dressed in green velvet and gold and 30 more men at back, but as they were not seen by us they did *no* work, consequently we were towed by a small launch. H.E., the Maharaja and I sat in huge chairs right on top deck, all the men in full uniform, including the Political Secretary and Secretary for Foreign

Affairs, etc., who accompanied us on this trip. Over H.E. and me two enormous umbrellas of scarlet, crimson and gold were held by two giants in gorgeous livery. Thus we started. The entire river full of rowing boats, mostly filled with natives but some Europeans amongst them—I believe we went several miles—3 to be accurate—but I was too dazed to know. The whole population of Kashmir, thousands of them, crowded the river, shouted and screamed, filled every window of every mud hut, public institute or roof. It was perfectly gorgeous, the banners, the colours, thousands of turbaned heads, thousands of coloured "saris". There were about six bridges we passed under, each decorated with masses of flowers and bunting, on each

"The Municipality of Srinagar
Welcome Your Excellencies."

I shall never forget it as long as I live. At intervals hundreds of school-children along the banks with flags of every colour which they waved, and as the last "Hurrah" was finished it was taken up by the next batch. Imagine 3 miles of people reaching from river to the skies *each side*, all in Oriental dress with all the windows of houses decorated with the most gorgeous shawls and carpets—Persian and hundreds of years old. Then we reached the steps of the Residency. H.E. and the Maharaja went off in one State carriage, all green velvet and gold with six horses and outriders and runners by the side, I in another, with his nephew and heir [the present Maharaja] till we reached the Residency itself, where we are living. On the lawn in front of the house a squadron of soldiers, a Military Band ; on the other side laid out on the lawn dozens of satin bags with gold in them, hundreds of platters of fruit, grain and vegetables, literally hundreds of red earthenware crocks of honey and preserved fruits. H.E. and I walked round them and inspected them and then ordered them all to be distributed to the poor and hospitals. We took leave of Maharaja who went home, and then I to bed. My bedroom was the surprise of my life. The Maharaja had commandeered the house, thrown two large rooms into one and built a white tiled bath and dressing-room for me. The bedroom where I am now writing with two large white fireplaces with log fires, the loveliest shot blue silk hangings and white furniture, heavenly blue rugs on floor and bed, with blue shot-silk eiderdown and great vases of roses everywhere. He had broken through three rooms just for me : also in the drawing-room had thrown three rooms into one and done it all up in chintz and brocade. What luxury and how it spoils me !

I kept to my bed till lunch to-day. Just before, the Maharaja paid his State visit j half an hour later H.E. returned it with all his officers of State, Aides, etc.

The Maharaja and H.E. sat on two silver thrones here, behind them servants with horsehair whisks in gold and silver to keep flies off. The chairs were silver for the principal officials, the others all draped in Persian shawls. The chiefs handed H.E. the usual gold coin and sprinkled everyone's hand with attar of roses and handed betel nuts

wrapped in gold foil. This ceremony over, it was repeated at Palace. (I did not go as unfortunately it is pouring and State Procession to Palace and Garden Party to be postponed). I was glad as it gave me a rest and also they look upon the rain (they have had none in October for four years) as a special act of Providence in honour of us, so all is well.

Except for the absence of the particular beauties of the Kashmiri scene, this recital would apply with few changes to most of their subsequent State visits, though never again were they confronted with the slightly ambiguous device displayed upon a banner in Srinagar, "God bless the Viceroy; God help Lady Reading," which afforded them peculiar joy.

While at Simla Lord Reading had managed to get a weekend's hill-pheasant shooting, which was actually his introduction to the sport. He had never before used either rifle or shot-gun, but realizing that shooting would form one of his few opportunities to escape from ceremony and distract his mind from affairs, he set about attaining such proficiency as was possible by practice at clay-pigeons at a school in the last weeks before his departure from England. He had greatly enjoyed his first experience, for he had not only been unexpectedly successful but had found delight in the informality, the scenery, the vegetation, and the birds and beasts of the hill-side.

In Kashmir he was put to a sterner test, but after an abortive expedition up to the snow-level in search of bear he was much gratified by bringing down a splendid stag.

With increased practice came growing confidence and skill, and for the rest of his time in India nothing gave him more pleasure or did him more good than occasional days in the jungle in pursuit of any quarry from quail to tiger.

Their visit to Kashmir was followed by a few weeks of great activity in Delhi, especially in connection with the Prince of Wales's forthcoming visit. The old Viceregal Lodge, in spite of the addition of a ball-room in the previous year for the Duke of Connaught's visit, was not built on a scale worthily to accommodate the Prince and his staff. Nor were any other suitable quarters available. The only solution was to construct in the grounds of Viceregal Lodge a special bungalow for the Prince with tents for the use of his staff. It was very simple in design, the rooms charmingly panelled and opening on to a small courtyard with a marble pavement and a fountain in the centre. A bougainvillea adorned the white outer walls and blue pots placed at intervals gave an added note of colour, while a thick border of hollyhocks surrounded the entire house.

Lady Reading devoted much time and thought to its lay-out and furnishing, for which she was in the end well repaid by the Prince's great appreciation of the arrangements made.

After this busy pause in Delhi they set off at the end of November for Calcutta, stopping to visit the Maharaja of Benares on the way. Benares, holiest city of the Hindus, was naturally a stronghold of Gandhi-ism, but from the moment when they left the station, the Viceroy and the Maharaja in a silver carriage followed by Her Excellency and the Private Secretary to the Viceroy in an ivory one, they were cordially received. Indeed, after a river-trip on the second day of the visit the Viceroy, in defiance of every responsible authority and to the horror of the police, who had declared that, if he entered the city itself, they would require at least 400 reinforcements to ensure his safety, climbed into a small car with two of his staff and set out on a tour of the narrow, thronged streets, from which he returned hung with garlands, having been met everywhere with striking friendliness.

Then three crowded weeks in Calcutta, where Lord Ronaldshay, now the Marquess of Zetland, was approaching the end of his highly successful period as Governor. During their stay they occupied Belvedere, once Warren Hastings' country house and since largely added to ; a fine three-storied building with two great staircases leading up, back and front, to columned entrances, and a very handsome set of state reception-rooms.

They were back in Delhi for Christmas, which, though not without some effort in unfamiliar surroundings and at such a distance from home, was traditionally and hilariously observed.

Three days' halt and then off again to Bikaner, to be received under a gold shamiana at the station before driving out along roads lined by the famous State Camel Corps to the Maharaja's red sandstone palace.

The last two days of the year were spent at Gujner, another of the Maharaja's palaces, for the renowned Imperial sand-grouse shoot, at which over 4,000 birds were accounted for. In this setting, so remote from anything they could have contemplated two years before, they saw in their first New Year in India.

1922 was made memorable by the Prince of Wales's visit. The Viceroy had been down to meet him at Bombay, where he first landed on Indian soil, but had then left His Royal Highness to carry out his own programme, in the course of which he reached Delhi on February 14, where there figured among the arrangements a Durbar, polo-matches, garden-parties, balls, the unveiling of the All-India War Memorial and a Military Parade Service, at which the Prince presented new colours to several regiments

and made a speech in Hindustani. Delhi, as a centre of non-co-operation, had been regarded as likely to offer him, if not an openly hostile, at least a sullen, welcome, but the pessimists were doomed to disappointment, for he was most warmly greeted on arrival and the enthusiasm did not abate throughout his stay.

It would be tedious to chronicle in any detail Lord and Lady Reading's travels throughout the year, in the course of which their visits to Indian States included Alwar, Indore, Gwalior, and Bharatpur. At Gwalior the Viceroy, to his own intense satisfaction, got his first tiger and at Bharatpur took part in the famous duck-shoot, where from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and again from 5 o'clock to 5, the overheated guests discharged equally overheated guns into an unending stream of duck and geese. Lord Reading, much as he enjoyed the experience, found this a very tiring and difficult form of shooting, and his bag was to his own certain knowledge a regrettably small one. He was therefore not a little surprised to find, when the "Cease fire" had been sounded on bugles and the birds had been collected, a most creditable pile heaped up beside his butt. There are compensations in being a Viceroy.

When he was on leave in England in the summer of 1925 and had the honour of lunching with King George V, His Majesty, being himself a famous shot, was much interested in Lord Reading's account of this shoot and enquired how many birds had fallen to his own gun. Lord Reading answered modestly and truthfully, and the King then slyly enquired how many cartridges he had fired. But Lord Reading was not prepared to reply to so searching a question, and told the King : "That, Sir, is a secret which not even you can force me to reveal," at which His Majesty was greatly amused.

After the Prince's visit the great event of the year for Lord and Lady Reading was their tour of the North-West frontier, carried out in the first days of April, though it was a sad disappointment to her that the far-famed Peshawar bazaar was closed to all Europeans, a punishment for some act of more than usual lawlessness on the part of the inhabitants of which on personal grounds she strongly disapproved.

Many places that he visited in India deeply moved the Viceroy, either by their intrinsic beauty or grandeur or by their associations or by a blend of both ; the Taj Mahal, incomparable in its ethereal peace ; Chitor, symbol of Rajput chivalry and sacrifice ; Udaipur with its dazzling white palaces studding the surface of sapphire lakes ; the Ridge at Delhi and the Residency at Lucknow with their grim, poignant and heroic memories of the Mutiny ; the aloof majesty of the unconquered Himalayas,

But the most vivid and lasting impression of all was stamped upon his memo'ry by his visits to the Khyber country, and there was no moment at which he was prouder of his position or more conscious of his responsibilities than when looking back on the outer marches of India from the borders of Afghanistan.

It was not just the spectacle of the arid, jagged landscape which had cost so many lives, or the sight of the tall, fierce, untameable tribesmen to whom legend ascribes descent from the Lost Tribes of Israel, that appealed to his imagination. There were also the troops, British and Indian, trim, business-like and alert, who kept unbroken watch over their turbulent neighbours, and it was to the knowledge that here was essentially a man's country, where the two antagonists understood and respected each other's qualities, that he traced in his own mind the secret of its primitive and compelling charm.

The year 1923 stood out for the variety and interest of their journeyings which included their visits to Udaipur, Chi tor and Lucknow. They also visited Hyderabad and Mysore, where they saw a thrilling *kedda*, or round-up of wild elephants, stayed with Lord and Lady Willingdon in the eighteenth-century spaciousness of Madras, and spent Christmas amidst the gay Burmese scene.

There was also one memorable shooting expedition, for on leaving Delhi in April they went to stay at Sipri with the Maharaja Scindia of Gwalior, in order that the Viceroy might take part in a tiger-shoot in perhaps the most celebrated and prolific tiger-country in all India. The Maharaja's patient and skilful preliminary work was well rewarded, for in the course of six days the Viceroy himself accounted for five tiger, the last measuring 11 feet 5 inches, only an inch less than the record Indian beast shot by the late Lord Hardinge of Penshurst in the same jungle, and the third largest in the world.

As if to balance the experiences of 1923, 1924 provided little of moment save for a further visit, this time unofficial, to the matchless beauties of Kashmir, and expeditions to the caves of Ellora and to Ajanta, the famous frescoes of which only Lord Curzon amongst former Viceroys had ever actually seen.

In the Birthday Honours List of that year Lady Reading was awarded the gold Kaisar-i-Hind medal for her work on behalf of the women and children of India, and when at the next Investiture the Viceroy first ceremoniously invested his wife and then kissed her on both cheeks the company, in defiance of all decorum, broke into loud and long applause.

The peak of the Simla season of 1923 had been **their** Excellencies' "Moonlight Fete," at which, against a background of **the**

illuminated house, guests had danced on the top terrace, lost themselves in a specially constructed maze on the middle one, and indulged in "All the Fun of the Fair" at numerous side-shows provided on the tennis-courts at the lowest level of all. There had also been a chute, upon which history was made by the combined and dignified descent of the Viceroy, the Commander-in-Chief and the Governor of the Punjab.

But these bucolic junketings paled before the splendour of the "Feast of Lanterns" in August of 1924, when the whole interior of the house was transformed for the evening into the Chinese mode and all the guests attended in Far Eastern dress.

These and many other of their entertainments owed not a little of their conception and much of their execution to Captain Ralph Burton, Coldstream Guards, then their senior A.D.C., who, in addition to being in charge of the issue of all invitations, contrived to "produce" these functions with an imagination, ingenuity and inspired attention to detail which contributed enormously to their success.

In April of 1925 they left India for England on three months' leave. It was as well that affairs of State required Lord Reading's temporary presence in London at that moment, for on his return to England it was at once evident that after four arduous years it was high time that he had a respite from toil. He was not well ; he was overworked ; and he had been greatly distressed on his voyage home by the receipt of news of the sudden death of his younger brother, Godfrey. His spirits, still so characteristic of him in spite of all his responsibilities, had vanished and upon anyone who had not known him previously he must have made the impression of a stern, aloof, preoccupied man.

In truth, both he and Lady Reading were thoroughly and not surprisingly exhausted by their labours, though to all outward appearances she had so far confounded expectations by standing the strain better than he.

On the deck of the ship which took them from Bombay on their homeward voyage a tent had been erected for their use, furnished with two splendid but unyielding red and gold chairs, in which they had taken their seats for the last ceremonious farewells. Soon after the ship had put to sea, a friend who was accompanying them went along to the tent to see that all was well, only to find them still sitting bolt upright in their chairs with her hand in his, fast asleep.

Since their own house in Curzon Street was let until the date of their final return in the following year, they took for the period of their visit Lowndes House, in Lowndes Place, where

they found amongst others awaiting their arrival a grand-daughter of 31, of whose birth they had learnt during their first journey to Kashmir but whom they had of course never yet seen.

They had naturally expected some official welcome at Victoria and had looked forward also to being greeted on the platform by friends, but they were taken completely by surprise by the crowds of the general public, who stood behind a cordon of police from the station-exit along both pavements of Wilton Road to the corner of Victoria Street and cheered them warmly as they passed.

The chief function that marked their sojourn in London was a reception of great magnificence given in their honour by the Secretary of State at the India Office, where a very large, distinguished and resplendent company of guests filed past Lord and Lady Birkenhead and Lord and Lady Reading to welcome the temporarily returned travellers.

During his stay in England the honorary degree of **LL.D.** was conferred upon Lord Reading by the University of Cambridge, Oxford following suit with the honorary degree of **D.C.L.** in June of 1926.

On their return to India in August 1925 Lord and Lady Reading travelled straight to Simla, a very hot and exhausting journey at the time of year, where Lord Reading took over his office from Lord Lytton, Governor of Bengal, who had been acting for him during his absence.

They had been accompanied home by Captain Burton, the only one of their A.D.C. who remained with them during the whole five years, and by Miss Fitzroy, who stayed behind in England, her place being taken by Miss Stella Charnaud, who had been introduced to Lady Reading by a mutual friend and had agreed to accompany her back to India for the remaining year.

The Simla season was already well advanced when they arrived, but it received a stimulus towards the end of September by the visit of King Albert and Queen Elizabeth of the Belgians, who were making an informal tour of India and came up to spend a few days with the Viceroy and Lady Reading. Their visit, though they were the most simple, charming and appreciative of guests, naturally involved increased entertaining and an additional strain upon Lady Reading.

But the various functions arranged for their Majesties were highly successful and, before leaving, King Albert invested the Viceroy with the Grand Cordon of the Order of **Leopold as a mark of his gratitude** for their stay.

Lord and Lady Reading accompanied their royal guests to

Summerhill Station on their departure, and it was only when they were driving back to Viceregal Lodge after seeing them off that Lady Reading broke the news to her husband that she had for days been in great pain, that the doctors had diagnosed a growth which might or might not be malignant, and that anyhow an immediate operation was necessary.

Although she had known throughout the Belgian royal visit that her condition was serious and, unless prompt steps were taken, might even be fatal, she had refused to mention it herself or allow her doctors to speak of it until all the official functions were at an end.

Arrangements had at once to be made to move to Calcutta, where directly on arrival after the long, hot and painful journey she submitted to the operation. For some days her condition was precarious and Lord Reading, struggling to carry on with his duties and overwhelmed by loneliness and anxiety, was inwardly almost distraught, though by immense effort he paid the tribute to her courage of himself remaining outwardly hopeful and calm. Thanks to the unremitting care of surgeon, doctors and nurses and her own gallant spirit she slowly recovered, but the operation had been a very severe tax upon her strength and the unanimous opinion of all those about her urged her not to struggle on till the following April, but to go home at once, leaving the Viceroy to complete the last few months of his tenure of office alone. She flatly refused. She knew very well that her advisers were right in principle, but she knew also that her husband would be lonely and miserable without her, and she stayed.

By Christinas she was, at least in her own estimation, sufficiently restored to health to attend the Calcutta races, and from then on till their final departure she carried out her tasks with all her old zest, though with greatly increased effort. But she never really recovered, for, although she did not know it, she had been stricken by the disease which less than four years later was to cause her death.

When the time came for them to take their leave of India, glad though they were at the prospect of being united with their family and friends, they were full of regrets at bidding good-bye to a country in which they had enjoyed such wonderful experiences, amongst whose peoples they had made so many friends, and whose interests they had striven so devotedly to serve.

But there was comfort in the sure knowledge that there was sadness amongst both Indians and Europeans at their going and that they would be sincerely missed in many quarters, where there would be echoed, though perhaps in different language,

the sentiments of an Indian bard who commenced a Farewell Ode in their honour with the immortal lines :

"Bring me a drink, O cup-bearer,
For I am about to indulge in a panegyric."

As they looked back then and later upon these years, there seemed to be displayed before their mind's eye an endless colour-film of their lives against the shifting, kaleidoscopic background of India, in which great events and passing incidents succeeded one another with dizzying rapidity and in fortuitous sequence, and unequalled splendour and abysmal squalor, the most subtle learning and the most benighted ignorance, western progress and eastern immutability, the loftiest humanity and the blindest cruelty, fervid loyalty and flaming sedition, were inextricably entwined.

Perhaps in retrospect it was the smaller happenings that by a common caprice of memory remained the most vivid. The old retainers in blue and silver who, carrying silver rods and chanting a weird cry, preceded the Viceroy and the Maharaja through the palace of Mysore, showing them where they might safely tread. The small children at Bangalore, who in gleeful welcome pelted Her Excellency with marigolds, while the police stood by and clapped. The dancing-girls performing on a gold-lacquered platform in the moat of the Old Palace at Mandalay. The visits of two great, if very dissimilar, artists : Melba singing " Home, Sweet Home", after dinner on the Viceroy's birthday at Simla in 1922, and Sir Harry Lauder enlivening the Christmas-party at Calcutta in 1924 with all his favourite songs. The tiny, pathetic shapes carved in the marble of palace gateways, where the Hindu widows, dipping their hands in ochre, had left their imprint as they passed through for the last time on their way to the funeral pyre.

The old warrior, Sir Pertab Singh, watching unmoved a polo-match between his own Jodhpur and the more fancied Patiala team, until, when Jodhpur took the lead for the first time, his mouth began to twitch and, when they won, a broad smile spread over his face, while a crowd headed by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales surged around him and cheered him to the echo.

Forts, palaces and humbler houses outlined by the light of countless wicks burning in saucers of oil, most primitive and lovely of all forms of illumination.

The Maharaj Rana of Dolhpur's legendary pearls, for only one string of which the Czar of Russia was said to have offered a fortune, and the Empress Eugenie's superb diamond necklace around the Maharaja of Patiala's massive throat.

The inscription over the main gate of Akbar's deserted **red**

sandstone city of Fatehpur-Sikri, where for a while the greatest of the Moghuls held court and strove to weld all religions into one universal faith : "Said Jesus, on whom be Peace : 'The World is a bridge. Pass over it but build no house thereon. He who hopes for an hour, hopes for eternity. The World is but an hour. Spend it in prayer. The rest is unseen'."

The solitary grave at Lucknow—"Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty."

From such materials was assembled the composite mental picture of India which they carried away. But for the most part they kept their memories and experiences to themselves after their return, for, as Lord Reading soon discovered, the ignorance of London Society on the subject of India was only equalled by its apathy, and, as he bitterly said : "People only ask you about India to make conversation. They don't want to be told."

But all these experiences still lay in the future in the spring of 1921.

Even in the opening days of his Viceroyalty Lord Reading's mind was much occupied by such long-term problems as the better adjustment of the machinery of Indian government, the recruitment of Indians to the superior services, and the vast subject of the economic development of the country. His approach both to these and to his more immediate problems was characteristically cautious. Indeed, at first he showed a tendency to refer too much to the Secretary of State, which quickly drew a remonstrance coupled with an admonition couched in the form of friendly advice. "I think," Mr. Montagu told him, "the right solution is to force you and the Local Governments to get the assent of your legislatures to anything you want to do, and then to give you a free hand . . . we cannot really enforce our statutory position from here in these days. Why, therefore, refer to us so much . . . ?"

This was wise counsel and Lord Reading was not slow to take it. He knew how essential it was that Viceroy and Secretary of State should walk in step with each other; and just as Mr. Montagu saw that the effective control of the India Office was now severely circumscribed, so Lord Reading saw that his own powers were in practice something different from the appearance which they had presented in the Statute to which they owed their being.

"It has interested me to go through the Government of India Act," he wrote to Mr. Montagu, "and consider your and my powers. They are both very great ; but both yours and mine require very tender handling." At the back of the minds of

both men was the desire, which they repeatedly acknowledged to each other, to do all they could for India in her aspirations towards nationhood. Moreover, both agreed, as Mr. Montagu once wrote, that it was their "cardinal duty to represent the Indian point of view in its relation to the Empire." To the end of his life this remained a "cardinal duty" to Lord Reading, and during the Round Table Conference of 1930 it was said of him that perhaps more than any other of the delegates he realized that there were three main parties to the discussions—India, the United Kingdom and the Empire. At any rate, this over-riding duty powerfully influenced all his actions as Viceroy, and largely explains conduct and policy which sometimes seemed on a short view hesitant or tentative. He never forgot that the ultimate objective of British policy towards India at that time was her inclusion in the British Commonwealth of Nations as a free and equal partner, but he knew that neither Britain nor India could be driven to that goal and that even to lead them thither called for the most subtle and sympathetic touch.

The slight but unmistakable lull in domestic politics which began with Lord Reading's arrival did not last long. Mr. Gandhi, impressed by the new Viceroy's high judicial standing and his Liberal antecedents, had made it known that he would frown on any hostile demonstrations on his landing, and he refused to sanction a "hartal," or general strike, in Bombay on April 3. Lord Reading's visit to Lahore and his early public utterances also helped to create a favourable atmosphere which might have persisted and even led to a permanent improvement, had the times been less abnormal. But Mr. Gandhi himself could not resist the pressure from his extreme followers.

April, the month of the new Viceroy's arrival, was marked by a fierce riot in Bihar, when a mob of ten thousand tried to storm a jail and afterwards looted a police station and burnt its records, and in the same month a brutal outburst of mob violence at Melegam in Bombay resulted in the murder of five police officers. Labour unrest also reared its head, manifesting itself in strikes on the railways and in wholesale breach of their contracts by labourers on the tea-plantations in Assam. Indeed, the annals of those days are a monotonous round of "hartals," riots, clashes between police and law-breakers, extremist political conferences, seditious speeches and all the other symptoms of acute political unrest, which startled the new Viceroy by their intensity and, as he himself confessed, caused him to form a much more gloomy view of Indian affairs than he had taken before his departure from home. "When in England," he wrote at the end of April,



THE VICEROY'S "BAG"

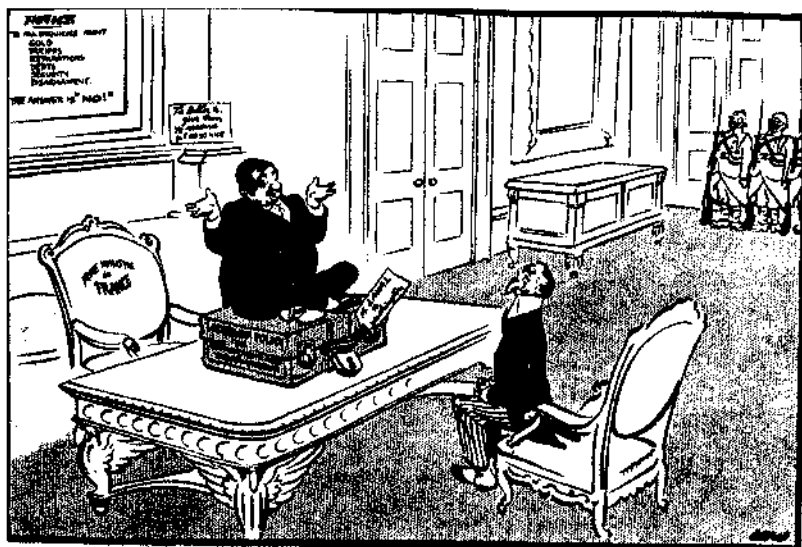


LORD READING ARRIVES IN LONDON IN 1925
 from India, for discussions. Pictured with him are Lord Inchcape,
 Sir W. Joynson-Hicks, Lady Reading, [right] Lord Birkenhead, Sir **Alfred**
Mond, Lady Birkenhead



LEAVING CALCUTTA FOR THE LAST TIME

The Viceroy and Countess of Reading in their carriage outside Belvedere, about to depart for Howrah Station and Delhi, January 1926



"HOW THEN, THE INESTIMABLE VALUE OF EXCHANGING VIEW WITH MILLER BREAD?"

LOW'S CARTOON OF LORD HEADING'S VISIT TO PARIS AS FOREIGN SECRETARY, 1931

"I was not unduly depressed . . . by the report of serious conditions. . . . I am reluctantly compelled, since my investigations here, to take a more serious view, since I find that the appeal of Gandhi and his associates is now being made to the ignorant masses . . . and the agitation is largely based upon the demand for complete S waraj."

The situation was in fact critical. The influence of the Government had SQ gravely declined that in various quarters both in India and in England it was suggested that the only course was for the Viceroy to call a Round Table Conference in an attempt to reach an agreed settlement of India's political problems. But Lord Reading set his face against all such hints and proposals, and not only declared his intention of refusing to take the initiative in summoning such a conference but also of rejecting the proposal if made by anybody else. For he realized that there could be no compromise with the out-and-out extremists, who at this time were in full control of the non-co-operation movement ; as he himself wrote : "The truth is, the more I consider the question of a Round Table Conference, the more I lean to the conclusion that unless the non-co-operationists make very material changes in their programme, it will not be possible to conciliate them."

By the end of April he had already decided that he could no longer permit open defiance of the Government, and he had resolved to begin a definite trial of strength with the principal law-breakers by prosecuting the two Ali brothers, Mahommed Ali and Shaukat Ali, the leaders of the extremist Mahonnnedans, for a series of speeches in which they actually informed their largely ignorant and temperamentally bellicose audiences that, if the Amir of Afghanistan invaded India, it would be their duty to assist him.

Such fulminations certainly embarrassed the Government, but they embarrassed the Hindu leaders, including Mr. Gandhi himself, no less. The great mass of Hindus had good reason to fear any Mahommedan invasion, no matter what the ostensible motive behind it might be, and the Hindu-Moslem axis began to show obvious signs of strain as a result of the disturbingly fanatical colour applied to their propaganda by the Ali brothers, whose wild speeches, coupled with often-repeated assertions that they were "Moslems first and everything else afterwards," gave Mr. Gandhi food for much serious thought.

Nor was this the end of Mr. Gandhi's troubles, for in some of their speeches in the early months of 1921, notably in Madras during April, the Ali brothers had finally overstepped all possible bounds of toleration by open attempts to seduce soldiers and police

from their allegiance. The Government had no alternative to prosecution, but no sooner had the situation become apparent than a vigorous outcry came from the Moslems that Mr. Gandhi was himself cunningly keeping on the right side of the law whilst leaving his Moslem lieutenants to run the risk of trial and imprisonment. Clearly Mr. Gandhi had to take some drastic and dramatic step. On the one hand, Hindu-Moslem unity, which had always been the dearest wish of his heart, was fast disintegrating into hostility, and on the other his own *ahirnsa*, or non-violent resistance movement, was entering on a phase of open violence, so that from both these directions his intended national struggle against a "satanic" Government was in grave danger of collapse.

But, whatever the future might hold, Lord Reading was quite clear in his own mind how to deal with political offenders, and as early as the end of April he telegraphed his views to the Secretary of State, who at once replied assuring him of his assent. In his telegram Lord Reading explained that he would himself determine at what point any given offender must be regarded as overstepping the limit, and it would thereupon be his duty to decide whether he could rely on the ordinary judicial process or whether some form of executive action was necessary. This procedure he would apply quite impartially, no matter who the offender might be. Mr. Montagu's unconditional support of this policy greatly strengthened Lord Reading's hands, for there can be little doubt that during and immediately after his Madras tour Mahommed Ali was deliberately courting prosecution with the object of forcing Mr. Gandhi into a campaign of violence from which he could hardly hold aloof once the Moslem leader was in the hands of the police. But the more responsible Hindus, who saw in such a prospect a severe and prolonged setback to the nationalist cause coupled with the miseries inevitably attendant on a revolutionary outbreak, realized that it was necessary to bring every pressure to bear upon Mr. Gandhi to induce him to try a more constructive line of action, and it was probably Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the supreme leader of orthodox Brahmin political opinion, who conceived the idea of bringing Lord Reading and Mr. Gandhi together. At any rate, it was he who conducted the negotiations with the Viceroy during the early part of May and he was admirably fitted for the task, since Lord Reading was strongly attracted by the Pandit's character and intellectual qualities. "A more subtle brain, I think, than Gandhi's," he wrote of him to Mr. Montagu. Pandit Malaviya was considerably worried by Mahommed Ali's references to Afghanistan, as well as by a rumour current amongst Mahommedans that the Amir was

ready to move against India in May or June. He therefore felt bound to exert all his influence with Mr. Gandhi to persuade him to seek an interview with the Viceroy, and in this undertaking he was finally successful.

Rather exciting days lately [wrote my father in a personal letter to me at this time] as for various reasons intermediaries have stepped in and seen me with a view to bringing about a meeting with Gandhi.

He certainly is a wonderful person. Everyone seems agreed that he is quite-sincere, he leads a deeply religious life, subsisting on the most modest food, goats* milk, nuts and bread, and eschews all form of comfort. He has a tremendous hold over the masses who are attracted by his idealism and self-sacrifice. I rather expect we shall meet during the next day or two. He arrived to-day at Simla and we heard the shouts and cheers all the way up the hill from the people who had received him with flowers.

There is no doubt that his arrival in Simla is solely in connection with the action of the intermediaries, and provided he makes application to me in the proper way for an interview, there will be no difficulty in granting it. But I have taken a firm stand against sending for him until he makes the first step, since otherwise my action would be grossly misinterpreted amongst the Indian people by unscrupulous propagandists and the people would never really understand what had happened.

The application was duly made and on May 13 Lord Reading had a first interview with Mr. Gandhi lasting for four hours, and others followed a few days later. Their general purpose was to induce Mr. Gandhi to abandon the dangerous and ultimately ruinous non-co-operative agitation ; but they also had the more immediate object of giving to the Ali brothers through him a last opportunity to withdraw publicly the seditious utterances and incitements in respect of which they were in peril of prosecution. Lord Reading himself put on record in another private letter to me an account of the first impression made on him by his visitor.

There is nothing striking about his appearance [he wrote]. He came . . . in a white *dhoti* [loin cloth] and cap woven on a spinning wheel, with bare feet and legs, and my first impression on seeing him ushered into my room was that there was nothing to arrest attention in his appearance, and that I should have passed him by in the street without a second look at him. When he talks, the impression is different. He is direct, and expresses himself well in excellent English with a fine appreciation of the value of the words he uses. There is no hesitation about him and there is a ring of sincerity in all that he utters, save when discussing some political questions. His religious views are, I believe, genuinely held, and he is convinced to a point almost bordering on fanaticism that non-violence and love will give India its independence

and enable it to withstand the British Government. His religious and moral views are admirable and indeed are on a remarkably high altitude, but I must confess that I find it difficult to understand his practice of them in politics. To put it quite briefly, he is like the rest of us, when engaged in a political movement, he wishes to gather all under his umbrella, and to reform them and bring them to his views. He has consequently to accept many with whom he is not in accord, and has to do his best to keep the combination together. This is particularly true of the Hindu-Moslem combination which I think rests upon insecure foundations.

In this short character-sketch, written immediately after his first personal contact with one of the most baffling personalities of our time, Lord Reading gave a notable example of his power of judging *men*. For he discerned unerringly the chief aspect of Mr. Gandhi's character, the conflict between his unquestioned sincerity in all that pertained to the religious and moral side of life and the flexibility of the principles on which his political conduct was based. All that has happened in the years since Lord Reading's description was written has proved the accuracy of the estimate-which he then made.

But, although Lord Reading saw so clearly the contradiction in Mr. Gandhi's character, he both liked and respected him, and to the end of his life he never spoke of Gandhi the man in any terms but those of sympathy and regard. Yet in his interviews he never lost sight of the fact that he was the Governor-General of India seeking to understand the point of view of his Government's most formidable opponent and, if possible, come to an agreement with him. In a further letter to me written immediately afterwards he gave an account of his dealings with Mr. Gandhi.

In the course of six interviews—the first of four hours and a half, the second of three hours, the third of an hour and a half, the fourth of an hour and a half, the fifth of an hour and a half and the sixth of three-quarters of an hour—I have had many opportunities of judging him. A critical point came towards the end of the second interview when I, for the first time, adopted a firm and rather severe attitude. He seemed surprised, and I think his attitude changed from that moment. Our conversations were of the frankest; he was supremely courteous with manners of distinction. A slight incident at our first interview reveals a pleasant Oriental courtesy. After two hours and a half's conversation I wanted tea and pressed him to have some. He would take nothing. I explained that I could not take tea unless he joined me in something. He then asked for hot water, which was immediately brought whilst I waited for tea. I was concerned lest his hot water

should get cold, and when my tea was brought said he was letting his hot water get cold. He replied, "I could not think of tasting it until you had had your tea." He held in every way to his word in the various discussions we had.

Four main topics were discussed at these meetings, the Punjab disturbances of 1919 and their aftermath 5 the Treaty of Sevres ; the meaning of Swaraj 5 and Mr. Gandhi's own attitude in the event of an Afghan invasion of India. Mr. Gandhi displayed considerable animus against all those British officers who had come into prominence during the quelling of the dangerous rising in the Punjab, and in particular he inveighed against Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer, demanding the cancellation of their pensions. Lord Reading pressed him closely on this point, since Mr. Gandhi himself had publicly declared that he did not desire vengeance or even punishment, but the Mahatma parried the Viceroy's thrusts by a bland announcement that what he was asking for was not punishment!

The discussion of the Treaty of Sevres was of a more perfunctory order. Certainly Mr. Gandhi had protested from time to time against the iniquity of the terms of peace which had been forced on Turkey, and in the course of these interviews he referred again to the grief of all good Moslems at the exclusion of Palestine and Syria from the Turkish Empire. But he could not claim to be the accredited representative of the Moslems, and Lord Reading spent little time in discussing this subject, as his main object was to discuss Swaraj with his visitor and find out, if possible, what meaning he attached to the word. He failed! ". . . I am as much at a loss now to explain it as when he came into the room, although I have striven hard to get a definite meaning from him." He had conducted a rigorous and comprehensive cross-examination with all his old force and skill, but Mr. Gandhi had gently evaded his questions, taking refuge in such vague generalities as that Indians would have attained Swaraj when they had regained their self-respect by pursuing a policy of non-violent non-co-operation.

I asked the question point blank—What is it in the actions of the Government that makes you pursue the policy of non-co-operation? The reply, repeated more than once during our interviews, was that he was filled with distrust of the Government, and that all their actions, even though apparently good, made him suspect their motive.

Mr. Gandhi's attitude during the discussion of the fourth of the divisions into which the talks fell, the line of action that he

would adopt in the event of an Afghan invasion of India, was equally unsatisfactory. He would not "ask Indians to raise leries" for the Amir, but he would tell them that it was a crime to help a Government which had lost the confidence of the nation. This beating of the air progressively exasperated Lord Reading, who demanded clarity and substance in any answer made to him, but he kept his temper under control, and, as he wrote afterwards to the Secretary of State, "I have been very patient and have discussed and listened at great length . . . although my inclination was to break off conversations during this morning's discussion."

Lord Reading did, however, let Mr. Gandhi see before the end of the first interview that his patience was not boundless, and that he was not prepared to go on talking generalities indefinitely. Accordingly, when at the second interview a few days later Mr. Gandhi began to cover the same ground again, Lord Reading pulled him up sharply, telling him that he had come to the conclusion that little good could result from further conversations between them, in view of the atmosphere of deep suspicion of the Government in which Mr. Gandhi and his associates lived and were determined to live. Immediately Mr. Gandhi's attitude changed. He urged that he was not the only man responsible for non-co-operation and that there were one or two others, particularly Lajpat Rai and Motilal Nehru, whom he would like the Viceroy to interview, but Lord Reading, whilst expressing his readiness to see them and any others who might be helpful, refused to receive them in company with Mr. Gandhi. In the end a third interview was arranged, but only after Lord Reading had drawn attention to the necessity for immediate and positive action. Accordingly, at the next interview Lord Reading refused further to discuss generalities and asked Mr. Gandhi the direct question, what definite proposals he wished to make to avert the arrest and prosecution of the Ali brothers. Mr. Gandhi again tried to escape the issue by saying that he had come to endeavour to avoid the disturbances which were bound to follow the arrests, but Lord Reading replied that all those considerations were before the Government and that nothing would induce him to condone inflammatory utterances of the kind of which the brothers were guilty. He demanded satisfactory assurances from them that there would be no repetition of the offence, together with a public expression of regret. Thereupon Mr. Gandhi for the first time, put forward a definite proposal, offering to go to the Ali brothers and lay the Viceroy's demands before them. He wished them to come to Simla, but Lord Reading refused and in the end it was

agreed that Mr. Gandhi should write a letter to the brothers containing Lord Reading's demands, and that the letter should be passed by Lord Reading before it was dispatched.

Even now Mr. Gandhi tried to save something from the undoubted ddb&cle by inserting in the first draft which he submitted certain passages which were in effect a manifesto in support of non-co-operation. But Lord Reading refused to budge and insisted on his terms, which in the end were accepted. Mr. Gandhi had a hard struggle with the brothers to persuade them to agree and a series of telegrams passing between him and the Viceroy in the days immediately following the interviews testify to the difficulty of the task which, he had undertaken. But Lord Reading would not recede from the terms which he had laid down and finally fixed a time-limit for compliance with them. The required withdrawal and apology were made and resulted in a satisfactory, though short-lived, stabilization of the position by shewing that the Government would no longer tolerate the preaching of sedition and open violence. The true significance of the episode was thus summed up by Lord Reading himself :—

He (Mahommed Ali) is a real factor in the situation : he is the ostensible link between Mahommedan and Hindu. If trouble comes between him and Gandhi, it means the collapse of the bridge over the gulf between Hindu and Mahommedan. If Mahommed Ali does what Gandhi desires—and that no doubt will be to make the declaration—Mahommed Ali will be lowered in the public esteem 5 his position as a leader will be seriously impaired and the most disturbing factor of peace at the moment will be quietened. My survey of the position on my own behalf and as the result of advice is that he is at the moment a far more dangerous factor . . . than Gandhi.

Lord Reading had of course kept his Executive Council in close touch with these developments, and though there was some disappointment in certain quarters at the outcome of the interviews, the Council were unanimous in agreeing that the Viceroy's course was the wisest. Indeed, he had manoeuvred Mr. Gandhi and his associates into a most unpleasant dilemma. If the Ali brothers had refused to agree to his terms, a big wedge would have been driven between them and Mr. Gandhi, and the Government would have gained enormous prestige from a successful prosecution carried out in the face of open and boastful threats. If they agreed to them, the result must be the peaceful and triumphant vindication of the law, with a consequent "loss of face" on the part of the leaders of the non-co-operation and Khilafat movements and for the time being a general diminution

in the vehemence of the attacks on the government of the country.

The Home Government were thoroughly satisfied with the way in which Lord Reading had handled these extraordinarily difficult negotiations ; as Mr. Montagu said in a letter to him, "We are all delighted with your skilful treatment of Gandhi. You gained a great victory."

Naturally the interviews created extraordinary interest throughout the country, and Mr. Gandhi was the object of much bitter criticism from extremist quarters. The most eager curiosity was shown as to what had happened during the talks but nothing was made public. The Government issued no account and Mr. Gandhi himself loyally adhered to his pledge of secrecy.

But the set-back to the Ali brothers and to the non-co-operation movement generally proved to be of short duration. The Ali brothers were very soon explaining away their apology, whilst Mr. Gandhi threw himself with renewed energy into his campaign against drink, the "satanic" foreign government and the use of imported cloth.

The campaign against foreign cloth, part of the tactics of which consisted in the burning of existing stocks, certainly represented a genuine conviction on Mr. Gandhi's part, but, as so often happened, he allowed his own idealism to be exploited for base ends. The motives which swayed some of his supporters were more than questionable, for amongst their number were prominent mill-owners whose special interest in this aspect of nationalist agitation was only too flagrantly explained by the substantial rise in the value of Indian mill shares as the result of the boycotting and burning of imported material.

Mr. Gandhi also continued his laudable attempts to improve the lot of the Untouchables, but was soon faced with the paradoxical situation of non-co-operation inside the non-co-operative movement. For the higher castes naturally took steps to preserve their age-old privileges, which in turn led the Untouchables to organize so effective a boycott against them in some parts of the Bombay Presidency that with characteristic illogicality the local non-co-operation Press actually appealed to the Government to stamp upon the pretensions of the upstart Untouchables!

Meanwhile the situation went from bad to worse. The routine reports to England in the early summer months of 1921 are a melancholy record of growing unrest and disturbance, the forces of law and order more and more on the defensive, the authority of the Government openly and violently flouted. The Ali brothers strove desperately to recover the prestige which they

had lost by their apology, and reports began to come in that they were contemplating as a last and most dangerous throw another appeal to soldiers and police. But Lord Reading was waiting for the right moment to pounce on them and wrote in July that, if they made any attempt to seduce soldiers and police, it must be scotched at once. During these anxious days the Viceroy found great help and encouragement in the attitude of Pandit Malaviya, who was not only genuinely convinced of the disastrous character of the latest developments of non-co-operation but did not hesitate to take an open stand against them. His advice was of particular value in the troublesome situation which arose when some weeks after the interviews Mr. Gandhi pressed for release from his pledge of secrecy or for the publication of an account of their conversations to be agreed between him and the Viceroy. Lord Reading preferred the latter course and, after rejecting a statement proposed by Mr. Gandhi, made a draft of his own which was shewn to and accepted by Pandit Malaviya. But Mr. Gandhi's attitude in this matter showed clearly that there was considerable and increasing tension between him and his Mahommedan allies and by the middle of July Lord Reading recorded his opinion that India had got over the more critical months and that a better chance of tranquillity lay ahead, if only the country could have a good monsoon.

Throughout this period of strain in the spring and early summer of 1921 Lord Reading never betrayed the least nervousness or showed the faintest sign of being "rattled." His imperturbability was all the more remarkable since nobody could for a moment imagine that it arose from ignorance of the true state of affairs. Indeed, as far as the general political situation was concerned, it is doubtful if even at that early stage of his viceroyalty any of his officers had a clearer or more comprehensive grasp of the dominant forces at work. But he found himself hampered at every turn by the lack of means for putting his Government's case before the country. For obvious reasons the Government publicity agency, the Department of Public Information, had to work within a sphere so restricted as to be of comparatively little use for this purpose. It was hopelessly understaffed and the exiguous funds allotted for its work ruled out any possibility of recruiting the army of journalistic and other agents necessary to present the Government's case on anything approaching an adequate scale in relation to the enormous size of India and the heterogeneity of her peoples and languages. Lord Reading put his finger on the core of the trouble in a letter to the Secretary of State written in July.

... It is a very difficult situation, for on the one hand there is a definite hostile and sometimes vitriolic campaign against the Government, engineered and carried on by unscrupulous persons, who seek by every means to poison the minds of the Indian against the British rule. This is effected by means of speeches in the vernacular at small meetings and in the bazaars and villages, and generally amongst uneducated and ignorant people. We never reach the same public . . . and are thus always at a disadvantage. The Government is attacked and can make no reply, for it is generally long after the event before we know what has taken place, if we ever know it with any precision. I find myself constantly comparing the system here with that at home, where there is a government with its organized supporters. . . . An answer can always be made by some prominent member, but here the members of my Council do not go out into the country to make speeches. . . .

This serious handicap was to some degree reduced by the admirable impartiality of the Associated Press of India, a news agency which was under the immediate control of the late Mr. K. C. Roy, an experienced Indian journalist who enjoyed the confidence of both Government and opposition. His insistence on the inclusion in his service of a fair account of the Government's doings and of its spokesmen's public pronouncements gave the authorities something of a platform outside the British press in the country. Nevertheless, throughout the whole of Lord Reading's time in India the scales were weighted against him in the matter of publicity, and during the successive waves of agitation which swept the country the masses heard nothing but the arguments and accusations of his opponents. As he wrote to me in the middle of 1921 :

I have been trying to soften the present-day political asperities. I don't pay much attention to momentary successes, although these are encouraging, for I know the desperate character of the racial difficulties, and nothing is harder to eradicate than notions of suspicions and annoyance on the one side and humiliation and indignation on the other. Add suspicion of everything we do, with calculated lies by agitators about our reactions to many people whom we can never hope to reach, and you will get some idea of the situation.

In the summer months of 1921 domestic politics in India developed along two gradually diverging lines, an intensification of the non-co-operation and Khilafat movements and a steadily widening breach between Hindus and Moslems. The Ali brothers held a Moslem Conference at Karachi in July, at which they declared that, unless the Turkish question was satisfactorily

settled by the end of the year, an independent Indian Republic would be declared. They also called upon Moslem soldiers to desert on the ground that service under the British Government was *haram*, or religiously unlawful. These pronouncements forced the Government at last to take action and the brothers were duly tried and convicted.

But their violence frightened thoughtful Hindus quite as much as it disturbed the authorities, and Mr. Gandhi found himself compelled to devote more and more of his time to the problem, rapidly becoming insoluble, of patching up the obvious cracks in the never very substantial "fac,ade" of Hindu-Moslem unity. He was also hard put to it to curb the enthusiasm of his own more extreme followers, who were steadily drifting into open revolution. At the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee in August he only managed to stave off discussion of independence and of the creation of an Indian Republic by focusing attention on the less inflammable programme of temperance reform and the boycott of foreign cloth.

It is noteworthy that Mr. Gandhi refused to attend the Ali brothers' Karachi Conference, the first of any such conferences from which he had absented himself. Nevertheless, it was urged in many quarters that he should be arrested together with the Ali brothers because of his intimate connection with them and their agitation from the moment of its inception. But the suggestion did not appeal to Lord Reading, who preferred to wait and see which way Mr. Gandhi really meant to jump.

... It is of no use speculating as to what his action will be [he wrote to Mr. Montagu at the end of August]. When he takes it, we shall have to consider very carefully whether it becomes necessary for us to prosecute him, and I shall, of course, consult you. The mere fact that it will be logical to prosecute him because we have prosecuted Mahommed Ali will not appeal to me as conclusive reason. There will be many considerations to take into account.

But happily the situation began to improve, and by the middle of October the Viceroy was able to report a general easing of tension over the whole country. Strangely enough, amongst the chief factors in this improvement was one of the most violent and singular upheavals which occurred in India during the whole period between the two World Wars, the Moplah outbreak in Malabar.

The Moplahs, who number about a million, are of mixed Arab and Indian descent. Fierce and primitive, they are prone to fits

of religious fanaticism during which the one object of **every** individual is to kill as many non-Moslems as possible. **The** history of British rule in India records no fewer than thirty-five Moplah outbreaks, but the one which broke out in August of 1921 with attacks on details of the Police and the Leinster Regiment is by far the most serious in that long and blood-stained roll. The Khilafat agitation and the preaching of **the** Ali brothers were the effective causes of the rising, which was only finally suppressed after severe fighting at the beginning of 1922. Serious as were the repercussions of such a conflict on the domestic politics of India, their effect was vastly increased by the peculiar state of Hindu-Moslem relations at the time. Already the violence of the Ali brothers had alarmed sober Hindu opinion, which saw behind their talk of Afghan invasion the age-old and dreaded spectre of death and rapine stalking once again out of the North-West throughout the length and breadth of the country. Here was a practical demonstration of what such talk meant when translated into action. Hindus heard daily of the murder or forcible conversion of their co-religionists, of the violation of Hindu women and the desecration of temples. From end to end of the country they were deeply stirred, and the grim happenings in Malabar thus greatly accelerated the final collapse of the political alliance between Hindus and Moslems.

