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GREAT RULERS OF INDIA

ASOKA, AKBAR, QUEEN VICTORIA

AND

KING GEORGE V

BY

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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ASOKA

Born of the mighty Mauryan dynasty, which was the first to found the slowly-growing Hindu empire, Asoka left behind him a renown which has endured to this day. No name, either of king or saint, is now more honoured in Buddhist lands than his. And even in other lands, where that creed does not prevail, he is remembered as a just and great ruler.

How then did Asoka win this great renown, which is upheld by writers of all times, and of many different schools of thought? Not only a man's words, but his deeds too, must tend to the public good, if they are to take so lasting a place in history. The world has known few such men; but of these, one was Asoka, truly termed the Great. Great as a warrior, he was yet greater as a king who showed the world how a state can foster the virtue of her

subjects. Under his rule, all branches of the state were based on religion, including those of law and justice; and religion, as Asoka nourished it, was linked closely to purity and morality; so much so, that the state played her part in guiding and helping the life of every man's home.

Most accounts agree, that the Mauryan dynasty was founded by the great Chandragupta the First, who lived at the same time as the Emperor Alexander. There were two other kings called Chandragupta, who belonged to a later time, and to the Gupta dynasty; of these the second is believed to have been Vikramaditya, the mighty conqueror and hero of romance. But the first Chandragupta known to history is said to have been he, who founded the Mauryan dynasty. This king was in the Punjab, at the time when the Emperor Alexander was at the height of his glory there. Several tales describe meetings between these two great rulers. But a time came when the vast and powerful army of the Greek conqueror mutinied, and refused to advance farther into Central India. Chandragupta was known then as a brave warrior, but he was probably in disgrace with the reigning

family of Maghada. He must have been interested to watch the skill and training, which brought easy success to the Greek arms. He must also have learnt how the Greek army rebelled, and wanted to return to Macedonia. The times were now ripe for a bold soldier like Chandragupta to form high and daring plans. In these he was helped by the counsels of his close friend and adviser, Chanakya, whose name has come down to us as that of a clever statesman. It is said that Chandragupta Maurya sought help from Alexander to dethrone the ruler of Maghada, but with little success. So Chandragupta went back to Behar with his friend Chanakya, and began making plots against the reigning family, till at last he gained what he wished.

At this time, the Takshak dynasty ruled over Maghada; but the reigning king was weak. Some writers tell us also that he was of low birth. His mother is said to have been of the barber caste; and we are told that she had been raised to queenly rank by the previous monarch.

However that may be, in about 320 B. C. Chandragupta made himself king. Before his reign, for several centuries, Northern

India had been split up into a number of separate kingdoms, each of them ruled by different dynasties, which were alike in this alone, that they had the same religion and the same kind of laws. Sometimes these dynasties fought side by side against an invader; but more often they fought against one another. Chandragupta, however, is famous for this, that he foresaw the idea of a Hindu empire. His conquests reached far and wide. He drove the Greeks away beyond the Indus, and his sway extended from the Punjab to Behar.

His son was named Bindusara. He too was a strong ruler, for he kept safe the huge empire which his father had left him, though he did not add to it. In his time, we are told that merchants carried their trade out beyond the borders of India, and that Maghada was visited in return by many foreign traders, most of them Greeks.

And now we come to Asoka, who was Bindusara's son. We know little certainly about his early life, though there are many legends of it. For instance, we are told that though Bindusara had sixteen queens, he wedded a maiden of the Brahmin caste who bore him Asoka.

The story goes that King Bindusara was once visiting a city of his realm, called Sambapuri. There he heard strange news from his courtiers; a certain Brahmin in that city, they said, had a very lovely daughter, of whom wise men foretold that she would be sought and won by a great emperor. But the poor father was keeping her hidden away, as though he hoped to defeat the wise men's prophecy.