Lord Reading was at Naini Tai on a visit to the Governor of the United Provinces, Sir Harcourt Butler, when news of the outbreak reached him; he left the same day for Simla, where immediately on his arrival he called a meeting of his Council to discuss the new development. His first impulse was to leave for Madras, but, as he telegraphed to Mr. Montagu, the effect of a Viceroy's being away from headquarters was to paralyse action at the centre, and for that reason he reluctantly decided to remain in Simla. He was, however, deeply concerned with all that was happening in the far south and he made himself acquainted with every detail of the Government's plans for coping with each emergency as it arose. Though all Lord Reading's instincts and training rebelled against the use of such a rough and ready instrument of administration as Martial Law, once he had convinced himself of its absolute and inescapable necessity, he did not hesitate to resort to it, conveying his reasons to his Council and to the Secretary of State in clear and forceful terms, though behind the wording of official telegrams and letters may be detected all the repugnance of a former Lord Chief Justice of England at finding himself driven by circumstances to **adopt** such alien methods.

The suddenness and ferocity of the Moplah rising with its extensive political consequences mark it out as an incident of great importance. Nevertheless, it was no more than an incident thrown for a short space into hideous relief against the darkness of the prevailing background.

Of all the problems awaiting the attention of the new Viceroy none was more intractable than that created by the ubiquitous financial stringency, which not only constituted a forcing ground for discontent but threatened to imperil the whole working of the reformed constitution and to sow the seeds of lasting hostility between province and province as well as between the provincial and the central governments. Immediately after the War India had faced in addition to the chaos of world economic conditions her own special difficulties arising from a series of bad monsoons inevitably accompanied by a succession of deficits in the annual Budget. Her financial position was gravely shaken by the fact that the price-level of her imports, which consisted mainly of manufactured goods, remained substantially higher than that of the primary products which formed the great bulk of her exports. Trade, industry and agriculture were all suffering acutely under the disabilities thus imposed upon them, the effects of which were plainly reflected in the Budgets both of the Central Government and of the Provinces.

Moreover, since Finance was in every province a "reserved" subject and the unfortunate Finance Members of Council found themselves compelled severely to restrict expenditure, the whole fabric of diarchy was threatened with destruction as the result of the bitter and ceaseless complaints of the Indian Ministers in charge of the *'nation-building" transferred subjects that their work was being paralysed by lack of funds. As early as June, 1921, the Government of Bengal, faced with an alarming deficit in its finances, addressed an urgent appeal to the Viceroy for the reopening of the Meston Award, by which a Committee presided over by the late Lord Meston had fixed the amount of the annual contribution of each province to the budget of the Central Government. Bengal had undoubtedly been hard hit by the rise in prices and by the drastic reductions in the pay of Government officials of various grades necessitated by the prevailing conditions, but the Viceroy was compelled to take a broad national view of the problem and he was very unwilling that any special favour should be granted to an individual province.

Yet the problem of Bengal was in varying degrees the problem of most other provinces, and the Central Government itself was in equally unenviable straits. There also a number of

urgent adjustments and developments were held up through shortage of money, and the Viceroy found himself particularly embarrassed by the inevitable delay in settling the matter of adjusting the pay of the British Services to the prevailing economic conditions.

The War had subjected the British personnel of the Civil Services, especially the Indian Civil Service and the Police, to an almost intolerable strain and their material conditions had gravely deteriorated ever since the conclusion of peace. The question was already acute when he landed in India and the Secretary of State's correspondence in the early months of 1921 recurs frequently to the theme. "I am very much worried by the fact that all the Services in India appear to have financial grievances," writes Mr. Montagu on April 27. " . . . The one disturbing feature of the working of the reforms is the growing bitterness of feeling due to the expense of the European Services, which balances the unhappiness of the Services due to their belief that they are not adequately paid at a time when they are being conspicuously loyal in trying to make the reforms a success." He then proceeded to make two suggestions, the first, that the Viceroy should summon a conference of members of the Services and explain to them the impossibility of concessions at the moment, but express hopes for the achievement of a better scale of pay later on and invite them to put forward proposals against the time when it might be feasible to give effect to them ; the second, that a scheme of "Whitley Councils" should be developed for the Indian Services. Later he wrote,

I have received innumerable visits from members of the Services. . . . They all tell the same story. The only thing is that I am glad to think that some of them have come with very commendable appeals that we should not forget the lower ranks of the Services who are not directly represented. My attention has been drawn to the impossibility of hoping for loyal service from the Police under existing circumstances of pay.

These repeated and influential representations weighed heavily upon the Secretary of State, who became increasingly anxious to meet the claims of the Services as far as was politically and financially possible, though he refused to press his wishes on the Government of India beyond the point of representing views and offering advice.

But he returned to the charge a few weeks later, discussing in detail the financial position of officers both in service and on the retired list, and as a result of his insistence the question was

fully discussed by the Governor-General's Executive Council at the end of June. Mr. Montagu had by then put forward for consideration the specific proposals that overseas pay should be put on a sterling basis or, alternatively, that marriage allowances should be given or that some form of Commission for a further enquiry into existing hardships should be announced. The most that the Council could do, however, was to announce that "present financial conditions do not allow of further concessions." Lord Reading explained the situation fully in a letter which he wrote to Mr. Montagu the day after this decision was taken.

. . . notwithstanding all my desire to meet the situation, I could not see how we could arrive at any other conclusion at this moment . . . there is really no chance at the present moment (I cannot say anything as to the future) of prevailing upon the Assembly to acquiesce in further allowances to British officers—military or civil. Moreover, to attempt to force it upon the Assembly . . . would be to create unpleasant political conditions. I am convinced, as are my advisers, that the Government would be seriously attacked and the cry would again go forth that we were burdening the Indian tax-payer to enable money to be spent in England, and there would be the inevitable cry for further Indianization of the Services. . . . It would be unwise to raise this question at the present time.

This extract shows, among other things, that extreme care for the rights and dignity of the Indian Legislature which was one of the controlling influences of Lord Reading's policy throughout his whole career as Viceroy, and he rounds off his remarks on this point later in the same letter by saying : "To increase expenditure without acquainting the Legislative Assembly of it would be . . . very bad policy."

Nevertheless, in July Mr. Montagu clearly intimated to Lord Reading his increasing anxiety in regard to Service grievances and his readiness to support the Government of India even at the risk of a clash with the Legislature.

You know [he wrote], I am still much concerned about the possibility of making further improvements in the conditions of the Services. Of course I have always been convinced of the vital importance of your relations with the Legislative Assembly on financial matters—may I make just this one point with no reference to matters of present discussion ? There have been occasions, not in your time, when the Government of India have to my mind shewn themselves a little unduly timid in giving the Assembly the sort of guidance which it is their duty to give, and which I am confident the Assembly would never resent

receiving. . . . Now that is one side of the Service Problem. On the other side is the question how far you can go in winning the confidence of the Services by inviting free discussion with their properly selected representatives. I am hoping to hear from you very soon what you think of my suggestion for establishing something in the line of Whitley Councils, something that will make the Services feel that they have "direct access" . . .

Lord Reading treated this thorny problem with no less seriousness than the Secretary of State. It formed the subject of close conference with his own constitutional advisers and he discussed it formally with his Executive Council. But he was not optimistic as to the reception which would be given by the Assembly to any proposals likely to prove acceptable to the Services. A letter to the Secretary of State at the end of June set out a full and frank statement of the problem as seen from the Indian Government's side, and showed incidentally how profoundly he himself was torn between his own impulses as a man and an Englishman on the one side and on the other his duty as Viceroy and custodian of the financial and general interests of India and her people. The passage of time which has seen the solution of this particular question has also caused its importance to be largely forgotten, but it is not too much to say that in 1921 and 1922 the grievances of the British Services ranked second only to the internal troubles of India as factors contributing to the critical situation which faced the Government of India and the British Cabinet in those days.

There can be no doubt that in adopting a *non possumus* attitude Lord Reading was reluctantly taking the only course open to him as head of the Indian Government. He looked anxiously for any sign of hope which he might hold out to the Services, but his correspondence with Mr. Montagu shows that he refused to gratify his own generous instincts or gain a temporary relief for himself and his Government at the cost of certain disappointment to the British Services whose interests, no less than those of the Indian people, were in his care.

But when the last chapter comes to be written of the long and memorable story of the British Services in India it will be counted not the least of their achievements that they never allowed their own harassing circumstances and the privations and restrictions which they and their families had to endure throughout those wearing years after the War to affect the quality of their work or the spirit of courage and devotion in which it was performed.

The association of Indians in growing measure in all the

Services was of course an integral part of the 1919 Reforms, but there was naturally increasing pressure from the Indian side for acceleration and extension, especially in view of the severe unemployment among educated Indians and the general financial stringency. From the inception of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms both Secretary of State and Viceroy realized that the process of Indianizing the Services was dictated by the most fundamental and compelling political reasons, such as were indicated by Mr. Montagu himself in a letter to Lord Reading dated July 21, 1921.

I am quite sure now, [he wrote], that we have got to go in for Indenization. We have got to realize that self-government does not merely mean political reform, but the substitution of an indigenous administration for a foreign administration. . . . You have got to get the spirit of self-government into the official as well as into the non-official Indian. You have got to make them understand discipline and the expert knowledge that is required. I see it coming. I see greater dexterity and facility in handling files. . . . I commend it to your notice.

Lord Reading's answer to this letter is in the same key. "I am in entire agreement with you," he told Mr. Montagu. "I think it useless to make pronouncement of our policy to give India . . . full Dominion Status and yet at the same time to hesitate to put her in the position to manage her affairs when they have been entrusted to her." In the remainder of this letter Lord Reading yielded for once to the temptation, against which as a rule he sternly set his face, to indulge in speculation as to the future and allow his thoughts to carry him beyond the frontiers established by mature reflection and settled conviction.

I am asking myself [he wrote], as to the future of the Civil Service recruited from England, what are the prospects for the Englishmen who come out here? For the Indian the future lies before him full of promise; for the Englishman who has to envisage Dominion Status for India and think of the past glories and traditions of the British Officer of the Civil Service in India, are we quite sure that there is any real future for him out here, and ought he to be tempted into the Service at this moment without knowing the risks he is incurring? Remember the Indian democratic leader in the future will probably have the faults of many democratic leaders in other countries. Although he may think it would be well to have British Administrators in some of the high posts for some time ahead, for reasons which are very obvious, yet it would require courage to say this to India and to Indians who, in the midst of the excitement of a new regime, would be clamouring

for posts in all directions. I certainly have not yet discovered that except in rare instances the Indian has the courage to stand against public opinion. I should say from what I have seen that he is rather more pliant than the democratic leader in our own country ; he is more timid perhaps, and very naturally, as a consequence of the system of government under which he has lived ; he is sensitive to criticism, and has not yet grown accustomed to attacks upon him ; he is keenly sensible of the demands of the people and of the natural onrush of the national demand for national administration.

Neither Lord Reading nor Mr. Montagu was content to leave his opinions at the theoretic stage. Both men regarded them as working rules and applied them fairly but resolutely whenever occasion offered, and no sentiments could have been more mindful of, or acceptable to, Indian opinion than the principle laid down by Mr. Montagu in his reply to the Viceroy's speculations. "If we are making a selective appointment . . . we ought not to seek the best man irrespective of race. We ought to say, 'Is there an Indian good enough for the appointment V' and give him the preference over even a better European. . . . After all it is their own country."

It was fortunate that this fundamental question should have been discussed at the outset of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms by these two clear-thinking and progressive minds, and much suspicion and recrimination from the Indian side would have been avoided had either the Viceroy or the Secretary of State been able to speak in public on this theme as frankly as they spoke to each other in private. For the process of Indianization, which has proceeded so rapidly since 1921, derived much of its impetus from the principles originally enunciated by Mr. Montagu and Lord Reading.

It is true that neither of them sufficiently appreciated the difficulties which Indianization was to encounter from communal rivalries and jealousies, but they did at least lay down the lines along which the respective spheres of interest of British and Indians were to be demarcated in the Services of the future.

The year 1922 was a difficult one from the point of view of the internal administration of India. Unforeseen strains and stresses developed in more than one direction and seemed at one time likely to result in severe friction, if not in an actual breakdown, in the machinery of government, particularly in the sphere of the relations between the Central Government and the provinces. Anxiety over finance dominated the scene, especially in Bengal, where Lord Lytton found himself with so grave a situation that he was at one time driven to contemplate resignation. By

August the prospects were so discouraging that Lord Reading wrote gloomily that he anticipated a deficit of 12 crores (£8,000,000 sterling at the rate of exchange then prevailing) and could see no possible way of reducing expenditure. Such a deficit may seem negligible in these days of astronomical budget figures, but it was a most serious consideration to a country whose total national revenue for the year was not more than £88,000,000. Moreover, all the provinces had similar problems to face, though on a smaller scale, and this predicament did nothing to ease the general tension in the country. Lord Reading's sombre picture of India's financial position "much disturbed" the Secretary of State, who communicated his misgivings to the Viceroy. But Lord Reading had little comfort to offer and replied that he could see no prospect of restoring financial equilibrium, "even if we have recourse to the Salt Tax which will be most unpopular, and especially undesirable if it can possibly be avoided in a year which will see a general election. . . ."

Nor did budgetary troubles make up the whole sum of Lord Reading's financial difficulties. The straits to which some of the provinces were reduced naturally called forth a bitter and determined attack on the "Meston Award" with its heavy provincial contributions to the central revenues. Bengal may have experienced the direst effects of the prevailing financial stringency but it was Madras, the largest contributor, who proclaimed her grievances most strenuously and persistently.

"There is a constant agitation for the reduction of provincial contributions," Lord Reading informed Mr. Montagu, "particularly from Madras which is almost out of hand on the subject, and passes resolutions condemning the Government and all associated with it, and generally making itself as objectionable as possible."

Indeed by the beginning of 1922 the Madras Legislative Council had reached the point of rejecting taxation Bills as a method of pressing their demands for a readjustment of the provincial contributions, and Lord Reading had to agree to receive a deputation from the Madras Council and ministers early in March.

This unpromising outlook was bound to have its repercussions outside India, particularly in London where there were doubts in some quarters as to the country's fundamental financial stability, though these doubts were at least as largely due to the prevailing political unrest as to the uncertain economic outlook. Indeed, in May, Lord Peel, then Secretary of State, who had recently succeeded Mr. Montagu in circumstances set out in detail later

in this chapter, wrote to Lord Reading that he had heard that some brokers were actually advising their clients not to invest in Indian loans, and still later in the year he was asking the Viceroy for his views about the raising of an Indian loan in New York. Lord Reading, however, firmly discouraged this suggestion. "My opinion," he wrote in reply, "is that we should do infinitely more harm than good even by attempts to negotiate in America for an Indian loan," and Lord Peel in the end accepted this opinion, although he remained convinced that it would be a good education for those Indian politicians who objected to the London monopoly of their country's loans to learn by practice how much more expensive it would be to raise money elsewhere than in London and how much more onerous would be the conditions imposed by the proposed lenders. Certainly the fate of the £12,500,000 loan which was floated in London in June supported the Viceroy's judgment, for it was immediately quoted at a discount of 1 to $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent, while 65 per cent of the issue was left on the underwriters' hands, and it is probable that an Indian loan floated in New York would have met with even scantier success in view of the inevitability of another deficit in the next year's Budget.

But the end of 1922 was to see some lifting even of the financial clouds, or at least a more favourable forecast, and better weather conditions were in fact largely responsible for the improvement. For a series of good monsoons, coupled with beneficial changes in world economic conditions, were used by Sir Basil Blackett, who came out as Finance Member at the beginning of 1925, with such skill that within four years the provincial contributions had been abolished and India set on her financial feet again. But at the beginning of 1922 this brighter picture still lay in the unseen future. In the meantime the pressing difficulties of the year called for instant action in the form of appointing a committee to enquire into the possibilities of retrenchment in order to bring permanent relief to the critical financial situation.

How unstable that situation was may be judged from a letter from Lord Reading to Mr. Montagu on March 9. Lord Reading was so little prone by temperament to overstate difficulties or to lose heart in face of an emergency that the note of pessimism in his words is all the more indicative of the reality of the danger.

I fully expected perplexities and anxieties [he wrote], when I accepted the position of Viceroy, and well knew that the pressure upon me to accept it was because of these difficulties. But I little knew that, in addition, I should be confronted with so serious a financial position. . . . The

trouble that was to come over the Budget has been present in my mind during the last three or four months and has hung like a black cloud over me.

He told Mr. Montagu bluntly that the thorny question of military expenditure would have to be faced sooner or later, and he scanned the expenditure on New Delhi with a jealous and critical eye, alert to seize any opportunity to reduce it. Indeed, early in February he had already proposed a reduction in the number of British troops in India, coupled with a further measure of Indianization of the commissioned ranks of the Indian Army, but in view of the threatening state of affairs both inside and outside India His Majesty's Government was unable to agree to any reduction of the British garrison. As to the proposed increase of Indian officers, Mr. Montagu replied that home opinion favoured a preliminary test of the working of Indianization in a number of selected units after the Indian officers required for the purpose had been trained, possibly at an Indian Sandhurst, as Lord Minto's Government had once suggested. Lord Reading's hopes of material saving on military expenditure thus came to nothing and he was obliged to look about for other means of retrenchment.

In these circumstances the idea of an Indian "Geddes Committee," on the same lines as the Committee under the Chairmanship of Sir Eric Geddes which had recently recommended drastic economies at home, strongly appealed to him, and it was with genuine relief that he heard not only that such a Committee was to be formed but that his friend Lord Inchcape, Chairman of the P. & O. Steamship Company, was to be at its head. Lord Peel, by then Secretary of State, had not much faith in the effectiveness of the Committee, but Lord Reading was greatly encouraged at having carried his point, since he firmly believed that Lord Inchcape's Chairmanship would kill the unpleasant rumours which were circulated as soon as it was known that such a Committee was to be formed, alleging that the whole procedure was only designed as a screen behind which the Home and Indian Governments might be left in peace to continue the existing scale of Indian expenditure. Nevertheless, he did not pitch his hopes of substantial reductions too high.

I am very glad about Inchcape [he told Lord Peel], although I warn you not to be too sanguine. India is not like England . . . and consequently there cannot be even an approximation to the drastic recommendations of the Geddes Committee. Here in India Inchcape's name

of course carries tremendous weight as a man of shrewd acumen and of high public position without his being identified too closely with any political parties.

Lord Reading wanted sufficient retrenchment to give him the nine crores and twenty lakhs which he needed in order to remit the provincial contributions, but, as he told Lord Peel, he could not imagine any possibility of saving more than one crore on civil expenditure. Any really substantial economies would have to be made at the expense of the military budget, although, mindful of his rebuff earlier in the year, he made no specific proposal now, contenting himself with reminding Lord Peel that "we need all the retrenchment we can get."

The impending arrival of the Inchcape Committee naturally fluttered the doves of the Indian Government, the different Departments manoeuvring for the best possible position from which to await the fall of the axe. But the Viceroy's determination to achieve justice both as between the different governmental interests and for the people of India went far to allay anxiety and deaden the pain of the inevitable surgical operation on India's finances. Nor were government departments and the masses of the people alone concerned with the Committee's decisions. The organized business and commercial communities, both Indian and British, took active steps to see that their point of view was represented and their interests considered, though the presence on the Committee of such men as Sir Thomas (now Lord) Catto, Sir Alexander Murray, Mr. (now Sir) Purshotamdas Thakurdas and the late Mr. (afterwards Sir) Dadibai Dalai, was an adequate guarantee that their case would not go by default. A joint deputation representing the organized business interests of both races waited on Lord Reading towards the end of May and strongly pressed for retrenchment in Government expenditure, particularly on the Army, and in his reply the Viceroy gave a firm promise that he would not agree to any half-hearted solution and that he would do everything possible to reduce Government expenditure even before the Inchcape Committee started work.

It was largely due to Lord Reading's vigorous preparatory clearing of the ground that the Committee were able to complete their formidable task within some three months of landing in India in November, 1922. Their report, which was actually in the hands of the public by March of the next year, handsomely relieved the Viceroy of any embarrassment in making good his promise to agree to no half-hearted solution, for they unanimously recommended reductions in the net expenditure of the Govern-

ment amounting to no less than 19.25 crores of rupees (£12,800,000). The heaviest blow of the axe descended upon Army expenditure, where a reduction of no less than £7,000,000 was recommended. But, if the Army suffered most severely, the whole structure of the Indian governmental machine was scrutinized with meticulous attention down to the smallest details, and the Committee proposed either the abolition or the drastic curtailment of every function which did not seem to them essential to the work of the administration. Lord Inchcape's own labours gave equal satisfaction in both India and England. Lord Reading was enormously impressed by him and, having already written home enthusiastically on several occasions, sent to Lord Peel a special word of whole-hearted praise on the eve of the publication of the Report. "Inchcape has worked like a Trojan. . . . I am full of appreciation and admiration of the splendid service he has rendered. . . ."

In such a prevailing atmosphere the undoubted disabilities under which the Services were suffering could scarcely hope for favourable consideration, although the existing conditions were exerting a deplorable effect upon recruiting in England. Within a few days of taking office, Lord Peel told Lord Reading that he was "troubled about the falling off of a good class of recruit for the Services," and a few weeks later he wrote on the same subject : "The economic difficulties and troubles under which the Indian Services are now labouring are constantly being brought before me. I felt very strongly the element of discontent at the I.C.S. dinner last week."

An incident which caused the Secretary of State serious misgivings was the action of two senior British Officials, members of the Legislative Council of the Central Provinces, who spoke in favour of a motion urging that all recruitment in the British Isles for the Imperial Services should be stopped and that Indians should be recruited on a lower scale of salary. This was a grave portent and Lord Peel's anxieties were only intensified by a report which he received in June from a Committee on Recruitment for the Indian Services, set up by him almost immediately on his entry into the India Office. An influentially signed supplementary note ended with an ominous warning :

. . . The question arises whether the Services, or at least some of them, may not have to be completely reorganized and recruitment placed on a new basis and those . . . in which the maintenance of an European element is not deemed primarily essential so re-cast as to adapt them to Indian standards of pay. . . .

In the course of time much of the forecast has come true, but in 1922 Indianization was still in its infancy and there were very solid reasons for anxiety over the future of the British Services. As it happened, this problem of recruitment led to a somewhat threatening political crisis in India, in which His Majesty's Government at home also became involved. The shortage of suitable British candidates not only embarrassed the Indian Government but also gave the Legislative Assembly an excellent argument in favour of further Indianization of the Services. It was therefore necessary for the Government to take some overt steps to meet the situation, and as a preliminary they decided to consult the Provincial Governments on the various issues involved. A confidential letter was accordingly addressed to the Provinces, but through the medium of an enterprising journalist the contents of this document, which afterwards became famous as the O'Donnell Circular, found its way into the public Press. Immediately a storm of indignation broke, both at home and in British circles in India, and the Indian Government was hotly accused of betraying the British Services in particular and British interests in general. So serious and sustained was the outcry that early in August the Prime Minister found himself obliged to reassure Parliament. In his speech Mr. Lloyd George declared that the Services in India were the "steel frame" of the whole structure of administration, that the recent reforms in India were an experiment, and that, although he could not predict the influence which non-co-operation would have upon the next elections, if there was a change in the character of the Legislature and in the purpose of those who were chosen to sit therein, the new situation would have to be taken into account. In any case, His Majesty's Government would stand by their responsibilities in India and would take whatever steps were necessary to discharge or enforce them.

This downright statement was successful in its primary purpose of giving some measure of reassurance to the Services, but it also had the effect of so enraging large sections of Indian opinion by what they regarded as its menacing and reactionary tone that the Legislative Assembly in its Simla Session went to the length of formally censuring the speech. Lord Peel took the matter calmly.

I do not quite know [he wrote to Lord Reading] what particular advantage the Members think they will gain by this proceeding, or why, if they are anxious for extension of power, they should proceed to antagonize the most powerful man in the country.

But Lord Reading, being at the centre of the storm, was compelled to take it more seriously.

. . . the Prime Minister's speech has upset things tremendously here [he wrote at the end of August], and it will take some time before they steady down.

On August 22 he received a representative deputation of leading Indian gentlemen, Hindu, Moslem and Sikh, who waited upon him to express their disquiet at the terms of the Prime Minister's speech and to ask for reassurance as to the intentions of the British Government. After stating that Mr. Lloyd George's words had "very naturally created feelings of deep disappointment and of grave concern throughout the length and breadth of India," and referring to the various pronouncements in which British policy towards India had been defined during the preceding five years, they went on to assert that "for the Prime Minister to characterize the British element in our Services as the steel-frame of the whole structure on which alone you must build and the removal of which, according to him, must result in the collapse of the fabric, and to say that he could see no period when India could dispense with the guidance and assistance of the British Civil Servants, amounts to a denial of the basic principle of responsible government." They ended by asking the Viceroy to obtain from the Home Government a formal declaration that there was no intention of going back upon the policy of the ultimate grant of **full** responsible government and an authoritative reaffirmation of that policy.

On these points Lord Reading was able to give them then and there an explicit assurance, for he had already been in touch with Mr. Lloyd George and was authorized by him to say that nothing in his statement in the House of Commons was intended to conflict with, or to indicate any departure from, the declared policy of the Government.

After this interview the storm gradually blew itself out. But Lord Reading took the comments of certain newspapers and individuals in England upon the matter very much to heart. He thought that he and his Government were being unfairly treated and he complained to Lord Peel :

I cannot but think that considerable injustice is being done to us as a government and certainly to me personally, in reference to this question of abandonment or reduction of recruitment in England for the Indian Civil Service.

His settled view of the problem was characteristically shrewd and deliberate.

Until we have arrived definitely at the point at which we see the next step to be taken in the development of the Indian Constitution, and particularly as affecting the Civil Services, we must continue as heretofore and subject to the understandings we had already given regarding the greater employment of Indians in the Services. It has always seemed to me that we should place ourselves in a weak position if we stopped or materially reduced recruitment at home for the Services, for when the critical time came we should find our lower ranks depleted of British members of the Services and we should have jeopardized the future of the Civil Services.

At one time there was a somewhat widespread opinion among the Services in India that Lord Reading either did not fully appreciate their grievances or was disposed to discriminate against their interests. Nothing could have been more false. His letters and dispatches during this critical year 1922, when men of the best type were pouring out of the Services, were full of the theme ; and his official correspondence during the summer afforded constant proof of his ample and sympathetic understanding of their case. Time after time he reported the results of discussions in his Council and of his own anxious deliberations on this harassing problem, only to come back to the inescapable conclusion that it was financially and politically impossible to make any such changes as would really satisfy the Services. Only his sense of duty and realism kept him from taking the easier course and recommending some concessions. But he knew that India could not afford them and that in any case they could only be temporary palliatives. In India, as in every other country in the world, men were being forced by circumstances to adjust themselves to new and less pleasant conditions of life, and however painful and even dangerous the process of waiting for the completion of this adjustment might be, Lord Reading knew that he must steel himself to the ordeal. By the time he left India the process may be said to have been practically completed, but in the interval he had to pass through many anxious days. Towards the end of 1922 Lord Winterton, the Under Secretary of State, returning from a visit to India, gave to Lord Peel "a very gloomy picture of the present position of the Services" and months were to elapse before this only too correct account could be reckoned out of date.

Throughout this trying period of political and administrative strain Lord Reading was fortunate in having the fullest and most loyal support from all his Governors, although from time to time

some of them, as was only natural, did not share his views on individual questions. But the only divergence of opinion which could be called serious arose between him and Sir George Lloyd over the arrest of Mr. Gandhi and the general handling of political agitation, and even this disagreement was a perfectly fair and open one, during which the attitude of both *men* to each other showed that they had no intention of allowing their political differences to affect their personal relations. Indeed the attitude of all the Provincial Governors during this period was such as to reflect British public spirit at its very best, since each one of them felt deeply the effect on his own province of the financial stringency caused in part by the Provincial Contributions and in part by Lord Reading's thorough-going economy campaign.

An interesting development in the provincial sphere at this time was the desire expressed by Lord Willingdon, Governor of Madras, to both Lord Reading and Lord Peel, that that province should be at once granted full responsible government. The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms had worked more efficiently in Madras than anywhere else in India, with the possible exception of the Punjab, since education and political sense were more widely developed there than elsewhere. Moreover, the Governor was fortunate also in having a non-Brahmin ministry, which could rely on popular support. It is possible that, as Lord Peel told Lord Reading, Lord Willingdon wished to excite the healthy rivalry of other provinces by obtaining this special concession for Madras. But the Viceroy, in whose hands Lord Peel himself was content to leave the question, told Lord Willingdon that the time was not ripe for even ventilating the subject, arguing that it was a political impossibility to give one province a higher political status than another.

A far more important and practical constitutional issue which arose during the year was concerned with the relations between the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. It was not to be expected that such a novel and delicate system of government as that contained in the Government of India Act, 1919, could be worked indefinitely without doubts arising from time to time over the allocation of final authority in some specific connection, and in 1922 such a doubt arose in somewhat acute form over the Viceroy's power to certify legislation. The immediate occasion of the division of opinion between Lord Reading and Lord Peel was the Budget of 1922, which included certain new taxation, in particular an increase in the Salt Tax and in the cotton excise and the import duties on cotton goods, necessary in order to avoid a deficit. In the inflamed state of current public opinion any new

taxation was bound to be not only vaguely unpalatable but definitely obnoxious ; and it was not difficult for suspicious Indian politicians to see in the proposed cotton excise and duties an attempt to favour Lancashire at the expense of India, whilst the Salt Tax had always been anathema even in the quietest times. The Legislative Assembly rejected these taxes, leaving uncovered a deficit of at least nine crores. Lord Peel had already agreed to an uncovered deficit of not more than five crores, but when he learnt of the Assembly's action he ordered Lord Reading somewhat peremptorily to supply him with full details of the position in India and the intentions of his Government, stating that he expected certification by the Viceroy of such parts of the Finance Bill as were necessary to meet his views concerning the permissible high-level of deficit.

Lord Reading responded with spirit to this attitude, pointing out how very difficult, if not impossible, it was to keep the Secretary of State completely up-to-date in all details and phases of a rapidly changing situation, and taking up the question of the exercise of the Viceroy's powers of certification in terms which left no doubt as to his view of the fundamentally important constitutional issue raised by the Secretary of State.

There is a serious constitutional question involved [he wrote to Lord Peel], for it seems to me difficult to understand how a Viceroy can be directed to certify when the conditions precedent to the exercise of his powers must depend upon his views of conditions in India. . . . If you assume that the Secretary of State could direct the Viceroy as to the exercise of the discretion vested in him, it would mean that, unless the Viceroy is conscientiously of the same opinion as the Secretary of State, he would then and there have to resign.

Lord Reading was not the man to let such an important point of constitutional law and practice be decided by *a priori* arguments, and nothing was further from his controlled and judicial temper of mind than any desire or intention to quarrel with the Secretary of State. But equally he was not disposed to yield to anybody on a point of principle.

The question was, however, never formally decided, since Lord Peel in the end accepted Lord Reading's representation that as a matter of policy certification of the Budget would be highly inexpedient.

The dramatic character of India's domestic affairs at this time tended to divert public attention from her external difficulties, though these, if less apparent to the outside observer, were hardly

less important in their influence on the future development of the country. Indeed, India's internal and external affairs were so closely interconnected that a great part of Lord Reading's energies during his first year in the country was devoted to the task of securing a lasting and honourable peace with Afghanistan and laying the foundations of post-war frontier policy. The close connection between Afghan affairs and the Khilafat movement was manifest in the campaign of the Ali brothers, and, as Lord Reading's negotiations with the Amir revealed, the ruler of Afghanistan was deeply interested in the matter of the Turkish peace treaty and tried to turn the situation to his own advantage by setting himself up as a mediator between Turkey and Great Britain. The relations between Afghanistan and Russia also raised a host of delicate questions, all of which required the close attention of His Majesty's Government as well as of the Government of India.

There is no doubt that a section of Indian Moslems saw in the Amir of Afghanistan a possible champion of Islam who might raise up a mighty Moslem kingdom in the North-West, and **that** the Amir himself was neither unaware of the feelings of this faction nor averse from using the situation to further his own ambitions. At any rate, in his Afghan Treaty negotiations Lord Reading had normally to move with extreme caution and yet be prepared to show strength and resolution in a series of sudden and threatening crises, never forgetting for a moment that he was engaged on an operation of the first magnitude in the domestic as well as the foreign field.

The unfortunate and completely abortive attack by the Afghans on India in the summer of 1919 necessarily called for a new definition of Indo-Afghan relations and a new examination of frontier policy generally. Feeble and insignificant as Afghanistan is when compared with her two giant neighbours, India and Soviet Russia, she occupied in 1921 a strong bargaining position. The young Amir (afterwards King) Amanullah entertained a generous opinion of his own gifts, and the blandishments of foreign emissaries to his country had convinced him that he was a great monarch, destined to exercise a decisive influence upon events both within and far outside his own borders. He was therefore determined that nothing in the future relations between India and Afghanistan should give the appearance of putting his country into a position of vassalage or even inequality. On the other hand, India was war-weary and had a surfeit of vital problems of the first magnitude awaiting her attention. **When Sir Henry Dobbs arrived in Kabul at the head of a British delegation**

in January, 1921, to negotiate a permanent treaty of peace, he found the place full of foreign agents and the Amir Amanullah shrewdly calculating how he could play off the different countries against each other. It needs little imagination to picture the tide of intrigue which ebbed and flowed inside the ancient walls of Kabul during the spring and summer months of 1921, and when it is viewed against the dark background of Indian unrest, the magnitude of Lord Reading's task can at least be partly understood.

Afghanistan wanted treaties with both Russia and India in order to win advantages from each for the consolidation of her own financial and general internal conditions and to escape from being dominated by either.

Russia wanted a treaty with Afghanistan to placate her own Moslem population on the northern Afghan border.

The Government of India wanted a treaty with Afghanistan to prevent any other Power from dominating that country and to secure peace on the North-West Frontier.

The frontier was in an even more than usually disturbed condition, partly as an aftermath of the Afghan War, partly because of the failure to reach a settlement with Afghanistan, partly because Afghanistan was using her influence amongst the tribes to force a settlement on her own terms.

When Lord Reading arrived in India to pick up the threads, the negotiations were not advancing satisfactorily. Sir Henry Dobbs had been in Kabul for three months and had at last unravelled the tangled skein of the Amir Amanullah's intricate diplomacy. A draft treaty had already been drawn up and presented to the Amir, which contained, in addition to the usual clauses designed to establish neighbourly relations between the two countries, arrangements for an annual subsidy to be paid to Afghanistan. The new Viceroy was at once acquainted with the latest developments. He was well aware that the Afghan problem would require his close and urgent attention, but he was hardly prepared for the scope and complexity which it had assumed, neither had he been able in England to look at it in its intimate relation to Indian affairs. But he was not long in forming an accurate appreciation of the situation, and a note concerning the negotiations which he drafted within a month of his arrival in India contains a very illuminating passage.

The searching conversations I have had with those concerned with the various aspects of the problem and my own independent study of its political, military and financial ramifications have left me firmly convinced that a rupture with Afghanistan would be most regrettable

in existing conditions. . . . The question has an internal as well as an external aspect. . . . There is a considerable section of Indian Moslems to whom the Khilafat is only an excuse for promoting discontent against the Government, which derives much of its strength from its pretensions that disaffected Indian Moslems can look to the Amir for help. An Afghan treaty would definitely explode those pretensions. . . . Moreover . . . the next two months are most likely to lead to disturbances. . . . The external and internal situations react on each other, and I am most anxious that we should not have an Afghan rupture. . . .

Lord Reading knew that the Amir would not break with the British, except in the last resort, but he knew also that an Oriental potentate could not be pressed too far, since loss of prestige would be even more fatal than loss of material and tangible benefits. As the negotiations proceeded, the Amir Amanullah was at pains to eliminate from the Soviet treaty such clauses as were regarded as objectionable by His Majesty's Government or the Government of India. But his attitude over the Border tribes still gave cause for anxiety, since he wanted the Indian Government to join him in granting an amnesty to the tribesmen who had fought on either side during the war of 1919.

The crux of the tribal question rested on the attitude of the Government of India towards the Mahsuds, who had taken such generous advantage of the disturbance caused by the Afghan War that the Government had been compelled to conduct important military operations for their suppression. At the end of these operations stern fines in money and rifles had been imposed, and in view of the general state of feeling and opinion on the North-West Frontier any relaxation of these penalties would certainly have been regarded as evidence of weakness and possibly of fear of Afghanistan. Here again the question of "saving face" arose, for on the one hand the Amir felt himself in honour bound to do everything he could for those tribesmen who had fought for him, while on the other hand the Government of India could not ignore the offences of those tribesmen who had fought against them during the war and certainly were not disposed to pardon those who had attacked troops and posts after the war had ended. But as the negotiations went on and the Amir was seen to be coming gradually to a decision to trust the British, Lord Reading also changed his attitude in the matter of the amnesty and began to seek for some compromise which would satisfy the Afghans without endangering British prestige and authority with the border tribes. The problem was somewhat seriously complicated by the British determination to remain in occupation of central

Waziristan, a course to which they were driven by the invincible recalcitrance of the warlike Mahsuds. On no account could Waziristan be abandoned and left as a constant and imminent source of danger to the British districts with which it marched. In the end the Indian Government agreed to announce that they would not introduce the regular administration of a settled district into Waziristan, but would administer it on a tribal basis in accordance with tribal custom and usage, and after considerable haggling and desperate efforts by the Afghans to get greater concessions a settlement was ultimately reached on these lines.

On November 22, 1921, the hardly won treaty was finally signed. The settlement was generally welcomed, and it did in fact prove to be the beginning of a period of reasonably friendly and stable relations between Afghanistan and India and Great Britain. No major problems again arose between India and Afghanistan during Lord Reading's time.

The achievement of a new *modus vivendi* with Afghanistan relieved the Government of India of a pressing cause of anxiety, and at last enabled the Viceroy to approach with less divided attention the even more formidable problem provided by the Turkish Peace Treaty and its powerful repercussions on India. From the moment of Turkey's entry into the War some sections of Indian Mahommedan opinion had inevitably been divided between loyalty to King George and loyalty to the Khalifa, the spiritual and temporal head of Islam embodied in the Sultan of Turkey. With the end of the War and the publication of the Turkish peace terms Mahommedan opinion in India became far more united than it had been during the progress of hostilities, and the Khilafat agitation, skilfully turned though it was by Gandhi and his associates to purposes other than those intended by the rank and file of Indian Mahommedans, was a genuine expression of resentment at the treatment of Turkey and of apprehension for the future of Islam. From the beginning of his Viceroyalty Lord Reading was fully conscious of the strength of feeling in this matter and of the acuteness of the danger to which it exposed the country. The war between Greece and Turkey, so obvious a potential source of grave developments, had already broken out and the possibility that Great Britain might intervene on the side of the Greeks naturally raised passionate protests in many parts of India, so that Lord Reading was obliged to consider what steps could be taken to counter any agitation that might develop in the event of Great Britain's active intervention. Both France and Italy were giving unmistakeable signs of sympathy with the Turks, and for a time it looked as though Great Britain

alone of the Great Powers was hostile to the renascent Turkish nation.

This position and the feeling aroused by it among Indian Moslems, as well as the wider implications, were put with admirable clearness and force by the late Sir Mohammed Shafi, himself a leading Moslem and at that time Member for Education and Health in the Governor-General's Executive Council, in a Memorandum which he addressed to Lord Harding, who forwarded it for the information of the Cabinet at home.

In India [wrote Sir Mohammed] the entire Moslem community feel deeply over the stringency of the Turkish Peace Terms, and a large section of them have joined Gandhi's non-co-operation movement. Among this section of His Majesty's Indian Moslem subjects, in common with the Moslem countries in the Near East and the Middle East, the impression is general that England, once the friend and protector of Islam, is now its bitterest enemy, and the main-spring of her present foreign policy is a desire to crush the Moslem Kingdoms in Asia. Personally, I am convinced that there is no real justification for this belief widespread in the Moslem world. Nevertheless, it would be the height of unwisdom to ignore its existence and I should be failing in my duty to my King and the Empire if I were to refrain from emphasizing not only this fact, but also its far-reaching effects on the political situation in the East. And it is absolutely undeniable that this unsatisfactory state of things is due exclusively to the happenings connected with the Turkish Peace Negotiations.

This aspect of the matter troubled Lord Reading greatly and as early as June, 1921, he wrote to Mr. Montagu: "I . . . do most earnestly hope, for the sake of our position in India, that we shall not be driven into supporting the Greeks." He himself agreed with his predecessor, Lord Chelmsford, in feeling and expressing sympathy for the views of Indian Moslems, and he kept in close and constant touch with Mr. Montagu on the progress of Turkish affairs.

By the end of June, 1921, he had already received a Mahomedan deputation and had sent several telegrams to Mr. Montagu, representing forcibly the opinion of India. He had also cabled to the Prime Minister in similar terms, and from these early days onwards he was constantly insisting on the desirability of as reasonable a peace treaty as possible. These views had powerful supporters in England, who were able to bring about substantial modifications in the proposed treaty to which Lord Reading could point in order to show critics in India how much had been done to bring about an improvement in the original terms. But

Gandhi and his associates were keenly alive to the possibilities of Indian Moslem discontent and were busily fanning the **flames** by making it appear that the British Government remained unalterably committed to the provisions of the Treaty of **Sivres**. By the end of 1921 extreme pressure was being brought to **bear** on Lord Reading, even by moderate and friendly Moslems, to urge His Majesty's Government to make further concessions in favour of the Turks. The restoration of Thrace and Smyrna to Turkey was the central demand made by the Moslems, and they were supported in this claim both by Lord Reading, who believed that, if it were granted, he and his Government would "have the end of our active troubles in sight," and by Mr. Montagu, who nevertheless found himself forced to contend with a good deal of "dilatatoriness and indifference."

The catastrophic development of Greco-Turkish relations in 1922 immensely increased the anxiety with which Lord Reading regarded the trend of events. So profoundly disturbed was he that on February 28, 1922, on the eve of the Greco-Turkish Conference, he sent a dispatch to Mr. Montagu containing the formal request of the Government of India for a revision of the Treaty of **Sfevres**. This request was based on the intense interest of Indian Moslems in the Turkish Peace Treaty and on the services of Indian Moslem troops during the War, especially in Mesopotamia and Palestine. In particular the Government of India through the Viceroy urged upon His Majesty's Government "three points which, due provision having been made for safeguarding the neutrality of the Straits and the security of the non-Turkish populations, we ourselves regard as essential : first, evacuation of Constantinople ; second, the Sultan's suzerainty over the holy places ; third, restoration of Ottoman Thrace, including the sacred Moslem city of Adrianople, and the unreserved restoration of Smyrna. We earnestly trust that His Majesty's Government will give these aspirations all possible weight, for their fulfilment is of the greatest importance to India."

In asking for permission to publish this dispatch Lord Reading spoke in forcible terms of his duty to warn Great Britain of the immense danger of failing to placate reasonable and friendly Mahommedan opinion, stating that the Governors and Ministers of every province in British India agreed with his views.

More than two years after his arrival in India, when peace with Turkey had at last been finally achieved at the Lausanne Conference, he wrote to a friend that the Khilafat agitation had been the most dangerous aspect of the whole revolutionary political movement.

For the first year that T was in India and when the Ali Brothers were much to the fore, the menace was more serious from the Mahomedans than the Hindus, for they were fierce and fanatical. It is very striking that in all the troubles we had which culminated in violent disturbances or in imprisonments, the larger proportion was Mahomedan. The Gandhi movement could never have gained its strength but for the Treaty of Sevres, which made the Mahomedans so frantic that they joined up with the Hindus.

Lord Reading was therefore naturally and justifiably anxious to prove to the world in general and the Indian Moslem world in particular how genuine was the solicitude of his Government for equitable treatment of Turkey.

In asking that the dispatch of February 28 should be published he was well aware that he was making a highly unusual request, for he was seeking nothing less than leave to proclaim to the world the fact that there existed a wide divergence of opinion between the Home Government and the Government of a part of the Empire which was not even a self-governing Dominion on a major question of foreign policy. He was admittedly influenced in wishing to take this startling step primarily by the necessity of convincing Indian Moslems of the Government of India's sincere and energetic support of their point of view, but he would never have committed himself to such a course in order to relieve the strain upon his own Government if he had not been satisfied that the policy advocated was in the best interests of the whole Empire with its vast and varied Moslem population.

He was therefore delighted to receive Mr. Montagu's permission to publish and the terms of the dispatch were promptly given out to the Press and prominently displayed in the newspapers both in Great Britain and in India and elsewhere.

Out of this blue sky there suddenly fell a thunderbolt. It appeared that Mr. Montagu in authorizing publication had acted solely upon his own responsibility and had not only never submitted the Viceroy's request on a matter of such outstanding importance to the Cabinet for their consideration but had not even gone so far as informally to consult the Prime Minister or the Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon, and obtain their approval, though the British Government as a whole and the Foreign Office in particular were vitally concerned.

No doubt he had acted precipitately, but the penalty exacted for his impetuosity was very severe. The hazard of a debate in the House was successfully negotiated, but his Cabinet colleagues, faced with a *fait accompli* in which they had had no part and of which at least some did not approve, were filled with a resentment

which could only be appeased by his sacrifice on the altar of collective responsibility. He therefore resigned his office, but with a bitterness in his heart which found expression in a vitriolic *apologia* in the House of Commons. So much of his political life, his hopes and plans, labours and visions, had been dedicated to India during the past years that what might have seemed to a less ardent and sensitive being nothing more than an irksome but temporary interruption of an already enviable career had in his ears the fatal ring of finality. The mainspring of his life was broken and in less than two years lie was dead.

The news of these swift and dramatic happenings in England took Lord Reading completely by surprise and filled him with consternation. His own action in asking leave to publish the dispatch had been the origin of the incident culminating in Mr. Montagu's resignation, and though he had no responsibility for, and could not have foreseen, Mr. Montagu's omission to consult his colleagues, he nevertheless had at the first moment of shock a strong, even though illogical, feeling that he ought to resign as well. He was not only profoundly unhappy at having caused, however indirectly, the downfall of his old friend with whom for the past year he had been in the closest relations j he felt that the predominantly Conservative Coalition Government had joyfully seized the opportunity to get rid of one Liberal from high office and would not be sorry to see another follow him into retirement. Early in March he wrote to me a letter in which his anxieties and doubts were clearly reflected.

I am in the midst of the controversy. I have never felt more certain that I acted rightly, both for reasons of policy and in matters of constitutional propriety. I wish I felt as certain now of the course I should take. The Government at home has behaved with perfect official correctitude as regards myself and has quite vindicated my position as Viceroy, but there is something lacking in the atmosphere.

What is far more important is that I am very doubtful whether I ought to let Edwin [Montagu] go into the wilderness without following him, not merely because we are both children of Israel and both anathema to a certain section of people, but because I find it very difficult to understand why he should have been drummed out of the Cabinet post haste. Have our Ministers always been so strictly correct in their handling of situations? and would the same fate have befallen a Minister who could command a following at the next General Election?

Yet I am surprised Edwin acted without consulting the P.M. and Curzon or either of them.

In the end, though not without long heart-searching, he reached the conclusion that, whatever might be his personal

inclinations, his departure could do no good and was even likely to do positive harm to India, where the appointment of a Conservative **Viceroy** and Secretary of State would be regarded as heralding **the** introduction of a reactionary policy and would only serve to **consolidate** and intensify hostility to the British "raj."

In a further letter to me, dated March 23, he stressed this aspect of his personal problem.

Montagu's resignation came like a bombshell, for he got through a debate in the Commons very successfully and it appeared that, for at any rate some time, everything would be plain sailing. His departure means a very great deal to me, for we were in the most close and intimate communication. I have so far refrained from public speech save to express my profound regret at his departure. I have to consider the effect of anything I may say upon the situation here and its reaction at home.

The Government have made it plain that the resignation was demanded, not because of my actions, but because of Montagu's failure to consult anyone. I did not attach so much importance to consulting the Cabinet, which I thought might not be possible, but I did expect him to consult the Prime Minister and Lord Curzon.