Bindusara resolved to win the Brahmin's consent, and to marry his beautiful daughter. In due time he succeeded, and carried off the maid to his capital, where she enjoyed his love. But this roused the jealousy of Bindusara's queens, who soon managed to keep the new wife away from her lord, and even to make her a slave. They disguised her too, so that the king should not know her; and in a little while he forgot his love for her.

The wicked queens were now so sure of their success, that they allowed the Brahmin's daughter to wait on the king. One of her duties was to comb his hair; and she did this with such devotion, that by degrees the king came to notice her. But still he did not recognise her; nor did she dare to tell him who she really was.

One day, when the king was feeling very pleased with her services, he praised the slave-girl's care of him, and even went so far as to offer her any boon which she might care to ask. The Brahmin's daughter saw that her chance had come, and replied promptly, though with fitting humbleness:

"There is a boon, O king—the greatest that I can wish, as it is also the greatest that your highness can grant. I entreat you to make me your queen."

At this the king was much surprised. It was a bold request, even from a favourite slave. And he said rather sternly:

"Your wish, sweet maid, ought to have been more in keeping with your rank. How can such as you hope ever to be made a queen?"

"Oh king, my words seem wild and foolish to you; yet I am not what I seem" replied the girl; and then she fell at the king's feet in tears, and recalled to him the day at Sambapuri when he had wooed and won her, and related the cruel way in which the sixteen queens had used her.

And now the king remembered her at last. And so deeply was he moved by her

patient sufferings, that he restored her to his favour and made her his queen again. Nor did Suptaragi, as the Brahmin girl was called, ever cease to enjoy the king's love for the rest of her life.

This Suptaragi, as the story goes, became the mother of Asoka. The child's name means absence of pain or sorrow, and it was given him because his mother felt no pain at his birth. We are told that she also bore a second son, who was called Veedasokana for the same reason. These two, however, were not the only sons born to the king. His eldest child, Prince Susiman, was the son of the chief queen, Dharmadevi; and there were more sons born to Bindusara—some stories say, as many as a hundred—by his other queens. But all these queens had cause to be jealous of the upstart Brahmin girl, as they deemed Suptaragi to be.

Not that Asoka was his father's favourite, at first. He was dark-skinned, and his body was ungainly, so that King Bindusara felt little love for him in his early life. Poor Suptaragi grieved at this; but she consoled herself by remembering that a son's merit lay not in beauty, but in brains: and in the case of a prince, in martial deeds. She

prayed that her son might be specially gifted in these ways, to atone for his lack of good looks; and she gave great care to his training, so that Asoka grew up full of promise, and before long began to win his father's respect.

None the less, as Asoka grew up he could not help seeing that his royal father still loved him less than the rest; often he felt unhappy over this, the more because he could guess no reason for it. One day he resolved to ask his mother, knowing how great her love for him was. But she had not the heart to tell him the true cause, namely his lack of personal beauty, of which he himself was still unaware. She was wise, too, and saw that to tell her son the truth would be no remedy, but would only increase his trouble; instead, she turned his thoughts to the call of his princely duties.

"My son" she said, "It is not for you to question your father's thoughts. Try rather to do all that you can to please him. Aim still at wisdom and at strength. Let nothing turn you from your studies and training. You will live to be great; something whispers this to me in my heart, which has never misled me. Keep your

ideals high, and strive to reach them. You are my good and dear son, and God will bless you for ever."

At this advice, the young prince returned with added zeal to his boyish labours. He made great progress; and though he roused still more the jealousy of the other queens and their sons, he began steadily to win his father's love and respect. One day King Bindusara ordered that his sons should all give proof of what they had learned, one against another. A great crowd of courtiers and wise men met at the appointed place, where the king sat in judgment; but though the other hundred princes were all there, young Asoka found that he had not been invited. The test was shortly to begin; poor Asoka felt bitterly grieved that he had not been asked to compete, and going to his mother, bemoaned his cruel treatment. But Suptaragi, who had the wisdom to see that good may come out of evil, comforted him in these words:

"I can feel for you, son. But you are brave and noble. Take courage, I pray you. Go in all meekness now, and stand with the rest, even though the king has not bidden you. I know that your turn will come, and

that you will defeat all your brothers and win glory. Go, son, and take a poor mother's blessing with you!"