His departure from office has moved me very much, particularly owing to the circumstances and the part I played in the incidents that led to it. I cannot say I am happy about it now, and it has produced a disquieting effect upon India.

Montagu was identified with the now reforms to which he and Chelmsford had given their names, and there is anxiety here lest there should be a reaction against them now that one of the parents, who was so enthusiastic over his offspring, has departed from the stage.

With the greatest desire not to exaggerate my own part in the picture, I cannot but recognise that my presence here steadies opinion, for there is, I gather, belief in my Liberal principles and desire to help India.

There can be no doubt that he came to a right decision. Apart from all other considerations the return of confidence on the **part** of the Mahomedans in the zeal and good faith of the Government of India which had resulted from the publication of **the** dispatch, even though dearly won at the price of Mr. Montagu's resignation, was an invaluable asset. But it was at first a tender and slow-growing plant, and if the author of the dispatch had been removed at that moment, it would assuredly have withered again and died. Moreover, the working of the actual reforms was still in its infancy and their progress would scarcely be assisted by **the** ministrations of three different Viceroys within the space of **little more** than two years from the date of their inauguration.

But it was with a heavy heart that he resumed his routine of work after the upheaval caused by this distressing interruption.

Mr. Montagu was replaced as Secretary of State by the late Lord Peel, with whom Lord Reading was at that time only superficially acquainted. He was a man of a very different stamp of mind from his predecessor ; industrious, conscientious, steady-going and decisive, he yet lacked not only all knowledge of India but also the occasional flash of visionary insight which had made Mr. Montagu so inspiring a colleague. Nevertheless, Lord Reading found in him a loyal and capable collaborator, prepared to speak his own mind, when necessary, but always heedful of the importance to be attached to the views of the man on the spot.

In replying to an address from the National Home Rule League during his visit to Madras in December, 1923, the Viceroy sharply reproved a reference in the address to the "autocratic" position of the Secretary of State, and added :

As regards Lord Peel I wish to express my obligation to him for his unremitting efforts thoroughly to understand and weigh Indian opinion in all questions and for his unvarying desire to further the best interests of India in every way. The many occasions on which India has had cause for gratitude to Lord Peel are perhaps better known to me than to the public at large.

Their personal relations became increasingly cordial as time went on and were never impaired by such passing differences on policy as arose between them, though they could naturally never achieve the rare intimacy as between Viceroy and Secretary of State which had been built up over many years of earlier association between Lord Reading and Mr. Montagu.

Within a few weeks of his succeeding Mr. Montagu, Lord Peel was writing to Lord Reading to tell him how opinion in England was becoming inflamed against the Turks owing to reports of barbarities committed by them on the Greek population in the north of Asia Minor. On the other hand, the bombardment of Samsun in the Black Sea by the Greek Fleet in June convinced Indian Moslems, quite erroneously, that the Allies had committed a breach of neutrality in allowing the Greeks to use Constantinople as a base and to pass through the Straits and the Bosphorus. In fact, largely owing to the efforts of agitators, Moslem opinion in India was satisfied that, although the Indian Government was favourable to Turkish claims, the Government of Great Britain

was **the** protagonist in the anti-Turkish campaign, and nothing that Lord Reading could say in public or in private could shake that opinion. But the publication of the famous dispatch had greatly improved the position of the Government of India, and in discussing the reports of Turkish atrocities with Lord Peel Lord Reading was able to assure him "that the Moslem does not now suspect the Government of India, indeed I think he believes in it as a friend of the Moslem, but he is firmly convinced, in spite of all we may say, that the efforts we make are checked by the Government at home."

No doubt some colour was given to this latter charge by the necessity under which the Home Government lay of minimizing as far as possible the strength of the feeling in India. The Turks were fully aware of the value of Indian Moslem agitation as a lever with which to extract concessions from the British Government, who were anxious in their turn to deprive their opponents of so effective a weapon. Nevertheless Lord Peel impressed upon Lord Balfour, who was acting as Foreign Secretary in the absence of Lord Curzon, the rising strength of Indian Moslem feeling, and he also had opportunities for conversations on the same lines with Sir Horace Rumbold, the British Ambassador to Turkey, who had come home for a visit from Constantinople. Lord Reading was consequently assured that everything possible was being done to meet his views.

In the interval between the bombardment of Samsun and the launching of the Turkish attack on the Greeks in August, opinion in India tended to become more favourable to Great Britain, a process which was helped by Lord Balfour's speech on Article 14 of the Palestine Mandate in July, when he gave emphatic expression to the aims of British policy as an Imperial Government and to the British desire to mete out the strictest justice to all communities. Of still greater effect was the "British attitude towards the Greek threat to occupy Constantinople, when hostilities with Turkey were seen to be inevitable.

But the Turkish victories, leading as they did to the critical "Chanak incident," once more gave rise to a highly explosive situation. Lord Reading, who was kept by the Secretary of State in close touch with the progress of events, was quick to urge on the Home Government that the British should "not again be placed in the unfortunate position of appearing to be the only Ally who is withstanding the legitimate aspirations of the Turk as they appear to the Moslems in India," a warning which he **repeated** in a series of telegrams and letters. Meanwhile, he busied himself in explaining to deputations and important leaders

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of Moslem opinion the friendly attitude of Great Britain towards Turkey, with the result that by the end of September he was able to report a growing opinion in India that Britain was **at last** really trying to restore the situation and make a peace which **would** be acceptable **to** the Turks. The fall of the Lloyd George Government was also a relief to Lord Reading as Viceroy of India, whatever regrets it may have caused him as a Liberal and an **old** personal friend and admirer of the outgoing Prime Minister. For Mr. Lloyd George was believed in India to be the **inveterate** opponent of the Turks, and some of his speeches, particularly those in which he dwelt on "Turkish atrocities/" had put a severe strain on the Viceroy's powers of explanation. Mr. Bonar Law's new Cabinet, greatly to Lord Reading's satisfaction, **quickly** showed that it was determined to follow a policy of peace **and** friendship towards Turkey.

But the long-drawn-out negotiations at Lausanne still **kept** Lord Reading and India in general on tenterhooks **until their** peaceful conclusion in the middle of 1925. More than once **they** seemed on the verge of breakdown, for the Turks were **quick** and skilful in exploiting the differences between the Allies, notably the British and the French, and more than once it **looked** as though hostilities must break out again. This was the eventuality which Lord Reading feared most of all, for he knew **that** any fighting between British and Turks would be the signal for a fiercer explosion of Moslem feeling in India than any that **had** so far taken place. He therefore followed the news from Lausanne with an anxious eye, keeping Lord Peel, who had retained his office in the new Government, fully supplied with information about the developments of opinion in India, and the records of those months prove how deeply impressed the Home Government were by his constant representations. It is indeed scarcely an exaggeration to say that Lord Reading played as important a part in shaping British policy towards Turkey as if he had been sitting at the actual Conference-table at Lausanne.

Peace was finally signed on July 24, 1923, and on **the next day** the Viceroy telegraphed to the Secretary of State :

We request you to convey to His Majesty's Government our deep gratification at the news that an agreement has been reached at Lausanne and peace in Near East has been secured. The news will be received with unbounded relief and thankfulness by the Moslems of India. **The** progress of the long negotiations has been followed by me and my Government stage by stage with the keenest interest, **and our hope**

and anxieties throughout have been shared by the Mahommedans of the Indian Empire . . ."

To return to 1921, as the year drew on, all other events, domestic or foreign, tended to be regarded solely in relation to the forthcoming visit of the Prince of Wales. It was only natural that this should be so, for the visit might easily prove a turning point for good or evil in Indian politics. A great wave of loyalty might sweep over India on the arrival of the Prince, undoing much of the mischief caused by the non-co-operation of the preceding months. On the other hand organized boycott and hostile demonstrations might convert the visit into so unfortunate a failure as to embitter still further the relations between the British and Indian peoples, thereby providing in abundance those conditions of wrath and mistrust which the non-co-operators found most fruitful for their activities. In the outcome the would-be-boycotters achieved some sporadic successes, but the spontaneous welcome accorded to the Prince by the millions of humble folk in all parts of India more than neutralized the efforts of the trouble-makers. Though there was at one time a wide-spread idea that the Prince's visit was due to Lord Reading's initiative, it was in fact arranged long before he became Viceroy. But inevitably the final responsibility for deciding whether the visit should take place or not lay with him, and there were people who, distorting out of their true perspective the untoward incidents of the Prince's tour, did not hesitate to reproach Lord Reading for refusing to recommend its cancellation in view of the disturbed state of India at the end of 1921.

Naturally, the Viceroy had all these considerations in mind, since he was better acquainted than any other individual with conditions in India as a whole, and he knew well enough that, if the visit proved a failure, he would have to shoulder the blame. Throughout the summer of 1921 he was in close touch with the chief developments in public opinion, and once more he found in Pandit Malaviya a staunch and public-spirited adviser. It was the Pandit who opposed a resolution moved in the National Congress to boycott the Prince's visit to such good effect that immediately after the meeting Mr. Gandhi issued a statement saying that the Prince's arrival was not to be marked by *hartals* or strikes or by any other active signs of disapproval, but only by abstention from official celebrations. But while the non-co-operators were discussing the degree of their disapproval, Princes and other important personages, as well as many public authorities all over the country, had begun energetic preparations for a rousing

welcome to the Prince, who was due to land at Bombay on November 17.

Nevertheless, the openly declared hostility of such an influential body as the All-India National Congress was a powerfully disturbing factor in the situation and one which forced both Lord Reading and Mr. Montagu to take careful stock of the position as the time for the Prince's arrival drew near. Rumours which began to circulate in India concerning his health were regarded by many as the prelude to an announcement that the visit had been cancelled, and letters from Englishmen resident in India were being received in high quarters in England, recommending the postponement of the visit to a more favourable time. All these considerations gave cause for anxiety and Lord Reading and Mr. Montagu discussed the situation very carefully during the crucial weeks preceding the Prince's departure from England.

The whole of Lord Reading's correspondence, private and official, at this time shows how he hated the very thought of possible hostile demonstrations against the heir to the throne. But he saw clearly that, if in the end the Prince's visit had to be postponed, then the true reason for so drastic a step must be proclaimed. Yet this again was a course which he disliked quite as much as the other, for he realized the unfavourable repercussions to which it would give rise all over the world.

"Postponement," he told the Secretary of State, "would have the disadvantage of attributing power to this (the non-co-operation) movement and, above all, of creating both in England and in the Dominions, and throughout the world, the impression that India was so disloyal that it was not safe for the Prince to visit it."

In the end he decided to count on the undoubted loyalty of the masses and of the majority of the responsible members of the upper ranks of society generally, and in due course the Prince landed at Bombay on November 17, where the Viceroy was present to meet him. The landing was the occasion for an enthusiastic and spontaneous welcome by scores of thousands of Indians of all ranks and races, and although it was marred by a bitter clash between hostile demonstrators of the non-co-operation party and the police, in the course of which a number of people were killed and injured on both sides, yet so fervent was the Prince's welcome that it overshadowed even this deplorable tragedy.

The visit continued to be successful, and indeed the Prince became more popular in each place he visited. Perhaps the most enthusiastic scenes were witnessed at Poona, where he laid the foundation stone of the All-India Shivaji Memorial. When the people saw him in the ancient capital of the Maratha Empire

paying tribute to the memory of the famed Maratha warrior, there was an amazing outburst of popular devotion. His tour of the Indian states was a triumphal procession, and he had not been long in the country before the non-co-operators found that they could not even begin to repress the enthusiasm with which he was being received throughout British India. Indeed, in some places the recalcitrant elements discovered that it was actually dangerous to try to interfere, and more than once the police had to stand between them and an incensed crowd of loyal citizens bent on welcoming their Prince. Calcutta, always a hot-bed of agitation, where disturbances might with some reason have been expected, did not lag behind the rest of India in the warmth of its reception, and Lord Reading wrote with relief to Mr. Montagu : "I am particularly struck by the reception he received at the Maidan, where there was nobody but Indians who vied with each other in the warmth of the reception they could give him."

The Prince's visit was certainly of immense value in easing the tension in Indian politics for a while and putting heart into many loyal citizens who had been frightened and bewildered by the rapid and incalculable developments in the non-co-operation movement during the preceding months. But the atmosphere of strain was soon to return and even the emotions which had been stirred in the breasts of millions by the sight of the King-Emperor's son had only a passing effect. Lord Reading's own position was becoming increasingly difficult in the last weeks of 1921, for already he was being pressed by important persons in both India and England to take what was called a firmer attitude. What this meant was shown by a passage in one of his letters to Mr. Montagu, written just after the conclusion of the interviews with Mr. Gandhi, in which he reaffirmed his belief in the beneficial results of the meetings and in the unwisdom, at any rate for the moment, of trying any other methods than conciliation, so long as such a course offered any prospect of success, and watchful care when all attempts at conciliation had failed.

I hope you will agree with the policy I have been pursuing [he wrote], I have no manner of doubt that it is right and that prevention by agreement and expressions of regret, etc., in this case Mr. Gandhi's, is better than arrest and prosecutions.

Mr. Montagu was in complete accord with Lord Reading on this issue, but on the kindred subject of the treatment of political prisoners a disagreement of some intensity developed between the two men.

Lord Reading believed in the simple proposition that imprisonment for a political offence should in fact be imprisonment, and not a comfortable lodging at the expense of the State. Mr. Montagu, on the other hand, was wholly in favour of treating political prisoners as a sort of enforced guests. The differences between the two men came to a head at the end of 1921, when for a period their telegrams to each other showed how widely apart were their points of view, until on December 22 Mr. Montagu felt constrained to write privately to Lord Reading.

I want you to be patient with me. . . . I am very sorry to feel, but it is better to admit than ignore, that so far we do not seem to have reached common ground . . . Your apprehension is that if we conceded special treatment for political prisoners and made public that concession . . . this could only encourage agitators to get themselves arrested. . . . It is my great anxiety . . . to make sure that in our treatment of these offences we cannot be justly charged with lagging behind the standard of humanity that will be expected of us.

Lord Reading, however, was not convinced by these and other arguments of Mr. Montagu, and indeed found it necessary to insist on the tightening up of discipline in certain provinces where jail regulations had in his opinion been relaxed too far. In any case no agreement had been reached by the two men when Mr. Montagu resigned in March, 1922. In this case the man on the spot surely was right, for at the turn of the year events in India were manifestly drifting towards a crisis, and it would have been highly dangerous to do anything that might have the appearance of countenancing an agitation which was fast calling for stern and decisive action.

The measure of agreement between Viceroy and Secretary of State was so great over the whole vast field of Indian affairs that their rare differences are thrown into sharper relief against the background of their normal harmony.

The most important question over which they found themselves unhappily at variance arose out of a prosecution of four persons for conspiracy to defraud the Government in connection with certain supplies delivered during the war, and led ultimately to the resignation of Sir Thomas Holland, one of the members of the Viceroy's Executive Council, at the end of 1921.

The original decision to institute proceedings against the accused men, two Europeans and two Indians, had been taken in 1920 by the Board of Industries and Munitions, which ceased early in 1921 to have a separate existence, its functions being merged in the newly created Department of Industries, **over which**

Sir Thomas Holland presided. The work of liquidating the commitments of the defunct Munitions Board was allocated to a special officer responsible to Sir Thomas, who thus represented the Government of India in its capacity as complainant in the criminal proceedings.

Now it so happened that one of the accused was a prominent banker, and not unnaturally the news of his arrest had so immediate an adverse effect upon his bank that its stability was seriously imperilled by heavy withdrawals of deposits. This threat to the bank's solvency jeopardized in turn over a hundred Indian industrial concerns which it had financed, and led to the allegation being strenuously made and widely believed that the prosecution was a mere blind to cover an attack by British interests on indigenous industries. The uproar produced by the dissemination of this story quickly spread to other parts of India outside Bengal, where the prosecution originated, to such an extent that the whole matter was taken up by the newspapers at home and even discussed in Parliament. Obviously a conviction or even a protracted trial would have a most damaging effect on a large section of the business community in Bengal, and unfortunately Counsel's opinion was that the trial would certainly last for many months and that at the end of it a conviction before a jury was very doubtful in view of the complicated character of the case. Thus, in whichever way the case ended, the result would be disastrous, while failure to secure a conviction would certainly stimulate a dangerous political agitation, since the suspicions of the motive behind the prosecution would be confirmed in the minds of large numbers of Indians. In face of these weighty considerations Sir Thomas, after a discussion with two of his colleagues in the Executive Council, decided to withdraw the prosecution. But the trouble-making possibilities of the matter were increased by the fact that the Indian banker under trial had started a civil case against the Government of India for certain sums of money which he claimed to be due to him, and that, before the criminal prosecution against him was dropped, he unconditionally withdrew his claim. Immediately attempts were made in disaffected quarters to represent the dropping of the prosecution as a *quid pro quo* in return for the abandonment of the claim, though no responsible or well-informed person ever believed for a moment that Sir Thomas Holland had been influenced by any considerations but those of the public interest. Certainly Lord Reading himself held no such belief, as is plainly evidenced by his telegrams and letters to the Secretary of State and by the official communique on the whole case published by his Government at the end of August.

But the whole affair had stirred him profoundly. As a former Lord Chief Justice of England he could not but be shocked to the core by this intrusion of politics into a criminal case already under trial, and the position had been aggravated by the fact that he himself had been kept in the dark until the irrevocable step of withdrawing the prosecution had been taken. "I am having a very unpleasant time about the withdrawal of the Munitions prosecution in Calcutta," he wrote to me, "which was done without my knowledge and of which I most strongly disapprove." In particular, Lord Reading took passionate exception to a statement made in open court by the Advocate-General of Bengal that, while in his opinion the case against the accused could be proved, nevertheless he did not intend to offer any evidence. "Nothing can justify the statement that he made, for even if instructions were sent to him by the Government of India to this effect, or if he had so understood them, his own position as the leader of the Bar in Bengal should have made him refuse to make any such statement in court. . . . In the whole of my legal experience I have never heard such a statement as was made by the Advocate-General."

In these words, written to Mr. Montagu in the middle of August, Lord Reading gave expression to the sense of outrage which filled him as a lawyer at the conduct of a highly placed member of the Bar in publicly branding an accused person as being guilty of a charge in respect of which the jury were not to be asked to record their verdict. But his estimate as Governor-General of the damage done to the entire system of government in India was conveyed in no less downright terms.

. . . the position is serious, for the whole atmosphere surrounding the Government is affected in the public mind by the course of events, and we shall still hear much attack and criticism both in the Press and in the Legislative Assembly. . . . The consequence inevitably is that the newspapers which are always attacking the system of Government by the assertion that the Viceroy . . . is never allowed by the bureaucracy to know the truth or to take independent action, are now pointing to this as an instance at last established of the small part that the Viceroy is allowed by the bureaucracy to play in the Government of India.

Discussion of the case between Viceroy and Secretary of State dragged on until the beginning of the next year, indeed until the last few days of Mr. Montagu's tenure of office, and the exchange of letters and telegrams between them provided another of the many striking examples of the difficulty of bridging the gulf of time and space between India and England, which is so

often apparent in the history of Indian Government. For the aspects of the case which attracted the greatest attention in England were not those which were **uppermost in the public and official minds in India. More than once in the course of their correspondence each of the two men told the other that, if he could only have him present for five minutes, he could clear away all misconception as to his own attitude or as to the facts in dispute.** Both Lord Reading and Mr. Montagu were eager to do everything in their power to ensure that no taint of **suspicion regarding Sir Thomas Holland's motives** should remain, and **both bore public testimony to his complete integrity and the great value of the services which he had rendered to India.** But they differed as to the best way of finally disposing of the whole unfortunate episode. Mr. Montagu wanted to write a personal letter to Sir Thomas, expressing in general terms his appreciation of his character and record whilst condemning the particular steps which he had taken in withdrawing the criminal prosecution. Lord Reading argued that this would revive controversy in its most acute and undesirable form and would lead inevitably to further suspicion of the motives and actions of the Viceroy **and his Government.** So strongly did he feel on the subject that during the later phases of the discussion he intimated that he had even contemplated resignation "as a means of bringing home to the public the grave view I took of the events, notwithstanding that I had had no hand in them," In the end, the matter was allowed to rest at the point which it had reached with Sir Thomas's resignation. In the course of his speech at the opening of the second session of the Legislature in September of 1921 Lord Reading himself summed up the whole matter in emphatic and explicit terms:

The public felt, and beyond all doubt rightly felt, that the proceedings in Court had shaken the very foundations of justice. Fundamental principles of administration and justice had been violated and the acceptance of the resignation of Sir Thomas Holland was therefore inevitable. Our conclusions were announced only in relation to the proceedings in Court and to the omission to refer to me as the head of the Government. Lest there should be any misapprehension, I must, however, add on my own behalf and that of my colleagues, that the existence of civil suits against the Government should be entirely disregarded in relation to a criminal case. Their unconditional withdrawal ought not to have any influence upon considerations **of the withdrawal of a prosecution.**

The whole incident revealed Lord Reading's fixed determination to maintain the unique character of British justice

at all costs, and his unshakable resolution and firmness of decision where his own principles and the reputation of his Government were affected.

The liberal bent of his mind was shown at an early stage of his Viceroyalty by the extraordinary pains he took to ascertain Indian opinion at first hand, so that it might have its due weight both in his own actions and in the conduct of his Government. Indeed, before he left England he discussed with Mr. Montagu the possibility of his travelling *incognito* in India, and although that idea never came to anything, both he and the Secretary of State returned constantly in their letters to the theme of getting into direct touch with Indians of all shades of political opinion and of all walks of life.

One aspect of the matter which Lord Reading was always at pains to bring out was that Indian opinion included among its many strata that formed by the views and interests of the non-official European community. He always recognized the value of this strong and independent element in the country, and he made a point of talking with as many as possible of the European commercial and financial community. His care for them was rewarded by the confidence which non-official Europeans reposed in him, as was strikingly illustrated by the spontaneous impulse by which some years later both they and the Indians, representing to some extent rival economic interests, turned to him as arbiter during the discussions at the Round Table Conference.

But his sympathies were not confined to Indian politicians and official and non-official Britons. They extended to the humblest of the many millions committed to his care, and his indignation could be readily aroused by stories of unnecessary hardships inflicted upon third-class passengers in trains or difficulties encountered by poor suppliants for justice. In particular, two cases which came into the courts very early in his Viceroyalty, in which Europeans were accused of offences against Indians of the humbler sort, brought forth some very outspoken comments, for he believed that full justice had not been done in either of the cases, although the strict letter of the law had no doubt been observed. "I am convinced," he said in regard to them, "that we shall never persuade the Indian of the justness of our rule until we have overcome racial difficulties of the character above-mentioned."

It was only natural that his temperament and experience should often have led Lord Reading to chafe at his limited opportunities to speak out frankly what was in his mind. Indeed, he once complained that the only chances he ever got were those

provided by occasional deputations and a very few after-dinner speeches. But he found that a Viceroy is very strictly hedged about, and although he infused much of his own views and personality into his formal addresses to the Legislature, throughout his service in India he never ceased to struggle against the convention which forbade him to go to the country on suitable occasions, as a Prime Minister in England is able to do, and expound the burning questions of the day. Had he been able to break down this hampering tradition of aloofness, the benefit to his Government and to the general welfare of India might have been very great.

Another disadvantage by which he was always oppressed was the impossibility of finding time for a comprehensive examination of any particular subject. He was perpetually snowed under with files involving the consideration of innumerable details of departmental work. Every Viceroy has had, and still has, this experience, but it was peculiarly irksome to Lord Reading, faced as he was with such vast and pressing problems of domestic and foreign policy. Lawrence, Mayo, Curzon and others of his predecessors had found the breath of life in the ceaseless departmental work which was their daily task, but the conditions of their times were very different. Formerly a capable, tireless administrator had been India's chief need, and Lord Curzon in particular had put the country in his lasting debt by his labours in overhauling and improving practically the whole system of Indian administration. But Lord Reading was voicing the true need of his India when he wrote, "I must find a way to abstract myself more from routine work to enable me to get to the hill-tops of thought and survey the whole situation, and thus arrive at broad lines of policy and particularly to develop constructive work." He found it stimulating to go in practice to the hill-tops when in search of the wider horizons. ". . . I do feel the need of getting away on to the hill-tops," he once wrote to a correspondent in England, "so that my vision may soar above departmental matters.*" The onset of the hot weather in the plains was always troublesome to him, and he was noticeably chagrined by his inability at such times to work the long hours to which he had been accustomed at home. Nevertheless, the calls upon his energies at all seasons of the year were heavy enough.

Indeed the formidable non-co-operation and Punjab troubles inside India and the menacing Turkish situation and the frontier problem outside its borders imposed so colossal a burden upon the Viceroy that it is no wonder that Lord Reading and the Home Government were forced to consider whether it was not possible to strengthen the machinery of the government of

the country, though in the end their deliberations produced no result.

Meanwhile the main political issues in India were coming to a head. They moved swiftly to a climax with the arrest of Mr. Gandhi on March 10, 1922, and from that moment the comprehensive non-co-operation-cum-Khilafat movement began to disintegrate into the beginnings of the long Hindu-Moslem political estrangement which has still not found its solution. The Sikh agitation was to flare up dangerously and imperil the peace of India for a time, but this yielded in due course to the statesmanship of Lord Reading and Sir Malcolm (now Lord) Hailey, at that time Governor of the Punjab

The easing of tension brought about by the Prince of Wales' visit had proved to be no more than temporary, and the year 1922 had opened with every portent of trouble ahead. The first and most threatening danger was provided by the conduct of Mr. Gandhi which finally necessitated his arrest, with all its latent possibilities of explosion. Outwardly, he seemed to be preaching moderation ; at any rate he certainly opposed the open adoption of violent methods in politics. At the Ahmedabad meeting of the All-India National Congress in the last week of 1921 a well-known extremist, Hazrat Mohani, made a speech which advocated the elimination of the doctrine of non-violence from the Congress creed and declared for a republican India completely independent of Great Britain. It is true that his views were rejected by a considerable majority of the Congress delegates, largely on account of Mr. Gandhi's strong opposition, and that the resolutions adopted by the Congress omitted any reference to non-payment of taxes and were so worded as to suggest that civil disobedience should be confined for the present to defiance of the Seditious Meetings Act and the Criminal Law Amendment Act, which had been recently passed to counter certain illegal political activities. But Lord Reading refused to take the surface view of the matter and saw in these proceedings cause for disquiet. Writing to Mr. Montagu within a few days of the close of the Ahmedabad meeting he gave it as his own impression that "the discussion . . . must be regarded as very serious, not only because of the language used but also because it received so much support and again, because the defeat of Hazrat Mohani's motion was really on grounds of inexpediency." The Viceroy was indeed far from dismissing as unfounded the opinion held by many competent observers, notably Sir George Lloyd, that Mr. Gandhi's preaching of non-violence was no more than a cloak for plans aimed at an ultimate revolution by violence.

Sir George would have had Mr. Gandhi arrested at once, but Lord Reading, as always, opposed arrest for mere speech-making, dangerous as the speeches might be, and awaited some definite step. "I am quite prepared to face the consequences of Gandhi's arrest if he takes action."

Even at the beginning of 1922 Lord Reading felt that the resources of conciliation were not yet exhausted, and he still hoped that it might be possible to achieve some useful results by conference and discussion with important representatives of different shades of political opinion. A deputation of leaders of more moderate views had waited on the Viceroy in Calcutta at the end of December, 1921, to urge that he should hold a round-table conference at which the Government and all sections of political opinion should be represented, with the object of finding some way out of the existing dead-lock. But Lord Reading in reply had insisted on the discontinuance of the unlawful activities of the non-co-operators as a fundamental condition precedent even to discussion of the holding of such a conference. His condition, however, found no favour with the Ahmedabad Congress a few days later, when the Subjects Committee rejected the proposal for a conference by an overwhelming majority and Mr. Gandhi made it clear that any such conference must meet merely to register his decrees. Congress apparently supported his demand, since amongst the resolutions passed by it was one appointing him as sole executive authority of the Congress Committee.

Nevertheless, in spite of this rebuff a conference of politicians outside the Congress fold met at Bombay in January, 1922, under the presidency of Sir Sankaran Nair to draw up terms on which a round-table conference could be held. Mr. Gandhi attended this conference, which swiftly passed into the control of a few extremists who managed to promulgate terms for a conference such as the Government could not possibly accept, while Mr. Gandhi himself announced that he reserved the right to continue the enrolment of volunteers and preparations for civil disobedience, even during the session of any conference that might be held. Sir Sankaran Nair at once resigned the presidency and the alienation of moderate opinion from Mr. Gandhi and his followers everywhere in the country was increased. The resolutions passed by this conference, incidentally by the votes of twenty out of two hundred persons present, were communicated to the Viceroy, who naturally replied that they did not contain the basis for any profitable discussion.

The next and gravest development was the publication on February 4 of an ultimatum to the Viceroy by Mr. Gandhi, who

declared that his party had been forced into civil disobedience by the Government, whose actions had deprived the people of the country of such elementary political rights as free speech and free association. He laid responsibility on the Viceroy for the breakdown of the negotiations for a round-table conference, and impudently announced that, if the Government would release all prisoners either convicted or under trial for non-violent activities and also bind itself not to interfere in the future non-violent activities of the non-co-operation party, he would postpone aggressive civil disobedience till offenders now in jail had been released and had had time to review the situation. He claimed the right to continue meanwhile his seditious and illegal propaganda.

From this moment Mr. Gandhi's arrest became inevitable. The Government of India at once published a refutation of Mr. Gandhi's irresponsible charges and Lord Reading waited for the moment to strike. But in the interval the Government at home was beginning to be seriously perturbed at the state of affairs in India, and within a day or two of the publication of Mr. Gandhi's ultimatum Mr. Montagu instructed Lord Reading to arrest the principal leaders of the non-co-operation movement, including Mr. Gandhi. The tone and contents of the Secretary of State's communication certainly gave the impression that His Majesty's Government believed the Indian authorities to be only imperfectly aware of the gravity of the situation, and accordingly it is not surprising to find Lord Reading energetically defending his administration against such an unjustified view. He replied with a detailed account of the measures taken against non-co-operation, including the strengthening of armed police forces, and referred to previous correspondence in which he had more than once stated that the inauguration of civil disobedience would call for drastic and comprehensive measures. He finished by informing Mr. Montagu that as far back as November 24 of the previous year his Government had sent to provincial Governments the fullest possible instructions as to methods of combating civil disobedience, if and when it should come, short of the declaration of Martial Law. There was perhaps a touch of pardonable sarcasm in the passage of his reply in which he assured the Secretary of State that he and his advisers would of course welcome any clear and practical suggestions on any point in regard to which His Majesty's Government considered that the measures taken by the Indian Government were inadequate or ineffective. By adopting this attitude the Home Government had clearly **put** itself in the wrong, for the conduct of affairs in India had to be left to the men on the spot, and among them there was substantial

agreement with Lord Reading's tactics. Sir George Lloyd, however, represented an opposing school of thought, insisting that Mr. Gandhi should be arrested before he had had the opportunity to commit any specific mischief. Two or three weeks before the meeting of the Ahmedabad Congress Sir George made it clear that, if Mr. Gandhi uttered any open incitement to sedition, he would be prepared to arrest him under the general instructions of the Government of India's letter of November 24, 1921, and immediately after the close of the meeting he made a definite recommendation for Gandhi's arrest on the ground that his apparently unchecked agitation was seriously undermining the foundations of law and order. Like the Viceroy, he took the gravest view of the proceedings at Ahmedabad and demonstrated that Gandhi's opposition to Hazrat Mohani's extreme proposals was due to expediency pure and simple. But Lord Reading, although he agreed with this opinion, still argued that it would be better to await the inauguration of active civil disobedience. Nevertheless, after the abortive Conference of Moderates at Bombay a meeting of Sir George Lloyd's Council, at which both Ministers and Members were present, decided unanimously in favour of Mr. Gandhi's prompt arrest. This was not a panic decision but a decision of very great weight, for the Bombay Government at this time was handling the political situation as well as any provincial government in India, and Lord Reading did not feel able to dismiss it out of hand. Although the Presidency was the headquarters of both the non-co-operation and Khilafat movements, its Government was entitled to the credit of having kept the volunteers and agitators of all sorts in check without resort to the special powers of the Criminal Law Amendment Act. But Lord Reading still preferred to wait for some definite move by Mr. Gandhi, and in the meantime Sir George Lloyd was partly reassured by the Viceroy's refusal to confer with Mr. Gandhi and his followers. It looked as though the occasion for the arrest would come soon enough, for Mr. Gandhi had announced that he was about to start active civil disobedience in the Bardoli *tehsil* of the Surat district in Bombay Presidency, and on January 24 the Government of India telegraphed to Sir George Lloyd specifically enjoining him to wait until Mr. Gandhi openly embarked on the Bardoli campaign. Mr. Gandhi's letter of February 4 to Lord Reading was a clear warning that the moment was at hand, but before it had arrived a terrible crime, due directly to the subversive activity of Mr. Gandhi's own followers, shocked the country and dismayed and frightened Mr. Gandhi himself. On February 4, the very day of the publication of the letter to the Viceroy, a

mob of volunteers and peasantry deliberately murdered in circumstances of extreme brutality and ferocity twenty-one policemen and rural watchmen at Chauri Chaura in the United Provinces.

This appalling incident gave Mr. Gandhi every excuse for calling off civil disobedience, but it is likely that, had the Chauri Chaura murders not taken place, he would have looked around for some other way out. His attempts to create an *impasse* by filling the prisons with persons convicted under the Criminal Law Amendment Act had failed, and by the beginning of February the supply of volunteers was beginning to dwindle. Moreover, his followers had not forgotten that in 1921 he had promised them Swaraj within a year and they were pressing him to make good his promise. The issue of the ultimatum of February 4 was therefore a somewhat desperate measure to establish enough credit to carry on a little longer, but the uncompromising manner in which the challenge was received by the Government showed him only too plainly what the upshot would be. The long communique issued by the Government of India refuting Gandhi's specific charges ended with an unambiguous statement of their intentions:

The alternatives that now confront the people of India are such as sophistry can no longer obscure or disguise. The issue is no longer between this or that programme of political advance, but between lawlessness with all its dangerous consequences on the one hand, and on the other, maintenance of those principles which lie at the root of all civilized government. Mass civil disobedience is fraught with such danger to the State that it must be met with sternness and severity.

Mr. Gandhi thereupon summoned the Working Committee of Congress to Bardoli on February 11 and 12, when he suspended mass civil disobedience forthwith and ordered his followers to abandon all preparations of an offensive kind. All attempts to get themselves arrested were forbidden to non-co-operators and volunteer processions and meetings held in defiance of law were prohibited. In place of these activities non-co-operators were in future to devote themselves to a so-called constructive programme, the chief elements of which were the enlistment of ten million members for the Indian National Congress, the use of the handloom and the production of home-spun cloth, the improvement of conditions among the depressed classes, the organization of 'national' schools, the promotion of temperance and the organization of local arbitration committees to settle disputes.

These decisions constitute the well-known "Bardoli Resolutions," which in the long run proved to be the death-knell of the non-co-operation movement so far as the period of Lord

Reading's Viceroyalty was concerned. Nevertheless, at the time of their adoption the political outlook seemed very black to the Government of India. Although the non-co-operation movement had either failed to attain its various objectives or at the best had achieved only a partial success, it had seriously affected the lower classes in the towns. Its effect upon the peasantry had been much slighter but even the rural masses had been deeply influenced in certain areas, particularly in parts of Bihar and Orissa, Bengal, the United Provinces and the Assam Valley. Above all, in the Punjab the Akali campaign had produced a most disturbing and dangerous reaction amongst the rural Sikhs, whilst the Khilafat agitation had left a great part of the Mahommedans embittered and sullen. On the other hand, the Army and Police were staunch, and moderate opinion was becoming so deeply alarmed at the increasing dangers of Mr. Gandhi's recent declarations and threats that it could be counted on for at least moral support. Lord Reading therefore told Mr. Montagu confidently that he felt able to deal with any troubles which might arise, especially as the prospects of a bumper harvest promised some alleviation of economic stress.

Lord Reading himself was certain that the Bardoli Resolutions were the beginning of the end for non-co-operation. They left the movement without any clean-cut and inspiring objective, with the inevitable result that enthusiasm evaporated, discouragement and disillusionment prevailed and disorganization proceeded apace, while Mr. Gandhi's personal prestige within the Congress party received an immediate and severe blow. Nevertheless, the Resolutions put the Viceroy in a very difficult dilemma. The calling off of civil disobedience forced the Government of India to pause and think over its next move. Everything had been arranged for Mr. Gandhi's apprehension and on the very day, February 12, on which the Resolutions were agreed by Mr. Gandhi and his colleagues Lord Reading had informed Mr. Montagu that the Government of Bombay had been instructed to effect the arrest on the 14th. Lord Reading himself was of opinion that the mere calling off of civil disobedience made no material change in the indictment against Mr. Gandhi, since active preparations for a campaign of civil disobedience at some more suitable time were still going on. Moreover, opinion in England was restive over Mr. Gandhi's continued freedom, and Mr. Montagu telegraphed early in February saying that he was "puzzled" at the delay in making the arrest. A debate was due to take place in Parliament on the 14th, and both Lord Reading and Mr. Montagu were naturally anxious that, as the arrest had

to be made, it should be made in time for Parliament to be informed of it as a *fait accompli*. But at this point the Indian members of the Viceroy's Council made the strongest possible representations in favour of delay, and Lord Reading, after careful thought, decided that the risks of a little delay were on the whole less than those of immediate action which would be open to easy misrepresentation both in India and abroad. He therefore postponed the arrest, but asked the three Presidency Governors, Sir George Lloyd, Lord Willingdon and Lord Ronaldshay to come to Delhi and talk the matter over with him. Lord Ronaldshay was unable to leave Calcutta, but Lord Willingdon found time to pay a visit to Sir George Lloyd en route from Madras to Delhi, and the two Governors arrived at Viceregal Lodge together.

Lord Willingdon was only less disturbed than Sir George by the apparent intention of the Government of India not to proceed at all against Mr. Gandhi, since he had not concealed his opinion that it was unfortunate that Mr. Gandhi had not been arrested at the beginning.

But after a full discussion of policy both Governors were satisfied that the Government of India would move against Mr. Gandhi at a suitable moment, and in addition Sir George was assured that, when papers were published, his point of view and that of his Government would be put beyond any fear of misconstruction. Nevertheless, Lord Reading found in Sir George Lloyd's views on future policy in India a certain hardening which corresponded to recent developments in some quarters both in that country and at home.

But the main question at issue between the Viceroy and the Governor of Bombay was about to be settled, for Mr. Gandhi's arrest became increasingly urgent with every day that passed. Fuller knowledge of his intentions and of the dangerous results of his continuing non-co-operationist activities became available to the Viceroy and his Council, and on March 1 Lord Reading wired to Sir George Lloyd that his Council had now unanimously agreed that proceedings against Mr. Gandhi should be started. By this time many of the most prominent leaders of the non-co-operation movement were already in prison, and Mr. Gandhi's arrest would make it clear that drastic and determined measures were to be taken to stamp out the agitation. Accordingly, the arrest took place without incident or disturbance on the night of March 10, the whole country receiving the news quietly, and in due course Mr. Gandhi received sentences of two years' imprisonment on each of three counts. Lord Reading's Fabian tactics were thus completely justified.

The mere fact that Mr. Gandhi had been taken into custody and kept in jail like any other ordinary mortal who has run counter to the Law was in itself a real set-back to his prestige. For many of his lieutenants had been busily assuring their followers that his mysterious powers were such that no emissary of the Satanic Government could ever lay a hand upon him and live and that if any attempt were made to imprison him, he would foil his captors by vanishing into space.

Nevertheless, he had until recently occupied so unique a position amongst the Indian masses that no-one could be sure in advance that his arrest would not produce at least sporadic disturbances, if not a general outbreak, and it was a considerable relief to the Viceroy and his advisers when no such consequences ensued.

I have had no trouble so far arising from Gandhi's arrest [he wrote to me in April]. He had pretty well run himself to the last ditch as a politician by his extraordinary manifestations in the last month or six weeks before his arrest, when he ran the gamut of open defiance of Government with a challenge of all authority fixed for a certain day, and when the day arrived he went to the opposite extreme and counselled suspension of the most acute activities.

This of course caused dissension amongst his followers ; the extremists in his party openly challenged his authority and advice ; the more moderate accepted his view ; and eventually a patched-up compromise was reached. There is no doubt that his failure to carry out his policy of defiance has had effect and there is much questioning as to the soundness of the policy he advocated. A distinct movement is on foot to bring the operations into more constitutional channels, and if this succeeds, there will still be active agitation for a vast extension of reforms upon more satisfactory lines. It is most unfortunate that Edwin should have fallen down just at this minute, for I cannot but think he would have got into smoother water for a time.

In spite of the intense discouragement caused by the arrest and conviction of their leader, the non-co-operators persisted for a while in trying to reconstruct his programme on lines likely to appeal to the popular imagination. But the unity of the party had been vitally impaired: no effective substitute could be devised for the original programme, which had at least offered a clearly defined objective, and in the end the remaining leaders of the movement were reduced to setting up a Civil Disobedience Committee. Their hope was that they would be able to think of some plan which would appeal to the party and again enlist the enthusiasm of the masses, in order to check the rapidly growing disintegration in the forces of active discontent. But the Committee's

report proved to be the dampest of damp squibs. It unanimously-rejected mass civil disobedience and practically abandoned the boycott of schools and law courts, thereby doing no more than follow in the wake of the trend of extremist opinion in general. Indeed, half the Committee, including Mr. C. R. Das and Pandit Moti Lai Nehru, two of the ablest and most influential leaders in the whole Congress camp, went so far as to recommend that the party should contest seats at the next general election and capture the legislative bodies. Such a tremendous *volte-face* could not of course be accomplished in a moment and there was strong opposition to it from some who still had a lingering loyalty to Mr. Gandhi, from others who could not stomach such a public confession of failure, and from a section in Bengal which had been infected by Communist propaganda. Nevertheless, the movement in favour of entering the legislatures was too strong to be suppressed and, steadily gathering momentum, it triumphed in the end over the opposition.

Simultaneously with the decline in the non-co-operation movement a comparable disintegration was proceeding in the Khilafat ranks. Chief amongst its many and complex causes was the collapse of the non-co-operation movement itself, which, whilst drawing much of the best of its fighting material from the Mahommedans, worked hard in turn to inflame Mahommedan feeling, to encourage an intransigent attitude in specifically Islamic affairs, and to sow general mistrust of British policy. But in addition to these influences the old, deep-seated Mahommedan suspicion of Hindu motives was coming once more to the surface, and at the same time the Government of India was making earnest efforts to support the more reasonable demands of Indian Mahommedans in regard to the terms of peace with Turkey. As 1922 drew towards its close, the belief spread that these demands were likely to be largely conceded and hopes centred in a successful conclusion to the Lausanne Conference, so that by the close of the year there were good prospects of a happy ending to the long-drawn-out Khilafat agitation. "The Mahommedans were much impressed by the efforts made on their behalf by the Indian Government," Lord Reading wrote to a friend at home, "and regarded Montagu's resignation as caused by his action in their interest. The tendency has been and is for them to hold more aloof from the Gandhi movement, and they were far the most turbulent and fanatical amongst those who gave trouble."

The brightening of the political horizon was not confined to the two main organized agitations but spread to the general attitude of the masses of the people. Undoubtedly the change

had been accelerated by good harvests and lower prices, but it was also due in large measure to the steady enforcement of the law by the Provincial Governments and the strict insistence upon the collection of Government's dues in those areas, such as Madras and Assam, in which systematic attempts to withhold revenues had been made. Above all, the change in the outlook of the masses was due to the manifest failure of the non-co-operators to fulfil their promises, which had had the effect of destroying the illusions fostered by the extremists and correspondingly restoring the prestige of the Government.

Even in the industrial areas the position improved to a noticeable extent after the breakdown of the non-co-operation movement. Here again the small communist element, particularly in Bengal, tried to make trouble in the labour centres, but their attempts were met by the opposition of the well-to-do classes of Indians themselves as well as by the Government, and with the improvement in general economic conditions the urban masses were much less responsive to agitation than they had been at the height of the non-co-operation movement. The general political situation at the end of 1922 was summed up by Lord Reading himself in a statement of his own and his Government's view, written in the closing days of the year.

As we read the situation [lie wrote], for the present the outlook is more favourable than it has been at any time during the last three years. It is far from our intention to suggest that there are no clouds on the horizon. The financial position is full of difficulty and the complete economic recovery of India depends on world conditions which admit only of slow and very gradual amelioration. The Sikh difficulty still awaits a permanent settlement and until this has been attained will continue to be a source of anxiety. The revival of the anarchical movement in Bengal is a factor to be reckoned with. More important because more abiding in its operation than any such temporary difficulties is the change which the last six or seven years has produced in the general feelings of Indians. Racial hostility is perhaps less acute and is certainly less obtrusive than it was a year ago : but we have still to contend with the tendency to subject the intentions of Government to criticism tinged with suspicion. We are fully conscious of the difficulties inherent in this situation. Nevertheless, when every allowance is made for the impossibility of forecasting coming events, we believe we can reasonably look forward in the immediate future at all events to a period of development and peaceful progress.

Lord Reading's private opinion always was that India's economic development had been largely sacrificed to her political **and** administrative progress, and that it would have been better

for the country if her governmental machinery had been less extensive and elaborate and her economic foundations more scientifically laid and more systematically strengthened. He never made the mistake of underrating past achievements, and he soon learnt from his own experience how powerfully political and administrative needs and conditions dominate the whole Indian scene. But he held to his opinion, and much of his time and thought was devoted to the problem of improving Indian economic conditions, a problem of vast scope, any solution of which, however partial, or local, presented formidable difficulties.

The conditions of India's general economic problem are fixed by the fact that very nearly three-quarters of her people gain their living directly from the soil. India always has been, is now, and will almost inevitably remain primarily an agricultural country. Certainly in Lord Reading's time the material welfare of India stood or fell by her agriculture and the quality and well-being of her rural population.

In 1921, Lord Reading's first year of office, everything was not well with the agriculturists. The prosperity of the war years had gone, a series of droughts had begun, and the terms of trade were against India's primary products and in favour of the countries which produced her manufactured imports. The whole economic life of the country was therefore suffering. Provincial revenues, largely dependent as they were on the land revenue, were hit 5 trade was stagnant 5 and in consequence the customs and income tax revenues of the Central Government were down. Moreover, the Provinces were doubly hit, because, unless income tax was at a level above the *datum line* fixed by the Meston award, there was no share of its yield for the provincial treasuries.

Lord Reading was therefore justified in holding that the material development of India had not kept pace with her political, educational and administrative progress. The report of the Indian Industrial Commission appointed during the 1914-18 War had shown that India was able to produce only a small fraction of the things necessary for civilized life. The revelations of this Commission left a permanent mark on Indian opinion and made it certain that future Indian administrations would pay more attention to the country's industrial development, whilst the lessons of the War only reinforced the Commission's Report. Thus Lord Reading was well aware from the outset that the economic side of Indian life would perforce have to be one of his chief cares, even had it not been, as in fact it was, one of his chief interests. There was ample scope for a long-term, compre-

hensive policy of economic development, but owing to the size and diversity of India and the extreme complexity of the problem such a policy could not emerge full-fledged from any single brain. It must be gradually but persistently devised and applied.

Lord Reading's task in this field fell into two main divisions. There was first the Government's administrative task of preparing a scientific budget, including the modernization and organization of the system of taxation and the equitable allotment of the country's resources both between the Centre and the Provinces and between the Provinces themselves. Secondly, there was the more general task of developing India's agricultural and industrial production. Both of these divisions of the national economic problem received his attention and in both of them he was able to record notable achievements. Within a month or two of his arrival in India he was already corresponding with Mr. Montagu on the possibility of abolishing the provincial contributions and also on the subject of India's industrial development. Mr. Montagu was in a hurry to see something done about both these things, but Lord Reading, true to his habit, had no intention of letting himself be rushed into any untimely declaration or hasty action.

Every letter that I receive or see [wrote Mr. Montagu on June 1st, 1921] makes me convinced that the Government of India will never run smoothly until it is self-supporting and the provincial contributions are dispensed with. . . .