So Asoka went forth, on an old elephant which had seen service in the days of his grandfather, the great Chandragupta. On the way he stopped at one of the ghats of the holy Ganges, and washed in the river. Then he rode on, to the place where the test was to be held; and leaving the elephant in charge of a servant, went in and took a humble seat beside his brothers, where he was scarcely noticed.

And now the test began. A great sage controlled it, a wise man who was not swayed by fear nor favour. At first the test was oral. Question after question was put to the young princes; but none of them could answer, for they were not wise enough. At last, when all had failed, the sage spied Asoka sitting a little apart, and called him forward.

"Let us see, my son" he said, "If you can answer where these princes have failed."

So young Asoka had his chance, as his mother had foretold. The hard questions were put to him, and lo, he replied to them,

at once, and won the applause of all who were present. The sage then put harder questions still, more searching, and on higher themes. The other princes would not even attempt such a difficult test; and so they had to stand aside, while Asoka answered the sage alone.

All this time, King Bindusara had been watching in silence and wonder. In his own heart, perhaps, he had guessed at the greater wisdom of his ugly son; yet he had not been prepared for such skill as the young Asoka showed. But the king still forbore to praise him; and when the test was done, and the place was still ringing with applause for his wise answers, Asoka withdrew as meekly as he had come, and went straight to tell his mother how he had fared.

"Truly" he said, "the hand of God is stretched out over men's affairs, helping or keeping back according to their deserts. When I went through the royal stables, I could find nothing else to ride but an old elephant, which the princes had ceased to use because of its age. I had no better, though, and so took it. And lo, I won praise even for this choice! For it seems that this elephant was once my grandfather's favourite;

the wise men who were at the test knew that; and in my choice of the old elephant, they read a great augury for my future."

"Again, while I was on my way I felt faint and thirsty. I stopped by the holy Ganges, washing my face and hands in the sacred stream. And this act again, the wise men say, foretells success for me in the days to come. Is it not strange, O mother, that the chief sage divined these things though I said nothing at all about what I had done?"

Then was his mother glad in her heart, and said; "You may well wonder, son. The mind of wise men is such, that they can see not only the past and present, but the future as well. That is why the name of seer is given to them. And now, my son, return with fresh courage to your studies and training. What my heart whispered to me of your future glory has been confirmed, you see, by the lips of the wise. In your own hands you carry your destiny. Remember always that it is a great one. Strive on, and may God crown your toil with success!"

Days and months passed swiftly by, while the mother fondly hoped and the boy laboured. But there was trouble brewing in Gandhara now, whose capital was Taxilla or Takshila, a distant city in the far north-west of the Mauryan empire. King Bindusara had word of it, and sent his eldest son Susina as viceroy, to restore peace and order. The prince took with him a large army; but he had also a retinue of his own friends, who were more bent on pleasure than on carrying out the commands of the king. When he arrived, the prince Susina was splendidly welcomed by the folk of Taxilla, who expected great things of him. But the people were doomed to be disappointed. Away from his father's eye, and without wise guidance, the viceroy soon gave full rein to his love of pleasure. So that the trouble, which had died down a little when the prince first appeared, now broke out afresh. The prince could do nothing to quell it, and before long returned to Maghada in sorrow and shame.

The king was thrown into great distress and anxiety by his eldest son's report. He called a council of his ministers, and sought their advice. They, feeling with the king how

grave the crisis was, urged him to take strong measures. Nothing else would serve, they said, than that one of the sons should be made viceroy of so distant and important a province as Taxilla; and they believed that out of all the sons only one could be trusted—Asoka. He was yet barely sixteen years of age; but he was fitted both by wisdom and by courage for the difficult task; he carried a clever head on his young shoulders.

King Bindusara heard their verdict in silence, but he felt that they were right. Having dismissed the council, therefore, he called to him the son whom he had neglected for so long, and thus addressed him:

"My son, I have work for you to do. You have heard, doubtless, of the trouble in Taxilla; and that your brother has come home again without any success. I wish to send you there to put matters right; but first tell me, how you yourself will act."

And the prince answered, wisely and tactfully:

"I have indeed heard, sire, of the trouble of which you speak. And I have gathered all the news I could of it, since my first duty as

your son is to know such things, and to be ready at all times to carry out your orders. The blame, I think, lies with our officers there; the folk of Taxilla ask only for peace and quiet, but the tyranny of your governors has become greater than they can endure. If we can force these governors to rule justly, the people will be content. Yourself, O king, they love; nor do they wish to overthrow your rule, which they count as a blessing. If your pleasure is to send me there, hear what I shall do. I shall go quietly without an army, and talk with this folk. I shall hear patiently from their own lips what has troubled them, sifting the evidence till I can surely know who is to blame. To those who have offended without knowing it, I shall point out their error; not harshly punishing, but making sure that they shall offend no more. If this plan seems good to you, O king, I pray you to entrust power to me; and as I succeed or fail, so may I hold or lose your favour!"

What father might not have been proud and happy to hear such words as these? Yet Bindusara gave no sign whether he were pleased or not, saying merely: "Be it as you wish, my son. In this affair your views

agree with mine. For your own good, I pray that it may be so always."

Asoka then took leave of his father and mother, and at once began to prepare for his long journey. On an auspicious day he set out from his father's capital, taking with him only a small retinue of servants and guards. He travelled fast, and by his speed and the smallness of his suite reached Taxilla not only in a very short time, but without letting anyone guess that he was coming. There he took lodgings at a private house; and telling no one who he was, he began quietly to find out what was going on in the city.

It was not long before Asoka found, that the reports which had reached him at the capital were perfectly true. And one morning, having learnt what he wished to know, he appeared suddenly before the officer in command of the city, and made himself known to him. The man was taken unawares; nor was he very happy when he found, that the young prince had come with full power from his father to look into the trouble; he had contrived, however, to save his face when the elder prince had come, and to conceal his offences; so he began to

hope that young Asoka could be cheated in the same way. But he soon found his mistake. Firmly and quietly, Asoka assumed command. His first act was to depose the governor. and to set up so strict an enquiry into the affairs of state, that no offence remained hidden from him. Yet he showed mercy and restraint; and in this way he won over to his side such officers as were sorry for the wrong they had done.

Asoka then held councils, to which the chief men of the city were invited. With them he discussed all public questions, frankly and openly. The tales which he had heard while still at home were no less than the truth, and the province had been passing through hard times. But Asoka set to work, backed by his loyal officers and the chief men. He at once helped the suffering people, by planning improvements in the city, which he taught them to carry out. His next act was to reform the courts of justice. Within six months, the province was peaceful and in order again; and, what was still better, the folk regained their former trust in the wise rule of the Mauryan king; as for Asoka, when he perceived his work was done and prepared to return home, the

province could hardly bear to let him go, so well had he won their love.

None the less, in due time the young prince came back to his father's capital; and seeking out his mother, gave her a full account of how he had fared. He then told his father what reforms he had made, and with what success. His father had heard much already, by messengers, and so was all the more impressed by the prince's modesty, when he recounted his own exploits. Indeed, King Bindusara felt such pride in his son that he now actually praised him—not lavishly, perhaps, but enough for Asoka to rejoice in the unwonted honour. As for his mother, words cannot tell how glad and proud she felt at her son's glory.