Lord Reading had naturally not overlooked this very desirable objective, but, as he told Mr. Montagu, "It happens that I have been discussing the same question here . . . but unfortunately this demon of finance confronts us again and we could not make up the nine or ten crores that we should lose (by abolishing the Provincial contributions)," adding characteristically, "As the Councils come to a realization of their full powers, I am rather apprehensive that they will themselves agitate for this reform. However, we have enough on our hands and we must wait meanwhile." In short, he was not going to build any bridge before he came to the stream, and if he were obliged to take the matter up, it would be in the form of a concrete proposition to which he could give a definite and measured answer.

Similarly in regard to the industrial development of India Mr. Montagu was writing to the Viceroy only a week or two later.

"Another subject about which I want to address you is the all-important one of the development of Indian resources . . . there is no work to which we ought so urgently to turn our hands."

Mr. Montagu saw the problem mainly as one of attracting

private and primarily British capital into Indian industrial development. Lord Reading was equally aware of the importance of this aspect of Indian economics, but he knew also that the industrial development of India would in future be a task for her own government and, as far as possible, her own capital. There was not likely to be the same scope as in the past for the operations of Companies registered and domiciled in Great Britain. As he pointed out in a letter to Mr. Montagu in June, 1921, "the difficulty in the way of carrying out the policy you suggest . . . is the anti-foreign agitation so prevalent at the moment." But both men were agreed that the time was now ripe for a thorough examination of India's industrial problem, and that it should be made by a Commission appointed to enquire into the fiscal policy of the country.

This Commission was duly constituted in October, 1921, its terms of reference being "to examine, with reference to all the interests concerned, the tariff policy of the Government of India." Of its eleven members seven were Indians, including the President, Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola, a well-known Bombay politician and leader. From the beginning Lord Reading was resolute that the Commission should be appointed by the Government of India and should not be a Royal Commission, and on this general principle he was supported by Mr. Montagu. Lord Reading at first took the unexpected view that the President should be a distinguished Civil Servant from England but on this point Mr. Montagu refused to agree with him. "If India is to have the same fiscal liberty as Australia or the other Dominions," wrote the Secretary of State, "it is not possible to contemplate a President from England. . . . We have arrived at the conclusion that fiscal subjects must be decided in Indian interests, and therefore by Indians, I think." For the same reasons both men considered that there should be no representatives of British manufacturing interests on the Commission.

It was inevitable that this decision should produce an outcry in England and particularly in Lancashire, already the centre of an acute trade depression, which would be more vitally affected than any other part of Great Britain by changes in the Indian Tariff. A storm of protest arose and Mr. Montagu was fiercely pressed in London to take some steps to safeguard Lancashire's interests. But he was faithful as ever to his conception of the duties of his office and strenuously resisted all attempts to coerce him into bringing pressure to bear on the Indian Government, writing to that effect in a strongly worded letter to Lord Reading on August 19, 1921.

Trade in Lancashire is as bad as it has ever been, if not worse, and the opponents of the Government are making the most of it. You can imagine my popularity with my colleagues and the pressure that is being put upon me from day to day. But I believe in my case and I am not going to swerve a hair's breadth. I only tell you of these matters in order to show you the difficulties of the case and the great agitation which is growing in this country against your Government in this matter.

He did, however, urge Lord Reading to press the Commission to hear the representatives of Lancashire, and to this the Viceroy at once agreed.

When the Commission was appointed, Mr. Montagu, having in mind the extreme desirability of its report being produced before the next Indian Budget was published in February, 1922, when it was certain that customs duties would have to be increased on various manufactured imports and particularly on certain cotton manufactures, entertained the optimistic notion that it could terminate its enquiries after a very few sittings. But Lord Reading, being on the spot and realizing that there was hardly an interest in India which would not want to state its case before the Commission, was under no such delusion. As he had foreseen, the sittings increased and multiplied and in the end the duties had to be increased without the Secretary of State being able to summon the reinforcement of the Commission's report when attacked by British manufacturing interests.

Another point on which Mr. Montagu had set his heart, again partly because of the help which it would afford him in his own battle in the Cabinet and the House of Commons, was that a recommendation for some measure of Imperial Preference should find a place in the Commission's report. Writing to Lord Reading in August, 1921, he stressed this point strongly. "I can only say," he told the Viceroy, "that India herself will be, I think, much prejudiced if she does not take her place as a Dominion by a free grant, not necessarily by a diminution of tariff against British goods, but by higher customs duties against foreign goods. This would give her a claim to the consideration of the rest of the Empire and would give her a weapon to use against such a country as South Africa."

But here again Lord Reading was much nearer to Indian realities than Mr. Montagu and he warned him not to be too sanguine. "I will take the opportunity of discussing . . . the question of Imperial Preference," he wrote in answer, "and will put your point about the harm which will be done to India if India stands out. . . . I confess to being apprehensive. Our

experience of the feeling **raised in India** by the **preference** we gave to the Empire in the export duty on hides and skins is not encouraging."

Lord Peel in his turn was not less anxious than his predecessor about Imperial Preference, and in November, 1922, when the Indian Government was working on the final stages of the 1923 Budget, in which their decisions on the Fiscal Commission's report would be incorporated, he wrote to Lord Reading that "The Premier contemplates summoning in due course an Imperial Economic Conference with the object of stimulating inter-Imperial Trade, a policy which . . . would have important interests for India." But unfortunately a minute of dissent, signed by the President and four other Indian members, to the Fiscal Commission's report maintained that "India cannot accept the principle of Imperial Preference until she has attained responsible government and is able to regulate her fiscal policy by the vote of a wholly elected Legislature." Lord Reading could therefore tell Lord Peel no more than that "the question whether we should . . . move a Resolution (in the Legislature) in favour of Imperial Preference is under our consideration," adding in a later communication that he hoped to get such a Resolution passed in the Assembly.

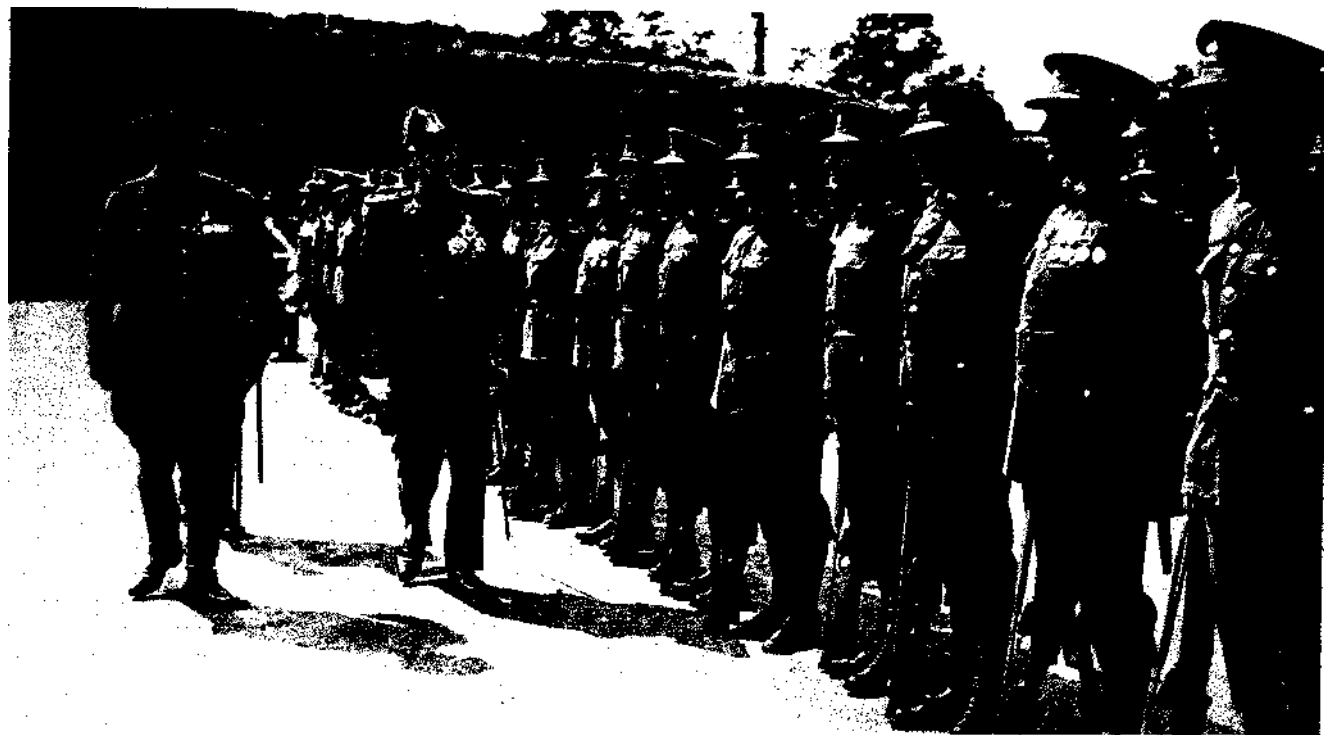
Lord Peel was quick to grasp the essentials of Indian opinion on this important subject, and at the beginning of January, 1925, he was writing to Lord Reading about a talk which he had had with the Prime Minister, Mr. Bonar Law, in regard to it.

"He considered there would be a very strong insistence in this country. . . on substantial preference for this country if a general tariff were established in India. I told him that I was afraid the proposal of a substantial preference would meet with very great resistance in the Assembly, and that it was OIK; of the subjects on which it might be very difficult for a Viceroy to use his reserve powers." It is clear, too, that Lord Peel did not agree with Mr. Bonar Law in his estimate of the strength of the demand in England for Imperial Preference, for only a week later he wrote to Lord Reading :

I do not want you to think that, in my view at any rate, there is likely to be any determined desire in this country or in our Party to insist upon an Indian fiscal policy in the interests of Great Britain. . . I did, however, read with very great pleasure that you hoped to get a Resolution on the subject of preference for this country passed in the Assembly. You are well aware what an excellent atmosphere would be produced here by such a Resolution. Even the Labour Members . . . have pressed this subject.



LORF READING WITH HIS SECOND WIFE
(formerly Miss Stella Chamaud, whom he married in 1951) leaving
52 Curzon Street



LORD READING IN THE GUARD OF HONOUR
in the Grounds of Dover Castle at his installation in June 1954 as Lord Warden and Admiral of the Cinque Ports

But Lord Reading's hopes were to be disappointed once more. The Indian Legislature refused to declare in favour of Imperial Preference, and even at the Imperial Conference of 1925 the representatives of India declined to accept the principle that effective preference should be given to goods produced within the Empire. Undoubtedly they were swayed by the strong feelings roused in India by the treatment of Indian nationals in some other parts of the Empire, but they would almost certainly have taken the same line at that time, had the motion been restricted to goods produced in Great Britain alone.

Politics were more important than economics, anyhow to the politicians.

But this argument over Imperial Preference was a secondary consideration beside the major constitutional issue raised by the question of India's fiscal autonomy, a policy which was recommended in the Fiscal Commission's Report and supported by the Government of India. Mr. Montagu had already stated clearly in June, 1921, that the British Government had deliberately determined to leave it to the Government of India and the Indian Legislature to settle tariff questions in the manner most in accord with their views and with the interests of the people of India. Lord Reading was fully in agreement with this standpoint and after the publication of the Report, when a new Government was in power in England, he was quick to press the importance of adhering to the policy already proclaimed.

⁴"The action taken upon this Report," he warned Lord Peel, "will now inevitably be regarded as a supreme test of Britain's good faith in the Reforms and her intention to keep the promises made. This promise of fiscal autonomy, to which the people of India attach the very highest importance, as the Fiscal Commission's Report indicates, will involve my Council arriving at their own conclusions upon the Fiscal Report and submitting them to you."

At first Lord Peel was inclined to shrink from committing himself to so vast a devolution of power to the Indian Government and Legislature as was implicit in Lord Reading's argument; he showed signs of attempting to defer a decision by opening a discussion upon the niceties of constitutional law.

But this line of argument was not a hopeful method of procrastination when addressed to Lord Reading, whose position, solidly supported as it was by his Council and by all organized Indian opinion, was too strong to be further opposed. The Fiscal Convention is now the corner-stone of India's tariff

policy of discriminating protection for the benefit of her own manufacturing industries. One of the recommendations of the Fiscal Commission for implementing this policy which was heartily disliked by Lord Reading, who did his best to avoid it, was that a Tariff Board should be appointed to enquire into and recommend tariff legislation for specific industries and interests. His dislike arose not from any theoretical Free Trade arguments, but from the very practical consideration that the work of the Board would certainly be made the occasion of a flood of demands for exclusive advantages by all sorts of interests in India.

But his own Council was strongly in favour of the establishment of the Board, as also were the great majority of Indian manufacturers, although the Council were as alive as the Viceroy himself to the need for safeguarding the general revenues of the country against the inroads which might be made on them by the decisions of a Tariff Board functioning in more or less complete independence of the Government.

In the end a compromise was effected by which those features of a Tariff Board which Lord Reading personally regarded as the most objectionable were removed, and this body's subsequent history has shown it to be a valuable part of India's governmental economic machinery.

In August, 1925, Lord Reading announced that a Royal Commission under the chairmanship of Mr. Hilton Young (now Lord Kennet) had been appointed "to examine and report on the Indian exchange and currency system and practice ; to consider whether any modifications are desirable in the interests of India, and to make recommendations."

These terms were wide enough to include an examination of the whole of India's currency and exchange machinery. But a storm broke in the Legislative Assembly over the membership of the Commission. Including the Chairman, there were six British and four Indian members and a resolution introduced in the Assembly sought to remedy this disparity. Lord Reading himself sympathized fully with the Indian point of view, and when he was on leave in the summer of 1925 he had strongly urged Lord Birkenhead, who had then succeeded Lord Peel as Secretary of State, to have an equal number of Indian and British members with a British Chairman in addition. After the debate in the Assembly he pressed for the addition of another Indian member to the Commission, but, although he urged this claim repeatedly, Lord Birkenhead refused to give way and the membership of the Commission remained as originally announced.

The report of the Commission and the Government's action on it lie outside Lord Reading's period of office, but in view of the immense political and economic importance of the Commission's work and of the fierce constitutional battle which arose out of its report in the time of his successor he was surely right in trying to equalize its British and Indian membership. His action gave another proof of the essential fairness of his approach to every matter of vital importance to the people of the country he governed.

CHAPTER V

VICEROY. (II)

WITH the settlement of the Turkish question in 1925 the last of the urgent problems of India's foreign relations ceased to be an ever-present anxiety to her Government and a perpetual menace to her internal peace. But there remained matters of what may be called domestic foreign policy, arising out of the relations between the Indian States and the paramount power. Before the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms these relations very rarely gave rise to any important expression of public opinion in British India, but since 1921 they have from time to time come prominently into the forefront of Indian politics and, as the Round Table Conference of 1930 onwards proved to the world, they are now a fundamental problem of Constitution-making.

It was only to be expected that the introduction of more representative and even quasi-responsible government in British India should cause the Indian Princes and the politicians of the British Provinces to take serious stock of the situation which had thus arisen. Until the emergence of a real political life in India it was very difficult for even the most knowledgeable observers to realize how continuous and important was the inter-relation of Indian States and British Provinces. The Government of India Act of 1919 acknowledged this principle by the creation of the Chamber of Princes, but it was left to the great ferment of opinion and the consequent stimulus to India's political life which took place in the post-war period to demonstrate with incontestable force that the welfare of India as a whole demanded a formal, organic system of co-operation between her two constituent parts.

The Indian States recognize the suzerainty of the British Crown but are in general independent of each other, save in

the case of certain small states which stand in a position of feudal subservience to their larger neighbours.

The territories of the States lie side by side with, and run in and out of, the territory of British India. There are islands of State land surrounded by British districts which are in their turn entirely cut off by other Indian States. Boundaries are artificial and members of the same races and tribes, even of the same families, are to be found under both British and State rule. The States are a heterogeneous mosaic on the map of India, ranging from a State like Hyderabad, which has the area and population of a considerable European country, at the head of the scale through all manner of intermediate gradations down to fragments of land a few acres in extent which boast of an annual income of a handful of rupees. They occupy a third of the surface of India, hold one-fifth of her people and number about five hundred in all. Although one-third of the area of India is occupied by the States, the ten largest together account for two-fifths of that area and more than half of its population.

It is inevitable that the life of British India and the life of the States should constantly impinge on each other and that the march of Progress in the one should have produced powerful effects in the others. Official relations between the paramount power and the Princes have grown steadily closer and more cordial. Higher education, visits to Europe and contact with the British Royal House have immensely strengthened the ties which unite the Princes to the Crown, and the emulation amongst the more enlightened rulers in the matter of good administration is a progressive influence of high value. Some of them have sat at meetings of the Imperial Conference and of the League of Nations, and their signatures are to be found affixed to European treaties.

One of the most anxious problems which faces the Princes is that of adjusting their policies and administrations to the rising tide of democracy and nationalism in British India.

The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms went as far as they could at that time in bringing the Princes into touch with the Government of India. Side by side with the Legislative Assembly and Council of State there was created the Chamber of Princes, under the Presidency of a Chancellor selected from among their own number by the Princes themselves.

The main function of this Chamber is to discuss matters affecting the States generally, or matters of common concern to the States and British India or the Empire at large. The mere fact of the Princes meeting under one roof is significant and the Chamber has enabled them as a body to observe the progress of

events in British India and to discuss and shape their own policy in conformity with it.

But in 1922 the Princes were perhaps more immediately interested in their relations with British India than in those existing between themselves. They were wise enough to know that the progress of political development in the British provinces would raise a crop of difficult questions for themselves, and in his first address to the Chamber of Princes in November, 1921, Lord Reading had drawn their attention to the gravity of their new responsibilities. He had also referred to the specific problem, which was exercising his and their minds very greatly at that time, of protecting the Princes against unfair and scurrilous attacks in the Press of British India. Prior to 1922 adequate safeguards had been afforded by three statutes, chief amongst them the Press Act of 1910, which put considerable restriction on the freedom of the Indian Press. But under strong political pressure the Government of India decided to abolish these Acts and they were accordingly repealed at the beginning of 1922. The Committee on whose report the Acts were repealed, which had included a substantial non-official majority, had not thought it necessary to recommend the retention of any special protection for the Princes, with the result that publication of the report was followed by a series of attacks on leading Princes even before the formal repeal of the condemned statutes had been effected. But both Lord Reading and Mr. Montagu had foreseen that some kind of protection would have to be devised and they were supported in this view by the overwhelming bulk of opinion among Provincial Governments and British Residents in the Indian states. Accordingly a draft statute was drawn up, called the Indian States (Protection against Disaffection) Bill, which, whilst safeguarding legitimate criticism by requiring the Governor-General's sanction for prosecution and by providing for the proper trial of accused persons, prescribed severe penalties for wanton and unjustified attacks on individuals. But when the Bill was presented to the Legislative Assembly in the Autumn Session of 1922, the Assembly flatly refused even to consider it and Lord Reading was consequently compelled to resort for the first time to his powers of certification under the Government of India Act of 1919. He has left a lively account of the whole business, written in September, 1922.

The leaders of the Assembly were completely taken aback by my at once recommending the Bill and certifying it. . . . A series of hurried conferences followed with the object of trying to get the Bill sent back

to the Legislative Assembly, but I felt very strongly that this course ought not to be taken unless I had a definite undertaking publicly expressed in the Legislative Assembly that the Bill would be passed substantially in the form in which the Government had introduced it. The leaders felt that they were in a difficulty in giving this undertaking . . . The Bill came on . . . in the Council of State, where it was passed without difficulty—the only dissentient voice being that of a member who happens to be very deaf and had not heard what was taking place.

In spite of the political capital which accrued to Lord Reading from this incident, especially amongst the Princes, it must not be supposed that he acted from motives of mere expediency. On the contrary, nothing was more abhorrent to a man of his training and temperament than any suggestion of using the law as an instrument of Government policy.

He showed great promptitude in certifying the measure and certainly out-manoeuvred the members of the Assembly who had expected further conferences with him and, as they confidently hoped, some additional concessions. But he was determined not to compromise and, as he told Lord Peel, he acted in the matter deliberately and of set purpose. He was compelled to move swiftly because he had information that some newspapers were about to launch a fierce attack on the Princes and he suspected that in most cases the object was nothing less than blackmail. For the Princes could not be expected to submit to the indignity of the kind of cross-examination that would take place if they had recourse to the criminal law and yet, in the absence of such protection as was afforded by the new Bill, they would have no possible redress by any other means.

There was naturally a great outcry in the Indian Press and the Legislature, but the Home Government strongly supported the Viceroy's action, and he himself always believed that it had served a most useful purpose by demonstrating that the Viceroy's special powers were no mere academic device but were there to be exercised in case of need, while both he and Lord Peel agreed that it was all to the good that this particular controversy should have been the occasion for the first exercise of those powers. Writing to Lord Reading on October 3, 1922, Lord Peel said in reference to the certifying of the Bill, "I think it satisfactory . . . that the exercise of your powers is in a case where the question is one between Indians and Indians."

Loud though the clamour had been for the moment, it soon died down, since the whole agitation against the Bill was never a genuine outburst of popular indignation but a transparent

political manoeuvre unsupported by any real weight of public opinion. The postponement of the Parliamentary debate at Westminster on the certification of the Bill, which should have taken place before Christmas, was unfortunate, since, as Lord Reading pointed out to the Home Government, the delay gave the impression that there was no real urgency in the matter and that he had acted with undue precipitancy, and in justification of his fears the Indian Press did in fact take precisely this line of criticism until the march of events and more stirring incidents elsewhere relegated the whole controversy to oblivion.

Relations with the Princes have been described as the Government of India's 'domestic foreign policy.' They could more accurately be described as one half of the Government's domestic foreign policy, the other half being represented by its policy in regard to the Frontier. In practice, "frontier" in this connection meant only the North West Frontier, since the borders of Burma, although they march with China for a thousand miles, presented no important problems and relations with Tibet had also been quiescent for many years. But the North West Frontier has always been a focus of unrest.

Between the western border of the regularly administered North West Frontier Province of India and the eastern border of Afghanistan the so-called "Durand Line," named after Sir Mortimer Durand who demarcated it in the middle 'nineties of the last century, lies a tract of mountainous territory which is not directly administered by the Government of India. The tribes inhabiting this area are, however, British-protected persons ; relations with them are in the hands of a number of political agents, and in the case of Waziristan of an official styled the Resident. No one knows precisely how many people live in these hills. They are divided into a number of tribes, some of whom have long traditions of enmity with each other, but in the unlikely event of a combination between them they could possibly raise nearly half a million fighting men, of whom between a quarter and a third would be armed with reasonably modern rifles. Since the Government of India inherited the wardenship of the Frontier from the Sikhs on the final conquest of the Punjab in 1848, military operations of a police character of greater or lesser importance against one or other of the tribes, or on occasion against a coalition of them, have been almost continuous.

The best guarantee of peace and safety on the Frontier lies in good relations with Afghanistan, and this was one of the main objects achieved by Lord Reading's settlement with that country. Since the beginning of 1922 there has been little disturbance of

the even tenor of Indo-Afghan relations. But the tribal territory itself, the country between the administrative border and the Durand Line which constitutes for India the "Frontier Problem," was still in a restless condition, particularly as regards Waziristan, and in 1922 Lord Reading was compelled to begin serious consideration of the whole question of post-war Frontier policy. It was in practice a complex of problems, political and military.

The immediate question facing the Government of India was the future of Waziristan. The War of 1914-18, followed as it was almost immediately by the Afghan Campaign of 1919, had completely unsettled the Mahsuds, always the storm-centre of the Frontier, and after the conclusion of hostilities with Afghanistan it had been found necessary to undertake extensive operations against them in Waziristan. Since the winter of 1919 troops had been in occupation of strategic points in central Waziristan from which the Mahsuds could be controlled, so far as they ever can be controlled without the occupation of every valley and village in their hills.

This occupation, which had cost the enormous sum for India of six crores of rupees (£4,500,000) during the year 1921, had severely taxed the resources of the Government, who were naturally anxious both to reduce this heavy burden and to settle their permanent policy for the future. But when Lord Reading formally raised the question, it quickly became evident that his views differed considerably from those of the War Office. In England there was a strong desire to retain full and effective military control of the country, but the Government of India decided that they could not afford such a solution of the problem and at the beginning of 1922 put forward their own alternative scheme for Waziristan. This was based on the recommendations of a committee of experts presided over by the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Rawlinson, who as a soldier himself had always preferred the full scheme of military occupation but became convinced by his examination of the political and financial implications of that proposal that it was at least for the moment impracticable. He therefore agreed with Lord Reading and the rest of the Government of India that a less thorough-going policy would not involve excessive risks.

The Government of India's proposal consisted in the concentration of a striking force of one mixed brigade of regulars at Razmak with two battalions of regulars on the lines of communication between Idak and Razmak. The scheme further involved the construction of a road fit for mechanical transport, by the aid of which the Government of India hoped to be able in the course

of time to reduce by not less than one half even the small regular garrison in Waziristan which they now proposed, replacing them by Pathan scouts enlisted from six border tribes.

This plan, was not favourably received by His Majesty's Government, who directed the Government of India to press on with the full programme of control of Waziristan, including the construction of the circular mechanical-transport roads. This was a highly ambitious programme which would have meant an addition of at least one and a half millions sterling to an already uncovered deficit of over five millions in India's Budget, a very serious matter in view of the size of her total revenues. Lord Reading therefore strenuously opposed the Home Government's order, not only pointing out the financial considerations involved, but also stating emphatically that he and his Council were in the best position to advise the Crown in matters of Indian frontier policy where no Imperial interests were directly involved, and that since the Government of India's scheme was first submitted to the Cabinet early in the year the frontier situation had steadily and substantially improved owing to the stabilizing of relations with Afghanistan.

He felt strongly that the Home Government's attitude was putting the Government of India in an impossible constitutional position. It laid on the Viceroy and his Council responsibility for a policy which not only was not of their choosing but was flatly opposed to their views. But they could not tell their own Legislature that they were acting under direct orders from England, for any indication that the Home Government were over-riding the opinion of the men on the spot would have precipitated a violent political storm. Lord Reading consequently pressed his point of view with the utmost vigour, informing Lord Peel in plain terms that he and his advisers knew more about Indian Frontier conditions than any authority in Whitehall could possibly know and claiming that their opinion, based as it was on wider and more up-to-date knowledge, should be allowed to prevail.

After further discussion with his Council they agreed to take steps to carry out forthwith that part of the scheme which was common both to the Government of India and to His Majesty's Government, the occupation of Razmak and the construction of one road. They also decided to put the other road into such a state that it could be used for occasional light mechanical transport, thus giving lateral communication. This left three points of difference between the two Governments, the question whether Razmak should be occupied mainly by tribal irregulars or by

regular troops, the construction of a heavy mechanical transport road and the completion of a circular mechanical transport road. In regard to these points Lord Reading asked for a suspension of judgment for three months, in particular urging the Home Government to reconsider their proposal for a regular military occupation of Razmak as opposed to occupation by irregulars supported by regulars, since its decision was fraught with such momentous consequences for the future of the Frontier.

In reply to these representations Lord Peel readily agreed to suspend decision for three months, at the end of which time it was found that the differences between him and Lord Reading had been considerably reduced. The Viceroy now agreed that the regular troops sent to Razmak to instal the irregulars should remain there for a certain period and that the circular road should be completed.

But this was not the end of the Waziristan problem, since later developments seemed to Lord Reading to demand for it a more authoritative and comprehensive examination than it had yet received. Throughout the whole of his discussions on the subject with the Home Government it is clear that he had in mind the wider problem of a permanent and fundamental settlement of frontier policy as a whole. This issue was brought forward sharply by Sir John Maffey, then Chief Commissioner of the North West Frontier Province, who, having informed Lord Reading in October that his view on the subject of border policy conflicted sharply with the scheme about to be inaugurated in Waziristan, went to Simla to discuss the matter and there submitted a memorandum for the consideration of the Viceroy and his Council.

Sir John criticized the scheme for Waziristan as ineffective and provocative, and roundly proposed that all the main principles of the old Close Border System should again be adopted, believing that the introduction of aircraft, mechanical transport and telephones made such a system far more effective and practical in the twentieth century than it had been in the nineteenth.

As the officer primarily concerned with the administration of Frontier policy Sir John was of course an important factor in the whole problem and it was impossible to disregard his views. At any rate, Lord Reading was sufficiently impressed by them to feel that the settlement of the Waziristan question should be reopened, and as a preliminary step he sent two members of his Council, Sir William Vincent and Sir Mahomed Shafi, on a tour of the Frontier to examine conditions on the spot and collect opinions from officials and others who were qualified to give them.

Their report confirmed Lord Reading in his belief that the question of Frontier policy as a whole called for a fresh and more thorough-going examination, and still further conviction was lent by Air-Marshal Sir John Salmond's proposals for the future of the Air Force in India, which recommended an increase in its strength with a consequent reduction in the field-force.

This recommendation was accepted by the Government of India, but, as Lord Reading pointed out to Lord Peel, it conflicted with the scheme for Waziristan as finally settled, which was based on the contention that no reduction in the field-force was possible. For all these reasons Lord Reading's Government addressed the Secretary of State at the end of November on the whole question of future Frontier policy. "We are . . . unanimously of the strong opinion," they wrote, "that all ramifications, military and political, of the whole Frontier problem, and its bearing both on our plan of campaign in the event of another Afghan War and on our new relations with Afghanistan, should without delay be subjected to a comprehensive survey by a commission whose opinion would be sufficiently weighty for its conclusions to carry conviction with His Majesty's Government and ourselves and also with public opinion both in England and India."

Lord Reading made this proposal because he was very conscious of the increasing attention being given by Indian opinion to Frontier policy and because he foresaw endless trouble from attempts at piecemeal solutions which would almost invariably be a more or less unsatisfactory compromise between clashing views in Delhi and Whitehall.

But Lord Peel was not convinced by Lord Reading's arguments and saw no great advantage in the proposed Commission, and he maintained this attitude in spite of renewed pressure from India and of Lord Reading's explanation that he was contemplating a really impressive Commission which should have as its British representatives such outstanding personalities as Sir Austin Chamberlain and Field-Marshal Sir William Robertson. The project therefore dropped and the scheme for Waziristan was carried out, though not without some fighting, since it was found necessary to undertake operations against Makin, the headquarters of the leader of the recalcitrant section of the powerful Mahsuds. By the end of 1923, however, Razmak had been occupied, the road from Idak had been completed and work on the circular road had started ; the raising of Scouts and Khassadars had made considerable progress and the protection of stretches of the new roads had already been entrusted to them. In fact,

apart from a few technical troops, there were no regulars in the Mahsud country at the end of 1923.

But Turkey, Afghanistan and the North West Frontier did not exhaust the whole of the Government of India's external problems. The most persistent of them arose out of the relations between India and those other parts of the British Empire, both Dominions and Colonies, where Indians were settled in large numbers. Since the War of 1914-18 conditions for Indian settlers in the British Empire had undoubtedly improved, but in places there was still a measure of discrimination against them and of penalization of their legitimate activities, and the questions arising out of these inequalities gave Lord Reading some of his most difficult and distasteful work. In this as in all other matters his instinctive approach was that of a Liberal and a strong believer in freedom of action and equality of opportunity, viewing any unfair discrimination or arbitrary restriction with profound dislike. But as a realist he had to take into account the actual conditions and the difficulties imposed by prejudice and ignorance, little though he could sympathise with them.

Nothing could show his attitude more clearly than his comments on the proceedings of the 1921 Imperial Conference, when all the Dominions, with the one exception of South Africa, passed a resolution that "in the interests of the solidarity of the British Commonwealth it was desirable that the rights of Indians lawfully domiciled in the Dominions should be recognized." The resolution was in too vague terms to be of great practical value, but it was at least a formal recognition of the fairness of Indian demands and would at any rate help to prevent further discrimination. Lord Reading was disappointed at the attitude of South Africa, but, as he wrote to Mr. Montagu, "I cannot think that we have any just cause of complaint against Smuts . . . for not going further in the direction of meeting Indian opinion. He felt closely circumscribed, and, deeply as I regret his action, I can understand it."

There was, however, one development at the Conference of 1921 which gave Lord Reading unalloyed satisfaction, the suggestion that in future India should negotiate direct with South Africa where India's nationals were concerned. This method of approach conceded the principle of equality of status for India, and Lord Reading was satisfied that in time direct negotiations between the Indian and the Union Government would effect some improvement even in a singularly unpromising situation.

Nevertheless, at the beginning of Lord Reading's Viceroyalty and throughout the greater part of its course the position of

Indian nationals in overseas parts of the Empire, except the West Indies, was such as to give rise to repeated agitation among their fellow-citizens at home and to continuous anxiety on the part of the Government of India. Indeed, at times public feeling in India ran so high as to thrust into the background even the most controversial domestic politics. South and East Africa were the chief causes of complaint, the two alternating with each other for first place in public attention. In the Dominions other than South Africa and certain parts of Canada Indians had no very serious grounds of complaint. In New Zealand they enjoyed all the privileges extended to any other British subjects, while in Australia such franchise disabilities as existed in 1921 were not in themselves very irksome or serious and have been removed since that date. In Canada the problem, though irritating, was of small dimensions and confined to British Columbia.

But in South Africa the position was grave and the outlook forbidding. The Union Government's Asiatic Enquiry Commission of 1920, appointed to enquire into the trading and land-owning activities of Asiatics, had recommended the retention of a law forbidding them to own land and had also proposed to withdraw from Indians the right to acquire land in the upland region of Natal. The Government of India, however, successfully protested against this latter proposal and managed also to secure modifications in other anti-Asiatic legislation in that province. But the whole trend of opinion in the Union was strongly anti-Asiatic and there was even reason to fear that Indians long settled in South Africa might be compulsorily repatriated.

Feeling in India was naturally stirred to its depths by these developments and in March, 1922, a strong deputation, which included members of both Houses of the Indian Legislature, of the Indian Citizenship Association of Bombay and of representative organizations of Indians resident in Natal and the Transvaal, waited upon Lord Reading to acquaint him with their views. Lord Reading was able to assure them of his own and his Government's deep concern and promised to lose no opportunity of pressing the claims of Indian nationals to fair treatment within the Empire.

Another aspect of the matter which caused deep resentment in India was the actual deterioration in the position of Indians as a result of the mandates allotted by the treaty of Versailles to South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. Since these were all "C" class mandates, the areas covered by them could be administered as integral parts of the territory of the respective mandatory powers, and the Dominions were consequently in a position to

apply their own immigration laws to their mandated territories. The result was that Indians could no longer go there for permanent settlement, although in New Guinea and Samoa the Germans had never discriminated against British Indian settlers nor was there any known case of their having done so in South West Africa.

During 1922 trouble blew up sharply in East Africa, particularly in Kenya and Tanganyika. In Kenya Indians were excluded from the ownership of agricultural land in the Highlands, and unfortunately racial feeling between Indian and British settlers had risen to such a pitch as to lead the Indians to fear that they might have to submit to actual territorial segregation as well as to the denial of the franchise and the restriction of future immigration. There were also grounds for fearing similar treatment in Tanganyika, and even in Uganda the question of segregating Indian settlers had come into the forefront of discussion. These reactionary developments would in any case have aroused the fiercest resentment in India, but feeling was given a keener edge because of the large and honourable part played by Indian soldiers, settlers and capital in acquiring and developing these areas for the Empire. Moreover, at the Imperial Conference of 1921 Mr. Winston Churchill, who was then Secretary of State for the Colonies, had expressly accepted the principle that in the interests of Imperial solidarity it was undesirable that any disabilities should be imposed on Indian settlers.

Lastly, the question of emigration of temporary Indian labour to Ceylon and Malaya, Mauritius and Fiji, was due to come up for extensive overhaul. Most of the grosser forms of exploitation had already been abolished, but the indenture system still left room for possible abuses and it was only to be expected that Indian opinion should insist on the satisfactory settlement of a question which was entirely within the competence of the Indian Legislature to decide. A Standing Emigration Committee was already in existence and under its energetic supervision it was found possible to ensure humane and satisfactory conditions for Indian emigrant labour to places within the Empire.

But as regards South Africa and Kenya the Government of India got "into very deep waters," to quote Lord Reading's own words, from 1922 onwards. Indeed, so forceful were his Government's representations to the Union that the latter Government took offence and Lord Reading had more than once to tone down the dispatches approved by his Executive Council. He himself understood the Union Government's position much better than any of his Council and he never lost sight of the attainable in searching after the ideal, but in regard to Kenya his tone to the

Home Government was much sharper and more decided. As he wrote to Lord Peel in June, "the Resolution passed at the Imperial Conference did not bind South Africa but it did bind the Imperial Government. Here it is being said that Kenya is a Crown Colony and, if the Imperial Government is in earnest, it has the power to enforce its view. I can well understand the embarrassment of the Imperial Government when a powerful English Colony of white men is opposed to the Indian view and asserts its determination not to give in, yet surely, if the British Government take a firm stand, an arrangement could be effected."

In this extract again Lord Reading's views and character are clearly exposed. As a Liberal and a Jew he hated any form of discrimination, and as a lawyer he saw that both constitutionally and in virtue of their previous declarations the Home Government could, and ought to, impose a settlement of the East African problems satisfactory to legitimate Indian aspirations. It was not that he had no sympathy with the white settlers in East Africa, but he could not see what he regarded as the exaggerated claims of a handful of Europeans stand in the way of justice or of the interests of the Empire as a whole. Unfortunately, the problem of Indians in East and South Africa is not yet solved, but by his resolute and practical policy on their behalf Lord Reading did at any rate stake out their claim and formulate the principles on which an acceptable solution might be based. Throughout the whole of his time in India he never hesitated to discuss this question of Indians overseas with representative deputations of Indians or with the British and other governments concerned and never once did he yield on principle, however much he might be forced to give way on specific demands owing to the difficulties imposed by the political conditions or the racial feeling of the moment.

One valuable step which he was able to take was to send the Rt. Hon. Srinivastra Sastri to Canada, Australia and New Zealand in 1922, to enquire into the condition of Indians in those Dominions and see what could be done to improve their conditions. A better missionary could not have been found, and Mr. Sastri's personality, eloquence and earnestness made a deep impression wherever he went. In all three Dominions he met not only with a friendly reception but with a readiness on the part of State, Provincial and Dominion Governments to do what they could to meet the wishes of the Indian Government and people which has since resulted in the putting into operation in those countries of such adjustments as public opinion has allowed in franchise and social legislation.

The year 1922 represented the peak of Lord Reading's

troubles in both internal and external affairs. Indeed, from the end of that year until he left India he had no major questions to solve in external relations, although frontier and military matters continued to provide difficult and often delicate situations. Internally, India began to quieten down after Mr. Gandhi's arrest, although the intricate and dangerous Sikh question still called urgently for settlement and Hindu-Moslem antagonism was to acquire increasing tensivity as the months went by. In Bengal and the Central Provinces political manoeuvres were to cause a temporary breakdown of the diarchic system, with resulting embarrassment to the Viceroy as well as to the Governors of those two Provinces, and other causes for anxiety existed in the financial situation and the recrudescence of anarchy in Bengal.

The first serious split in the post-war *entente* between the Hindu and Moslem communities came with the Government of India's staunch support of reasonable Moslem demands in connection with the Turkish Peace Treaty. This course of action with its dramatic culmination in Mr. Montagu's resignation was tangible proof to Indian Mahommedans that Lord Reading and his Government were sympathetic to their cause in act as well as in word. From the moment when the Indian Government's dispatch of February 28, 1922, was published, he began to get messages from individuals and organizations of the Moslem community thanking him for his attitude, and it became obvious that the definite and open secession of Mahommedans from the non-co-operation movement was only a matter of time. For they soon realized that a temporary and, as they now discovered, largely fictitious grievance was not solid enough ground to support a permanent political alliance. Thus from the summer of 1922 the political paths of Hindus and Mahommedans began once more to diverge. It is true that the end of 1923, when the second elections to the Legislature set up by the 1919 Act were held, was to usher in a period of political outbursts in two or three areas, notably in Bengal and the Central Provinces, but these were mainly local and belated echoes of the general explosive atmosphere in India which was beginning to subside.

The end of 1922 saw the non-co-operation movement in a parlous plight and riddled with acute internal controversies. The despair and confusion attendant on the fiasco of the Bardoli Resolutions turned the best minds of the movement once more to thought of constructive action, and such men as Mr. C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru began to raise in a more resolute fashion than ever before the question of ending the boycott of the reformed legislatures. They were naturally opposed by Mr. Gandhi and

his more faithful followers, but the tide of opinion was with them and by the end of 1923 they had so far carried their point that the second elections to the new legislature saw Congress candidates contesting constituencies all over the country. The general trend of economic conditions was also favourable to an improvement in the political situation and, as Lord Reading himself said in December, India could "reasonably look forward in the immediate future at all events to a period of development and peaceful progress."

The Moderates saw in the collapse of the non-co-operation movement the best confirmation of the soundness of their own policy and they were not slow to deduce the conclusion that a further instalment of reforms would lead to a still greater amelioration of the general political situation. Their demands for a revision of the 1919 Act before the statutory period of ten years had elapsed consequently took on added urgency and enthusiasm. But this development was viewed by Lord Reading with a certain anxiety which he communicated to Lord Peel in a letter written on January 4, 1923. He was discussing in the first place the Public Services Commission, of whose appointment Lord Peel had already given various hints in his speeches and answers to questions in Parliament, and he warned the Secretary of State that the setting up of this Commission would be regarded by Indian politicians as an opportunity for re-opening the whole question of the reforms.

Agitation will proceed here for the purpose of removing the exclusive control of the Services from the Secretary of State [he wrote], and you will hear much of the "Steel Frame" and of the necessity of limiting it so as to include more rapidly a larger number of Indians. The Indian will not unnaturally ask, if it is proposed to induce British youths to enter the I.C.S. and also to make arrangements for further Indianising the Services, what is the period to which India is to look for her responsible self-government, and, it will be argued, on this must depend the determination regarding the Services. Will it be ten, twenty, thirty, or even forty years before India obtains fully responsible self-government? And it will be urged that arrangements regarding the future of the Services must depend upon the period set, inasmuch as responsible self-government involves complete control of the Services—leaving it to them to determine whether they care to recruit further British, or even to continue British, in the Services . . . And so the ball will be set rolling and we shall again be in the midst, I fear, of agitation for the reform of the Constitution which we have only just managed to quiet for a time.

But the Commission was appointed and Lord Reading's prediction was fulfilled with such accuracy and completeness **that**

within a year he found himself compelled to set up a committee to enquire into the possibility of administrative changes in the direction demanded by the Indian Legislature. True to his own ideas of what was practicable, he confined the terms of reference of this Committee within the four corners of the 1919 Act, but the necessity for its appointment was an ample justification of his attitude towards the Public Services Commission. Yet he was not a Conservative, and most decidedly he was not a reactionary, in Indian politics. He was as truly progressive as any British statesman of the first rank in his own day, but he had a far firmer grasp of the realities of the situation than many of them, and he was by temperament and training resolutely opposed to the taking of any step, however expedient at the time, that might raise unjustified and unjustifiable hopes or give rise to suspicions of bad faith. That way lay the renewal of agitation and as a consequence the inevitable postponement of the political progress of India which he desired as ardently as any of his Indian or other critics. The extract from his letter to Lord Peel admirably illustrates his attitude towards Indian political development, and it should be remembered when his action in connection with Lord Irwin's famous pronouncement of November 1, 1929, with reference to Dominion Status comes to be considered. Throughout the whole of the rest of his life Lord Reading steadfastly refused to deal in vague and ambiguous statements regarding Indian politics. His mind fastened on the next practical step which could be taken and he preferred to concentrate upon its attainment, leaving general pronouncements about India's ultimate political goal to others, when he could not prevent such prophecies from being made.

As Lord Birkenhead once wrote : " Among the people of India a phrase instantaneously becomes a fact," a truth which is not less fundamental for being put in epigrammatic form.

Lord Reading was always alive to this danger and consistently refused to raise distant hopes which he knew would at once crystallize into immediate expectations.

The excitement created by the appointment of the Public Services Commission raged throughout the year, even the most moderate sections of Indian opinion seeing in the forthcoming work of Lord Lee of Fareham and his colleagues a sinister design to enrich Europeans at the expense of the Indian masses and to carry out all the suspected implications of Mr. Lloyd George's "Steel Frame" speech. Indeed, the Commission and its findings gave rise to more personal correspondence between Viceroy and Secretary of State than any other single subject during the same period. It took all Lord Reading's firmness and tact to keep the

matter from growing into another actively dangerous agitation, and the many discussions on the Services which took place years later during the Round Table Conferences gave proof of the depths to which Indian political opinion had been stirred.

As was usual where this particular subject was concerned, Lord Reading found himself torn between his own and the Home Government's desire to remedy the proved grievances of the Services on the one hand and on the other the severe limitations necessarily imposed by financial stringency and by the strenuous opposition of practically all sections of Indian opinion. The final decisions reached by the Commission and the two Governments probably represented as fair a balance as could have been struck between the opposing claims and interests. The merely financial side of the matter, important as it was, was not the only, or indeed the most vital, factor. It was the political aspect of the future of the Services which took first place in the minds of the British and Indian Governments and of the politicians and peoples of India.

The Lee Commission's work represented so important a development both in the broad political progress of India and also in its administrative system as to awaken Indian politicians to the possibility of exploiting the situation for their own ends and to arouse an anxious vigilance on the part of the Viceroy. But although the settlement reached by the Commission failed fully to satisfy Indian opinion, it was sufficiently equitable and comprehensive to prevent even the most extreme section from representing it with any plausibility as either partisan or retrograde, and it certainly had the effect of encouraging the members of the two key services, the I.C.S. and the Police, and stimulating recruitment for them. Nevertheless, the outcry in the Indian Press and Legislature against the proposed financial concessions to the Services persisted and the demand for further constitutional reforms gathered impetus, exactly as Lord Reading had foreseen.

But the centre of the political stage was now occupied by the Sikh agitation in the Punjab, which had swollen from a strictly provincial disturbance to a maiih national threat. It had been coming to a head for a long time, and Lord Reading had recognized its trouble-making potentialities and endeavoured to forestall them by his visit to Amritsar immediately after his arrival in India.

The Akali agitation provided the outstanding illustration of the impossibility of maintaining that clean-cut division between reserved and transferred subjects which the theory of diarchy demanded. According to the Constitution, the Sikh agitation over the control of their sacred places should have been settled by

the proper Minister in the Punjab, but in practice it not only taxed all the strength and resources of the Punjab Government as a whole but involved the serious attention and firm action of the Central Government as well.

The situation which confronted Lord Reading in April of 1921 had already become menacing, and the next twelve months saw no signs of any abatement in the vigorous spread of the movement.

Acts of violence were of almost daily occurrence and by the middle of 1922 the whole position, especially in the Central Punjab, gave cause for genuine alarm. In some districts the administration was strained to breaking point and troops and additional police had to be drafted in.

A new technique of agitation was introduced in August, 1922, at a great demonstration at the Gurukabagh shrine near Amritsar, the headquarters of the Sikh faith. It began by some Akalis cutting down a tree on the land belonging to the shrine. The *mahunt* in charge promptly complained to the police and the Akalis were arrested and sent for trial. Thereupon more trees were cut down, fresh complaints were made to the authorities, and a detachment of police was sent to protect the *mahunt*. At this point the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, the general staff of the agitation, took up the challenge and the Akalis began to concentrate on Gurukabagh.

The continued influx of these bands, who had to be treated as unlawful assemblies since their object was avowedly to take forcible possession of private property, led to*the placing of police pickets along all the roads leading to the shrine. But when the police tried to prevent their approach, the Akalis refused to obey and had to be dispersed by force. As each member of a *Jatha* had taken an oath of non-violence, no resistance was made, but considerable excitement was aroused amongst the populace by the repeated spectacle of people deliberately compelling the authorities to take vigorous action against them and yet never lifting a hand to protect themselves against the staves of the police. It was only to be expected that the whole country should soon be flooded with exaggerated stories of police excesses and terrible accounts of injuries inflicted on the demonstrators, although in fact not a single fatality occurred nor was there any considerable number of cases of serious injury.

But Gurukabagh was not the only centre of trouble. A similar sustained and determined attempt was started to capture another famous shrine at Bhai Pheru in the Lahore district of the Punjab, which in time became the focus of the whole struggle

for the attempt continued for more than three years and from first to last led to the arrest of some seven thousand persons.