Asoka had not been long at home, when the king found another mission for him. There was a certain city, Avanthi, later called Ujjain and famous as the capital of Vikramaditya and as a centre of trade. At that time it was capital of Malwa, and was even then rich and prosperous. King Bindusara wanted to send one of his sons to it as viceroy; not because it was in revolt, as Gandhara had been, but because Bindusara thought it needed a stronger and wiser

governor. Once more the ministers were all agreed that Asoka was the best prince to send as viceroy; and since the young man had done so well in Gandhara, the king accepted their advice. So to Ujjain Asoka went, and was received with great honour. His fame had gone before him, nor were the people disappointed when he began to rule there. Firmly and justly the young prince turned his mind to their troubles, and had soon righted what was amiss and made the province happy. He stayed there as viceroy for about eight years, and during all that time the land was peaceful and content under his rule. By his care for the people's welfare, no less than by his gentle speech and kind heart, he made himself dear to all, and became famous far and wide as a great and just ruler.

Soon after he began to govern the province, an important event befell. In a small town not far from Ujjain, there dwelt a rich and learned merchant, who had a daughter of great beauty named Devi. Her loveliness and virtue were the talk of all Malwa; but although old enough to marry, she was not yet betrothed. She had many

suitors, certainly; but although some of these were worthy, and had won her father's consent, the girl herself would have none of them. And her father loved her too well to wish her to marry anyone against her will. Asoka, ruling at Ujjain, heard the report of her. Now the young man had long made up his mind, that when he sought a bride he would prefer to win her by virtue of his own worth, rather than because he was a king's son. He therefore went, without declaring himself, to the town where this maiden lived, and made the acquaintance of her father. The merchant approved of the young stranger, finding him wise and virtuous, and in due time allowed him to meet the fair Devi. At first Asoka had small hope of winning her love, for by this time he knew well that he himself was ugly. But Devi also welcomed him, for she was wise enough to look beyond his ugliness to the beauty of his inward nature; and before long he won both Devi's and her father's consent to the marriage. Then the young man revealed to them who he was, and the wedding took place with great pomp. It is not known that Asoka asked his father's consent to this match; perhaps he doubted whether the king would give it.

After his marriage, Asoka lived long enough in Malwa to have a son and a daughter, whom he named Mahendra and Sangamithra. We are told that both were born with certain marks on their bodies; which foretold that their lives would show rare piety and service to the cause of religion; and indeed these two children were the first, in later days, to adopt Buddhism and to carry it to far countries.

Meanwhile events were moving fast at Pataliputra, where Bindusara was. The king was now very old, and his first-born Susina had displeased the ministers and people by his vice and laziness. This prince, they felt, would be no worthy successor to the throne of great Chandragupta. Nor did the other princes seem much better, so that Asoka was the only one who could command the love and loyalty of the folk. Small wonder, then, that a strong party was being formed to keep Susina from the throne, and to make Asoka king when the old man should be dead. It is not known how far Asoka himself took part in these plots. He was at Ujjain still, and it may be supposed that his sheer virtues were enough to win the love and support of his father's chief men. We know at least that the

young prince was as well loved as Susina was hated; and that the king's chief ministers all wished him to succeed to the throne.

Of all those who disliked Susina, the foremost was Kilataka. This man was an important councillor, second only to the Prime Minister, Radagupta; the king himself thought highly of him, and he was powerful among the rest of the council. Kilataka was keen that Susina should never become king, if they could elect Asoka instead. So when the old king fell ill, Kilataka called to him all those whom he thought likely to support Asoka, and urged them to act with him. Among these was the Prime Minister himself, whose support Kilataka needed for the success of his plot. They could do little, however, while the old king was alive, and were content to wait until some good chance should appear. That chance soon came; King Bindusara grew a little better, and at the same time news came from Taxilla that the province of Gandhara seemed once more likely to revolt. The king called a council of his ministers, to discuss what they should do; and at once the friends of Asoka all advised, that since Asoka was still absent in Ujjain, Prince Susina should be sent to Taxilla. So far, they pointed out, there-

was no actual revolt; and as Susina knew the city, and had had some experience of ruling there, they urged that he might be able to avert the trouble before it grew serious. There was no need, they said, to recall Asoka from Ujjain and send him to Taxilla; if they did that, they might offend Prince Susina. And besides, since Susina must soon be called upon to succeed to his father's throne, it would be well for him to be given some further practice in government.

These clever arguments succeeded. The old king had always been more fond of his eldest son, and had no thought that Susina should not succeed to his throne, however unfitted he might be to rule so great an empire. So he agreed to what his councillors said, and at once sent Prince Susina to Taxilla.

So it befell that Prince Susina went off to the distant province, and the way was now clear for Asoka's friends to mature their plot. Their chance came even sooner than they had hoped. For Susina had not been long away on his mission, when the old king once more fell sick; this time, he knew, his death was close at hand; and in his eagerness to have his eldest son near him, he ordered the Prime Minister to

recall him from Taxilla with the utmost haste. But when Radagupta went out from the king's bed-chamber, he took counsel with Kilataka and the rest, and they sent messengers to Asoka first. They informed the young man that his father was now not likely to get better, and urged him to come home to the capital as fast as he could. Then, after some further delay, they obeyed the sick king's orders and sent a slower messenger to Susina.

Thus the news reached Asoka first. He set out at once, and by swift travelling reached the capital with very little delay. Whereas Susina, because of the slower messenger, had not yet even heard that the old king was ill.

Meanwhile, even before Asoka reached the capital, King Bindusara died. The young man was stricken with real grief, when he arrived and was told the bad news. For some time the ministers could hardly console him, much less could they propose to him that he should seize the throne. After a while, however, they made known to him how they had plotted on his behalf, and invited him to succeed to his father. And the young man, who saw how great a chance was offered to him, laid aside his grief at last and ascended the throne.

Meanwhile the news of Bindusara's illness reached Susina in distant Taxilla. The prince made all speed he could, but by the time that he appeared with his troops before the gates of the capital, Asoka had been made king. You may imagine with what bitterness Susina heard these tidings. With scarcely a thought of mourning for his father's death, he massed his army outside and prepared to seize power. Fortune seemed to favour him to this extent, that the common people were not yet enough won over to Asoka's side to oppose the elder prince's entrance. But he had still to reckon with Asoka himself, who was more clever than the ablest general of his time. Asoka had foreseen, of course, that his brother would try to depose him; nor did he wish to enter on a war with Susina, till he was sure of the common people's support. He therefore caused the water of the city-moat to be secretly drained away, and in its place laid gunpowder, covered over with straw. Men were kept ready to set fire to this at a given signal; and at the moment when Susina and his troops were crossing the moat, a torch was flung down into the straw from above. A terrible explosion rent the air, and when the smoke had cleared, Susina and a great number of his host were seen to have perished.

Asoka had now got rid of his chief enemy; but he was not yet able to feel sure of his own safety. Many men felt, that in supplanting his elder brother Asoka had outraged justice and tradition, and had transgressed the precepts of the Shastras. Moreover, the death of Susina seemed to them no less than a crime. There were also the disappointed followers of Susina, and a number of malcontents who would have welcomed a civil war. Thus many people were disposed to question Asoka's power, and to support one or other of Asoka's step-brothers, who had also a claim to the throne. So that for nearly three years after he became king, Asoka was dangerously beset by foes within the city.