It is obvious that these developments, powerfully affecting as they did the deepest feelings of a community from which the Indian Army draws some of its most valuable units, held very serious possibilities for the future. The Government of India were gravely concerned and with the approval of Lord Reading, who personally examined every detail, the Punjab Government drafted a Bill designed to put the control of the Sikh sacred places under management satisfactory to the whole Sikh community. This Bill was introduced in the Punjab Legislature towards the end of 1922, in the hope that it would steady public opinion and show that the Government was at any rate trying to find a fair way out of a very difficult situation. But feeling had by then risen to such a height that the Sikh members resolutely refused to give it their support.

Lord Reading, while making every effort to strengthen the hand of the Punjab authorities in their difficult task, was never very sanguine as to the fate of their Bill and placed greater reliance on the encouragement of active counter-propaganda against the Akalis in the Army and Police. Had he arrived in India a few months earlier, it may well be that the Nankana Sahib affair with all its subsequent ramifications would never have taken place, for he was quick to perceive what he described as "the deplorable results that ensue if the Government stands aside, as the Punjab Government did in this particular case, simply referring the complainant to the Civil Court." He was anxious that the undoubted injustices suffered by the Sikhs in having so many of their temples in the hands of members of another faith should be remedied as speedily as possible by constitutional means. But, true to his invariable rule, he would not yield an inch to any display of force ; he was prepared to use all the strength of his Government to suppress the disorder and he saw to it that the local authorities were assured of military help, whenever it should become necessary.

Unfortunately the extremist leaders of the Sikh agitation were intoxicated by the success which had hitherto attended their efforts, and throughout the whole of 1923 they remained so completely intransigent that the situation in the Punjab became exceedingly grave. The police, in spite of additions to their numbers, were approaching breaking point owing to the incessant demands upon their physical endurance as well as upon their patience and restraint. The peak of the trouble was reached in 1924 and at the beginning of the year Lord Reading, in informing

Lord Olivier, who with the advent of a Labour Government **had** by then become Secretary of State, that he would keep London closely in touch with all developments, was plainly regarding the whole matter as no longer a provincial but an all-India problem.

The most threatening feature of all was the rise of the so-called *Babber* or *Lion* Akali movement. This was a frankly terrorist and murder organization which had for its object the assassination and terrorization of Government agents and sympathizers wherever the gunmen could reach them. Extraordinary energy and decision were required to counter these activities, and it was fortunate that at such a juncture a man of Sir Malcolm (now Lord) Hailey's quality was at the head of the Punjab Government. There was complete harmony of opinion between him and the Viceroy, who throughout his term of office regarded Sir Malcolm as the ablest of all his colleagues in the government of the country. But it was only after immense effort and at the cost of valuable lives that the Babber Akali movement was at length curbed and finally broken.

Meanwhile, another very disturbing development had taken place with the extension of the active agitation to the State of Nabha, a small Punjab state ruled by a Sikh dynasty. The events leading up to the deposition of the highly disreputable Maharaja of Nabha were scarcely such as to entitle him to sympathy but the Akali leaders somewhat ingenuously professed to regard him as a religious martyr and at once set up a clamour for his restoration.

One of the meetings arranged in furtherance of this aim was held in the Sikh temple at a place called Jaiton in Nabha State, and despite their avowedly religious purpose the proceedings consisted of a series of flamingly seditious speeches against the new administration of the State and the action of the Government of India in deposing the Maharaja. In the end Nabha State officials were compelled to break up the meeting and arrest the chief speakers, but their action proved to be the signal for one of the most dangerous phases of the whole agitation, since some of the persons apprehended were engaged at the time of their arrest in reading the Sikh Scriptures and the Shiromani Committee had an easy task in persuading many devout Sikhs in every part of the Punjab and the adjacent states that an appalling sacrilege had been committed.

Intensive *jathabandi* was thereupon applied to Nabha State, and the Committee sent *jathas* daily to Jaiton for the ostensible purpose of completing the interrupted reading of the Scriptures. The State authorities had no objection to the holding of religious

services, but they demanded undertakings that the *jathas* would not deliver seditious speeches in the temples and, as this undertaking was consistently refused, they simply arrested the members of every *j at ha* that appeared. This action had so good an effect in controlling the illegal activities of the demonstrators inside Nabha State that the Shiromani Committee were driven to take active steps to counter it, and for this purpose they arranged that a special *jatha* 500 strong should proceed to Jaiton. Clearly, the size and character of this demonstration were meant as a definite challenge not only to the Nabha authorities but to the Government of India, and it gained added importance from the fact that its arrival was carefully timed for February 21, the anniversary of the Nankana Sahib massacre.

When the pilgrims came within a few miles of Jaiton, a mob of several thousands of persons armed with axes, swords, spears and clubs joined them, together with a number of habitual criminals carrying fire-arms, and the whole of this disorderly throng moved on Jaiton, screening the original 500 demonstrators. The police could not allow the procession to advance, but when they called upon the rioters to halt, the only response was a frenzied attack which forced the police and a small military detachment to fire. A few persons were killed and wounded but the actual *jatha* itself was practically untouched. Needless to say, this affair was at once grossly and deliberately misrepresented by the leaders of the agitation, who had no difficulty in getting the fullest publicity for their story in the nationalist newspapers, and the Legislative Assembly, amid scenes of frenzied emotion and excitement, allowed itself to be so far carried away as to accept a resolution hostile to the Government. In the midst of such stirring events as these the voice of reason was inaudible, and both the Punjab and the Indian Governments found it impossible to enlist support for a fair and permanent settlement of the original issue, which by now had been submerged under all sorts of extraneous and irrelevant considerations. One of the most promising of the attempts to find a peaceful solution foundered on the rocks of popular excitement and political manoeuvring. This was the proposal to form a Committee under the presidency of Sir William Birdwood, to get into touch with every section of Sikh opinion and try to work out a settlement satisfactory to all concerned. Sir William's great personal popularity with the Sikhs in the Indian Army and his immense influence with responsible leaders of the community outside it gave promise that at least some measure of success would attend the work of his Committee, if its appointment were accepted in principle. But the inflamma-

tory propaganda and actions of the extremists had had their effect upon public opinion and the scheme was rejected out of hand.

As it happened, however, the Jaiton affair was the last really serious manifestation of the Sikh trouble. Its skilful handling by Sir Malcolm Hailey and the resolute attitude of Lord Reading in his support gradually wore down the extremists and correspondingly encouraged the responsible and respectable elements of the Sikh community and the country at large. But it was not until 1925 that the discontent was finally set at rest by the passage of the Sikh Gurdwaras Act by the Legislative Council of the Punjab. This Act, which the Indian Legislative Assembly later accepted without a division, brought all Sikh religious places under the control of the Sikh Community itself, ended the irresponsibility of their incumbents and ensured that their property and income should be used for the religious purposes for which they had been designed.

During 1923 the conditions created by Lord Reading's handling of Mr. Gandhi and his non-co-operation movement were being superseded by a fresh set of conditions adapted to the new and wider problems of the day. These new conditions and their accompanying problems were precipitated into existence by the elections to the Central and Provincial Legislatures which took place at the end of 1923.

Throughout the year the fortunes of the Gandhi wing of Non-co-operators had waned as the trial of strength between Mr. Gandhi on the one hand and Mr. C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru on the other was seen to be turning steadily in favour of the latter. As time went on, the differences between them shrank to the single vital question whether Congress men should enter the Legislatures or continue, as hitherto, to boycott them. Mr. Gandhi lost in the final tussle and it was decided that Congress men and quondam Non-co-operators should enter the Legislatures wherever they could and seek to "wreck the Reforms from inside." Something like an open break between Mr. Gandhi and the others occurred when on January 1, 1923, the "Swaraj" party came into existence under the leadership of Mr. C. R. Das. The conferences which were held after that date to try to close the breach did not at once reveal the quickly growing strength of Mr. Das and his followers and the corresponding weakness of their opponents.

At first even Mr. Das himself did not seem to perceive the true reason for the popularity of his views, although before his death in the early summer of 1925 he saw it clearly and

announced it frankly. That reason was to be found in the fact that all who took any real interest in politics were beginning dimly to see that the true political arena in India had been transferred from meeting-halls and mass rallies to the Legislatures set up by the 1919 Act, and that in them and in them alone could any tangible results be achieved, whether by way of ending or mending the new Constitution. At any rate Congress party candidates did contest constituencies in both the Central and Provincial Legislatures at the general elections at the end of 1923, and with considerable success.

These were the second elections held under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms and they proved far more popular than the first, for about 40 per cent of the electors recorded their votes, a high figure in view of the many difficulties in the way of voting in India. In the Central Legislative Assembly the majority of the new members were lawyers. Forty-five "Swarajists" balanced forty-six Moderates and nominated members, and there were in addition about thirty-eight "Independents" distributed between the other two groups, whose attitude was to be of immense importance later on. It must be remembered that this was the first election at which there had been any mention of political parties. There was no party system of any kind in the first Assembly, but although the grouping in the second Assembly was very far from representing a true party system as understood at Westminster, it did mark a definite step in the formal organization of political opinion and action in India.

Some of the best known politicians in the country had been returned either to the Central or to the Provincial legislative bodies. In the Legislative Assembly in Delhi were such men as Pandit Motilal Nehru, who was to assume the leadership of the Swaraj Party on the death of Mr. Das in 1925 ; Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the outstanding Hindu Communal leader ; Mr. Patel, who was shortly to become the first Indian President of the Assembly ; and Mr. Jinnah, later to be President of the Moslem League, who, although a prominent Mahomedan, was at that time head of the "Independent" Party. Of Moslem communal leaders, Sir Zulfikar Ali Khan from the Punjab and Dr. Abdulla Suhrawardy and Mr. Ghuznavi from Bengal were also in the Assembly, which was a really powerful and influential body, a far truer reflection of All-Indian political opinion than its predecessor.

The results of the 1923 elections provided Lord Reading and the Provincial Governors with a problem which has since become very familiar both in this country and in India as a consequence

of the introduction of the far more drastic reforms contained in the Government of India Act of 1935, the establishment of correct and friendly constitutional relations between the Governors of Provinces and those Congress leaders whom the ballot-box had chosen to head provincial administrations. To-day the leader of the strongest party in a Province is called upon as Prime Minister to form and preside over a full Cabinet, but in 1925 the scope of his duties was far narrower, since he was merely called upon to accept the office of Chief Minister in a diarchy. Nevertheless, his position was an important one, especially as the whole situation was completely novel, and the Congress successes in the elections led to some embarrassment and much misgiving both in India and in England.

In the Viceroy's speech at the opening of the new Assembly on January 31, 1924, he pointed out the harm which might be done to the Reforms by the entry of the Swarajists if they persisted in their policy of "wrecking from within," and showed the necessity for co-operation with the Government if even the hopes of the Swarajists themselves were to be realized. He flouted the idea that the hand of Parliament might be forced, telling his hearers that no action could prevail with the British people which was not based on reason and justice, and he gave utterance to the undeniable truth that India's progress towards responsible self-government depended not on Parliament or on the British people but on the people of India and the conduct of their representatives in the Legislatures. His words, reinforced as they were not long afterwards by a striking speech in Parliament by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, then Prime Minister, made a deep impression on the Assembly as a whole and permanently altered the attitude of an important section of its members.

But the political situation was to remain confused and threatening for some time, both at the Centre and in the Provinces. At the Centre, Lord Reading watched closely and anxiously a series of manoeuvres which took place inside the Legislative Assembly. The Swarajists and many of the Independents had a clear-cut policy in view, to achieve constitutional advance of a kind and to an extent satisfactory to themselves. Nothing less than full Dominion Status for India and fully responsible government in the Provinces would satisfy them. Their sweeping successes in the elections had given them immense prestige in the country and had correspondingly raised their own estimate of their power and prospects. Lord Reading gave in a letter to Lord Olivier a graphic account of the situation as it appeared to him at the end of February, 1924,

For the present [he wrote] the Swarajist has it all his own way ; there is none to withstand him ; there is none to compare with him ; there is none to attack him ; and he proceeds on his victorious march largely because of the full-blooded programme he puts before the electorate as a remedy for all their ills and a means of disposing of a tyrannical government. The Moderate presents a very dull and dreary appearance as compared with the Swarajist. His programme is drab and uninteresting to the electorate after listening to the highly coloured and fiery denunciation of the Swarajist.

In Bengal Lord Lytton found himself faced with a troublesome crisis. On the refusal of Mr. C. R. Das to accept office he had invited Mr. Mullick to become Chief Minister at the head of a coalition of parties. But Mr. Mullick's election was declared null and void by the Courts for various technical reasons, none of which was concerned with any impropriety of conduct on his own part, and when he stood again he was defeated by a very heavy majority.

It was an unfortunate circumstance that the general political situation in Bengal was seriously complicated by the resurrection of the famous Regulation III of 1818. This old enactment of the East India Company, which empowered the authorities to order arrest and detention at will, had been revived in the days of Lord Minto's viceroyalty to enable the Government to cope with the wave of revolutionary crime which swept over various parts of India and especially Bengal after the partition of that province in 1905. The ethics of its use had been fully discussed at the time of its first revival, and Lord Reading in his turn gave the fullest and most careful thought to its reintroduction. He was profoundly reluctant to sanction such a step and the voice of the former Lord Chief Justice of England was again audible in a letter to Lord Olivier, in which he explained his reasons for agreeing to the use of the obnoxious instrument. But he would not compromise with lawlessness and he had to steel himself to employ in its suppression the only weapons available.

I dislike the use of the Regulation [he wrote] and have the greatest reluctance in applying it. I would not agree to have recourse to it except when I am certain that its use is essentially necessary in the public interest and for the protection of the public. I confine its application strictly to extreme cases of emergency of the most serious nature and in applying it, I use every possible safeguards to prevent any miscarriage of justice or injury to personal liberty.

The emergency which required the revival of the Regulation arose in 1923 and by September was so serious as to cause Lord

Lytton to appeal to the Viceroy for the issue of a Special Ordinance. But Lord Reading would not agree to this course, although it was clear that some extraordinary measure would have to be taken. Revolutionary gangs of a type only too familiar in the past had been actively revived and plots formed for political *dacoities* and the assassination of British and Indian police officers with a view to paralysing the administration. A number of such *dacoities*, or armed gang robberies, were committed during 1923, and such outrages as the murder of Mr. Day, a prominent and much respected member of the European Community in Calcutta, the murder of the Postmaster in Sankarittolla, the attack on a European juror at the trial of Mr. Day's murderer, numerous discoveries of arms and bombs, and conspiracies to murder Mr. (now Sir Charles) Tegart, the courageous and resourceful Commissioner of Police in Calcutta, were proof enough of the existence of a serious emergency. These and similar happenings forced Lord Reading to agree to put Regulation III once more into operation.

As he wrote at the time : " If I had permitted these sinister plots to continue to advance unchecked, and if I had offered no protection to our officials and the public from these murderous outrages, only because the machinery of the law could not secure such protection, I should have failed in my duty."

Naturally his action was savagely attacked, but no alternative suggestion for dealing with the situation was advanced. As so often happened, destructive criticism was vocal and constructive suggestion silent.

There has been much public condemnation of these organizations for violent crimes and of their deeds [he told the European Association in Calcutta in December, 1924], but at the same time my action in issuing the Ordinance had been condemned. Yet I have been unable to find in the public statements of those who condemned both any concrete suggestion of utility as to how the activities of these violent organizations . . . are to be checked and punished, and what effective steps, other than the action taken by me, for which I take full responsibility, could have been adopted. We cannot shut our eyes to facts. We cannot merely wail and wring our hands while law and order founder in the flood. Condemnation of violation of the code of civilization is not in itself sufficient. If civilization is to live, its code must be upheld and its sanctity must be vindicated. . . . My whole life and training have* tended to imbue me with extreme reluctance to resort to special legislation or arming the executive authority with emergency powers . . . except in the face of sheer necessity.

In spite of the difficulties of his own position as a member

of a Labour Government in dealing with a question of this kind, Lord Olivier gave his unqualified support to the Viceroy. He was being hard pressed by a section of his Party who objected to the Regulation in general and in particular to its being invoked after the persons affected had been acquitted by a Court of Law, but he never attempted to over-ride Lord Reading's action or to say or do anything which could give the authorities in India any reason to fear that they would not be strongly and loyally supported at home. It was unhappily essential to keep the Regulation in force for many months, during which the agitation against it spread far and wide beyond the confines of Bengal.

Strengthened by the adventitious help of this agitation the Swarajists continued their wrecking tactics in the Bengal Council throughout 1924. By the beginning of June an emphatic difference of opinion had arisen between the Viceroy and the Governor of Bengal owing to what the Viceroy regarded as a misconstruction by Lord Lytton of an important provision of the Government of India Act of 1919. During the Budget Session of the Bengal Legislative Council in March the grants for salaries of Ministers and for certain reserved and transferred departments were wantonly refused. The Governor, exercising the powers vested in him, restored the grants for the reserved departments but accepted the rejection of those for the transferred departments and gave three months' notice of termination of their engagements to the officials concerned. This step involved the virtual destruction of the Medical and Educational services, and it was here that the Viceroy and the Governor found themselves at variance. The matter turned upon the correct interpretation of the relevant section of the Act. Lord Lytton thought it did not give him power to restore grants for transferred, as distinct from reserved, subjects, whereas Lord Reading held that it did. The practical issue soon confined itself to the Education Department, since it was found possible to continue almost all the medical officers in their employment in view of the intimate connection between their work and the continued activities of the reserved half of the Government. But for a time it looked as though the Education Department would disappear on the expiry of the three months' notice which had been served on so large a part of its personnel, a development which was viewed with great concern by the Secretary of State, who asked that the situation should be cleared up with as little delay as possible. The actual position was plain enough. The estimates submitted to the Bengal Council would have provided for the employment in that Province of about 386 officers on school inspection duty. The action of the Council

made possible the retention of not more than the farcical number of 29 such officers. Lord Lytton hoped that the Council would reconsider their rash decision at their next session and he had some justification for this belief, since soon after the conclusion of the Budget Session the Ministers began to arrange for a petition to be submitted by members of the Council, asking for an opportunity to be given them to revise their action.

His position was undoubtedly a harassing and delicate one. He was faced with the organized obstruction of the Swarajists as well as with formidable difficulties due to the corrupt practices of some members of the Council, but he was keenly anxious to see the new constitution working on sound lines and he exhibited infinite forbearance and much tactical and political skill in his efforts to achieve this end. Nevertheless, he did not keep the Government of India as closely and as promptly in touch with his doings as the Viceroy had every right to expect, and his failure to take the Government of India into his confidence early enough concerning his intentions in regard to the Educational Service led him to adopt an attitude which brought much trouble upon the Central Government as well as his own. Happily this aspect of the Bengal crisis was cleared up by the Council's action in restoring the Medical and Education grants without a division in their session at the end of August.

But the controversy over the Ministers' salaries continued and in the end brought about a temporary suspension of the Constitution. Here also there was an important difference of opinion between Lord Reading and Lord Lytton, the latter again arguing with force but with moderation that a purely legal view of the situation was not enough, and that decisions should be taken in the light of broad political and constitutional principles. Moreover, revolutionary agitation in Bengal was growing steadily more dangerous, and Lord Lytton knew that sooner or later he would have to take determined action against those responsible. At almost all costs he wanted to avoid the breakdown of the constitution and the consequent triumph of the Swarajists, which would give an immense stimulus to subversive activities and make it correspondingly more difficult for the Government to suppress them.

Lord Lytton's solution of the difficulty in which he was placed by the Council's refusal to vote his Ministers' salaries was to bring into operation his own powers of expenditure in order to authorize payment of the salaries from the time at which the Council had refused to sanction them up to the time at which they could be submitted to the members once more in a new session.

But Lord Reading flatly refused to agree to this step, for reasons which he put very clearly both to Lord Lytton and to the Secretary of State. As he wrote to Lord Olivier in July 192+:

I cannot possibly give my consent to the course which Lytton proposes. . . . I am most anxious to help him and would strain a point if it were legitimately possible to help him to avoid the temporary paralysis of diarchy, but I am quite clear that the course he proposes is wrong constitutionally and may land him in further difficulties. . . . My objection . . . was intended to protect him against the risk of charges he might find it difficult to answer. These might seriously impair his position as Governor.

Lord Olivier, whilst preserving the necessary detachment of a Secretary of State in regard to such a difference of opinion, was clearly convinced that Lord Reading's view of the matter was the correct one, and his communications to Lord Lytton during the development of this situation were all designed to ensure that he did nothing without ample reflection. In India the last word was necessarily with the Viceroy, and whatever the legal position might be, it is not easy to see how he could have been overruled by any authority in Whitehall without at once resigning. But Lord Reading was assured of Lord Olivier's support and the incident ended happily. Lord Lytton went up to Simla at the end of July to stay at Viceregal Lodge, and personal contact and direct talk quickly accomplished what no amount of correspondence had been able to achieve.

Both men were greatly pleased by the success of their meeting, which not only settled the immediate point at issue between them but renewed and strengthened the personal regard which each had for the other.

As a result of these talks Lord Lytton was able to avoid the immediate revocation of the transferred subjects into his own hands. It was decided that the Governor should carry on for a while under the Temporary Administration Rules, and that the complete collapse of diarchy involved in the revocation of the transferred subjects should be postponed as long as possible. In the end the intransigence of the Swarajists forced the suspension of the reformed Constitution in Bengal, but by then it had been made incontestably clear to all that Lord Lytton had exhausted every possible means of conciliation.

In the Central Provinces also the Swarajists' wrecking tactics brought the Reforms to a temporary halt. The Swarajist majority refused to accept office as Ministers and simply voted against every Government measure without regard to its merits or

purpose. They had no difficulty in carrying a vote of no confidence in the Ministers who had accepted office and they followed this up by fixing their salaries at the derisory figure of two rupees a year. Moreover, they rejected the Annual Budget *in toto* and thus brought the working of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms to an end in their province.

The Governor, Sir Frank Sly, kept in close touch with Lord Reading during and after these developments and in September went up to Simla to discuss with him the procedure to be adopted. The Government of India Act contained provisions for dealing with such an emergency, but Parliament had naturally not been able to anticipate the exact circumstances in which the emergency would arise.

Lord Reading did not like the idea of applying automatically the powers contained in Rule 6 of the Devolution Rules made under the Act. His natural caution and desire for compromise compelled him to give the Council of the Central Provinces another chance to reconsider their obstructive policy, and he was encouraged in this attitude by the fact that in the Central Provinces, as elsewhere, the Swarajists were by no means of one mind in regard to the advisability of the wrecking tactics. Beneath their surface unity there was considerable dissension, and Sir Frank Sly actually wrote to Lord Reading at the end of 1924, telling him that he had received indirect but substantial overtures from one section of the Swarajists to the effect that, if he would invite them to form a ministry, his invitation would be accepted. He did not see his way to taking the first step, but the incident showed that Lord Reading was justified in counselling the Governor to wait on events.

But the state of affairs in Bengal supplied a further and even more cogent reason from the point of view of all India, why Lord Reading should advise caution and delay in suspending the reformed Constitution in the Central Provinces. Lord Lytton was engaged in very difficult and delicate political operations and the recrudescence of terrorist and other unconstitutional activity was causing him considerable anxiety. Any brusque and uncompromising action in the Central Provinces would certainly have important and unpleasant repercussions in Bengal, which the Viceroy was anxious to avoid by all reasonable means.

In the end it was found that there was no way out of suspending the working of diarchy in the Central Provinces, since the Swarajist leaders had committed themselves too deeply. But the cautious policy advised by Lord Reading, and loyally carried out by Sir Frank Sly and his successor, Sir Montagu Butler, was

fully justified, since it powerfully reinforced the influences working for sane and moderate action in the Swaraj Party and was one of the foremost factors in making it possible for certain of the Swarajist leaders in the Central Provinces to become pioneers of the very fruitful "responsive co-operation" movement of the future.

Each of the other provinces had its own particular difficulties, although in none of them were the wreckers able to have their way, and Lord Reading's personal touch with their Governors was only less intimate and continuous than with the Governors of Bengal and the Central Provinces. The brief account which has been given of the progress of events in those two Governorships at least serves to indicate the weight of the burden which the Viceroy had to carry in these formative and crucial years in India.

Meanwhile, on the broader stage of All-India politics interest was mainly confined to the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly. Violent agitation and mass movements in the country had died down, and it appeared that at any rate for the immediate future the political battle would be fought out in the Central Legislature and primarily in the Legislative Assembly.

The composition of this house, as determined by the elections at the end of 1923, made it certain that its proceedings would be designed to create trouble for the Government, and the members of its left wing quickly proceeded to give a definite shape to their policy. The Swarajists' first move threatened imminent danger to the peaceful progress of the Reforms. In the first days of the new Assembly they held a series of conferences with the Independents, at which a general desire for immediate responsible self-government in India was expressed. Only the Army and relations with Indian States and foreign powers were to be left temporarily outside the sphere of a representative and fully democratic Indian legislature. A coalition of seventy members, half of the entire Legislative Assembly, was quickly formed under the name of the National Party, its adherents pledging themselves to obstruct the working of the Reforms unless their demands were granted. A few of the leading Independents stood out of this *bloc*, but quite two-thirds of their followers joined, not from any belief in the working tactics of the Swarajists but because they saw no harm in pursuing a general policy of "no supplies without redress of grievances", thinking that in the last resort they could restrain their allies from any step which might be utterly fatal to the Constitution. Events proved them wrong. One of the favourite tactical devices of the Swarajist leaders was to call meetings at very short notice, at which the

superior compactness and discipline of their own party almost always enabled them to have a substantial majority of those present. They then proceeded to secure the adoption of their policy without any regard for the views of their allies, who soon found this position of impotence intolerable. The break up of the short-lived Nationalist Party followed in due course. But for the moment the stage was set for the opening scenes of the new Assembly's activities. In so far as these were directed towards achieving immediate and far-reaching political advances, they were foredoomed to sterility, for whatever victories might be won over the Government in the division lobbies of the Assembly they could not affect the basic problems of communal antagonism, the relations between the Indian States and the rest of India, defence and the position of minorities, the rate of progress towards settlement of which controlled and still controls the pace at which India can advance towards her goal of political autonomy. The Nationalist Party had hoped for active assistance from the new Labour Government in England but found their hopes disappointed. They misjudged the temper of the British people and forgot that India has never been a purely party question in Parliament.

The extremists were, however, in the ascendant and they set to work to combine the maximum of embarrassment to the Government with the highest degree of personal irresponsibility. Lord Reading watched the proceedings warily but with detachment. The leader of the Independent Party, Mr. Jinnah, was quick to realize that he had made a bad bargain in tying himself up with the Swarajists, and he would have liked to enlist the Viceroy's help to recover his freedom of action without losing prestige in the process. Lord Reading himself gave an account of Mr. Jinnah's predicament in a letter written in March, 1924, towards the end of the session of the Legislative Assembly in Delhi.

. The Independents under the leadership of Jinnah made upon their arrival in Delhi at the beginning of the Session a bargain with the Swarajists which we always regarded as unwise, even foolish. Jinnah evidently thought that by the terms of the alliance he would be sitting in the driving seat of the motor-car holding the steering wheel, with Motilal Nehru beside him powerless to control except by means of advice. The exact opposite resulted. Motilal Nehru was in the driving seat and Jinnah was scarcely even beside him ; but his Party were inside the car, being driven along without realizing whither they were going or what would happen. There were various suggestions direct and indirect to me that I should send for them and erect a bridge of retreat from their avowed policy ; but, of course, I did nothing of

Lord Reading's reference to the attempts made to induce him to intervene as *deus ex machina* in favour of the disillusioned Independent leader and his followers may seem strange to those unacquainted with the vagaries of Indian political conditions in those early days. Yet such overtures were of common occurrence. Time after time in both the Central and Provincial Legislatures even important members of the Swarajist, or, as it came later to be called, the Congress, Party would approach Viceroy or Governor, usually indirectly and through intermediaries, begging him to restore the damage caused by some ill-considered action of their own which had been taken with the sole object of impressing the country with their stern, unbending opposition to everything proposed or attempted by the Government. The reason for such manoeuvres is not far to seek. These adroit politicians knew that, while the responsibility for any situation thus created would not rest upon them, their own chief claim to the suffrages of their fellow-countrymen lay in continuous, unreasoning and noisy demands for complete political independence as a prelude to the dawn of the Golden Age in India. These demands may fairly be said to have been the main stock-in-trade of their political equipment up to the end of Lord Reading's Viceroyalty. Mr. C. R. Das was beginning to plan his rural reorganization policy in Bengal, and one or two others had distant visions of improving the lot of the urban industrial workers. But it is not unfair to say that between 1924 and 1926 all the energy of the Swarajists was devoted to pressing impossible claims for Indian independence and that they had no real constructive policy of any sort.

The Liberal, or Moderate, Party, on the other hand, had such a policy which they proposed to advance by all practicable and constitutional means. But they could not hope to stand up to the Swarajists at the polls, precisely because their policy demanded reason, knowledge and restraint, both to understand it and to achieve it. The Swarajist programme of opposition, wrecking and general uproar and excitement naturally appealed to the cruder instincts of humanity and did at any rate promise a revolutionary change at an early date, a prospect which always has strong attractions for those at the lower end of the economic scale, who in India constitute the vast majority of the population. Lord Reading himself, writing shortly after the elections of 1923, put the whole situation very clearly in a summary of the political conflict as he saw it at the time.

Two parties stood at the last election—Liberals, or Moderates as

was attacked by both parties—the Swarajist condemning it root and branch and claiming complete and immediate self-government, the Moderate condemning it in fainter terms, or, at most, damning it with the faintest praise, but always urging that it required drastic amendment . . . It would seem inevitable that in an appeal to an electorate, and especially to an ill-educated and ill-informed electorate, and where both parties are concerned in attacking the Government, the party that shouts loudest, hits hardest, and demands most, will assuredly succeed. . . .

Lord Reading never had much hope that this state of affairs Could be remedied under the existing constitution, but he knew that sweeping and fundamental political reforms were for the moment out of the question. All that he could do was to keep the ring and give to any healthy and constructive political movement which might appear a fair chance to work. At the same time he was always on the look-out for opportunities of making such constitutional progress as circumstances might warrant, and he never hesitated to discuss politics with the utmost frankness with those leaders who sought his advice. He was fully aware that his attitude was not only misunderstood but even mistrusted in some quarters in India, as he once confided to Lord Olivier.

I am rather surprised [he wrote] at the practical unanimity among Indians of all shades and descriptions, with one or two rare exceptions of no importance. Their attitude is of such doubt of our intentions as to amount almost to mistrust. I do not mean that they doubt my intention to forward the policy of reform. I believe those most opposed to us are convinced of my desire to go forward j but they think I am too slow, too cautious, and have been restrained by public opinion in England.

From the beginning of his Viceroyalty the problem of how to get into personal touch with Indian political leaders had occupied Lord Reading's thoughts. He never lost a chance of going to social functions where he might meet the leaders of either the Moderate or the Swarajist Parties, but though he had no difficulty in meeting Moderate leaders, the Swarajists almost invariably boycotted him. In a letter written in April, 1924, he gave a vivid impression of the difficulties which he encountered in his efforts to establish personal contacts with his chief political opponents.

I attended a garden party of Chatterjee's, (Sir Atul Chatterjee, one of the members of his Council) he wrote, who has personal relations of old standing with Motilal Nehru, and I attended for the purpose of giving Nehru the opportunity of meeting me without applying formally

for an interview ; hut he did not come. He sent the excuse that his Party would not stand his coming to meet the Viceroy, although they would not have objected to his meeting Lord Reading. . . . Following my practice I invited all the members of the Legislature, among others, to a Garden Party, and, notwithstanding Nehru and his Swarajist friends' action in Chatterjee's case, I issued invitations to him and all his Party ; but they did not attend.

Not only did Lord Reading try to get into touch himself with Indian political leaders, but he warmly approved of efforts which were made in England to bring together individual members of His Majesty's Government, particularly the Prime Minister, and important Indian visitors to London. The Secretary of State for India was always ready to meet such visitors, but now Lord Olivier rightly believed that there was much to gain by extending these contacts much more widely between Indians and at any rate some of the members of the Cabinet. Lord Olivier found his views cordially supported by Lord Reading, who nevertheless warned him of the dangers of initiating overtures to the Swarajists whilst they remained actively hostile to the established Government of India.

Unfortunately, the Swarajists persisted in that attitude with unflagging zeal and the record of the first session of the Legislative Assembly returned at the 1923 elections is a sorry one. Nothing was considered on its merits and the "wrecking from within" tactics were pursued regardless of the object towards which they were directed. Even such a subject as the Cotton Excise was discussed not as a matter of primary industrial and economic importance but as "a standing emblem of India's subjection" and "an insult to the national sense of self-respect." Moreover, the rebate on railway freight enjoyed by South African coal, which formed the subject of another debate, was seen by one member as nothing else than a sinister plot to attack the Indian coal industry. It goes without saying that in this atmosphere resolutions for the release of certain political prisoners and for the repeal of Regulation III of 1818 were carried almost without opposition.

In the prevailing temper of the majority of the Assembly it was not to be expected that the Budget would receive fair examination or consideration. It happened to be the most favourable Budget which had been presented for years, and the Finance Member, Sir Basil Blackett, anticipated a surplus for 1924-25 of nearly two and a half crores of rupees, or over two millions sterling at the rate of exchange then prevailing. Moreover, Sir Basil's proposals for the use of the surplus were in the highest

degree statesmanlike. He proposed to use it partly to reduce the bitterly hated Salt Tax and partly to give the most needy Provinces some relief in their contributions to the central exchequer, which would enable Ministers to expand their 'nation-building' activities.

The Government of India left the disposal of the surplus to the vote of the Assembly, which might choose whether it would reduce the Salt Tax to a trivial figure and forgo the relief to the Provinces or whether it would prefer a slightly higher, but still innocuous, Salt Tax together with some remission of provincial dues. Here was an excellent chance for the Assembly to take thought for the good of India instead of pursuing the will O' the wisp of immediate independence. But, driven by its Swarajist members, the Nationalist *bloc* proceeded to reject every grant which came up until the proceedings became a lamentable farce. As Sir Basil Blackett wrote : "Every opportunity that is given to the Assembly of showing that it has a responsibility and can use it is taken to prove that it is irresponsible I" The final act was the blank refusal to allow the Finance Bill even to be introduced. The Government went to the farthest possible limit of conciliation by presenting the Finance Bill a second time with the Salt Tax at a minimum figure, but permission to introduce was again refused. Lord Reading thereupon exercised his special powers and sent the Bill to the Council of State, which passed it with many sarcastic references to the antics of the Lower House.

But although this action was practically forced upon him by the headstrong opportunism of the Assembly, Lord Reading only took it with great reluctance.

I have heavy anxieties over the financial and constitutional problems [he wrote to me early in April]. It was a hard decision for me, for my intentions and political views were against the use of special powers entrusted to me, more particularly in a taxing measure. But I could not shirk the responsibility and had to make the decision, which of course is very unpopular amongst Indians and involves me in much criticism and even attack. It is a curious position under the Act. The burden of deciding whether the occasion requires the exercise of the special powers over-riding the vote of the Chamber is placed, not upon the Government of India, but upon the Viceroy. . . .

I am the first Viceroy to encounter these complex questions of government, for the new system began just before my arrival, and my task has been, among other difficulties, to govern with a Parliament in which there is always a large majority against the Government. Hitherto, the scheme as it eventuated under the Morley-Minto Reforms,

which held the field until the Montagu-Chelmsford era, provided a certain number of elective seats, but the Government always had a substantial majority. To make it more troublesome, there is very little of the party system as yet, so there are no recognized leaders with whom one can discuss the situation and the leaders never know whether the followers will follow.

He did not, however, take the irresponsible behaviour of the Indian politicians too seriously. "It was a foolish procedure on the part of the Assembly," he told Lord Olivier, "and cannot redound to the credit of the leadership of Motilal Nehru, although it will assuredly for the moment be claimed in the *Swarajist* Press as clever strategy and the right course. Nevertheless, a saner view will, I am sure, prevail at no distant date, even though it was not to be publicly expressed. Meanwhile, the Central Government scarcely expect any trouble will result, and we shall proceed for the time being as usual save that I shall have certified the Finance Bill, and we shall—I deeply regret to say—have lost a great opportunity of beginning to remit Provincial contributions."

His forecast was justified by events, for in a second letter to me on the subject, written some three weeks after the first, he said: "There is still a certain amount of agitation going on over my action in certifying the Salt Tax, but it is no longer an economic or fiscal issue; it has entered the domain of constitutional controversy and is confined to the politicians."

But far and away the most important resolution of the session, because it led to the formation of a committee to enquire into the working of the Reforms up to date, was one which asked for full responsible government in India and for the summoning at an early date of a representative Round Table Conference to recommend a new constitution.

This constitutional debate Lord Reading took very seriously and he was in constant touch throughout all its stages with Lord Olivier, the value of whose wide experience of colonial administration was very considerable at such moments. Lord Reading saw in the debate the chance to make a cautious move forward and, as he put it, "to allay the distrust of those more moderate and thoughtful members who doubt the intentions of the British people, and to give some prospect of a stable course of policy in constitutional advance within the next few years, and to offer some inducement for good-will and co-operation."

He was deeply impressed with "the growing unanimity among all sections of the Assembly in favour of urging for some immediate measures leading to a definite advance towards responsible government, and . . . the determination to obtain advance shewn even

by classes who were previously somewhat distrustful of its advisability." In the light of these considerations he wrote at the beginning of February to Lord Olivier, making tentative proposals for dealing with the situation.

My Government are now prepared to examine, with the assistance of Local Governments, the desirability and feasibility and the extent of the advance to be made within the powers conferred by the Act [the Government of India Act, 1919]. We shall thus be carrying out the intentions of the Imperial Parliament. We shall, of course, inform you and shall keep in close consultation with you. We should also ascertain the causes of complaint or defects in the working of the system to the best of our ability. After taking into consideration the views of the Local Governments, we shall propose as the result of our investigation to submit our conclusions to the Legislature, or possibly to a Committee of the Legislature and others, for consideration and approval before we make our formal recommendations to His Majesty's Government for their approval and that of Parliament. It will be observed that our intentions are limited to the possibilities of development and expansion within the Act itself, that is, under the powers deliberately given by the Imperial Parliament for this purpose.

Should these proposals for advance within the Act be approved by Parliament, the Government of India will then be able to judge after a reasonable period what further advances should then be made which would require amendment of the Act. We shall then have had more experience of the working of the Act, and, we hope, of the benefit of co-operation and good-will. If, in the result, we arrived at the conclusion that the Statutory Commission should then be appointed, we should be prepared to make this recommendation to His Majesty's Government, notwithstanding that the full period of ten years contemplated under the Act had not elapsed.

This document shews Lord Reading's attitude with the utmost clearness. He would do anything possible to adjust the existing constitution to developing conditions and to Indian aspirations and he was ready to consider and even advocate more fundamental changes, provided that the trend of events and the policy and temper of Indian political leaders were such as to justify those changes. His own words dispose finally of any suggestion that he was either reactionary or ultra-cautious in his attitude to proposals for further advance.

Lord Olivier was not less careful than Lord Reading. Indeed, the exchange of views between the two at this time shews the Labour Secretary of State a little perturbed lest the Viceroy should hurry him into wider schemes of reform than he was prepared to accept. He was very anxious that nothing should be done to give India

the impression that the Statutory Commission might be sent out earlier than was contemplated by the 1919 Act, and repeatedly impressed the importance of this consideration on Lord Reading, whose proposals for an enquiry within the four corners of the Act he scrutinized with meticulous care.

But after long discussion Viceroy and Secretary of State were by April so much at one in their plan for the immediate future that the Secretary to the Home Department of the Government of India was able to address Provincial Governments on the subject of the proposed Constitutional Enquiry, and on May 25 the Central Government issued a public communique announcing the appointment of a Committee consisting of official and representative non-official members to enquire into the difficulties arising from, or defects inherent in, the working of the Government of India Act and the Rules made under it.

The communique further stated that the Committee would investigate the feasibility and desirability of securing remedies for such difficulties or defects, consistent with the structure, policy and purpose of the Act, either by taking action under the Act itself and the Rules or by amending the Act in such a manner as might be necessary to rectify administrative imperfections.

The leader of the Swarajists, Pandit Motilal Nehru, refused to serve on the Committee because its enquiry was to be confined to the existing Act, but the Independent leader, Mr. Jinnah, and Sir Sivaswamy Iyer, the doyen of the Indian Liberals, both agreed to serve. Sir Alexander Muddiman, at that time President of the Council of State, was Chairman, and Sir Mohammad Shafi, the Maharajadhiraj of Burdwan, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sir Arthur Froom, Sir Henry Moncrieff Smith and Dr. R. P. Paranjpye were the other members.

The Committee began work in August, 1924, and its report was published in March, 1925. Lord Reading closely followed its progress. "I am keeping myself fully acquainted with all that is happening in the Committee from day to day," he told Lord Olivier soon after the enquiry started, and he lost no opportunity of urging on the Chairman the desirability of an early end to the Committee's labours. Realizing from the outset that agreement in the Committee was unlikely, he saw as clearly as anybody in India that this was no mere routine enquiry, but on the contrary an important test of the vitality of the Montagu-Chelmsford Constitution, of the degree of its adaptability to meet reasonable demands based on changed conditions, and of the extent to which it could inspire confidence in responsible Indian political leaders

and so provide a rallying point for those who believed in progress by constitutional means.

Indeed, so seriously did Lord Reading regard the enquiry that he decided to avail himself of the opportunity afforded under the Government of India Act to visit England on leave, in order to confer with Lord Olivier and other members of the Cabinet on the problems with which he was faced. In writing to the Secretary of State about his proposed visit, which he wished to make early in 1925, he emphasized that he had in mind a comprehensive discussion of essentials.

It would be futile to discuss India with reservations in one's mind [he wrote]. I should desire to speak with the utmost frankness to the Prime Minister and you and the Cabinet, and it is only thus that we can arrive at satisfactory conclusions.

When the Committee's report appeared, it justified the anxiety with which Lord Reading had viewed the whole situation, for it was really two reports, one by a majority and the other by a minority of the members. The majority consisted of Sir Alexander Muddiman, Sir Mohammad Shafi, the Maharajadhiraj of Burdwan, Sir Arthur Froom and Sir Henry Moncrieff Smith. The minority were Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sir Sivaswami Iyer, Mr. Jinnah and Dr. Paranjpye. The two sides certainly agreed that a number of defects existed in the present constitution, but at that point agreement ended. They differed on the question of remedies and here the divisions of opinion were fundamental. The main criticisms on which all were agreed were that joint deliberations between the reserved and transferred sides of provincial governments had not been encouraged ; that there was no joint ministerial responsibility ; that the administration of reserved and transferred subjects could not be separated in practice ; and that the vesting of financial control in the reserved side of the provincial government deprived the ministers of real power. The majority held that the force of these defects could be lessened, if not destroyed, by adjustments consistent with the structure, policy and purpose of the 1919 Act. The minority, on the other hand, maintained that the system set up by the Act had failed and that nothing would be of any use short of a radical revision of the Act itself, which should take the form of the institution of responsible government in the Provinces and at least a measure of responsibility in the Central Government.

The publication of the Report on March 9, 1925, was followed by a storm of controversy, in which the Indian Press led the way.

But Lord Reading was completely unperturbed and never for a moment contemplated any action other than the submission of the Majority Report to the Indian Legislature in the shape of a resolution for its acceptance and the early consideration of its detailed recommendations for improvements in the machinery of government. But before the stage of discussion by the Indian Legislature could be reached he had to arrive at firm agreements with the Provincial Governors and the Secretary of State. The discussions with the former were almost all on detailed points arising out of the effects of the proposals on the actual machinery of administration, and the discussions therefore had a limited and severely practical scope.

But Lord Birkenhead, who had now succeeded Lord Olivier on the fall of the Labour Government, at first took up an attitude strongly reminiscent of that adopted by his predecessor when Lord Reading had originally proposed the formation of the Muddiman Committee. He was afraid that the Resolution to be submitted to the Indian Legislature was too sweeping and liable to give rise to unfounded expectations, and in any case he considered that some of the detailed recommendations of the Majority Report were certain to give rise to controversy in England. He wanted reassurance on these points, but there was actually no more serious difference between him and Lord Reading than there had been between Lord Reading and Lord Olivier at the earlier stage, since the Government of India intended by their Resolution to convey that they accepted the basic principle that any changes made should be within the scope of the 1919 Act, and that any individual change should be the subject of examination and future decision. Satisfied on this point, Lord Birkenhead agreed to the introduction of a Government Resolution recommending "to the Governor-General in Council that he do accept the principle underlying the Majority Report of the Reforms Enquiry Committee and that he do give early consideration to the detailed recommendations therein contained for improvements in the machinery of government."

The Resolution was debated during the Simla session of the Legislature at the beginning of September, 1925. In the Assembly debate centred chiefly upon Pandit Motilal Nehru's opposition amendment, the gist of which was that immediate steps should be taken to move His Majesty's Government to make a declaration in Parliament embodying such fundamental changes in the constitutional machinery and administration of India as would make the Government of the country fully responsible. The amendment further recommended the holding of a Round Table Conference or other suitable agency, fully representative of Indian

opinion, to frame an acceptable scheme based on the principle of responsible self-government, which could in due course be embodied in a statute of the British Parliament. The general level of the debate was high, and more moderate amendments moved by Independent and Liberal leaders took much of the acerbity out of the discussion and prevented the spectacle of a mere head-on collision between official and non-official opinion. The amendment was, however, carried against the Government, although in the Council of State their Resolution had a comparatively easy passage and was accepted by a decisive majority.

Lord Reading never had any illusions about the fate of the Resolution in the Assembly, but he was equally clear as to the true strength of the Swarajist opposition and the degree of active support in the country for Pandit Motilal Nehru's amendment. He knew that the great majority of elected members would vote against the Government, if only to escape the scurrilous denunciations of the extremist Press⁵ but he knew also that the tide of opinion in the country was rising steadily against extremism and was running more and more strongly in favour of constructive rather than merely subversive activities.

Moreover, there was another good reason for the calmness with which Indian political opinion as a whole received the fate of the Muddiman Committee's report, for the Secretary of State himself had now held out definite hopes of expediting the enquiry into the working of the 1919 Act which had been statutorily fixed to take place after ten years from the inauguration of the existing constitution.

Lord Reading had left India on April 10, 1925, on short leave of absence to England, partly for a rest and partly to have that opportunity of candid discussion with His Majesty's Government about which he had already written to the Secretary of State. It was the first occasion on which a Viceroy had ever left India during his period of office, and it was necessary for Parliament to pass legislation to make his absence possible. He landed again in India on August 6, and, addressing the Legislature at the beginning of their Simla session on the 20th of the same month, drew the attention of his hearers to the very important speech made not long before by Lord Birkenhead in the House of Lords. This speech was, indeed, the direct and main result of Lord Reading's deliberations with the Home Government.

"The speech undoubtedly aroused interest in Parliament **and** the country," the Viceroy told his hearers. "It was the first review by the Secretary of State of the general situation in India since he had assumed his high office, and it had been deferred until after the conclusion of his conferences with me."

The speech gave rise to considerable astonishment in India. Before it was delivered, the Indian Press had freely assumed that it would be reactionary and provocative. Its statesmanlike and conciliatory tone confounded the prophets, and although the newspapers, moderate as well as extremist, professed to be disappointed, there was in fact from many sections of Indian opinion a definitely favourable response which showed itself in conduct, if not in words. In particular, the phrase used by Lord Birkenhead when discussing a possible future revision of the Constitution struck their imagination. "Wise men," said the Secretary of State, "are not the slaves of dates," and he went on to shew the conditions which had to be created before revision could take place.

The more responsible Indian leaders thus felt that they had been given the opportunity to speed up the developments for which they were looking, and that Lord Birkenhead had asked them in so many words to contribute to the solution of their own constitutional problems. This gesture, together with his appeal to the Dominions to avoid such discrimination "as must deeply wound the ancient and dignified people of India," was genuinely appreciated, although the rules of the political game forbade such appreciation to be openly expressed. The debate in the House of Commons which followed Lord Birkenhead's speech also, as Lord Reading said, "shewed ... a growing appreciation and a sympathetic understanding of the complexities and difficulties of Indian political problems."

After so many sudden and violent storms these last months of Lord Reading's Viceroyalty at last shewed the political barometer approaching "fair."

But, although during 1924 and 1925 the broad trend of Indian politics, both at the centre and in the Provinces, was moving away from constant and violent disturbance and danger towards a state of definite, if somewhat precarious, equilibrium, the opening of the year 1924 forced Lord Reading to take a decision which might have had a disastrous effect upon this growing stability.

On January 12 Mr. Gandhi underwent an operation for appendicitis, which was a complete success, and he subsequently made a recovery which was remarkable in view of his age and the extraordinary demands which he had made on his strength in the past.

As soon as the news of his illness was known the agitation for his release, which had never wholly died down, again flared up fiercely, leading among other demonstrations to mass mill strikes in Bombay. The Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council of Bombay, his home Province, threw themselves whole-heartedly

into the fray, and it was clear that, unless he was set free, there was every prospect of a recrudescence of non-co-operation and an immense enhancement of his personal prestige. The Government's situation was difficult in the extreme. The last thing they wanted was to make a martyr of Mr. Gandhi, but the dangers of yielding to popular clamour were obvious.

Lord Reading saw from the beginning that in the circumstances it would be impossible to keep Mr. Gandhi any longer in prison and he considered the chances of releasing him on conditions. Lord Olivier was content to leave the decision entirely to the Viceroy, who at once took up the question personally with the Governor of Bombay. But Sir Leslie Wilson, the Viceroy's old political opponent and Reading who had by then succeeded Sir George Lloyd, was naturally very loath to have Mr. Gandhi released unless he was prepared to give an undertaking satisfactory to the Government that he would not engage in any further subversive activities. It did not, however, take Lord Reading long to decide that there was no chance of getting any such undertaking, and he and Sir Leslie Wilson next considered the possibility of dealing with the case as one of convalescence, sending Mr. Gandhi away for six months to some sanatorium where he would be under no more than the mildest form of supervision. But such a step would be merely temporising, for both Viceroy and Governor realized that the question of release would have to be faced again at the end of the six months, and when Sir Leslie Wilson had had an opportunity of making full enquiries among all sections of political opinion in his Province, Hindu, Parsee, Mahommedan and even European, he was so deeply impressed with the strength and unanimity of support for immediate release that he felt obliged to change his original opinion.

The situation in Bombay was in fact threatening and any delay in releasing Mr. Gandhi would certainly have led in the end to disorder and bloodshed. Sir Leslie Wilson and Lord Reading were guided in the matter purely by expediency. There was on the one hand the absolute certainty of widespread and violent agitation if the release were not sanctioned, whilst on the other hand, as both foresaw, there was a very good chance that, if he were released, Mr. Gandhi's attention would be fully occupied for months to come in fighting his fellow Swarajists on the subject of the continued boycott of the reformed legislatures and he would have no time to create trouble for the Government. This was in fact what happened. Mr. Gandhi was released in February and removed to the seaside for a protracted convalescence, but long before the expiry of the six months which had been regarded

as the minimum period required for his recovery he began a strenuous campaign against those Swarajists who wished to stand at the elections.

But he was by now fighting in a lost cause, for already the majority of his Party had decided to abandon non-co-operation and had passed the so-called Delhi and Cocanada resolutions expressly permitting Swarajists, or, as they had by now begun to call themselves, Congressmen, to enter the Provincial Councils and the Legislative Assembly, if they had no conscientious scruples against doing so. As the year drew to its close, it became more and more certain that in the clash between himself and the famous Bengali leader, Mr. C. R. Das, Mr. Gandhi would go to the wall.

Lord Reading watched these developments with keen interest. In the letters and despatches which passed between him and Lord Olivier a friendly difference of opinion arose at this stage as to the character and status of the Congress Party. Lord Olivier tended to regard it as a political party in the English sense, appearing to think of it as being as well organized and as definite in its views and objectives as one of the main political parties at Westminster. But this was far from being Lord Reading's opinion, and several times he attempted an earnest refutation of the Secretary of State's views.

A characteristic passage in his correspondence on this point occurs in a letter written in July, 1924, in which he referred to the unfortunate effects in India of certain remarks made by Lord Olivier during a speech in the House of Lords on June 5.

I think the real difference between us lies in your determination to regard the Swarajist Party at the present moment, and viewed as a whole, as a political party of the stability and position of a Labour, Liberal or Conservative Party in England.

On another occasion Lord Reading, whilst reaffirming his immediate opinion, made it clear that he hoped that the Congress Party would in time develop into a real political entity, and that he at any rate would be careful not to put any obstacle in the way of such a desirable outcome. From this point of view the interest with which he watched the duel between the boycott faction of Congress and the would-be entrants into the legislatures is readily explained, and indeed events have proved that the defeat of Mr. Gandhi at the end of 1924 was just such a development as Lord Reading had in mind. In the middle of the year he wrote to me :

We are having a very interesting time politically here. Some kind of a compromise seems to have been reached between Gandhi and the

Das-Nehru combination, but it is very skin-deep and I think deceives no-one. Gandhi has been giving interviews to the press and is almost a pathetic figure, for he who only three years ago could carry the whole multitude with him, whilst no-one dared to criticise, much less oppose, him, has now confessed that he could not get sufficient support for the main items of his programme, the same programme that was universally acclaimed in 1921. Apparently he has still faith in the spinning-wheel, although he should be aware that the vast majority of all those obtained during his great missionary period have lain idle in the corner, if they have not been broken up, since he was incarcerated. He went so far (although it seems madness) as solemnly to propose in a resolution that every member of the Executive Council of Congress who did not spin a certain weight of yarn during the 12 months should *ipso facto* be deprived of his office. . . .

Eventually he withdrew the penal clause, but only when he saw that he was hopelessly beaten. Of course he made their task easier for his opponents by proposals of this kind. Nevertheless, his purity of life and honesty of purpose make him a powerful figure and I should not be surprised if at the next meeting of congress, assuming that he drops the rather wild portion of his programme, he will get a majority, and a substantial one too, to support him again.

Events soon proved Lord Reading to have erred in this forecast on the side of overestimating Mr. Gandhi's waning influence. For the great fight between the Mahatma and his two leading opponents in the Congress Party, Mr. C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru, ended with the latter's complete and crushing victory and in what seemed likely to be the final abandonment of the sterile policy of non-co-operation.

After this defeat Mr. Gandhi was for a time totally eclipsed, and his position and activities at the beginning of 1925 clearly and somewhat cruelly illustrate the contradictory elements in his complex character. For he was determined to cling to every attribute of political leadership within his reach, and when actual executive authority in the Congress Party was denied to him, he allowed his personal prestige with the masses to be exploited by his opponents in return for the outward semblance of power. Lord Reading accurately described the position in a letter written on the first day of 1925.

Gandhi is now attached to the tail of Das and Nehru, [he wrote], although they try their utmost to make him and his supporters think that he is one of the heads, if not *the* head. It is pathetic to observe the rapid decline in the power of Gandhi and the frantic attempts he is now making to cling to his position as leader at the expense of practically every principle he has hitherto advocated. I have always admired

him as a social reformer and as an Ethical teacher. I have always believed in his sincerity and devotion to high ideals, but I have always doubted the wisdom of his political leadership and have felt that personal vanity still played far too important a part in his mental equipment.

These words were written twenty years ago and yet, in the light of all that has happened in the meantime, it would be difficult to frame a juster estimate of so elusive a figure in so few words. For the rest of Lord Reading's Viceroyalty Mr. Gandhi was for all practical purposes below the political horizon. His attempts towards the end of 1924 and in the opening weeks of 1925 to compose inter-communal hostilities through a unity conference attended by representatives of other religions than the Hindu and Mahommedan was a fiasco and after its failure Hindu-Moslem relations degenerated rapidly.

Indeed, the last two years of Lord Reading's Viceroyalty witnessed the resurgence of the ancient enmity between the two communities in a more ubiquitous and persistent form than before. By this time purely religious differences had become of far less importance than the clash of material and political interests. It was inevitable that this should be so, for, once the doctrine of responsible self-government for India was accepted as the official policy, Hindus and Mahommedans were bound to ask 'self-government by whom ?' and the considerations arising out of this question have been the dominating force in Hindu-Mahommedan relations ever since the inception of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. Since the end of the *entente* in non-co-operation days the two sets of leaders have been manoeuvring for position in readiness for the coming of responsible self-government, and their inveterate antagonism has consequently spread to all aspects of Hindu-Moslem relations and has become the real political platform of parties organized inside the rival communities.

This new model of communal antagonism was seen in action even before the definite break-up of the non-co-operation *entente*. The sweeping demands made by Hindus early in the life of the first Assembly elected under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms were effectively opposed by some Mahommedan members, and from the outset demands by Mahommedan members for increased representation both in the Legislatures 'themselves and in the Government services shewed clearly that there could be no permanent political fusion between the two interests.

Moreover, side by side with the split between the two factions in the Legislatures a steady deterioration began in the relations between the rank and file in the country. The Moplah rebellion

might be regarded as a special case of an isolated uprising by a primitive and fanatical Mahommedan community, but the savage Hindu-Moslem riots at Multan in the south-west corner of the Punjab in September, 1922, were a portent the significance of which none could fail to understand. With this outbreak the last vestiges of the spurious unity between the two communities, based as it was on purely transitory and artificial conditions, disappeared.

By 1924 feeling between Hindus and Moslems was so acute as to colour the whole picture of Indian politics. Communal interests now began to dominate the scene and the solid front of extremist opposition to the Government gradually crumbled away. But Lord Reading always resented the short-sighted view taken by many people in India and England that it was to the advantage of the Government of India that Hindus and Mahommedans should be at each other's throats. He regarded the temporary respite thus afforded to the Government as being bought very dearly and only at the cost of endless future difficulties. As he told Lord Olivier :

It (Hindu-Moslem antagonism) is a menace to the peace of the country. Some, doubtless, think that this is to our advantage, but, if so, they fail to realize how grave the position might become if the feeling between the two communities continues to grow more antagonistic and fails to be alleviated by some compromise.

The appalling riots at Kohat in the North-West Frontier Province in September, 1924, when 155 people were killed and wounded and vast amounts of property looted, were the prelude to three or four years of bitter internecine warfare between the two communities, during which Hindu-Moslem relations became set in the mould of irreconcilable hostility for the next decade.

It was to be many months before Indian public opinion in general, and Hindu opinion in particular, recovered from the shock of the Kohat outbreak, and unhappily in the following years there were to be even more bloody and destructive clashes between the two communities. After Kohat relations between Hindus and Mahommedans progressively deteriorated and even the proceedings of the Statutory Commission and the Round Table Conference were deeply and indeed decisively affected by influences which had their origin in that outbreak.

All attempts to compose the differences between the two communities failed. A committee set up by the Indian Congress at its 1925 session had been at work before Kohat, trying to draw up a scheme for a national agreement. But the plan came to

nothing, since it only dealt in general terms with religious differences and made ineffective suggestions for arbitration in cases of conflict. An attempt to bring about a regional pact for Bengal, based on the extent of representation to which each of the communities was entitled in the Legislature, had also failed and the prospects of Hindu-Moslem unity were thus already remote enough when the Kohat riots occurred. But the most resounding failure of all these attempts at reconciliation occurred after that disaster.

Mr. Gandhi made fruitless attempts to heal the ancient antagonism by summoning an "All Parties" Conference immediately on receipt of the news from Kohat. This Conference appointed a sub-committee to devise a plan for improving Hindu-Moslem relations and high hopes were entertained of its success, but in February of 1925 it had to adjourn *sine die*, as it had utterly failed to come to any agreement on any item of the real problem. As Mr. Gandhi himself wrote in the issue of his paper, *Young India*, for March 5, 1925 : "The atmosphere for reasonable solution is lacking. Each distrusts the other. In such circumstances there can be no common ground of action. . . . Nor does one notice real anxiety on the part of any of the parties for a solution."

It is therefore not surprising that the period from the end of 1924 was marked by the rise or consolidation of definitely communal organizations and the virtual abandonment of national politics by a number of well-known public men in order to devote themselves to the development of these bodies. The most significant single move in this process was the revival of the Moslem League in December, 1924, which came forward with a demand for increased Mahommedan representation in all legislative bodies and public services. At the same time a *tanzim*, or "uplift," movement was started amongst the Mahommedans with the object of organizing them for economic, educational and industrial purposes and thus increasing their communal self-sufficiency. But the movement made only poor progress, and the most effective step taken on behalf of the community during the remainder of Lord Reading's Viceroyalty was the formation of a definitely Mahommedan political party in Bengal to promote specifically Mahommedan interests.

Amongst the Hindus also a certain amount of organization was taken in hand, although the need was nothing like as great as on the Mahommedan side. The caste system, whilst it no doubt makes for division between different classes of Hindus, at least provides the community with a number of powerful ready-made associations, and their immensely superior education, their greater subtlety of intellect and their age-old practice of commercial and

financial pursuits had put the Hindus into an immeasurably stronger material position than that occupied by the Mahomedans.

Communal relations were thus taking on a new and threatening aspect and Lord Reading's final year of office coincided with a rising tide of Hindu-Moslem antagonism. During 1925 Bengal, the United Provinces and the Bombay Presidency were each in turn the scenes of intercommunal rioting, while parallel with the growth of Hindu-Moslem antagonism there proceeded a steady weakening of extremist influence inside the Mahomedan ranks. Towards the end of 1925 Lord Reading was able to inform the Secretary of State that "the Ali Brothers have lost nine-tenths of their influence."

But the Kohat riots were more than an explosion of Hindu-Moslem antagonism ; they were also a reflection of the disturbed conditions prevailing in certain parts of the trans-border territory and in Afghanistan itself. As far as the trans-border tribes were concerned, the settlement of frontier policy on lines which have already been traced marked the beginning of a few years of tranquillity. The KJiyber tribes were quiet, and work pressed steadily forward on the railway to link Peshawar with Landi Khana at the head of the Pass on the Afghan border. Even in turbulent Waziristan road-making proceeded apace. Operations had to be undertaken in Southern Waziristan in 1923 against the irreconcilable leader Musa Khan, but they were speedily successful and by 1924 it had been found possible to withdraw regular troops from every position in Southern Waziristan except Razmak, and to replace them by Scouts and Khassadars.

Elsewhere along the frontier the general conduct of the tribesmen was also satisfactory, but in 1923 there occurred a series of isolated outrages against British subjects, one of which, the kidnapping of Miss Ellis and the murder of her mother by transborder outlaws, attained world-wide publicity. This series of crimes began on April 8, when Majors Orr and Anderson of the Seaforth Highlanders were shot dead at Landi Kotal near the head of the Khyber Pass. The murderers were Afghan subjects and, although they were arrested by the Afghan Government on the energetic representations of the Government of India, they were allowed to escape from prison whilst awaiting trial.

The relations between Afghanistan and India had already been troubled by a number of recent incidents when the Khyber murders occurred. In April, 1923, during operations against tribesmen in the hills north of Dardoni, where the Afghan boundary was not clearly defined, British aircraft had accidentally violated Afghan territory and killed some Afghan subjects. The Indian

Government immediately expressed its regret and paid full compensation for the lives and property destroyed. But during this year Lord Reading's Government had to bring pressure to bear on Afghanistan to settle what were known as the Barshore and Spinchilla incidents, which had occurred in 1921. In the former, tribesmen from Afghan territory had invaded British Baluchistan and inflicted casualties on a small detachment of Indian troops and their two British officers. In the Spinchilla affair, Afghan subjects had attacked a convoy in British territory and inflicted casualties on British troops. These incidents were finally settled during 1925 by the Afghan Government's compliance with the demands made on them by the Government of India, but it cannot be pretended that they left very cordial feelings behind them. Considerable unpleasantness between the two Governments was also caused by the theft of the mail bag belonging to the British Minister in Kabul. It was perfectly clear that the Afghan Government had instigated the theft, and Lord Reading took up a strong line, insisting on the restoration of the bag and a firm guarantee against any repetition of such an offence and at one time even contemplating the breaking off of negotiations then in progress for a trade convention between the two Governments. Fortunately the dispute was in the end settled in time to allow the convention to be signed in June, 1925.

The murder of the two British officers, with its disgraceful sequel in the collusive escape of the murderers, still further exacerbated relations between the Indian and Afghan Governments, but every other incident was put in the shade by the terrible Ellis tragedy at Kohat on April 15. An Afridi named Ajab, who had been an outlaw since his participation in the murder of Colonel and Mrs. Foulkes, also at Kohat, in 1920, murdered Mrs. Ellis, the wife of a British Staff Officer, and abducted her daughter as a hostage for his own safety.

Immediately Lord Reading acted with the utmost vigour, and in the Chief Commissioner of the frontier Province, Sir John Maffey, he found a colleague of determination and energy equal to his own. Sir John promptly ordered the villages of Ajab Khan and his chief lieutenant, which were in Afridi territory, to be destroyed, while at the same time by his skill and personal prestige he kept the tribes in sympathy with his action. A missionary lady, Mrs. Starr, who was well known to the Afridis, was sent across the border with influential Pathan officials and others and within a short time she had managed to effect the release of the captured girl. Everything that Sir John Maffey could do to discourage the frontier tribes from giving active or even passive assistance to such

crimes in future was done with a will and with Lord Reading's fullest support.

Exciting times on the Frontier lately, [he wrote to me], and I have been kept informed of all the steps taken to secure the return of Miss Ellis, which fortunately has just happened. The Lady and I met Mrs. Starr last year at Peshawar and were much struck by her earnest and broad-minded views of life, and her generosity of spirit, seeing that her husband had been murdered before her eyes by Frontiersmen. I have just been reading her report sent to me of her journey. It must have been an awful business up to the last until she knew that they would give up the girl.

I myself was always in dread of the telegram which would ask me for my orders as to whether or not a promise of immunity and pardon should be given in return for the delivering up of Miss Ellis alive and well. Fortunately we have managed without such an undertaking, but it might have become the crucial point, and then I should have been confronted with a very grave situation.

To pardon these devils in return for Miss Ellis would be putting a premium upon these frontier evil-doers kidnapping English women in the future ⁵ to refuse it would have meant the murder of the child.

He was indeed fortunate in being saved from so terrible a dilemma by the courage and determination of Mrs. Starr and her companions. But, while he was insistent upon every possible step being taken on the Indian side of the Frontier to prevent future outrages, Lord Reading knew very well that the crux of the situation lay in Afghanistan. If the Afghan authorities could be made to act honestly and energetically against their own desperadoes, as well as against the outlaws in their territory belonging to the tribes on the British side of the Durand line, the problem of safeguarding women in the Frontier Cantonments would be rendered infinitely simpler. But this was precisely the line of action which the Afghan authorities were not at first prepared to follow, and Lord Reading had to move with great circumspection.

His voluminous correspondence with the India Office during 1923 shows him grappling with this question. To all those who would have liked to see an ultimatum presented to the Ameer he turned a deaf ear, and yet short of military action there was very little that could be done to bring pressure to bear on the Afghan Government. An added difficulty arose from the fact that since the 1921 Treaty the British Minister in Kabul was officially responsible to the Foreign Office, so that the final conduct of affairs with Kabul lay outside the province of India and the India Office. But Lord Reading always maintained throughout his Viceroyalty

that the prime interest in, and responsibility for, Afghan affairs lay with him and the Secretary of State for India, and on the whole their wishes did in practice prevail. Nevertheless, the position was anomalous and unsatisfactory and the intervention of the Foreign Office produced at moments an atmosphere of vagueness and hesitation in British dealings with Afghanistan.

But in this matter of security on the Frontier the Foreign Office stood aside and Lord Reading's own diplomacy was allowed full scope. By the beginning of June he had determined that the Afghans should no longer be left in ignorance of the Government of India's determination to put an end to further evasion of the issues. At this stage the withdrawal of the British Minister from Kabul had become a possibility. But Lord Reading saw that such a step would probably fail in its object of extracting satisfaction from the Afghan Government, and would at the same time create a dangerous situation all along the Frontier as soon as news of the breach between India and Afghanistan became public property. He was therefore averse from such action whilst any other effective measures remained open.

"Clearly, we must exhaust all other measures both in London, Kabul and India," he told the Secretary of State on June 5, "to convince the Afghan Government of our determination to see this business through."

His own view was that the remedy lay in the application of the now more familiar device of "economic sanctions," reinforced by the most serious representations to the Ameer from the British Minister in Kabul and to the Afghan Minister in London from the Foreign Office.

The Afghan Government also had its grave difficulties to face, and it soon became clear that, however good their intentions, it was outside the bounds of practical politics for them to arrest the Kohat murderers and hand them over to the British authorities. But as the summer wore on Lord Reading's firmness, backed as it was by consistent support from London, convinced the Afghans that some acceptable step must be taken ; and in the end they agreed that the murderers should be deported to Afghan Turkestan and there kept under close surveillance. But it was one thing to promise and quite another to perform. Before the agreement could be carried out, Afghan troops had to be used against Ajab Khan and his fellow criminals, and an Afridi tribal force summoned to work in co-operation with the Afghans. These operations took place in January, 1924, and at the same time one of the two murderers of Majors Orr and Anderson, who had been recaptured after his first escape, was shot dead by an Afghan soldier in again

attempting to evade confinement. Critics were not wanting to condemn such an ending to the Ellis affair as grossly inadequate, but Lord Reading was able to show both that the Afghan Government could not be induced to go further except by military intervention, and also that tribal sentiment on the Frontier agreed that justice had now been done.

Throughout all these trying and dangerous months the diplomatic skill and the personal prestige and courage of Major (now Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Francis) Humphreys, the British Minister at Kabul, proved invaluable. Without his firm, energetic and resourceful presence on the spot a breakdown in the relations between India and Afghanistan could scarcely have been avoided, with ultimate repercussions the extent of which no one could foretell.

From the beginning of his Viceroyalty and throughout the rest of his life Lord Reading took a deep interest in the problems and personalities of the Indian States. It was left to his successors to grapple with the contentious problem of an All-India Federation, but even in his time the future shape of events was dimly perceptible, and none knew better than he that it would be well for the Provinces and the authorities in British India to prepare in advance for the alteration in their relations with the Indian States which would in time be forced on them. Throughout his Viceroyalty this question of the future of the States was always in the forefront of his mind and he lost no opportunity of keeping it in a friendly way before the Princes themselves.

The problem of bringing the States, with their bewildering multiplicity of resources, rights, privileges and interests, into one common system of government, not only for themselves, but for the provinces of British India also, was one to tax the powers of any statesman. The creation of the Chamber of Princes was hardly more than a formal recognition of the fact that the States had interests in common with each other and with the provinces and peoples of British India. The Round Table Conference with its scheme for a Federation of all India was still nearly a decade away when Lord Reading became Viceroy.

His introduction to the political problem of the States was not calculated to lessen his idea of its gravity and complexity, for in 1921 the conditions were already in existence which forced him in the next year to use his powers of certification for the first time to protect the Princes from unfair attacks in sections of the British Indian Press. The rise of an Indian Nationalist party inevitably spelt new trouble for the Princes, because their long tradition of loyalty to the British Crown, their naturally conserva-

tive views on domestic and national policy, and their undoubted strength as breakwaters against the flood of subversive ideas which swept along with such force in the years immediately after the war, all made them anathema to extremist politicians in British India. The extremist Press naturally took full advantage of the repeal of the Press Laws, and the Chamber of Princes, as has already been noted, had to appeal for protection by special legislation to replace the safeguards which they had lost by the rescission of the material statutes.

But this was only an isolated scene in a continuing drama. Whilst perfectly willing to protect the Princes against unfair attacks, Lord Reading was by no means prepared to condone any practices that might call for deserved criticism or to bolster up a system that was no longer appropriate to modern conditions. In his approach to the problem of the Indian States he shewed exactly the same cautious and deliberate attitude which marked his approach to all his other problems. Change and reform there had to be, but these must not be forced on the Princes. An excellent example of his technique is given in his first address to the Princes at Delhi on November 7, 1921. Speaking of reforms and the march of ideas in India and elsewhere, Lord Reading specifically applied his observations to the audience before him.

Reform, as it affects Your Highnesses has two aspects—one affecting your relations with the British Government in India and the other your relations with your own people. . . . The place of the Indian States in the India of the future is a problem which . . . must engage the attention of all your Highnesses. For the present I will merely ask your Highnesses to ponder the problem and to look ahead. . . . As regards the second aspect of the problem . . . the time and the place and the manner of change, if change there is to be, are in your hands. But the forces with which you have to deal are live forces. They need and they deserve careful study wherever they are at work.

Some months later, writing to Lord Peel with the authority of longer experience of the problems and conditions to be faced, Lord Reading reaffirmed his opinion that there would have to be changes in the States to correspond with those in British India and also defined what should in his view be the attitude of the British Government towards those changes. Throughout the rest of his service in India, and indeed to the end of his life, he never altered the opinions then expressed.

As we proceed with the development of self-government of British India, [he asked], what is to be the position of the States . . . ? This question cannot be indefinitely postponed and must at some time in

the future receive serious consideration from the ruling British authorities. Will the States stand still and refuse to change their present methods of government and their present constitutional system, or will they—no doubt tardily, gradually, and warily—follow in the footsteps of the British Government? Again, suppose some States are willing to reform and others refuse to abate one jot of existing autocratic rule, will these latter be overwhelmed by agitation in British India and within their own dominions for a more democratic system of government? Will the Maharajas, even the most liberal amongst them, ever consent to become constitutional rulers? . . . I am tempted to proceed to examine and answer to the best of my ability all these questions- . . . I am, however, convinced that our policy should be, indeed it must be, to act according not only to the letter but also to the spirit of our Sanads and treaties with the Princes in the preservation of their "honour, respect and dignity," and that we must trust them as they trust us. It is true that all their interests demand that they should act with us and place themselves in the hands of the paramount power, but it is none the less equally true that, so long as we continue to rule in India, it is in our interests to trust them.

The controversy attending the issue of an all-India Federation was afterwards to invest some of these questions and comments with a prophetic quality. But the implication of his speech to the Chamber of Princes and his letter to Lord Peel is clear enough; he was telling the Princes that the course of events would inevitably force on them some readjustment of their relations both with the paramount power and with their own people, and warning them to take up the task betimes and so obviate the necessity for outside intervention. Already he knew how extraordinarily sensitive the Princes were to anything like encroachment on their domestic autonomy. It is true that, when he first addressed the Chamber of Princes, he had only visited one Indian State, Kashmir, but he had already met some of the Princes individually and through personal interviews and correspondence had gained a good deal of insight into the views and wishes of the Order as a whole.

These problems were of many kinds: legal, constitutional, economic, even personal and social. The great Customs revenue dispute between the Government of India and certain of the Indian States was becoming steadily more urgent as Lord Reading's Viceroyalty drew to its close, but did not come to a head until Lord Irwin's time. But, apart from this, the improvement of communications and ports, the growth of industries and the general economic development of the States provided ample material for the attention of the authorities concerned with the two halves of India. Such a matter as the construction of an irrigation canal, partly in British India and partly in one or more Indian States,

raised a whole crop of intricate financial and constitutional problems, as did the equally delicate operations of extending telegraph, railway and postal facilities in the States. There were also perennial questions of extradition and innumerable minor disputes over boundaries and the possession of property and the like, many of which had to be brought to Lord Reading's notice and on occasions even decided by him. Again, there was a never-ending stream of questions arising out of the personal status of individual Princes, the number of guns in their salutes, their mode of address, their relations with their Residents or other officials and representatives of the Government of India, and many other matters which may seem insignificant at a distance but had a real importance in their time and place.

Before he had been very long in India, Lord Reading wrote to a correspondent in England about the difficulties arising out of the personal precedence of the various Princes :

I know nothing which gives rise to more unsatisfactory discussion than this question of precedence between Princes. I rarely get a visit from a ruling Prince who doesn't suggest either additional guns or some change in the salute he gets to add to his prestige.

But Lord Reading never treated any of these problems, great or small, lightly. Indeed, it was sometimes felt by his officers that on occasions he magnified the importance of questions which were intrinsically trivial. This feeling may have been justified in one or two instances, but the truth was that he looked at all his Governments relations with the Indian States as parts of one indivisible whole. As he was fond of saying, there were very few questions arising between the Government of India and the Indian States which could not be shown to have considerable potential importance. Moreover, democrat though he was, and stern and relentless as he showed himself to be in regard to misgovernment and dereliction of duty, there was a side of his nature which responded instinctively to the traditional pageantry and romance of these resplendent survivals from a less drab and progressive age.

This side of him shewed itself in the unaffected pleasure which he took in his visits to the ruling Princes, and in the thrills, at times not unmingled with justifiable alarm, of some of his hunting expeditions in the States. There was obvious sincerity and much self-revelation in a passage in a speech made at a farewell banquet to him given by the Maharaja of Bikaner not long before his **departure, in which he told** his host **and** the other Princes in the

company that he did not know whether they were aware of all they had done for him.

I have often thought, and shall think again and again, of the wonderful times I have had when we have been out in the jungle. . . . To me it has meant more perhaps than I can tell you ; it has been my period of rest and relaxation, and, above all to an old man, it has been my time for fresh experiences.

The extent of Lord Reading's acquaintance with the Princes and the strength of his influence with them became clearly apparent during the meeting of the Indian Round Table Conference. The prolonged and difficult discussions of the more contentious proposals for federation saw him placed in the position at once of court of appeal and source of advice. Innumerable rubs and obstacles were removed by his counsel and tact, and even the very vexed question of the representation of the greater and smaller States in the Federal Legislature was rendered less intractable than it had been before the champions of both sides consulted him.

Although the major problem of the adjustment of the relations between the States and British India was one for Lord Reading's successors to face, his own concern with the Princes and their affairs was by no means confined to the routine questions arising out of the everyday round of administration. The Princes' Protection Bill was in fact a necessary preparation of the ground for the big political developments which were to open with the Round Table Conference. Whilst the struggle over the Bill was proceeding, Lord Reading and his Government were engaged in another important development of the relations between the States and British India, the re-organization of the Indian States Forces. Lord Reading sent his proposals for reorganization to Lord Peel at the end of July, 1922, and with them a personal letter in which he made it plain to the Secretary of State that the military reforms now proposed were in truth only one element in the general issue of the future of British India and the Indian States and should be regarded as such.

It is not difficult to see what Lord Reading had in mind. The spontaneous loyalty of the Indian Princes during the War in putting their military resources at His Majesty's disposal was, of course, a contribution of high value to the Allies' fighting forces and war effort in general. But in the Indian States troops, as in all others subjected to the searching test of active service, defects of organization and administration had come to light, which it was the purpose of Lord Reading's memorandum to remedy.

Already in Lord Chelmsford's time proposals had been made to this end, but the present suggestions were more radical and extensive. In particular, they provided for supplying State troops with the most up-to-date weapons and equipment, including modern artillery, and for giving them adequate training for war so that they could combine easily and effectively with the Indian Army.

There can be no question that the proposals gave as complete an expression of trust in the Princes as they themselves could have desired, and they had the further valuable effect of raising the dignity of the Princes in the eyes of their own subjects and of the outside world, whilst both India and the individual States concerned gained materially by the new accession of strength and increase of efficiency which was secured by the acceptance of the Government of India's reorganization scheme.

Unhappily, it fell to Lord Reading's lot to have to remove two Rulers, the Maharaja of Nabha, one of the small Sikh States in the Punjab, and the far more exalted Maharaja Holkar of Indore, and, whilst these cases were occupying so much of his attention, he found himself compelled to deal with another matter of the greatest complexity, the long-standing dispute between the Government of India and the Nizam of Hyderabad over Berar, a territory which has been under British control since 1853 and is now attached to the Central Provinces of British India.

The document which constituted the Hyderabad claim to restitution was very voluminous. The Nizam had taken over three years to formulate his case, and had gone back so far into the mists of history that the Political Secretary to the Government of India had to be put on special duty in order to undertake the historical research necessary to enable a reply to be given.

During 1924 Lord Reading took pains to ascertain public opinion in India about the restoration, and in particular during a visit to the Central Provinces he sounded local people, including leading men from Berar itself, finding no support for restoration to the Nizam, a Moslem ruler of a predominantly Hindu State.

"They were very emphatic," Lord Reading reported to Lord Olivier, "one and all, to the effect that save for an infinitesimal minority there was no desire for it in Berar. This is in accordance with what I expected, inasmuch as at least 90 per cent of the population is Hindu . . . and in these days more particularly, the Hindu does not wish to place himself under the sovereignty of a Mahommedan."

Correspondence, both official and semi-official, on the subject went on briskly between Lord Reading and Lord Olivier during

1924, the Secretary of State promptly forwarding full accounts to India of all his interviews and correspondence with Sir Ali Imam, chief Minister of the Nizam, who was then in England. Lord Reading never liked the idea of transferring territory and people from British rule to an Indian State, and, although this attitude would certainly not have caused him to exercise any bias against the Nizam, it made it certain that the claim would have to be proved to the hilt before it was accepted.

In the end any detailed reply to the Nizam's long historical memorandum was omitted, and the Government of India's views were concisely stated. Once more, the restoration of Berar to Hyderabad was specifically refused.

The discussions between the Viceroy and the Secretary of State over the reply to Hyderabad had occupied some months, and it was not until March 20, 1925, that the Resident in Hyderabad was able to hand Lord Reading's letter to the Nizam. The Viceroy was anxious that Lord Birkenhead, who had by then replaced Lord Olivier, should agree to publish the letter as soon as possible on account of the danger of unauthorized reproduction of extracts from it in the Press, in all likelihood in a garbled form. But before the correspondence could be prepared for publication a new development occurred which broadened the issue into something much bigger than the mere restoration of a leased territory. The Nizam wrote a letter to Lord Reading in which he sought to give a novel interpretation to the doctrine of paramountcy, thereby raising a constitutional question of the first importance which was of vital interest to every ruling Prince in India. Lord Reading was very anxious to reply to this new development at once, so as to be able to publish the documents before he left India, and it was therefore agreed between him and Lord Birkenhead that the Government's answer to the Nizam's claim to Berar should be held up for the moment in order to be published together with the reply to this new and more fundamental claim.

The letter which created this new situation reached Lord Reading at the end of September, 1925. In effect, it challenged the position of His Majesty's Government as the paramount power and claimed that the Nizam, as one of His Majesty's Allies, was entitled in the event of a dispute between him and the British Government to ask for an independent arbitration of the kind to which a dispute between His Majesty's Government and a Foreign Power might be referred. The Nizam accordingly requested the appointment of a Commission to enquire into and report on the whole Berar controversy.

"The claim," wrote Lord Reading to Lord Birkenhead, " . . .

appears to amount to a claim to absolute equality with the British Government except in foreign affairs."

Viceroy and Secretary of State were at one in their response to such a sweeping demand. The Secretary of State went to the heart of the matter when he wrote that the crux of the Nizam's letter was its denial of the supremacy of the British Government, a denial which "demands immediate refutation," and Lord Reading was also convinced that "this notion of equality with the Paramount Power must be set at rest." It was, in his opinion, eminently desirable to publish the whole correspondence, not only for the purpose of publicly rejecting the Nizam's claim, but also because some of the Princes had for a considerable time shown a covert disposition to assert that under their treaties and engagements many of them were allies of the King and consequently ought to enjoy complete internal independence, whatever might be the position in regard to foreign relations. Indeed, there is reason to believe that there was a movement amongst some of the Princes actively to support this point of view and that this movement is not yet dead.

Such an attitude on their part could be understood in the light of the certainty of still further progress towards autonomy in British India in the near future. To deal with the Viceroy as the personal representative of the King-Emperor was one thing, but to have to deal with him as the head of an autonomous Indian Government was quite another. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Princes wished to make their position as safe as possible, well in advance of impending changes. They were unable, however, to get any lead or support in their attitude from Lord Reading.

The Princes, not unnaturally, have been anxious to get me to commit myself to some view as to the future, [he wrote to Lord Birkenhead in January, 1926]. I have refrained, save that I have told them that they may be quite sure that their sanads and treaties and engagements with His Majesty's Government will always be fully respected.

This tendency on the part of a large and influential section of the Princes illustrates clearly the general importance of the issue raised by the Nizam, and explains the anxious and constant attention which his letter received from both Viceroy and Secretary of State, than whom no two men better qualified to deal with such a question as this could have been found. They decided that the Government's answer to the Nizam should be issued by Lord Reading before his departure from India at the beginning of April, 1926, and this publication in fact constituted the last impor-

tant act of State in his Viceroyalty, taking place only twenty-four hours before he left Delhi *en route* for England.

The terms of Lord Reading's letter of March 27, 1926, every word of which had been carefully weighed both by him and by Lord Birkenhead before it was sent, were intended to scotch this claim once and for all time.

You state and develop the position, [he wrote to the Nizam], that in respect of the internal affairs of Hyderabad you, as Ruler of the Hyderabad State, stand on the same footing as the British Government in India in respect of the internal affairs of British India. Lest I should be thought to overstate your claims, I quote Your Exalted Highness's own words : "Save and except matters relating to foreign powers and policies, the Nizams of Hyderabad have been independent in the internal affairs of their State just as much as the British Government in British India. With the reservation mentioned by me, the two parties have on all occasions acted with complete freedom and independence in all inter-Governmental questions that naturally arise from time to time between neighbours. Now, the Berar question is not and cannot be covered by that reservation. No foreign power or policy is concerned or involved in its examination, and thus the subject comes to be a controversy between two Governments that stand on the same plane without any limitations of subordination of one to the other."

Lord Reading then proceeded to a direct refutation of the Nizam's argument by stating categorically the position of the British Crown.

The sovereignty of the British Crown, [he continued], is supreme in India, and therefore no Ruler of any Indian State can justifiably claim to negotiate with the British Government on an equal footing. Its supremacy is not based only on Treaties and Engagements, but exists independently of them and, quite apart from its prerogative in matters relating to Foreign Powers and policies, it is the right and duty of the British- Government, while scrupulously respecting all Treaties and Engagements with the Indian States, to preserve peace and good order throughout India, . . . I would remind Your Exalted Highness . . . that no succession to the "masnad" (throne) of Hyderabad is valid unless it is recognized by His Majesty the King-Emperor, and that the British Government is the only arbiter in cases of disputed succession.

The right of the British Government to intervene in the internal affairs of Indian States is another instance of the consequences necessarily involved in the supremacy of the British Crown. The British Government have indeed shewn again and again that they have no desire to exercise this right without grave reason. But the internal, no less than the external, security which the ruling Princes enjoy is due* ultimately to the protecting power of the British Government

and where Imperial interests are concerned, or the general welfare of the people of a State is seriously and grievously affected by the action of its Government, it is with the Paramount Power that the ultimate responsibility of taking remedial action, if necessary, must lie. The varying degrees of internal sovereignty which the rulers enjoy are all subject to the due exercise by the Paramount Power of this responsibility. Other illustrations could be added no less inconsistent than the foregoing with the suggestion that, except in matters relating to Foreign Powers and policies, the Government of Your Exalted Highness and the British Government stand on a plane of equality, but I do not think I need pursue the subject further.

The publication of the Hyderabad correspondence had an instantaneous effect. The Press of all shades of opinion, as well as the people of Berar, voiced their approval of the decision to uphold the *status quo*, whilst the clear and uncompromising statement on the doctrine of paramountcy put an end to any further attempts to claim complete internal independence for the India States. Lord Reading had in fact laid down the authoritative definition of the constitutional relations between the Indian States and the British Government, and had marked the position from which any future readjustment of those relations must start.

As it happened, whilst he was still busy with Hyderabad affairs, another matter of the first importance was engaging the Viceroy's attention which provided a most apt illustration of the correctness of his interpretation of the doctrine of paramountcy. This was the question of the Bhopal succession.

It was in March of 1925 that Lord Reading wrote to Lord Birkenhead, telling him that a "difficult situation" was about to arise in regard to this question. The Begum of Bhopal, who had by this time been on the throne for a number of years, was well over sixty, which in India is a considerable age for a woman, and both her eldest and her second sons had died within the previous twelve months. As was only natural in such circumstances, her third son, Hamidullah Khan, was especially dear to her, and she had already made known to Lord Reading her desire that he should succeed her, thus passing over the children of her eldest son.

Lord Reading was deeply moved by the Begum's appeal, but from the outset he took the line that the succession should be decided by law alone. Neither policy nor inclination should sway the decision. But the law in regard to the succession in Bhopal was obscure, and he told the Begum that he would have to go into **the whole question very** carefully before his decision could be

announced. Caution was all the more necessary since the decision in this case would be a matter of vital interest to the Rulers of all Mahommedan States in India, and it was not long before some of them were writing to Lord Reading, giving him their unsolicited views on the subject. The problem was one which appealed to Lord Birkenhead's legal instincts as strongly as it did to Lord Reading's, and he also took great personal interest in the search for precedents which would govern the decision. At first, however, he was not as emphatic as Lord Reading in the opinion that legal considerations alone should settle the issue, but thought that policy should have some influence. But Lord Reading, quite apart from his own cast of mind, which made departure from established law a procedure only to be contemplated under pressure of quite overwhelming arguments, was able to adduce in his support the effect on other Princes of a decision not in accordance with the laws of succession, which hitherto they had felt assured that the Paramount Power would keep inviolate. It was therefore decided that the Bhopal succession must be settled on the basis of established principles and valid precedents.

This decision again entailed considerable research, in which the Government of India's Political Department and the India Office both took part. It is fortunate that the research was not confined to India, because the Political Department's enquiries did not go back beyond the Mutiny and precedents between 1857 and 1925 tended to a conclusion hostile to the Begum's plea.

But the Begum somehow got an inkling of this state of affairs, and with a spirit and determination nothing less than heroic considering her age and her uncertain health she set off to England to press her case in person. Happily, Lord Reading was also in England on leave from April to July, and he too busied himself with the Bhopal case. To his surprise, he found that the India Office was in possession of a good deal of material bearing on the problem which was not available in India, or at any rate had not been brought to his notice, of such a character as to cause him strongly to doubt the correctness of his Political Department's opinion. Accordingly, when he returned to India, he ordered a thorough search of the Indian archives and in the end it was found that the London material and the additional Indian material now unearthed threw a completely new light on the Begum's position. An examination of a number of analogous cases in Mahommedan ruling families occurring in the first half of the nineteenth century shewed that it had not been the invariable rule to recognize the claims of primogeniture in the sense in which that term is normally interpreted. On the contrary, there were

important precedents in which the British Government had allowed succession to be determined in accordance with the somewhat peculiar provision of Mahommedan civil law, on which the Begum's claims were mainly based, that upon the death of the father his sons cease to possess expectation of participation in the property of their paternal grandfather. As soon as this point was clearly established, Lord Reading had no hesitation in agreeing to the Begum's request.

Once the history of the Mahommedan successions was completed, [he wrote to Lord Birkenhead in March, 1926], and the precedents were before me, all difficulties seemed to me to melt and I could find no ground for refusing to tread the same path as Government had followed from the end of the eighteenth century. . . .

The settlement of this case was well received on the whole, both by the people of Bhopal, who were after all mainly concerned, and also by the other Mahommedan rulers who were separately assured that in the event of similar circumstances arising in their States it would be left to their choice whether the succession should be governed by the Bhopal precedent or by the normal rules of primogeniture. It is undeniable that the fortunate outcome of what might have been a very harassing matter was largely due to the personal interest and trouble taken by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State, both of whom rejoiced to be able to fall in with the desires of the Begum, for whom they entertained a profound regard.

The direct effects on India and the Indian Army of the Great War of 1914-18 and the general world conditions which followed in its wake made the question of Indian military reorganization and future military policy one of the most important of the many problems which faced the Government of India during Lord Reading's Viceroyalty. For many and obvious reasons this particular question had been left practically untouched until his arrival. The aftermath of hostilities in the Near East, in Afghanistan and on the North-West Frontier kept the country in a condition which was far removed from a state of real peace. Much of the actual demobilization of the war-time Indian Army was not yet complete and there were still some thorny issues between Delhi and the War Office to be resolved. Moreover, new and difficult questions such as those relating to the early establishment of a Military College for India and the creation of an Indian Territorial Force had come into prominence by 1921.

A great stimulus had been given to Indian interest in military affairs by the publication of the Esher Report in 1920. When

Lord Esher's Committee, which had been appointed to enquire into the whole Indian military system, was at work, the experience and ideas of the War were still dominant, and the Committee believed that some of the expedients for active inter-Imperial co-operation which were evolved in response to war-time needs would become permanent parts of the machinery of the British Commonwealth. In particular they were convinced that in the political sphere the Imperial Cabinet would be perpetuated in some shape and that the setting up of such a body would entail the formation of a corresponding organization for Imperial defence. They visualized a general co-ordination of the various Imperial defence forces with a rôle allotted to the Indian Army in keeping with its strength and prowess. Inside the framework of such a scheme the Government of India was to have a voice in matters of general Imperial defence, whilst the Imperial General Staff was to exercise influence on India's military policy. With this proviso control of the Indian Army and of other Indian military forces was to be in the hands of the Government of India.

The Esher Report not unnaturally gave rise to acute anxiety and suspicion on the part of the great mass of educated Indians. The War had made them highly sensitive and apprehensive concerning this very question of the control of India's military forces by any outside authority, and in the Esher Report they found what they regarded as ample justification for their fears. Moreover, the publication of the Report almost coincided with the inauguration of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, which were not only designed to give popular opinion greater weight and influence than ever before with the Government, but were also by their whole purpose and tendency inconsistent with the subordination of Indian military policy and organization to Whitehall. The Esher Report had not in point of fact directly recommended any such subordination, since its proposals depended upon the inauguration of a large scheme for Imperial co-operation in defence which had not yet even begun to mature. But Indian opinion in general believed that, if the recommendations of the Report were ultimately carried into effect, they could only result in a substantial measure of domination from without.

Accordingly, the first session of the reformed legislature, held at the end of Lord Chelmsford's Viceroyalty, saw intense activity in connection with military affairs, including a full-dress debate on the Esher Report itself. The outcome of all these discussions was the passing by the Legislature of a number of resolutions designed to safeguard the Government of India's control over the Indian Army, and the appointment by Lord Reading, soon after

he had succeeded Lord Chelmsford, of a Committee to consider India's future military requirements in the light of the Legislature's resolutions and the opinions out of which they arose. The Committee sat under the presidency of the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Rawlinson, and its findings were sent to England for examination by a sub-committee of the Imperial Defence Committee. At the same time, the Government of India undertook to proceed without any unnecessary delay with the creation of a Military College and a Territorial Army for India. Military affairs had thus become a very live issue even at the time of Lord Reading's arrival in India and did not cease to hold their ground for the next two years.

The reaction to the Esher Report ensured that two main considerations should dominate all India's problems of defence during Lord Reading's Viceroyalty, the first, economy, and the second, the transformation of the Indian Army into a genuine national army, recruited and officered throughout by Indians. Both these considerations must in any event have become increasingly effective factors in Indian military policy after the War, but the inauguration of the Reforms brought them into the immediate foreground. For after 1921 the Indian Legislature, with an elected Indian majority in the Lower House, had greater powers of enquiry and criticism than ever before and even without any Esher Report it was inevitable that its members should turn their attention to the cost and control of their country's defence services. Moreover, the introduction of diarchy in the Provinces had concentrated attention upon expenditure on "nation-building" services and criticism was directed with growing force against military expenditure, which was regarded in many quarters as the exact opposite of a nation-building activity and by some people as even positively anti-national. The strength and ubiquity of the demand for economy in military expenditure were therefore readily understandable, particularly at the end of a war which had been proclaimed as destined to end war as a method of settling quarrels between civilized nations.

The demand for Indianization also sprang from easily identifiable causes, for the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, with their ultimate goal of responsible self-government for India, postulated, at least by implication, the transfer of military side by side with political and economic control into Indian hands.

Lord Reading had not been three weeks in India before he was deep in discussions with Mr. Montagu on both these main aspects of Indian military policy. The Secretary of State was "very **anxious**" about military expenditure and was "casting about

in his mind" for any plans that would help. He was also uncomfortable about "the unsatisfactory score or so of commissions granted to Indians at Sandhurst," which were not in the least likely to satisfy Indian aspirations. But such questions as these could not be decided off-hand, and Lord Reading told Mr. Montagu that he was setting up in Simla the Committee already mentioned, which was to include amongst its members a proportion of Indians, to deal with these and other allied problems. Meanwhile the Prime Minister had set up in England an "Army in India" Committee under the presidency of Sir Austen Chamberlain, a former Secretary of State for India who had been closely concerned with the Mesopotamian campaign, to consider the whole problem from the British Government's side. Both the Viceroy and the Secretary of State had hoped to be able to make an early announcement of important reductions in the number of British troops in India, but, as the year 1921 ran its course, their hopes gradually faded.