We are told many stories of the measures taken by Asoka to quell such foes. Some make him seem so cruel, that we may find them hard to believe. We hear, for instance, that he regarded his hundred step-brothers as so great a danger to him, that he resolved to destroy them and their followers altogether. Many he slew with his own hands, if the tales are true. Others he left to be destroyed by his agent, a bold and cruel villain named chandragreeha, who murdered them one by one in a large garden. Nor were they

simply murdered there; their deaths were attended by such fiendish tortures, that the old writers who describe them have compared them to those of Hell. We read that there were pits of fire, and pits of molten lead; others filled with snakes and venomous reptiles; others in which were hidden cunning engines of torture and death. For a long time, if we may credit the tales that have come down to us, these hellish tortures continued, until at last there befell a strange miracle. One day a young Bikshu was caught in one of Chandragreeha's traps, and was cast into a pit of fire. But when they looked to see him perish, lo, he lay there amid the flames unhurt; his eyes were closed, his face was calm and smiling, and he seemed lost in contemplation. Dismayed, the cruel agent of the king had him drawn out, and put by turns into the other pits of death. But the saint remained unharmed.

Asoka, hearing of this miracle, came in haste that he might see for himself. Great wonder filled him when he beheld the Bikshu against whom death had no power. He had him taken up then, and fell in awe at his feet, praying him for pardon. The young Bikshu forgave him, and at once began to preach to

him the sacred tenets of Buddhism. So the king, in repentance, gave orders that the garden of torture should be destroyed; but before the pits were filled in, the cruel agents were all cast into them, and so perished miserably.

Thus was Asoka turned to Buddhism - or so we are told; but the old story-tellers often make up tales of foul crimes, which they ascribe to leaders of religion; so perhaps we should not be too ready to believe that King Asoka was as cruel as the legends tell. At any rate, it seems impossible that he slew all his hundred step-brothers; for we know he appointed some of them to govern provinces in his name.

After the early years of Asoka's reign, during which he put down rebels and made himself secure on the throne of Maghada, he began to turn his mind towards plans of reform. By now, he felt, he had the full support of his folk; so he was free to turn his thoughts towards enlarging his empire. His first step was the conquest of Kalinga. That country lay on the sea-coast of the Bay of Bengal; and the advice of all his ministers was, that he should lead his army against it without warning. Asoka, however, despite the strange

tales of his cruelty to which we have referred, seems to have been too generous to make so treacherous an attack. He sent an envoy to the king of Kalinga, warning him that he must look on King Asoka as his overlord. The other king refused, however, and so war was declared. After a while the two hosts met in a great battle, in which the king of Kalinga was utterly routed. A hundred thousand of his troops were killed that day, many others wounded, and a hundred and fifty thousand captives taken. Asoka's victory was complete.

It was soon after this that King Asoka was fully converted to Buddhism, whose tenets he now began to preach. He had been stricken with remorse by the horrors and cruelties which he had witnessed during the late war; and we may read on some of the inscriptions which he has left, what deep regret he came to feel for all the deaths he had caused. He therefore made a generous peace with the king of Kalinga; the kingdom, certainly, was to be counted now as part of Asoka's empire; but its own king was allowed to rule there still, nor did he have to pay Asoka tribute.

It will be seen from these accounts that Asoka was a great warrior, and that he did

much to further his people's welfare. But his chief fame is founded on his religious work. His noble aim was now to encourage the creed of Buddha in his own lands, and also to send out missionaries to spread it elsewhere. This creed, which is called Dharma, enjoins certain virtues; purity, mercy, generosity are taught by it, with mildness and truthfulness. These virtues, Asoka pointed out, could be achieved by all. Men should be sparing of the lives of their fellow-creatures; they should revere their teachers, and obey their parents and elders; they should behave with justice towards their friends, and towards all those who follow other creeds; they should be kind and merciful to their servants and slaves; and they should avoid excess. Above all, men should aim ever to control their base passions—rash action, cruelty, pride, anger, and malice. It will be seen that if the cruel stories of Asoka's young days are true, he had indeed reformed his ways since the young Buddhist in the fiery pit converted him. The Buddhist virtues, as Asoka taught, are common to all noble creeds; but the best method of attaining them is to examine one's own heart, as Buddha himself ordains.