Various reasons contributed to their disappointment. In the first place, there was the natural reluctance at home to do anything which would apparently reduce the margin of safety in India. This was a most important consideration, especially in view of the strength of the Non-Co-operation and Khilafat agitations at the time. In the second place, the Committee in England found its work delayed by the intense preoccupation of the British Government with Irish affairs in those critical months of 1921, and in any case it required concrete proposals from the Government of India on which to work.

Lord Reading, on his side, found the conditions which would permit of retrenchment on British troops and also of effective consideration of the long-range problems involved in Indianization worsening as the year proceeded. Suggestions had been made in various quarters for the creation of a gendarmerie, officered and manned largely by Indians, for the purposes of internal security, but this and any other possible method of carrying out retrenchment and Indianization on parallel lines had to be abandoned in the face of prevailing conditions. Indeed, by August Lord Reading was compelled to tell the Secretary of State that he could not "conscientiously agree that the present situation is one that would properly allow of an immediate reduction being taken in hand."

In support of his attitude he pointed to the turn of affairs in Afghanistan and to the general growth of insecurity due to political **agitation**. Another element of importance in Lord Reading's eyes was the state of feeling among non-official Europeans in **India, to whose opinion** he always attached **great weight on account**

of the part played by them in the economic and political life of the country.

Almost immediately after he had written this letter the outbreak of the Moplah rebellion immensely complicated the situation, while the pressure on the morale of Indian troops and police was intensified by the Non-Co-operators and Rhilafatists throughout 1921, until the outlook could scarcely have seemed less favourable for the changes which Lord Reading and Mr. Montagu had in mind.

Nevertheless, the process of reducing India's war-time army to its peace establishment, which had been delayed by the employment of Indian troops in Mesopotamia and elsewhere in the Middle East, by the Afghan War of 1919 and by conditions on the frontier, proceeded apace.

Even at the end of 1921 the Government of India found it necessary to inform the War Office that it could not continue to accept liability for the supply of more than a certain number of Indian troops for overseas service, and insisted that the cost of those which were so supplied should not fall entirely on Indian revenues. In truth, a good deal of indignation was aroused in India—and not only among Indians—at the apparent discrimination on the part of the British Government, which had postponed for two and a half years after the armistice the demobilization, and even the return to India, of Indian troops, whilst finding it possible to arrange for the speedy demobilization of British and Dominion forces. As a result of this delay India had to continue to bear the heavy annual cost of these troops, and the Government of India was finding it more and more difficult to justify its military expenditure to the country. There was therefore a very good reason for Lord Reading's determination to press on with the demobilization of India's war-time soldiers as speedily as possible. Writing to Mr. Montagu at the end of April, 1921, he announced that, providing they could be spared from Mesopotamia, he was contemplating the demobilization of about 50,000 soldiers before the end of the year.

But there was uneasiness in England about the rate of demobilization of Indian troops, though from the opposite point of view to that which obtained in India. In England the belief was gaining ground in influential quarters that the permanent strength of the Indian Army was, being dangerously reduced, and Mr. Montagu himself was asking if the rate of demobilization could not be retarded. Lord Reading was accordingly obliged to write at some length to him, explaining the true position and pointing out that, before he landed in India, it had already been proposed that the

post-war establishment of British combatant personnel should be about 6,500 below the pre-war figure. The regular Indian personnel also was to be reduced, nominally by something over 7,000, but in fact by only 2,000. Such was the position as regards the regular peace-time army, British and Indian, and the Indian military authorities, although naturally reluctant to see the numbers of the permanent establishment decrease, believed that to this limited extent the reduction could safely be made. As for the temporary war-time soldiers, Lord Reading was determined to carry out the demobilization scheme already arranged.

But, as 1921 drew to its close and the extreme gravity of India's financial condition oppressed his mind more and more strongly, Lord Reading found himself forced to ask whether after all some further saving might not be made in military expenditure, and in pondering this question his thoughts turned to the possibility of reductions in the British establishment. Writing to Mr. Montagu on December 28, he said :

The Budget . . . will be a most serious affair, for there will be an enormous deficit, larger than I had ever been led to expect. . . . It must be really bad, for what alarms me most is not merely the actual deficit, grave as that will be, but the thought that in anything like present expenditure the deficit must continue to recur. How and where to make big reductions is the problem. . . . Here it is complicated by the cost of British troops as compared with Indian which, I fear, will loom large in the discussions on the Budget."

Mr. Montagu, however, had to face public opinion and Parliament in England, just as Lord Reading had to face Indian opinion and the Indian Legislature, and he knew that no further reductions of British troops would be tolerated at that particular juncture.

I am very sorry about your military expenditure problems, [he told Lord Reading in reply], but I am afraid it has got to be lumped. Will you look at it from this point of view? Consider India's land frontier; consider its extent, and consider the appalling perplexities of the tribal character of its neighbours; consider the size of India and consider its population. (Three hundred millions in a country the size of Europe). Can anybody say that forty-five British battalions are excessive? . . . Now, what I should like . . . is to do away with using the Army for maintaining internal order, and to have in its place a mixed gendarmerie . . . on which we could rely for all internal purposes. I want you to explore this proposal.

The proposal was duly explored both in India and in England but never came to fruition. **One of the greatest arguments against**

the gendarmerie, or battalions of armed police, was that, although the cost ought under the existing constitution to fall on the Provinces, this was a practical impossibility in prevailing circumstances ; while, if the Central Government were to assume liability for the expense, the problem of the national Budget would not be eased to any appreciable degree.

Nevertheless, the problem of how to economize in military expenditure was one of the utmost urgency for Lord Reading at the beginning of 1922. Out of a total revenue of about £80,000,000 no less than £29,000,000, or 36 per cent, were absorbed by military expenditure, and political as well as financial reasons dictated some immediate and substantial reduction of this overgrown item. As soon as the proposal for the Inchcape Committee had taken definite shape, Lord Reading's mind had at once turned to the possibility of retrenchment in the Army and in March, 1922, he warned Mr. Montagu that this thorny problem would certainly have to be tackled sooner or later. During the months which passed between then and the arrival of the Committee in India in November of the same year, his opinion that no effective retrenchment could be made without including military expenditure hardened into a fixed conviction. Thus in August he was writing to Lord Peel, Mr. Montagu's successor :

We cannot get away from the fact that no substantial reduction can be made in expenditure unless military expenditure is tackled. . . . All the study I give to the retrenchment problem only impresses upon me again and again the futility of any retrenchment we may make in civil expenditure as a means of balancing our Budget, and the whole question in this country will assuredly turn upon the heavy military expenditure borne by this country, and, it will be said, utterly disproportionate to our revenues. Be it also remembered . . . that it is not only the Indian who will insist upon cutting down the military expenditure, but also the European who lives in India. . . .

Naturally, no decision could be reached between the Secretary of State and the Viceroy in their communications, for the matter involved larger issues than they had power finally to determine. The War Office 'was not willing to accept liability for any share of Indian military expenditure,' and the Government of India could not recommend further permanent reductions in numbers of either British or Indian military personnel. Accordingly a tug-of-war went on between Delhi and Whitehall during the early months of 1922, the Government of India trying to save money by delaying the arrival of replacement-drafts for British regiments in India, whilst still keeping them nominally at full strength ; the **War**

Office objecting to keeping the drafts in England at the Home Government's expense ; and the Secretary of State for India explaining that he could not justify to the British public even a temporary reduction of British troops in India at a time when that country's internal and external conditions were so unpromising. Amongst other expedients the possibility of separating the expenditure on Waziristan from the general defence budget was at one time mooted in Whitehall, only to be promptly scouted in Delhi. The position was still further complicated during these months by the efforts of the War Office to induce the Indian Government to attend to certain long-standing claims made by the War Office on India in respect of war-time expenditure. Lord Peel, while himself not agreeing with the claims, thought that the simplest solution of the whole business would be to refer it for arbitration to two or three eminent members of the British Government. But Lord Reading hardly took the trouble to disguise his impatience with what he regarded as the small-minded attitude of the War Office, and in a series of telegrams to Lord Peel countered the proposal for arbitration, finally summarizing his objections in one pungent sentence : "My opinion is that in any event there is no money to come ... to the War Office, so why pursue this belated claim ?"

Even the European Press in India commented in tones decidedly unfriendly to the War Office on the subject of Indian military expenditure, and the Indian-owned Press was, of course, far more outspoken and hostile, while in the Legislature the opposition were massing for a first-class attack on military expenditure and policy generally. From every point of view the problem confronting Lord Reading bristled with formidable difficulties. The Joint Select Committee of Parliament which had been considering the cost of maintaining British troops in India reported in July, but did not advance a solution much further by making a few vague recommendations, amongst them one to the effect that the Inchcape Committee should be directed to give their most serious consideration to the possibility of reducing expenditure under this head.

Such generalities were not very helpful, for in their efforts to economize on defence Lord Reading and his Government had already been forced to the very limits of safety. The Commander-in-Chief, Lord Rawlinson, described to the Legislative Assembly in March, 1922, some of the economies already effected or to be effected during the financial year 1922-23. New buildings and the purchase of modern equipment of all sorts had been postponed. The artillery had been reorganized, cavalry regiments amalgam-

ated and the numbers of the Headquarters Staff reduced. As reasons for refusing any further reductions in the numbers of either British or Indian combatants, Lord Rawlinson pointed to the existence of internal disorder, the seditious activities of Non-Co-operators and the Moplah rebellion, quoting this incident as an indication of what might take place in other areas, if the country were still further denuded of troops.

But with all these economies the actual figure of military expenditure was scarcely diminished. The savings were at once swallowed up by increased and increasing prices, and Lord Reading's alarming financial problem remained as intractable as ever. In the last letter which he wrote to Mr. Montagu as Secretary of State he made it clear that in his opinion defence policy in India now resolved itself into a mere choice of two great evils, the danger of inadequate defence and the danger of financial disaster.

It is this heavy burden of military expenditure which presses so severely on this country, which really cannot bear it, [he wrote] . . . How can this go on ? . . . You at home are grappling with your problems regarding military and naval expenditure in drastic fashion and are obviously taking risks. . . . The time must come when we shall have to do the same in India and, although we should prefer to be fully insured against all possible risk, yet we may find the premium so high as to threaten to bring about the very loss the insurance is intended to prevent.

Fortunately the 1922 Budget proved to be the peak of Lord Reading's difficulties in the matter of military expenditure. Thenceforward the steady decline of unrest and Non-Co-operation, better economic conditions both in India and abroad, a run of good harvests, the skill of the late Sir Basil Blackett as Finance member, and decreased expense on the North-West Frontier and on overseas and other foreign commitments, all combined to alleviate the situation in regard to India's defence expenditure and to make possible the great relief provided by the Inchcape "axe."

Moreover, in 1923, after a final tussle with the War Office, Lord Reading succeeded in obtaining the Home Government's sanction for that reduction in British troops which in his view was the only way in which material saving could be made. The Government of India's proposals comprised reductions in artillery, cavalry and infantry. The artillery reductions were not important and caused no friction between Delhi and Whitehall, but the proposed reductions of cavalry and infantry, and particularly of cavalry, gave rise to prolonged and somewhat embittered negotiations between the **War** Office on the one hand and **the India**

Office and Indian Government on the other. The reluctance of the War Office to agree to any decrease in the number of British troops in India is easily understandable, for such a step affected the whole basis of the calculations on which their strategic policy was framed. Reduction of the number of British troops in India meant an equal reduction in the strength of the standing British Army, unless the men removed from the Indian establishment were kept on the Home establishment and paid for by the British tax-payer. But either of these alternatives was distasteful to the War Office, and the year 1925, with its post-war aftermath of financial and economic problems, was no time to ask the people of Great Britain to sanction increased expenditure on the Army.

In the course of the discussion of the Army estimates in the House of Commons in March, the Under-Secretary of State for War made it clear that the War Office was by no means certain to approve the reductions suggested by Lord Reading and his Government, and this statement was instantly and inevitably interpreted in India as an announcement that the reductions had been definitely refused. Both Lord Peel and Lord Reading were highly indignant that the War Office should thus ventilate its views before the matter had been even considered by the Cabinet. In India the incident had a most unfortunate effect on public opinion and undoubtedly contributed to the defeat of the Government in the Legislative Assembly on Sir Basil Blackett's proposal to increase the Salt Tax in order to balance the Budget. It was in fact an ominous warning to Lord Reading of the difficulties still to be overcome before the reductions could be made.

But the position of the Government of India was desperate, and Lord Reading resolutely pressed his point of view with the whole-hearted support of Lord Peel, who was in complete agreement with him and fought his battle stoutly in the Cabinet. Ultimately the crux of the dispute between the War Office and the Indian Government resolved itself into the question of the cavalry reductions. It was agreed that the infantry reductions should be by establishment and not by units, the number of officers and men in each British infantry regiment serving in India being reduced, but no complete units disbanded or transferred from the country. The Government of India insisted, however, that the cavalry reductions should take the form of the removal of three British cavalry regiments from the Indian establishment. Here Lord Reading was on unassailable ground, for the Commander-in-Chief had advised him that they were not absolutely essential and their reduction would of course result in an important saving.

But the War Office opposed the proposal stoutly and it took all Lord Peel's firmness to save it from shipwreck. Indeed, the dispute had to be taken to the Cabinet before it was finally settled on the basis of a compromise agreed upon by both parties. Two of the three cavalry regiments were to be withdrawn from India to England, where their cost would fall on the British taxpayer. The third regiment remained on the Indian establishment.

With the settlement of this long-drawn-out dispute the controversy as to the number of British troops to be retained on the Indian post-war establishment was at an end as far as Lord Reading was concerned. But the no less harassing question of "Indianization" remained with him throughout the whole of his Viceroyalty. It was early brought to his notice in the letter from Mr. Montagu in April of 1921 to which reference has already been made, and it quickly grew into one of his outstanding pre-occupations. Both he and Mr. Montagu believed that the progress of political reforms in India implied a corresponding replacement of British officials by Indians in all the services. Mr. Montagu's letters and despatches snowed that he was chiefly interested in the "Indianization" of the Civil Services and had not yet given much thought to the question of the methods by which a truly Indian Army was to be evolved, officered and controlled by Indians throughout. Indeed, there is nothing to show that he regarded this problem as different in kind from that of increasing the proportion of Indian to British officers in the Civil Services. But Lord Reading, although he was as fully convinced as Mr. Montagu of the necessity of replacing British civil administrative officials by Indians, always had more clearly in mind than Mr. Montagu both the desirability of making an early start with the Indianization of the Army on an effective scale and also the very different considerations which were involved in applying the process to the civil and military services respectively. As early as July 21, 1921, Mr. Montagu had written to Lord Reading, "I am quite sure now that we have got to go in for Indianization. We have got to realize that self-government does not merely mean political reform, but the substitution of an indigenous administration for a foreign administration."

The whole tone and contents of the letter show that Mr. Montagu was thinking exclusively of the civil administration, but Lord Reading's reply of August 18 went straight to the heart of the Indianization problem by stressing the need for the Indianization of the Army.

I think it useless, [he wrote], to make pronouncement of our policy to give India in the near future full Dominion Status and yet at the

same time to hesitate to put her in the position to manage her affairs when they have been entrusted to her. Above all, I am always impressed by the arguments of a thoughtful Indian . . . who sees the dangers to India of the withdrawal of British control of government and the consequent withdrawal of the British Army. I have never myself been able to understand the views of those who comfort themselves by the thought that, supposing . . . full Dominion Status was given to Indians, the British Army would still remain in India, controlled by India and not by the War Office at home. Who can possibly expect that such a state of things will happen ? . . . It is scarcely worth while analysing this proposition, for I am absolutely convinced that it never could happen. Consequently, steps must be taken to enable Indians to take the high command and to direct their own Army. . . . These considerations apply, though not with such force, to the other Services, and this touches one of the most complex and difficult questions surrounding the future of India. . . . The problem is not only in the future : it is in the present.

With the Viceroy holding such definite views and expressing them in such decided fashion, it is not surprising to find that the main impulse towards Indianization of the Indian Army came throughout from the side of the Indian Government, supported on this topic by a strong, widespread and growing public opinion in India. The War Office, naturally enough, took a conservative attitude towards the question, but successive Secretaries of State for India were on the whole prepared to follow the lead of the Viceroy.

The position taken up by the War Office and the Home Government is easily understandable. Already they were encountering increasing reluctance on the part of parents to put their sons into the Indian Army, while on the other hand suitable candidates for the few vacancies which already existed for Indian cadets at Sandhurst had only been found with great difficulty. Any scheme for extensive Indianization required examination in the light of these conditions, for in the early post-war years the only justification for running any risk of depleting the supply of British officers for the Indian Army had to be founded upon an overriding and clearly demonstrable necessity.

Lord Reading and his advisers, including Lord Rawlinson, whose opinion in this matter was properly of decisive influence, held that it was necessary to proceed with some definite scheme of Indianization without further delay. During 1921 a Committee appointed by the Commander-in-Chief, under the Chairmanship of the Chief of the General Staff, had been at work preparing a scheme of Indianization, and at the end of January, 1922, Lord

Reading was able to send their Report to Mr. Montagu for the opinion of the Cabinet and War Office. It is not surprising that the proposals contained in the Report appeared at first sight somewhat alarming in their extent. Briefly, the Committee suggested that the Indian Army, with the exception of the Gurkhas, should be completely Indianized in three definite stages each of 14 years, beginning in 1925. But, if the experiment proved successful in the first stage, the period of the second stage might be reduced to nine and of the third to seven years. Thus the proposal involved the possibility that, given favourable conditions, the Indian Army might be controlled and officered from top to bottom by Indians by the year 1955.

The Committee justified their bold proposals as providing the basis of a workable scheme for the most rapid practical Indianization of the Indian Army, whilst safeguarding efficiency as far as possible. They avoided costly reorganization on the one hand and uneconomic experiments on the other. They were to be executed by stages, while ensuring the maintenance of the existing organization and grouping. Above all, by clearly indicating the method and time of complete Indianization they assured the people of India that an honest effort was being made to satisfy their aspirations. They also afforded protection for the interests of British officers already in the service and those who would join it in the future.

In sending this plan to Mr. Montagu, Lord Reading said that he had considered it in Council and believed that it offered a hopeful basis for Indianization. Obviously he could not ask for its wholesale adoption without further examination of details, but he expressed the wish to be in a position to declare his Government's policy in the matter to the Indian Legislature before the introduction of the Budget at the end of February. Mr. Montagu, however, quickly dispelled any idea that the Home Government would agree to handle the problem on the broad lines indicated in the report of the Chief of Staffs Committee without a good deal of further discussion.

In reply, Lord Reading explained that he had, of course, taken the trend of present events into consideration, and that the whole scheme had been based on the principle of gradualness. The first period of experiment would not end till 1939, "by which time," as he rightly observed, "the whole system of Government in India will probably have changed." He agreed that there were dangers in the scheme, but stated roundly that the Commander-in-Chief was at one with him in holding the opinion that India's claim for the Indianization of her Army could not long be resisted.

Nevertheless, the Home Government were not persuaded by this reasoning and insisted on beginning with a more modest and manageable scheme. Opinion in London favoured the selection of four regiments for the experiment, but on this point Lord Reading and his chief military advisers were obdurate, maintaining that four was an impossibly small number and demanding that at least eight units should be Indianized. The arguments and counter-arguments between Whitehall and Delhi occupied the greater part of the summer, and in the meantime the Press in London discovered that there was disagreement between the Viceroy and the Cabinet on this question. One or two of the less responsible papers circulated the wildest rumours, amongst others the statement that the Viceroy favoured the complete abandonment of European recruitment for the Indian Army. *The Times*, however, issued on August 14 an authoritative denial of these rumours and they thereupon died a natural death. But the episode had the beneficial effect of accelerating agreement between Lord Reading and the Cabinet as to the number of regiments to be Indianized. The Viceroy had his way in the matter of the number of regiments, but had to yield on another point which he regarded as of hardly less importance. He had desired to include in the announcement of the eight units scheme a statement that, if the results were successful, the number would be increased and the scheme extended and developed with the ultimate objective of complete Indianization, and in support of his point had described in a long letter the state of feeling in India, in regard to Indianization of the Army, particularly among those Indian political elements which supported the Government. But neither these arguments nor the possibly stronger argument that his principal military advisers upheld him on this as on other points in which he had disagreed with London could prevail.

He was unable to carry the Secretary of State with him. In Lord Peel's view, the possibility of further Indianization must be strictly dependent on the results achieved with the eight units. He feared, and with justice in those days, that any talk of complete Indianization at that juncture might result in drying up the supply of British officers for the Indian Army. He also argued that there was a tendency in India to believe that, when once a policy involving progress by successive stages had been initiated, any failure to achieve such progress must be due to the shortcomings of the Government alone and that a declaration of policy of the kind contemplated would be taken in India to be a solemn pledge by which the Government was bound, no matter what the actual progress realized might be. For these reasons he could not agree

to any announcement implying an ultimate programme of complete Indianization, and there was nothing for Lord Reading to do but accept the decision.

Throughout the whole of Lord Reading's Viceroyalty India's defence was regarded primarily as the task of the army alone. It was only in his last weeks in India that the intention to create an Indian Navy was announced, though only on a scale and at a rate which will leave the defence of India by sea for many years to come in the hands of the British Navy. The Air Force in India was not even a stripling in his time ; it was the merest infant, for there were not seventy military planes in the country in 1921, and even those in whose hands rested the responsibility for India's defence would have been startled had they been able to foresee into what a giant this infant was to grow in the next ten years. For the whole of his first year in the country no problems connected with the Air Force arose to occupy Lord Reading's attention. Apart from routine matters such as the provision of equipment and personnel, his official and private correspondence is blank on the subject. After a minor military operation on the Frontier in the summer of 1921, an official of the Air Ministry suggested to Mr. Montagu that there might have been some saving of life and expense had aircraft been used in co-operation with the ground troops, but Mr. Montagu passed on the suggestion rather perfunctorily and there is nothing on record to show that Lord Reading attached any importance to it. In 1921 the head of the Air Force in India had no direct access to the Viceroy, whilst the control of its equipment and requirements generally was in the hands of the Government of India's Finance Department. It is therefore not surprising either that the Air Force in India did not count for much when Lord Reading first went out as Viceroy or that he was scantily informed about it.

In 1922, however, the existence of the Air Force was brought somewhat brusquely to his notice. A warning note was sounded in March by Lord Peel, who informed him that the state of the Air Arm in India had been the subject of very adverse comment by the Defence Committee in London. This was the sort of hint which Lord Reading was always quick to take, and he at once began to interest himself in the grounds for the complaints, although under the prevailing system he was cut off from direct access to information. Fortunately, the Home Government found it possible to spare Air Marshal Sir John Salmond for a visit to India to inspect and report on the state of the Air Force there. Lord Reading welcomed his visit heartily, for it meant that whatever deficiencies **there might be would be fully exposed by Sir**

John's inspection, and also that the Government of India would have the benefit of the best advice available. At the time of Sir John Salmond's visit there was in fact a good deal of uneasiness in England about the state of the Air Force in India and various scaremongering rumours were bandied about, some colour being given to the stories by several aeroplane crashes. A formidable newspaper campaign against the Indian authorities suddenly developed and *The Times* published some very severe criticisms of the administration of the Air Force. There was a firmly rooted belief that the Force had been starved of necessary spares and safety appliances for financial reasons. But the Court of Inquiry into the crash upon which the main attention of the Press had been concentrated reported that it was not due to any defect in the machine, a decision which was a great relief to Lord Reading.

After Sir John's visit there was a marked increase in the speed and comprehensiveness of the Government's plans for strengthening the Air Arm in India. In particular, the Air Force chiefs in England insisted that the head of the Force in India should have the right of direct access to the Viceroy without the intervention of the Commander-in-Chief.

The outcry in England against the state of the Air Force in India came as a great shock to Lord Reading. The fact that the head of the Force had no direct access to him of necessity cut him off from the most authoritative source of information available, and with characteristic decision he at once took the necessary steps to ensure that that defect in the system should be remedied.

We have had a meeting of my council this morning, [he wrote to Lord Peel in September of 1922], and have decided forthwith to ask for the appointment of an Air Vice-Marshal who shall have the opportunity of direct access to me just like a Secretary of the Government of India. . . . If this right had existed before, representations could have been made to me to take steps to remedy the defects.

Lord Reading was disturbed and more than a little piqued to find that deficiencies in the Air Force in India had been officially admitted and yet had not been brought to his notice. The appointment of an Air Vice-Marshal with direct access would at least prevent a recurrence of such a state of affairs. Later in the same letter, which contained the first discussion by him of the whole question of the Air Force in India, he gave in firm and concise language his opinion as to its future standing : " . . . if we are to have an Air Force, which is now quite settled, it must be an efficient force, and we must take care it is kept up to full efficiency."

Unfortunately the efficiency of the Air Force in India was bound

up with the persistent topic of military expenditure, which at this time was in the forefront of Lord Reading's mind. He was at the very moment engaged in making out an unassailable case for the absolute necessity of some material saving in military expenditure and he naturally could not contemplate any increase in the Budget, even in order to provide India with a larger and more efficient Air Force. Any expansion must therefore be attained out of savings brought about in expenditure on the Army. The strong view was held in London that the Air Arm could be more frequently used in frontier warfare with large attendant economies, and Sir John Salmond also had in mind the problem of retrenchment in military expenditure when he drew up his recommendations for the future of the Air Force in India. He recommended that India should have two additional squadrons, relying on Great Britain for a reinforcement of three further squadrons in the event of war. This addition to the strength of the Air Force would in his opinion enable India to dispense with a fourth division. Lord Reading and all the members of his Council, with the exception of the Commander-in-Chief, supported Sir John Salmond's recommendations, but Lord Rawlinson was unable to endorse them because he believed that the Air Force was still comparatively untried as an arm of aggression and defence in substitution for ground troops. He therefore wished to have the two extra squadrons of aircraft recommended by Sir John without any reduction in the Army. But Lord Reading and his other colleagues found themselves unable to accept this view on account of the absolute impossibility of agreeing to any additional military expenditure.

The various improvements and adjustments in the internal administration of the Air Force which were recommended by Sir John Salmond were at once undertaken by the Government of India in spite of the immediate extra expenditure involved, and by the beginning of 1923 everything that the Government of India could do with the means at its disposal to bring the level of safety in flying in India to an equality with that of any other Air Force had been done. In fact, no airman had ever been allowed to go up in a machine which was known not to be thoroughly serviceable, but the number of such machines available at any given moment had been unduly depleted by the deficiencies in equipment and safety appliances to which the Press had drawn public attention in England.

Lord Reading was very anxious that the India Office should issue a categorical statement to this effect, since suspicions of the efficiency of the Air Force in India persisted in some quarters long after all remediable shortcomings had been rectified. But

Lord Peel would not agree to the form of the statement which **the Viceroy** wanted to issue, and after some argument it was abandoned. Unhappily, the old suspicions were revived in full force by the deaths in an air accident at Quetta in April, 1923, of two very promising and gallant young airmen. A virulent newspaper controversy again broke out in England and found an eager echo in the Indian Press. These casualties were a source of particular grief to Lord Reading, but he had at any rate the consolation of knowing that no sins of omission could be laid at his door, since he had given instant personal attention to the state of the Air Force in India, once he had become aware of its unsatisfactory condition. Moreover, the Air Ministry in London entirely absolved the Government of India from the grave charges made against them in some of the English and Indian newspapers.

The fact that in April, 1925, the Viceroy could leave the country for four months is a plain indication of the degree of relative stability in the political situation which had by then been attained. The growing pains of the Montagu-Chelmsford Constitution were over, and the new legislatures had definitely established themselves as the centre of gravity of India's political life. The Congress Party's attempt to "wreck the Reforms from inside" had failed because some of their own leaders had joined the revolt of the Independents and others against the barren creed of mere non-co-operation. It is true that in March, 1926, the Congress Members in the Legislative Assembly staged a "walk-out" by way of protest against the Government's failure to comply with the terms of the "Home Rule" Resolution passed by the Assembly in February, 1924, but this action was in itself a confession of failure. The Congressmen could no longer get a majority in the Assembly for automatic obstruction to everything the Government proposed, and the "walk-out" was an attempt to avoid an open demonstration of their futility. In fact, the "walk-out" ultimately proved conclusively that effective political action in India was now possible only in the Legislatures, for it took place at the end of the winter session in Delhi, and at the next session of the Assembly, the autumn session in Simla, the Congress members were in their seats once more.

At the end of August, 1925, one of the most important Congress leaders in the country, Mr. S. B. Tambe of the Central Provinces, accepted the office of Executive Councillor in the Government of his province and this move was the first of a series of events which gravely undermined the unity of the Congress Party. For Mr. Tambe's example was followed before long by some of the leading **Congress men of Bombay, who announced that they too were tired**

of useless non-co-operation and believed that the time had come to try other measures. The policy which they and Mr. Tambe had in mind later came to be called "Responsive Co-operation."

This promising development in Indian politics was helped by the friendly and conciliatory tone of Lord Reading's speech on August 20 at the opening of the Simla Session of the Indian Legislature.

"Is it not worth while to make a real attempt to wipe out past controversies," he asked the members, "and to unite in an effort to test the system at present established? In the Secretary of State's words 'we desire and request good will, nor shall we be niggardly bargainers if we meet with that generous friendship which is near and dear to our hearts'."

The speech had a note of emotion such as Lord Reading seldom allowed himself to display, but the great majority of his audience were in tune with him and it is possible that on this occasion he made the most effective of all his appeals to political India. Certain it is that the cracks in the Congress Party developed more rapidly than ever after this speech, and the conviction grew apace that the Viceroy's visit to England and its outcome had brought a move forward in Indian policy definitely within the bounds of possibility. Writing to Lord Birkenhead after the close of the Simla Session, Lord Reading said " . . . there is more desire to co-operate, and not only is there desire but there has actually been more co-operation throughout the session."

Another sign of the determination of some of the Congress leaders to use the opportunities afforded by the 1919 Act was given by the election during the Simla Session of an outstanding Congress man, Mr. V. J. Patel, to the office of President of the Legislative Assembly in succession to Sir Frederick Whyte. Mr. Patel had been for years a bitter and outspoken opponent of British rule in India and his willingness to accept office came as a surprise.

Nevertheless, there were dangers in this situation which Lord Reading was quick to perceive. For, as its more responsible members inclined towards greater co-operation with the Government, so the Congress organization, with all its experience, resources and prestige, was passing into the hands of its most extreme and least constructive section. The elections for the Legislative Assembly were due to be held in the Autumn of 1926, and in the general political backwardness of the electorate **the** Congress extremists, with their ubiquitous organization and vote-catching slogans, were likely to sweep the field. Fortified by victories at **the** polls **and in a** stronger position than ever **inside**

the Assembly, the Congress Party would be able to reverse the tide which had begun to flow against them and once more destroy all chance of early and fruitful moves in the direction of political advance in India.

But Lord Reading was not disposed to sit idly and watch the initiative pass into the hands of the opposition. Accordingly, in December, 1925, he proposed to Lord Birkenhead a counter-stroke which would solidify and hearten all the various anti-Congress elements in the country. Moreover, as he told the Secretary of State, "I have particularly kept in mind the desirability of a favourable atmosphere for the arrival of my successor." He therefore boldly proposed to spike the Swarajist guns before the election by appointing the Statutory Commission in 1927 instead of 1929.

The effect of such an announcement [he wrote] will give the Liberals and Independents the advantage of having by their policy succeeded in obtaining a substantial measure of political advantage . . . it would embarrass the Swarajists . . . and it would create a more favourable atmosphere for my successor, who would thus have a comparatively quiet time enabling him to arrive at his own conclusions regarding the political situation in India.

But he was insistent that this decision should be taken immediately, for, as he said, "otherwise the Swarajists will table a Resolution (in the Spring Session of 1926) based upon that of September last, and when this has been placed on the table, any subsequent announcement of Government policy will be hailed by the Swarajists as a victory for their tactics and they will go to the polls with the claim that they had forced Government to this action."

Unfortunately Lord Birkenhead was unwilling to entertain the proposal and in the last few weeks of office Lord Reading had no time to pursue it further.

The decision of the Home Government was a disappointment to him, for he had hoped to be able to make this most promising political gesture before he left India. His place in the Constitutional history of the country will always be important, for it fell to him to inaugurate the new principles and institutions of the 1919 Act, and it was his strength and adroitness which kept the great experiment from coming to grief in the violent political storms of his first years as Viceroy. He had been compelled repeatedly to refuse demands for further political concessions and he had had to withstand on these occasions the strongest pressure not only from the avowed opponents of British Rule in India, but from its friends and supporters as well. Undoubtedly, a certain

suspicion of reaction and inflexibility attached to him in some Indian quarters when he left India, because of his refusal to make easy promises or try rash experiments which he knew must end in disaster. The extracts from his letters and despatches already given show how completely mistaken this suspicion was. Had he had his way over the Statutory Commission, such suspicion could never have persisted, and indeed the course of Indian politics in the years to come might conceivably have been greatly changed.

Lord Reading left India on April 8, 1926. In the last speech which he made on her soil, at a dinner given to him in the Byculla Club, Bombay, he told his audience how, as he approached Bombay on his first arrival in India, "the political sky seemed heavy and overcast and' stormy. I gazed at it and pondered 'how shall I discover the light V and then I discerned a ray of sunshine which came through the clouds to me, illumining the whole political firmament. It burnt into my mind in letters of gold : 'Go forward, fearlessly, faithfully and honestly, according to the best of your ability and to the true dictates of your conscience.' I have tried never to forget the precept of that ray."

CHAPTER VI

L O R D W A R D E N

LORD and Lady Reading reached London in the middle of April and this time to their great joy were able to return to their won beloved house in Curzon Street. During their absence they had received more than one enquiry as to their willingness to dispose of the remainder of their lease and in view of the uncertainty of their financial future they had felt compelled to enter into tentative discussions on the subject, but they were supremely delighted when the successive negotiations failed.

Within a few days of their arrival they were bidden to Windsor. It was of course not unlikely that some official recognition of Lord Reading's services in India would be proposed, presumably in the form either of a Marquisate or of the Garter. In the few opportunities which time allowed us for talking the matter over I had expressed a hope that, if he were consulted beforehand and given a choice between the two honours, he would select the one which was not hereditary, provided always that he and my mother had no preference of their own. But as the situation actually developed, no decision was required. On 20 April he wrote to me from Windsor Castle i

I tried to send you a line last night but could not manage it. Immediately on my arrival, H.M. sent for me and I had about an hour's audience. The King was extraordinarily nice to me and expressed his appreciation of my services to the country, culminating in those to India and the Empire. He informed me that he had just signed the formal paper announcing that he had raised me to a Marquisate. There was no discussion regarding other possibilities and I heard later that it had been communicated to the P.M. and would be sent to the Press in the evening.

There could, in fact, never have been any question of a choice, since, as he learnt later, the Garter is an exclusively Christian Order, but the problem in the end solved itself to the satisfaction of all those most closely concerned.

My father became the first man since the great Duke of Wellington to be advanced from commoner to Marquis within the space of a single life-time ; my mother was able to share in his new dignity to an extent which the Garter could not have provided ; whilst I ascertained that there was no objection to my retaining my existing courtesy-title of Viscount Erleigh.

Abrupt and disconcerting though the transition must always be from the pomp and circumstance of Viceregal life, Lord and Lady Reading resumed without difficulty the normal routine of existence. Perhaps the thing that they most missed was the magnificent white Viceregal train, for which they found an ordinary first-class carriage a very indifferent substitute.

Nevertheless, he found two compensations. He was allowed to have money in his pocket again and to pay personally for anything that he bought ; and he could once more have curry, of which he was fond, made with curry-powder out of an ordinary tin instead of the rare and strange concoctions which the Princes had been at such pains to prepare for him.

But, although he had now soared to the heights of a Marquisate, Lord Reading found himself for the first time in half a century without occupation.

He had made over a period of years a large income at the Bar and had subsequently enjoyed a handsome salary as Lord Chief Justice, but he had started with no capital behind him and indeed with a substantial burden of debts, his investments had been too often unsuccessful and his expenses had been heavy. Moreover, for the past five years he had been able to put nothing aside, and in spite of the high offices which he had held, no pension now awaited him such as would have been at his disposal had he remained for 15 years on the Bench.

But even if his financial position had allowed him to subside

into retirement, he would never have either contemplated or tolerated such a course. He was only 65, active and vigorous both in mind and body, and eager to undertake any new adventure that might present itself.

As regards public life, it was not easy for a man who had already been Lord Chief Justice, Ambassador and Viceroy to find new worlds to conquer. Moreover, a Conservative Government was in power and there was little prospect that, even if they were displaced, they would be succeeded by the Liberals. It was therefore inevitable that his thoughts should have turned to the City, where the prestige of his name and experience was likely to open many doors.

Meanwhile, he was the recipient of a distinction which, born as he had been in the City of London and connected with its civic life by many personal ties, was a source of peculiar pride and pleasure to him. On June 8 he was admitted with traditional ceremony to the Honorary Freedom of the City at Guildhall in the presence of a large company headed by his old friend and leader, Mr. Asquith, by that time become Lord Oxford, Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Birkenhead and Sir John Simon.

The practice of most ex-Viceroy's had been to abstain from closely identifying themselves on their return to England with any political party and to preserve an attitude of lofty detachment upon the cross-benches. But Lord Reading was not prepared to conform to tradition in this respect. He had always been a Liberal and he saw no reason why he should not openly resume his connection with the Liberal party, now that he was free from the restraints imposed by the Viceroyalty.

A strenuous effort was being made by Mr. Lloyd George and those associated with him to promote a revival of Liberalism, and one of the major requirements of a campaign for that purpose was the possession of a really effective newspaper. There was the *Taily Chronicle*, but Mr. Lloyd George was not satisfied that under its existing direction it was proving as influential as it might be.

Advantage was therefore taken of an opportunity to obtain control of the Company responsible for the publication of this and certain other newspapers and at Mr. Lloyd George's urgent request Lord Reading agreed to accept the Chairmanship. But he soon found that he had made a serious error and that neither the work nor its surroundings were congenial to him. Fleet Street was a world apart, with its own traditions, conventions and standards, into which it was difficult for a newcomer to enter otherwise than as a probationer ready to serve his apprenticeship

and make his way upwards from humble beginnings, being initiated into the mysteries of his craft on the way. There were many changes which Lord Reading desired to make, but he had always to bear in mind that he was not an autocrat, but the chairman of a company, and he felt obliged to bow, however reluctantly, to the greater technical experience of his subordinates. Having thus largely to depend upon other people's judgment he felt himself always upon uncertain ground and he began to worry to a degree out of all proportion to the importance of the questions involved. Fortunately other occupation was available.

After my marriage the friendship which had already existed for some years between my own parents and my wife's, Sir Alfred and Lady Mond, took on an increased intimacy.

Owing to his frequent absences from England during the war my father had temporarily let Foxhill to Sir Hugo (later Lord) Hirst, and in 1918 had finally disposed of his lease to him, since the house had lost its purpose when once his parliamentary connection with Reading was severed. Nor had he up to the time of his departure for India acquired any property to take its place.

He and my mother were consequently dependent upon their friends for such week-ends as they spent out of London. Christmas and Easter in particular were habitually spent with Sir Alfred and Lady Mond at Melchett, near Romsey, where their joint grandchildren always passed a considerable part of the holidays.

Sir Alfred's youth had been as different as possible from Lord Reading's. Educated at Cheltenham, St. John's College, Cambridge, and Edinburgh, he had lived as a young man in the intellectual atmosphere of his father's house in Avenue Road, Regent's Park, or of his *palazzo* in Rome, to both of which there resorted people distinguished in art, literature, music and science. He had read enormously and remembered wisely, and he talked with real authority and at the same time often with mischievously provocative originality on pictures, music, literature and philosophy, and he had a passionate love, at once critical and emotional, for beautiful things. The kindest and most generous of men with an immense devotion to his family, who adored him in their turn, he nevertheless often hid his true character under a veneer of cynicism disturbing to strangers. Though the major part of his life was spent in developing the great concerns which his father's genius had done so much to create, Brunner, Mond and Company, and **the Mond Nickel Company**, he was not temperamentally a business **man** and he would have been happiest in the life of a student and connoisseur and patron of the **arts**.

Without the graces that had smoothed Lord Reading's path,

he had nevertheless become by sheer force of personality and brain-power an outstanding figure alike in industry and in politics, and first at the Office of Works and later at the Ministry of Health had used his knowledge, energy and vision to good purpose.

But with the fall of the Coalition Government in 1922 he had found himself out of office, and though early in 1926 he had left the Liberal party owing to disagreement with the land policy which at the moment held the field and had given his formal allegiance to the Conservatives, he never again took part in official life. In 1925 the doctrine of rationalization of industry was being assiduously preached and he was an early convert, with the result that in 1926, by the joint efforts of Sir Alfred on behalf of Brunner Monds and Sir Harry (now Lord) MacGowan on behalf of Nobels, with the co-operation of other important groups, the huge structure of Imperial Chemical Industries was founded with Sir Alfred as its Chairman and Sir Harry as President. Sir Alfred had always believed in the value to industry of the collaboration of men of experience in wider spheres than the world of business, and when the new amalgamation took shape he at once offered Lord Reading a seat on the Board.

Lord Reading thus began at the outset an association with Imperial Chemical Industries which lasted for the remainder of his life, and when on Lord Melchett's untimely death at the end of 1930—for Sir Alfred had been raised to the peerage in 1928—Sir Harry MacGowan became Chairman, Lord Reading succeeded him in the office of President.

From the time of his original election to the Board the affairs of the Company absorbed much of his time and thenceforward his delightful room at Imperial Chemical House, Millbank, became his working headquarters.

Before long other offers were forthcoming in embarrassing profusion, but his choice was regulated by two principles, the first, that the particular concern should be of unassailable stability, and the second, that the aggregate of his directorships should not involve him in more work than he was able properly to perform. He was also determined that the prestige of his name should not be used as a bait to attract public response to new issues. He therefore confined himself to acceptance of membership of the Boards of the National Provincial Bank and of the London and Lancashire Insurance Company, taking a valuable and interested part in the responsible work of the committees of both Boards, where his knowledge and experience of finance and of his fellow-men could be put to good account.

Later he also became the first Chairman of the Palestine Electric

Corporation, formed to exploit the concession which that remarkable and dynamic personality the late Mr. Phineas Rutenberg had obtained from the Government of Palestine, and in the last two years of his life he was also Chairman of Carreras Limited.

He had met some time before Mr. Bernhard Baron, who, with little education save his own experience of life and no backing save his own energy and shrewdness, had founded and developed the great cigarette-making business of which he was then still the head. Mr. Baron had by then acquired a large fortune from the business, much of which he spent during his lifetime in inspired philanthropy, leaving by his will a further munificent sum in the hands of Trustees to be spent for like purposes.

He had a whole-hearted veneration for Lord Reading, who in his turn held the old gentleman in affectionate admiration for his sincerity and generosity of spirit and often visited him at his house at Hove. During his lifetime Mr. Baron frequently consulted him in regard to his charitable schemes and by his will appointed him Chairman of the Trustees charged with the administration of his benevolent bequest.

By this means Lord Reading was brought into contact with Mr. (afterwards Sir) Louis Baron, who followed his uncle in the Chairmanship of the Company, and his colleagues on the Board, and on Sir Louis' premature death in 1935 was invited by the other directors to succeed him.

Lord Reading was at the time already overburdened by work and not growing younger, and his acceptance was largely dictated by the knowledge that it would have been the wish of his old friend and admirer.

In addition to these important preoccupations Lord Reading maintained an active connection with Indian affairs to the end of his life. Normally a viceroy ceases on retirement to have any direct concern with Indian affairs. He becomes simply an ex-viceroy, an honoured and respected figure, whose opinion may usefully be sought on occasion but whose effective knowledge is soon out of date.

But there was little likelihood that Lord Reading would sink into this dignified obscurity. Indian affairs occupied in 1926 far too important a place in the attention of the British public to allow the man who had so recently been responsible for their control and direction to abandon them altogether. Moreover, there was no other comparable source of information and advice on Indian affairs to which the Government of the day could turn.

By the time when Lord Reading left India in 1926 it had become clear that the statutory review of the working of the

Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms could not be long delayed. He had never concealed his opinion that the enquiry could with advantage be antedated, given certain conditions of political peace and co-operation in India, and in his view, when he left, conditions were sufficiently quiet to justify acceleration. The rising tide of Hindu-Moslem antagonism was a disturbing portent, but the possibility that His Majesty's Government would be able to set up the Statutory Enquiry Commission before 1929 was far from a remote one in 1926, and in fact Lord Irwin, the new Viceroy, and the Home Government found it possible to agree to the nomination of the Statutory Commission under the Chairmanship of Sir John Simon as early as 1927.

But, although there was no opposition to the appointment of the Statutory Commission as early as 1927, the decision to confine its membership to Members of the British Parliament gave rise to a violent controversy in both India and England. Lord Reading's attitude in this controversy was unequivocal and he was able to make it plain in the debate on the Commission which took place in the House of Lords on November 24, only a few days after the names of Sir John Simon and his colleagues had been made public.

"The real difficulty that we have to deal with," he said, "concerns the composition of the Commission. It is said that it is an affront to India to appoint a Parliamentary Commission and to exclude Indians. I cannot but think that there is misapprehension in the minds of those who come to that conclusion. . . . If a commission had been contemplated composed of men who had had experience of India . . . I should have said without hesitation that we could not have appointed such a commission without appointing a number of Indians. . . . But that is not the Commission appointed ; it is totally different. Indeed, the selection is made of gentlemen . . . who have had no special experience of India . . . and that is the central point upon which all argument must rest."

In the forefront of his mind was the strong conviction that the only safe, and certainly the only fair, examination of the Indian problem was one conducted by a body of men experienced in public affairs but unversed and unbiased in Indian politics.

"I think I shall be borne out by everyone who has knowledge of Indian politics," he told their Lordships, "if I say that there is no leading Indian politician, indeed no Indian politician, who has not already committed himself again and again on the very subject we are now discussing."

As an illustration of this theme, he gave his own experiences with the Muddiman Committee of 1924, and showed how the **same Indian** politicians **who** were now most strenuously demanding

the inclusion of Indians in the Statutory Commission were precisely those who had committed themselves most firmly and irrevocably to certain specific demands of the widest possible scope.

His resolute and reasoned attitude on this crucial point had great effect in rallying to the Government's policy all but the more extreme elements of opinion in Great Britain, though it failed to silence the criticism in India.

Lord Reading kept in regular communication with the Government and with the Secretary of State for India in particular during the three years between the appointment of the Statutory Commission and the publication of its report. But during all this time there was only one development in the situation which became a matter of political controversy, the publication of Lord Irwin's famous announcement of October 31, 1929.

The violent resentment of the majority of Indian politicians at the non-inclusion of Indians in the Statutory Commission had caused some sections of Indian opinion to boycott the whole enquiry. This boycott hardened as time went on, and the leader of the Indian Moderates, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, collaborated with Pandit Motilal Nehru, the leader of the Non-Co-operating Congress Party, in drawing up and publishing in August, 1928, a constitution for India which was far in advance of anything likely to be recommended by Sir John Simon and his colleagues. It was clear that, with the political situation in India deteriorating steadily as the months went by, there was now no chance of the Statutory Commission's report receiving any hearing at all, far less a fair and reasonable hearing, from the non-co-operating sections of Indian opinion. Accordingly Lord Irwin, having satisfied himself by personal enquiry that this was the true state of affairs, came to the deliberate conclusion that some major political move was necessary to find a way round the solid wall of sullen resistance to the Commission and all its works.

He therefore came to England on leave in the summer of 1929 to discuss the position with the Government of the day, and in Mr. Wedgwood Benn (now Viscount Stansgate), Secretary of State for India in the then Labour Government, found a sympathetic and understanding colleague.

Their problem was simplified to some extent by Sir John Simon himself. Having in mind the supreme importance of the relations which might at some future time develop between British India and the Indian States, he came to the conclusion that what was required was the setting up of a Conference in the interval between the publication of his Commission's report and its examination by the Joint Select Committee of Parliament, to

which representatives both of British India and of the States would be invited by His Majesty's Government. This conclusion and proposal were contained in a letter written by Sir John to the Prime Minister, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, on October 16, 1929. By this date Lord Irwin had already left England to return to India. During his visit to England he had pressed his own desire to make an announcement concerning full Dominion status for India on the leaders of the Conservative and Liberal parties in England, but had failed to secure their agreement. They had no objection to the conference proposed both by him and by Sir John Simon, but would have no truck with any talk of full Dominion Status. The Labour Government, however, had agreed to such an announcement and with that backing Lord Irwin determined to issue a statement affirming that full Dominion Status was the ultimate goal of India's political progress, and at the same time making known the decision of His Majesty's Government to hold the Conference suggested by Sir John Simon.

It was only to be expected that Lord Reading would be approached by Lord Irwin in such an important matter, since, outside the Cabinet itself, he was perhaps the key man. But from the moment when the proposal to declare at that stage Dominion Status as India's ultimate goal was made to him he set his face firmly against it and never for a moment showed the slightest inclination to agree. He had several interviews with Lord Irwin, both alone and in company with Mr. Lloyd George, and also with Mr. Wedgwood Benn, but at none of these would he even consider any sort of compromise in the matter of Dominion Status. In fact, he was anxious that a specific declaration should be made in any announcement published by Lord Irwin that all the reservations on Indian Home Rule contained in the Preamble to the 1919 Act still held good and that no change in the British Government's Indian policy could be expected until after Parliament had considered the Statutory Commission's report.

With the publication of Lord Irwin's announcement on 31 October, Indian affairs became and for more than two years remained amongst the most important issues in British domestic and imperial politics. Political opinion in this country at once aligned itself for or against the Irwin policy. In India the Congress Party, acting in blind obedience to Mr. Gandhi's dictates, declared after a fierce internecine struggle that the announcement did not go far enough. All other sections of Indian opinion, however, were fully satisfied and announced their intention of accepting the invitation to a conference. The reaction in England was more complicated. The **Labour Party as a whole supported** the announcement,

although there were a few extremists who held with the Congress Party in India that the announcement did not satisfy Indian national demands. In the Liberal Party, notwithstanding the attitude of the leaders, there was a strong section on the side of Lord Irwin, who also found by no means negligible support in the Conservative ranks. Nevertheless, both Conservative and Liberal Parties refused officially to identify themselves with that part of Lord Irwin's announcement concerning Dominion Status, "this foolish and deceiving declaration," as it was savagely styled by Lord Birkenhead.

Naturally, the political situation in India after the announcement was for some time obscure. The rejection of Lord Irwin's offer by the Congress Party enabled his opponents in both India and England to claim that it had fallen flat, although the men in close touch with Indian politics and politicians knew that every section of Indian opinion except the extreme left had ranged itself on Lord Irwin's side, and that even Congress was now divided. European opinion as represented by the European Association also largely supported the Viceroy.

Nevertheless, Lord Reading continued to regard the announcement as a profound mistake and in this attitude he was completely consistent with his past experience and views. The announcement was in very general terms and referred to what might happen in some vague and distant future, when certain unspecified and perhaps unspecifiable conditions had been fulfilled. As he was never tired of pointing out, such a general statement was invariably torn from its context by Indian politicians and turned into a definite and binding obligation on the Government, not to be broken and not to be delayed of discharge except at the cost of angry accusations of ill-faith followed by active revolutionary agitation. Moreover, in the Statutory Commission he saw a procedure which was dear to his own heart and fulfilled every test of his reason and every criterion of suitability. Of all men in England he was perhaps the one best qualified to perceive the profound effect of Lord Irwin's announcement upon the future of the Statutory Commission's work. He believed that, even if it did not render the Commission's work null and void, it would at any rate detract so enormously from the authority and prestige of its recommendations as to turn them into academic observations which would already have become mere museum exhibits by the time the Conference should meet.

He was in a difficult position. He had a great reluctance to appear in the guise of public critic and opponent of his successor in India. His strong feeling for constitutional propriety and his

abounding sympathy for a man engaged in a labour which he himself knew to be almost too much for one human being, made the role of critic extremely distasteful. But he felt in duty bound to initiate the debate in the House of Lords on November 5, which sought to extract from the Government a clear statement concerning its Indian policy and to ascertain whether there had been any such fundamental change in advance of the Simon Commission's report as the announcement about Dominion Status appeared to suggest.

He never ceased to regard the announcement about Dominion Status as a mistake and as a serious detraction from the value and prestige of the Statutory Commission's report. But it had been made, and he had therefore no choice except to await the report, due to be published in May, 1930, before taking any further action. The Conference, already being referred to as the Round Table Conference, would be the next big move, and he was determined that, as far as he could ensure it, the Statutory Commission's report should form the basis of the discussions at that Conference. And he maintained this attitude towards any announcement concerning Dominion Status for India long after it had been abandoned even by such staunch Conservatives as Sir Samuel Hoare (now Viscount Templewood), who succeeded Mr. Wedgwood Benn as Secretary of State. Indeed, during the sittings of the Joint Select Committee, when it was clear that the words "Dominion Status" would after all find their way into the preamble of the Bill, Lord Reading complained to one of his colleagues that "Sam Hoare was becoming dangerously radical!"

He never concealed or modified his views on this vital subject. As leader of the Parliamentary Liberal delegation to the Round Table Conference he had to speak at the opening plenary session on November 20, 1930. The speeches delivered by the various leading delegates during the session were general in character and as a rule exceedingly careful and diplomatic in tone. It was not the occasion for detailed discussion or negotiation. Nevertheless, Lord Reading took the opportunity to put into their proper perspective the statements of one or two of the speakers who had preceded him and had demanded "Swaraj" for India,

"You will forgive me," he said, "if I use a strong expression ; it is only expressing what I have heard in different directions from many of you, when I say that it is idle to assert that at this moment there could be anything like equality of status—that is, constitutional status—in India with the Dominions."

Proof of the strength of his desire to ensure the best possible **showing for the Simon Report at the Round Table Conference** is

to be found in his request to the Government to nominate Sir John Simon as a member. This request was conveyed in a short statement in the House of Lords on July 30, when he pressed very urgently for its acceptance.

It was inevitable that he himself should be chosen to lead the Liberal Party's delegation at the Conference, his colleagues being the late Lord Lothian, the late Sir Robert Hamilton and Mr. Isaac Foot. As it happened, all three were more sceptical than Lord Reading of the adequacy of the Simon Report, but they agreed with their leader that the simplest plan was to accept it as a basis for discussion and see how it was affected by the opinions expressed and the evidence adduced at the Conference itself.

As things turned out, the Report hardly came under discussion at all, since the whole aspect of the Indian problem was radically transformed by the declaration of the Maharajah of Bikaner on behalf of the Princes in favour of Federation at the opening plenary session of the Conference.

The first British delegate to speak after the subject had been raised, Lord Peel, leader of the Conservative delegation, confessed that it was "very difficult to see how it is possible to get an organized unity in India except on some federal basis," but he was guarded in his references to Federation and was careful to bring the Simon Report into the forefront of his remarks.

Lord Reading, who spoke a day or two later in the session, was more guarded still. The Maharajah of Bikaner's statement was no surprise to him, since he had already been told that the Princes had at last come down on the side of Federation. But he was not unduly impressed by this fact. The word "federation," used in connection with India, was to him of exactly the same value as the expression "Dominion Status." It represented an obviously desirable, perhaps even inevitable goal, but one that could be attained only in the future, after certain hard, practical conditions had been fulfilled. As always, he asked himself what were the actual immediate steps to be taken, and the answer to his question revealed the existence of a vast number of formidable difficulties, all of which must be solved before an all-India Federation could become a reality.

But, when it was decided that the Conference should proceed on the basis that the future Constitution of India was to be a Federation of States and Provinces, he bent his mind to the work of hammering out a fair and workable system of government, though he always warned his associates not to pin too much faith on the speedy achievement of federation, telling them that the concluding stages of the negotiations between British India and

the Princes would certainly be difficult and protracted. Nine years after he first issued his warning in London, the Indian Princes in conclave in Bombay were to tell the Viceroy that the terms offered to them for joining the Federation were "fundamentally unsatisfactory."

By the end of 1930 circumstances had thrust Lord Reading into the key position in the Round Table Conference. His personal prestige and his wide knowledge and experience must in any case have conferred on him a leading part in the deliberations. But, in addition to this, neither the Government, as a minority Government, nor the Conservatives could do anything without the assured support of the Liberals. Indeed, by the end of the year the Government was awaiting the Liberal decision to see what line it could take, and, since that decision in fact lay with Lord Reading, both Conservatives and Labour waited for him to declare his mind.

Inside the Conference, too, Lord Reading had largely dominated the scene by virtue of his position, his knowledge and his experience and capacity. Above all, he was the trusted and influential friend of the Indian delegates of all shades of opinion, none of whom had any hesitation or false pride in consulting him and asking his help and advice. His study at 32 Curzon Street saw a constant succession of visitors, from members of the Government, important personages in all three British political parties and Indian delegates, down to a host of persons of all sorts and conditions, unconnected with the Conference but interested to a greater or lesser degree in its work. Knotty points of procedure in one or other of the Conference Committees, on which sharp clashes of opinion arose, disagreements between the representatives of different Indian communities or interests or between British and Indian interests; on more than one occasion even personal quarrels, were all submitted to his judgment. He was perhaps the central figure of the Conference, the clearing house of ideas and interests, trusted and consulted by all concerned from the Prime Minister downwards.

His views on responsibility in the Central Government were therefore awaited both inside and outside the Conference with some anxiety. They were stated on January 5, 1931. The discussions on the rough outlines of the proposed All-India Federation had been concluded, and there was enough general agreement all round the table to warrant Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, acting on this occasion as spokesman for the British Indian delegates, in telling the British Government that, if responsible self-government at the Centre were conceded, then Indians would agree to any

reasonable safeguards, even though these were clearly in Great Britain's interests. Sir Mohammad Shafi, the spokesman of the Moslem delegation, supported Sir Tej Bahadur, and Lord Reading then delivered his long-awaited verdict.

The Liberal Party, he told his hearers, was prepared to agree to a responsible Federal Government in India, provided it was subject to certain safeguards in respect of defence, foreign relations, law and order and the maintenance of various legitimate European interests. His speech was severely practical throughout, and nobody who heard or read it could be in any doubt that the forward move to which he was now prepared to agree depended absolutely on the fulfilment of the conditions he laid down.

Nevertheless, the enthusiasm evoked among the Indian delegates by this utterance was extraordinary. Mr. Sastri, it is true, was at first somewhat suspicious of the emphasis laid on safeguards, but the other leading Indian delegates looked only to his public support of responsibility at the Centre, and the fact that this support was offered evoked an almost emotional outburst of enthusiasm. One of the most important and best-informed of all the Indian delegates said to an English friend after the close of that memorable sitting : "The importance of Lord Reading's speech is that all the world knows that he never agrees to anything unless he is absolutely convinced that he ought to agree. Now, we shall have a responsible Government at the Centre."

The prophecy proved a true one, and the principle of responsibility at the Centre was firmly expressed by the Prime Minister, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, in his final address to the delegates on January 19, 1931. "The view of His Majesty's Government," he declared, "is that responsibility for the government of India should be placed upon Legislatures, Central and Provincial, with such provisions as may be necessary to guarantee during a period of transition the observance of certain obligations and to meet other special circumstances, and also with such guarantees as are required by minorities to protect their political liberties and rights."

This formula exactly represented Lord Reading's views and had in fact been submitted to him for opinion before it reached its final form.

On December 16, 1950, Lord Reading gave a reception in honour of the delegates at his house in Curzon Street, which was honoured by the presence of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.

In the course of the evening various Indians were presented to the Prince, amongst them the survivor of the two once turbulent Ali brothers* "Did I meet you, when I was in **India** ?" **the** Prince

asked him; "No, Sir," replied the Indian with a beaming smile, "I was at that time the guest of your father the King-Emperor/'

The second and third sessions of the Round Table Conference were largely wasted owing to fundamental dissensions between the minorities. Mr. Gandhi attended the second session, and it was clear from the way in which he and Lord Reading met each other that there was a genuine feeling of respect between them.

The two protagonists during the second session were the Aga Khan for the Mahommedans and Mr. Gandhi for the Hindus. Both sides had no hesitation in trying to get Lord Reading to intervene in the very tense minority negotiations which held up the work of the Federal Structure Committee throughout the session, but he would never throw his influence on either side. He did, however, on occasion convey requests between leading personalities in the dispute, and he was always ready to give practical and legal advice. But, though he would take no initiative in the main Hindu-Moslem dispute, he was urgent in impressing upon the leaders of both sides that there were two minorities in India, disregard of whose rights would certainly wreck any political constitution, no matter what agreement might be reached between the two major communities. These minorities were the depressed classes and the Europeans.

There is very little on record to show the strenuous and thoughtful care which he devoted to the cause of the untouchables in India, but it is the fact that behind the scenes he did everything in his power to ensure that no advantage should be taken of their political inexperience and helplessness. Their leader, Dr. Ambedkar, fought their battle doughtily, and Lord Reading watched him with intense sympathy. He had the same feelings towards the small and unfortunate "Anglo-Indian" minority, the people of mixed blood, whose homeland is India, but who are too often despised and rejected by British and Indians alike. The sufferings and the gallantry of this little community's losing fight against increasing difficulties moved him deeply, and he was one of those primarily responsible for the comparatively favourable report of the Committee on the "Education of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Communities in India."

But as far as the pure European Community in India was concerned, Lord Reading was moved by no emotion, but by the hardest and most practical reasoning. Extensive and long-established interests of a perfectly just and lawful kind were at stake, and the lawyer in him revolted from anything like expropriation, whether direct or indirect, of legal rights. Moreover, he held

strongly that the British connection was the cement of Indian unity and that in the last analysis the British traders, bankers and industrialists in India were the basis of and the justification for the British connection.

In view of the severe handicap imposed on the broad constructive work of the Federal Structure Committee by the breakdown in the inter-communal consultations, the greater part of Lord Reading's work during the second and third sessions of the Conference lay in the proceedings of the sub-committees and in his personal relations with delegates representing all Indian interests, as well as with the leaders of all shades of political opinion in this country.

The third session, from November 17 to December 24, 1932, was primarily a legal and financial conference, in which he naturally took a full part. The subjects discussed called not for rhetoric but for close and competent reasoning, and in such discussions he was seen at his best.

The Round Table Conference dispersed for ever on Christmas Eve, 1932.

The long and detailed examination subsequently devoted by the Joint Select Committee of Parliament to the Conservative Government's proposals for India made great inroads on Lord Reading's strength. The work of the Round Table Conference had been a terrific burden on a man of over seventy in his key position who never dreamed of sparing himself, and it was a source of deep disquiet to his friends to see how the unrelieved strain of the Joint Committee's work sapped his energies. Nevertheless, he did not flinch from it, and the Committee's voluminous records provide ample proof of his unremitting zeal. His mind seemed to seize on essential points as swiftly and firmly as ever, and the master advocate's skill in eliciting the true facts of a situation and the essence of a problem had not deserted him. He fought stubbornly to keep mention of Dominion Status out of the preamble to the Bill, and behind the scenes he was active in reconciling conflicting views, arranging compromises and giving advice. He had at any rate the satisfaction of seeing the Government of India Bill, without a preamble referring to Dominion Status, passed into law on August 2, 1935, only a few months before his death, and if there were some clauses in it to which he objected, nevertheless his contributions to the Act as a whole form one of the great achievements of his life.

After their return to England in 1926 Lord and Lady Reading's thoughts began to turn to the possibility of acquiring a new house in the country, to which they could escape for week-ends and

where he could play golf and she could garden and they could see something of their family and friends after the long separation in quieter conditions than London could provide. But the uncertainty of his financial future had restrained them from coming to any decision when in the autumn of 1926 Lord Allenby resigned the office of Captain of Deal Castle, and Lord Beauchamp, who as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports had the right of appointing a successor, offered the vacant post to Lord Reading. The office was a sinecure, but it entitled the holder to occupy rent-free Deal Castle, one of the fortifications erected by Henry VIII to protect the Kent coast against foreign invasion and still the property of the Crown. The original building, laid out in the form of a Tudor rose, would not by itself have offered great attractions as a residence but an early nineteenth-century captain had fortunately become conscious of its defects and had caused a new wing to be built on. This unsightly addition at least contained larger and loftier rooms better adapted to modern living, though it was totally destroyed by enemy action in 1941 and the Castle has now reverted to its ancient form. But even with this enlargement it had its drawbacks. Bath-rooms were scarce and electricity non-existent ; the main garden was on the farther side of a busy road ; and the dining-room and drawing-room and the terrace and ramparts were all so completely overlooked from the sea-front that privacy was difficult to obtain. But the advantages prevailed. It was by the sea and commanded a view of the Downs, a busy reach of the Channel where even large ships are often forced by the Goodwins to stand close in to the shore. The garden was large and productive. A benign Office of Works was prepared to instal electric light and to add to the sparse supply of baths. Moreover, the fact that no rent was payable enabled them to maintain without anxiety a house containing far more accommodation than they would have been able to afford in normal conditions. They moved in at Easter of 1927 and it was an immediate success, especially so far as Lord Reading was concerned. Lady Reading was in very poor health but she had rallied all her energies to the task of putting the house in order and she was happy to have a garden again. He was enchanted with the view out to sea and spent hours with telescope and field-glasses watching the passing ships, reading their names and identifying, with the aid of "Lloyd's List" and Brown's "Flags and Funnels," the lines to which they belonged and the voyages on which they were engaged. Very occasionally a sailing ship would appear and his happiness was then complete.

They spent there the whole of August and September of 1927, my wife and I staying with them together with our children,

and they were there again for the greater part of the summer of 1928.

In that year he served his term of office as Treasurer of the Middle Temple, having missed his normal succession to it owing to his absence in India, and he greatly enjoyed the resumption of contact with his old friends and surroundings of the Bench and Bar. Indeed, he had never lost interest in the life of the Courts and the Temple, and even while he was in India continued to follow the newspaper reports of cases and was always pleased with any information which I was able to give him in my letters concerning legal personalities and events. His chief attention was directed less to the judges than to the methods of the men who were doing the type of work in the Courts in which he himself had once shone, and especially to the younger men who were building up a position. "Who is?" he would ask me. "I see his name increasingly often, but he is new since my time. He seems to be beginning to go ahead."

With these activities and interests the days, which he had feared on his return from India were likely to hang so heavily on his idle hands, flashed past, but by the middle of 1929 all his thoughts and doings were overcast by the inescapable knowledge that the growing ill-health from which his wife was suffering had developed a fatal character and that for her sake he must not hope that the end would be long delayed. But he refused till almost the very last to share the secret even with me, preferring to bear the burden in stoic solitude in order, as he thought, to save me the pain of certainty and the strain of waiting, though in fact I also knew.

On January 30, 1950, she died and the perfect partnership of 42 years was dissolved for ever. To the last each strove to spare the other, he stoutly pretending in her presence a cheerfulness and optimism which must have cost him ceaseless agony, she bravely feigning confidence in her recovery though from a letter which she wrote in the last days of her life, to be opened only after she was dead, it was plain that she too knew that she was doomed and that the end was very near.

But she never lacked courage, whether it was a question of refusing in the straitened conditions of their early married life to allow her husband to abandon the Bar and return to the Stock Exchange, or of resigning herself to many solitary evenings in order that he might find distraction from his work and increase his circle of friends, or of stepping out of semi-invalidism into the exacting position of Ambassadress, or of consciously accepting the probability of a shortened life in order to undertake the mani-

fold **duties of** Vicereine. **Her determination was not** only that her ill-health should not at any point impede his career, but **that at** whatever cost she should not fail him at those moments at which she herself had an active rdlc to play. Few women, even when blessed with good health and free of any such physical handicap as deafness, could have kept pace with so meteoric a course. But never once did she lag behind him, and even though at times cut off for long periods from sharing his progress, she would re-emerge later equipped in every way to take her place beside him at the stage at which he had then arrived.

Always referred to between her husband and her son as "the Lady," she kept to the close of her life their unfaltering devotion, giving to each of them without reserve her love, encouragement and support in all their undertakings. But she never did them the disservice of blind approval : she did not hesitate to criticize or to dissuade if in her own shrewd and direct mind she thought them wrong.

After her death my father turned as soon as possible to his work, but he was bitterly lonely. My wife and I were eager to do what we could to give him company, but he would not let us come to him in the evenings as often as we wished, saying that we had our own life to lead and that he was not going to allow us to disorganize it for him. I have always believed that on not a few occasions when we rang up to know if he was going to be alone and would like us to come round, he answered that he had friends coming in but actually spent the evening by himself rather than feel, though he knew that we were only too glad to be with him, that he was being in any way a drag upon us.

The strain which he had undergone for the last months before my mother's death and the efforts which he had afterwards made to preserve his outward composure inevitably told upon him, and when he fell ill the enforced confinement to his room only increased his loneliness. Moreover, Lord Melchett's premature death at the end of the year greatly saddened him, for he had not only known him for so long and with increasing intimacy, but since their association on the Board of Imperial Chemical Industries they had been in almost daily contact.

His acceptance of the office of President of the Company, rendered vacant by Sir Harry MacGowan's appointment as Chairman, involved for him additional work and heavier responsibilities at a time when he would have been wiser for his own sake to relax the pressure upon him for a while. But when it was represented to **him** that the best interests of the Company would **be served by his accepting, he felt unable to refuse.**

But even work had lost its savour, though he plodded on in search of such distraction as it could provide. Hitherto he had always looked many years younger than his real age ; now he seemed suddenly an old man. He had lost his quickness of movement and he walked slowly and with a stoop.

But happily for him and for those who cared for him the remaining years of his life were not to be spent in numb and melancholy solitude.

After their return from India, Stella Charnaud had changed her functions and become my father's secretary instead of my mother's. My mother had become deeply attached to her, but recognized not only that my father's need took precedence of her own but that Miss Charnaud would find greater scope for her exceptional gifts in his work than in hers.

After my mother's death Miss Charnaud had perforce to assume the added responsibilities of running his house for him, both in London and at Deal.

At the end of July, 1931, he announced his engagement to her and they were married early in August. The transformation in him was immediate and immense. Much of his old buoyancy returned and he resumed work with fresh vigour and zest.

The rest of the year was to prove his good fortune in again having a wife to take her place beside him.

He had only been back from his honeymoon for a few days when political events began to move with rapidly increasing momentum. The Labour Government of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, which had been in office since 1929, was becoming submerged by financial troubles and it was soon apparent that swift and drastic action was required if the country was not to be plunged into disaster. Mr. MacDonald himself knew the dangers and realized that the very fact of an exclusively Labour Government being in power was an added strain upon the financial fabric in an emergency, but he was unable to carry with him the support of a united Cabinet. There was accordingly only one course open, and almost overnight the National Government came into being with Mr. MacDonald still Prime Minister and Mr. Baldwin as Second-in-Command.

Though Lord Reading would have hesitated long before entering again a purely party government, the situation which had thus developed was one in which, in the capacity of Elder Statesman which had now automatically descended upon him, he felt bound to play his part, more particularly since the one office which had always had a powerful attraction for him and for which his gifts and experience admirably qualified him, was at his disposal.

The office of Foreign Secretary, largely removed as it is from the area of partisan controversy and requiring as it does wisdom, judgment and knowledge of men and nations, was one in which, had it come his way ten years earlier, he would in all probability have achieved outstanding success. But at 71 he found the exacting and unremitting duties an almost insupportable burden, especially when coupled with the responsibilities of Leader of the House in the House of Lords and complicated by the necessity of frequent journeys to Geneva.

Everywhere and at every hour the relentless red boxes pursued him with the need for decisions.

Nevertheless, he enjoyed the work with its new experiences and contacts, though he realized almost from the outset that he would be unable to pursue it indefinitely in spite of the efforts of his Under-Secretary of State and his Private Secretary, Sir Walford Selby, later Ambassador to Portugal, and the skilled officials of the Foreign Office.

When he had accepted the appointment, he had been given a list of possible Under-Secretaries and invited to make his own selection from amongst them. His choice fell upon the young member for Warwick and Leamington, Mr. Anthony Eden, who thus began his ministerial connection with the Department over which he was only four years later to preside.

The Labour Government resigned on August 24 and on the next day the composition of the National Government was announced. Lord Reading's appointment to the Foreign Office was cordially received, *The Times* describing it as "interesting and impressive," but he was assuming office at a most unpropitious moment. The circumstances which had brought about the fall of the Labour Government were having widespread repercussions in other countries. Doubts of the financial stability of Great Britain were rampant and were not at once allayed by the decision to abandon the gold standard.

A cut in the so-called "dole" as part of the general economy campaign led to demonstrations by the unemployed to which exaggerated importance was attached abroad as evidence of the precarious state of Great Britain.

The National Government was in office, but no one could know with certainty whether it commanded the support of a majority of voters in the country until after the results had been declared of the General Election which was not fixed to be held until October 27.

It was manifest that, if the National Government was then confirmed in office, Great Britain was committed to a policy of

tariffs which might have rapid and far-reaching effects upon the export-trade of other countries which were already oppressed by economic instability.

Germany in particular was indulging in one of her periodic crises, which led to the resignation of the Chancellor, Dr. Brüning, early in October, whilst Japanese policy in Manchuria was plainly about to confront the Council of the League of Nations with the first major test of its effectiveness in curbing the designs of a recalcitrant and aggressive member-state.

The general nervousness was particularly reflected in France and at the beginning of October an invitation was received from the French Government for the British Foreign Secretary to visit Paris and discuss the situation. This invitation was at once accepted and on October 6 Lord Reading arrived in Paris, accompanied by Sir Frederick Leith-Ross of the Treasury.

At their first meeting he had a long talk alone with Monsieur Laval, the French Prime Minister, an unusual procedure in such circumstances, and later had conversations with Monsieur Laval and Monsieur Briand, the French Foreign Secretary, jointly. The brief visit proved satisfactory to both sides and Lord Reading was able to report on his return to London that French apprehensions had been largely set at rest.

His sojourn in London was short, for on October 11 he left for Geneva to attend the meeting of the Council of the League, the proposed intervention of which in the Sino-Japanese dispute over Manchuria was being vigorously resisted by Japan. The situation was at once strengthened and complicated by the existence of the Pact of Paris, more familiarly known as the Kellogg Pact, the signatories to which, including China and Japan, had agreed to renounce war as a method of setting their differences.

Accordingly on his arrival in Geneva Lord Reading joined with the Foreign Ministers of France, Germany and Italy, Monsieur Briand, Herr Mutius and Signor Grandi, in a proposal that the United States, which had a paternal interest in the Kellogg Pact, should be invited to nominate a representative to sit at the Council table and examine the relations between the Kellogg Pact and the unhappy situation in Manchuria.

Mr. Yoshizawa, the Japanese delegate, who regarded American participation as unlikely to furnish additional support for his country's cause, was at first obdurate in his resistance to the proposal. Nevertheless, Mr. Prentiss Gilbert, the American Minister at Berne, who had been appointed to represent the United States, took his place at the table and in the end Japanese opposition to his presence was withdrawn.

But even with this reinforcement the Council's actions **can scarcely be described** as drastic, **for they** contented themselves as a first step with decreeing that each Government concerned should send telegrams both to Tokyo and to Nanking, reminding the Japanese and Chinese Governments of the international obligations to which they had committed their signatures. This gentle preliminary canter was followed by the presentation of terms to both disputants, by which Japan was to withdraw from the territory upon which she had encroached and China was to guarantee security of conditions within that territory.

As Japan's pretext for the invasion had been China's alleged inability to provide just that security which she was now called upon to furnish, the prospects of these terms offering a final solution of the dispute were not brilliant. But the terms had been formally presented and it was therefore necessary that the interested parties should at least go through the motions of considering them and that they should be given adequate time in which to do so.

The Council therefore adjourned and on October 22 Lord Reading left for London. Before the next meeting took place the General Election had been held, the National Government had been returned with an enormous majority, the Cabinet had been reconstituted and Lord Reading had been replaced as Foreign Secretary by Sir John Simon.

Had he been consulted, he might well have come to the conclusion that he had performed the public service required of him by becoming a member of the National Government at the uncertain moment of its birth and that the time had now come when he would be well advised to free himself of the weight of cares and make room for a younger man. In fact he found himself superseded without any warning from the Prime Minister of his intentions. He therefore returned to his directorships, which had been kept open for him during his temporary absence.

He was considerably exhausted and on medical advice decided **to take a long trip** abroad, visiting Egypt and Palestine and incidentally seeing something of the operations of the Palestine Electric Corporation on the spot instead of from the angle of its London Office and in particular opening its new and magnificent powerhouse. Nevertheless, he had some hesitation in deciding to visit **Palestine lest more should be** expected of him than he was prepared to give.

He himself not only never **attempted** to conceal his Jewish origin **but took pride in proclaiming it at** all times, both publicly and privately, and amongst his greatest satisfactions in his own success was the knowledge that it had been a joy and an inspiration

to Jews everywhere and had proved that anyhow in England no limits were set to a man's advancement by reason of his being a Jew. One of the few occasions on which I remember to have seen him really angry was when a guest in his own house inadvertently used the expression that he had "been Jewed out of" something, and he once, when presiding in the Court of Criminal Appeal, rounded upon a prominent leader at the Bar who had asked the prisoner in course of cross-examination at the trial whether he was not a Jew. The question, said the Lord Chief Justice, was pointless unless it was intended to create prejudice, and if it was so intended, it was gravely reprehensible. But though he acknowledged that there existed between him and other Jews indefinable bonds, over and above those of a common faith, which had been forged in much adversity and tempered in long tribulation, nevertheless he counted the Jewish aspect of his life as secondary and subordinate to the British. When he was in India, I sent him out a copy of E. T. Raymond's biography of Disraeli, *The Alien Patriot*. He was greatly interested in the book but highly indignant at the title. "Why * alien' ?" he wrote to me. "England had been Disraeli's family's home for very many years and she has had no more devoted servant."

Holding passionately these views of his own position, he was not prepared to accept the doctrine of Zionism.

When in the latter years of Lord Melchett's life the visionary spark in him was kindled to enthusiasm by a visit to Palestine and he was soon taking an active and leading part in Zionist affairs, he exerted all his influence to persuade Lord Reading to become the first Chairman of the Jewish Agency, newly formed under the provisions of the Mandate and including by its constitution both Zionists and non-Zionists in its ranks. But Lord Reading was unwilling to be involved.

Nevertheless, once the experiment of the Jewish National Home was launched, he was not prepared to allow it to fail, with the consequent discredit to Jewry in general, for lack of any help which he could give from outside. And Dr. Chaim Weizmann, the Zionist leader, recorded at the time of Lord Reading's death that he had never approached him in vain with any request for his aid or counsel in moments of difficulty or danger.

Many factors combined to make him ponder before deciding to visit the country, for he could not help knowing that he was regarded with hero-worship throughout the Jewish world and that he would be enthusiastically received, and he feared that his presence might give rise to hopes of more active support on his part than his convictions would allow him to give.

In the end he made up his mind to go and his tour was a success. He was charmed with the beauty of the landscape and deeply impressed by the achievements of the Jewish settlers, and the speeches which he was called upon to make reflected his favourable reactions to all that he saw. But he did not change his views in the smallest degree or allow his emotions to outweigh his reason.

From Palestine he and his wife went on to Egypt, where at Luxor he suddenly contracted a chill and was soon gravely ill with double pneumonia. For some time he hovered between life and death, but in the end the skill of a Swiss doctor and the indefatigable devotion of his wife at the head of a staff of nurses and helpers won the day. In his delirium he reverted by some strange process of the subconscious mind to the Lord Chief Justiceship and spent much of the time sternly sentencing his nurses to various periods of penal servitude.

How strong a constitution he possessed even at the age of seventy-one was shewn by the inability of his English doctors to find on his return home, after a convalescence on Lord Inchcape's yacht in the Mediterranean, that so critical an illness had left any permanent mark upon him. His recovery seemed to be complete and he resumed the full burden of his work.

I am quite normal again, [he wrote to Colonel the Hon. Arthur Murray in April of 1932], after being well within the Shadow. Thank Heaven my lady was with me. Otherwise I should have "gone West".

I was very sorry to leave the F.O. I liked both the office and those officials with whom I was in closest contact very much indeed. I only gave up because I knew I was at breaking point. I had had some very hard years and last year really only got one week's rest. My doctors insisted that I must take a holiday—I did and nearly passed out! But that wasn't their fault.

Not only did he recover his physical health but his spirits also regained much of their old effervescence, mounting at times to boisterousness. At the instigation of his grandchildren, whose presence was always a great joy to him, he would produce lurid anecdotes of his own very different youth, occasionally enriched with strange fragments of by-gone musical-hall ditties and snatches of sea-shanties learnt in remote "Blair Athole" days.

In the autumn of 1932 he paid a further visit to America, accompanied by Lady Reading, as the representative of the Bench and Bar of England at the laying of the foundation-stone of the new Supreme Court building in Washington.

In the course of the visit he was entertained by the English-Speaking Union in New York and had the happiness there and

on other occasions, public and private, of renewing many old friendships and acquaintances.

Had he still been Foreign Secretary in the next year, he would have found himself in a situation of great difficulty, for the coming into power of the Hitler regime in Germany was accompanied by the propagation of doctrines in regard to Jews, the principles of which roused his fiercest indignation and the practice of which filled him with the deepest horror.

That he should have thus reacted was wholly consistent with the views which he had always held. For the Nazi teaching was based on the theory of the essential inferiority of the Jews and of the necessity for their expulsion from a country in which they had been settled for very many centuries and to which they had made outstanding contributions in widely different fields.

It was thus in complete conflict with his own belief as to the place of Jews in the modern structure of nations, a belief which by his own pre-eminent example he had done so much to encourage amongst his fellow Jews and to commend to the Gentile world.

But he would have been horrified and indignant to almost the same degree if the victims of this persecution had not been Jews at all. For he detested all forms of cruelty and intolerance, especially on religious grounds, and it was not only as a Jew but as a British Liberal that he was prepared to lend the immense prestige of his name to the fund inaugurated in England for the succour of refugees from Germany and to give expression to his feelings at the protest-meeting at the Queen's Hall at which Lord Buckmaster presided and Dr. (now Lord) Lang, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was the chief speaker, as well as in the House of Lords.

He was at least spared the bitter torment of impotence which would have been his had he lived to see the extension and intensification of the Nazi campaign, when Jews in Central Europe would have instinctively turned in their thousands for help to the magic of his great name and he would have found himself powerless to aid.

The happenings in Germany were not without their influence upon his decision when early in 1934 Lord Beauchamp resigned the office of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald offered it to Lord Reading.

He was deeply touched by the Prime Minister's action. He had felt that since his resignation of the Foreign Secretaryship his connection with official life in any form other than his leadership of the Liberal party in the House of Lords was at an end and that

he was being rapidly forgotten by those who were now at the head of affairs. This invitation, meaning as it did that he who had held so many great offices would now hold one more ancient and dignified official position to the end of his days, was therefore singularly welcome. Moreover, he was proud to think that at the particular moment it should be extended to a Jew, and it had for him the immense attraction of being closely connected with his beloved sea, whilst among the minor considerations was the knowledge that the uniform of the Lord Warden, closely resembling that of an Admiral with the addition of certain touches of red, would finally relieve him of the necessity for wearing on State occasions the knee-breeches which, being highly conscious of the thinness of his legs, he so greatly abhorred.

But, although the duties were not onerous, they were more substantial than those attaching to the Captaincy of Deal Castle and he was doubtful whether he could find the time properly to perform them. The change of offices would also involve moving to Walmer Castle from Deal, of which he had grown exceedingly fond and where he was very comfortable and even nearer to the edge of the sea.

But apart from the public considerations, which weighed heavily with him, Walmer afforded greater seclusion with almost as good a view of the Channel and possessed a large and lovely garden behind.

In the end, after much deliberation, he determined to accept and the move which he had dreaded was from the outset an unqualified success. An array of telescopes was erected on the bastion and he would walk up and down the terrace by the hour, looking out to sea. He and his wife greatly improved both house and garden and they redecorated and rearranged with the expert assistance of Lord Gerald Wellesley (now the Duke of Wellington) the Wellington room in which the great Duke died.

On June 30, 1934, there took place at Dover his formal installation according to a time-honoured and impressive rite. The proceedings opened in the venerable church of St. Mary-in-the-Castle, where the Archbishop of Canterbury conducted the service and the Prime Minister and Sir John Simon, the Foreign Secretary, were amongst the congregation.

The ringing of the bells of Dover having sounded a welcome down the ways of the Port and Places of Landing to the Lord Primate and the Lord Warden, to the Mayors and the Barons, to friends and neighbours.

The members of the Court of Shepway having proceeded to seats prepared for them. The Deputy Constable of Dover Castle being in

his appointed place and all things being now ready for the Hallowing of the Wardenship of the Cinque Ports in the Name of God.

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury shall be conducted to his seat before the Holy Table, and the Lord Warden shall be presented to His Grace by the Registrar and Seneschel.

Which done, the Lord Warden shall proclaim in loud voice, "God Save the King", and the people shall sing the National Anthem.

Thus ran the traditional order of service prescribed for the occasion, and after an address by Archbishop Lang on the text from Isaiah, "Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn," in which with characteristic eloquence he pointed to "the self-government of free men" as the rock from which the English folk are hewn, there followed the Hallowing Prayer.

The Lord bless thee and keep thee. As our Sovereign Lord King George hath bestowed the Lord Wardenship of our Cinque Ports upon thee, so may the Almighty grant unto thee a sound judgment in the things that pertain to the welfare of our people ; that, ever obeying the divine commands and always serving the King with loyal affection, thou may est enjoy tranquillity of peace in the present world and attain the company of eternal citizens.

Next came the procession with an escort of cavalry through the streets of Dover, beflagged and lined with troops, to Dover College, once the Priory of St. Martin, where at the Court of Shepway, of which the Mayor of Hastings had been chosen by his fellow-mayors as Speaker, the actual installation took place. The fourteen mayors of the Cinque Ports and their 'limbs' took their places, seven on either side of the Lord Warden, each with his mace before him, and after they had handed in the returns of their representatives appointed to attend the ceremony, the Seneschal read the Patent of Appointment of the Lord Warden himself. This done, the Speaker invited the Lord Warden to assume the duties of the office and the Lord Warden complied. Immediately he had resumed his seat after undertaking "to maintain the franchises, liberties, customs and usages of the Ports," the Mayors and Barons rose and bowed, the Lord Warden's flag was broken at a flag-staff outside and the guns of the Castle Battery fired a salute of nineteen guns.

Next came a speech of welcome from Sir Frederick Pollock, the aged Judge of the Court of the Cinque Ports, and the Lord Warden's reply, and at the end of the proceedings of the Court of Shepway luncheon in the Town Hall with speeches by the Prime Minister, who had postponed a **much** overdue holiday to

attend, the Lord Warden and the Archbishop brought the long and brilliant day's ceremonies to an end.

That Christmas saw the first big party at Walmer, when my wife and I and our children and various relations and friends went down. He was in exuberant spirits and enjoyed every moment, and his examination of the contents of his stocking was as excited as it might have been if stockings had come his way seventy years before. His only trouble was his voice. The hoarseness which had descended upon him some months earlier refused to yield to any treatment and he was difficult to hear except in an otherwise silent room. This disability worried him greatly, for he realized that it might be permanent and that, if so, he would have to some degree to re-orient a life which still involved much making of speeches.

He was happy to be able to attend in May of 1935 the Silver Jubilee Service in honour of the Sovereign whom throughout his reign he had served with so much public distinction and personal devotion, but he found it a very tiring ordeal.

I was driving with him one day at this time when we saw on the placards the announcement of the death of his old friend and colleague Lord Buckmaster. He sat very silent for a few minutes and then said : "That is the real tragedy of getting old, that your friends keep dropping off one by one. I sometimes look round the House of Lords at my contemporaries, and I notice this one failing in one way and that one in another, and I wonder whether they themselves are conscious of it. And then I wonder whether it is all the time happening to me without my knowing it. I should hate above all things to lose my faculties and linger on."

He was to be spared the slow^r dissolution which he so much feared.

With the termination of the sittings of the India Committee he was relieved of a burden which had greatly occupied his mind and told heavily upon his strength. Now he was free to spend a long summer at Walmer with only the occasional interruption of a visit to London and at the end of July he established himself there, intending to remain until mid-September.

August passed quietly with few people and fewer duties and by September he felt so far rested that he decided to take up golf again after an interval of many months. Being out of practice, **he** betook himself to a remote part of the Royal Cinque Ports links with his regular and invaluable caddie and proceeded to play a number of balls, never realizing that in doing so he was taking far more concentrated exercise than in playing round **the course.**

That night a violent attack of cardiac asthma seized him and all but destroyed him. For some years there had been a known weakness in his heart and the morning's strenuousness had put upon it too great and sudden a load. Within the next week two further attacks followed, potentially as severe but checked in their early stages by the remedies available since the first unheralded onset. It was obvious that, even if no further attacks ensued, he would have to remain in bed for a considerable time and be treated as an invalid, which of all things he most deeply detested. But his doctors were of opinion that after a period of convalescence there was no reason why he should not resume his normal life, though he would have always to exercise greater care.

When the first news of his illness reached me I was on my way home from Gibraltar by sea. I had been away for some weeks and, my stock of books being exhausted, I sought in the ship's library something to distract me from my anxiety and helplessness and to pass the time between successive wireless telegrams. The first book that I took down was one which I had long intended to read, D. L. Murray's novel of the Crimean period, *Trumpeter, Sound!* Opening it at random, I found my eyes focused upon one sentence: 'The old Duke lies dying up in his Castle at Walmer.' It was not an encouraging omen even to the least superstitious, but it is only right to add that after the first shock I found much to divert my thoughts in the rest of the book, for which I shall always be grateful.

By the time I arrived it seemed as if the omen had been averted. There were one or two lesser attacks, but these he surmounted without difficulty. He himself was greatly amazed at the whole proceeding and very resentful at the injunction that he should remain for some weeks in bed.

It was fortunate for him as well as for those who so devotedly looked after him day and night that he was at Walmer rather than in London, for his bed commanded a view of the sea and he would spend long hours lying in comparative contentment or at least resignation, watching the ships pass.

By a happy chance a big Finnish barquentine came and lay close in, at a spot where no ship had been known to anchor for years past, and there spent ten days. At times she was within his view-; at others she would swing at her moorings with the tide and be carried out of sight. His first enquiry in the morning would be whether she was still there and it was a real grief to him when she finally received her sailing orders and disappeared for good.

After a while he began to read again, first the papers and then books, especially stories of the sea. Of these he could never have his fill ; he read them voraciously and almost exclusively and they helped the long days to pass, though the nurses' displeasure fell heavily upon the innocent Poet Laureate, whose sea-stories kept him awake to a reprehensible hour of the night. One book which gave him particular pleasure was Mr. Richard Brinsley Sheridan's account of his experiences of life before the mast, which vividly recalled to him his own youth. By this time he was allowed to get up again and to spend an hour or two on the terrace, if the day was fine, and Lady Reading had the inspiration of arranging for the young author to come down and see him. He was delighted with the visit. The old Lord Warden and the young ex-seaman, now also unhappily dead, spent a long hour "swapping yarns" in the harmony of men who, whatever the disparity of their ages, have a community of experience and devotion.

Early in November he was able to return to London. The weather at Walmer had deteriorated and he was beginning to feel cut off from first-hand news when great events were afoot.

He had followed with deep and growing anxiety the foreign policy of Great Britain in regard to the Italian attack upon Abyssinia. Though he had been from the first a sincere believer in the League of Nations and though he had nothing but condemnation for the course of action pursued by Italy, he was realist enough to insist that sanctions, to be effective, must mean war and that unless the Government were prepared to go to that length, their policy was foredoomed.

Not that he was in favour of taking any of the irretrievably provocative measures advocated by some of the more fanatical adherents of the League.

If the great powers had all been member-states and all willing to impose force, the position would have been different. As things were, hostilities were unthinkable, but in his view the fervour of British advocacy at Geneva and the tepidness of French adherence were creating a situation in which this country would at best lose an old, if calculating, friend, while gaining nothing in return.

It was often in his mind during these weeks to set out his views in a letter to *The Times* and, if in the end he refrained, it was only from a desire not to embarrass his former colleagues on a subject on which he might not be fully informed. But he still hoped to be well enough to return to the House of Lords

before the end of the year and there state his opinions in debate.

By the beginning of December he had progressed so far as to be able to hold an occasional Board Meeting in his own home and on one or two occasions to visit his room at Imperial Chemical House and attend meetings at his Insurance Company and Bank. It seemed as if the sanguine prophecies of the doctors were to be fulfilled.

But to those nearest to him there was always present the fear that he might advance so far and no farther on the way to recovery and that the future might hold for him nothing but the semi-invalidism which he so much dreaded. That fear was not to be realized.

The doctors had always told us that, while there was no reason why he should ever have another attack, there was equally little reason why the symptoms should not recur and that, if they did, he could not resist indefinitely.

In the middle of December he was seized again without warning by the old pains, this time so severe that it was necessary to draw off a quantity of blood before he could get relief from the breathlessness.

As soon as the rigour of the attack was over the doctors told him what they had done. He made only one comment: "I hope the blood was blue !"

Other attacks followed, but even then it did not seem ever to occur to him that he might be nearing the end. His mind was as clear, active, forceful and interested as ever. But to us who were around him the position was becoming only too plain. It was obvious that his frail body could not hold out more than a few days and we felt under a duty to put some announcement in the Press which would prepare people for the news that must soon follow. On the evening of December 28 we decided to issue a statement to the evening papers on the next day, being only too sure that he would never rally sufficiently to read it himself. This was done, but on the 29th to our amazement he woke from his afternoon sleep and demanded to see the papers in order that he might ascertain what fate had overtaken Monsieur Laval, who was that day seeking a vote of confidence from the French Chamber on his foreign policy as evidenced by the Hoare-Laval agreement. Every evening paper contained the news of Laval's success but contained also our bulletin stating that Lord Reading's condition was giving cause for anxiety. The situation was critical and only solved by keeping him in conversation long enough for his secretary to dash down to Fleet Street and procure

earlier editions of the papers, which fortunately did not yet reproduce the statement about himself or the result of the French debate. We were also able to tell him that we had telephoned to Reuter's, who had just received the news from Paris, and to give him the figures of the division in the Chamber. With that he was happily satisfied.

Later in the evening I went in to talk to him, as it proved, for the last time. "These attacks are a horrid bore," he said. "I am afraid that, when I am fit again, I shall have to give up some of my work instead of taking on anything new." Even within a few hours of death he chafed at the likelihood of having to reduce the volume of his work and especially resented his inability to embark upon any fresh adventure. He had to resign himself to growing inactivity and he thoroughly disliked the prospect. But, though he never realized it, he had no need to look far ahead. That night he became unconscious and at 4 o'clock the next afternoon his breathing gently ceased. After his long, happy and wonderful life of labour and service he had "attained the company of eternal citizens."

It is still too soon, in the first Lord Birkenhead's phrase, "to run the risk of affronting the correct perspective of posterity" by attempting any exhaustive or final estimate of the effects of his life and work.

It was not given to him either by temperament or by opportunity to stand out against the contemporary background as the author of any vast new constructive scheme. His talents were for administration and negotiation rather than for initiation. He had neither the burning vision nor the creative ardour of the great reformer. Perhaps his outstanding achievement lies in the success of his missions to the United States. But his particular gifts found their fullest scope in the Viceroyalty, where, carrying a colossal weight of responsibility, he was able to administer the affairs of a sub-continent either from the complete detachment of his own study or in the relative seclusion of the Council Chamber, and to keep on his course guided in the main by his own wisdom, fortitude and patience, however alive he might be to the turmoil and travail outside.

Much of his influence upon the life of his time was too transitory in form to be chronicled in this or any biography, though its effects were lasting, widespread and profound.

For, as years passed, the value of his balanced and objective **judgment, enriched by** long experience of men and affairs, was

widely and gratefully recognized and his advice was increasingly sought by men of sharply differing views and ways of life on most of the major problems of the day.

It may well be that his contribution to the service of the country along these indirect and intangible lines was scarcely less fruitful than his labours in more familiar and obvious fields.

Time may gradually obliterate much of the work that he accomplished ; it is unlikely for very many years to erase the record of the basic facts of his career. To have been born a younger son of a Jewish fruit-merchant in the City of London and to have died as the first Marquess of Reading, P.C., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O., successively Attorney-General, Lord Chief Justice of England, High Commissioner, Ambassador, Viceroy and Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports is surely to have made an indelible mark upon the tablets of history.

At least he lived his marvellous life to the full ; he held with unfailing dignity and distinction a unique series of great offices without ever losing his courtesy to everyone or his modesty in all things ; he rose to heights never before attained by one of his race 5 and he loved and served England with all the silent passion of his heart.

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