We may tell how Asoka felt towards other creeds by some of his edicts, in which

he bids his subjects to respect all good men, even though they do not happen to be Buddhists. To be thus tolerant of other creeds, is a sure way to win respect for one's own; and King Asoka's wise and generous edicts are the more notable, because in his time men were apt to have less patience with the creeds of others than they have today.

Asoka had ruled for eight years, before he finally became a Buddhist. And it was after this that he took more thought for religious affairs, and began to foster Buddha's creed among his own people. With this end he held displays in Samajas, or theatres, showing the many kinds of Heavenly bliss which a good man might hope to gain in his future life. He also bade men go on pilgrimage to the Bodhi tree, under whose branches Buddha had received his message from Heaven; and while the pilgrims journeyed, teachers appointed by the king instructed them in the Buddhist doctrine.

For the king himself could not address all those whom he wished taught. To spread the new doctrine far and wide, he sent out preachers; but on his own part he did many acts, which showed the influence of Buddhism on his ideals of government. Such acts were

planned to increase the people's welfare, and are described in certain edicts of the king, which we may still read. "On the roadsides" he says "I have planted banyan trees, to give shade to man and beast. I have grown mango-orchards I have caused wells to be dug." He also taught the members of his family to perform acts of kindness, so that by their example all might see the fruit of the Buddhist faith. He made laws, also, to protect animals from ill-use. And the king's preachers spread their gospel far and wide, from Macedonia to Burmah, and from China to Egypt.

"There is no higher duty than the welfare of the whole world" Asoka proclaimed. He wished all living creatures to dwell together in brotherhood. And he is different from most other kings in this, that he cared not only for the bodily good of his folk, but for their souls too.

Strange legends have come down to us, concerning Asoka's zeal in sending teachers of Buddhism to all parts of the world. In Ceylon, for instance, Buddha's doctrines were preached by Mahendra and Sangamithra, the son and daugther whom Devi bore to the king. Mahendra first went there alone, flying

through the sky with his attendant teachers. He converted to Buddhism the king of Ceylon, and forty thousand of his people. Then he was asked by Anala, the king's daughter, whether she might herself become a disciple of the new creed. But since Mahendra and the rest had not been told by King Asoka to convert women, the king of Ceylon sent his nephew to Asoka's court, praying that Sangamithra might be sent to his island, and that she might bring with her a branch of the holy Bodhi tree from Gaya. When the young envoy arrived, Asoka treated him with great honour and agreed to his father's wish. The king himself cut a branch from the sacred tree; and at once a miracle happened. For no sooner was the branch put on board Sangamithra's ship, than the ship sailed away at a great speed; around her, the waves all sank to rest, while fragrant lotus blossomed on the face of the sea; and there came floating down upon the ship and her passengers a sound of divine music. When the ship reached the harbour of Ceylon, a great procession welcomed the sacred branch and carried it ashore; and they had not long planted it before eight shoots grew from it, towards the eight points of the compass. These shoots in turn were

cut, and were replanted in eight different parts of the island.

There is another tale, of one of Asoka's sons named Gunala. When the young prince's mother Arantimithra died, Asoka married a young wife, who hated Gunala and began plotting his ruin. Her chance to harm her step-son came, when a revolt once again broke out in distant Taxilla. On the step-mother's advice, the king sent Gunala to settle the province, even as he himself had been sent there in the days of his youth. Before Gunala left, the king assured him that all royal letters would bear the stamp of his front teeth; but the young queen had overheard his words, and now thought of a cunning plot. While the king slept one night, she took the impress of his teeth, and with this sealed a letter which she sent to the chief officer in Taxilla. It was to bid him to put out the eyes of Gunala, and then to drive him and his wife into the forest.

When the chief officer received this letter, he was very distressed, and had no wish to carry out what it ordered. Gunala, however, had seen the letter come, and insisted on reading it. Unable to prevent him, the chief officer none the less assured him that a

mistake must have been made, and asked leave to send back a messenger and find out if this cruel order had indeed come from the king himself. But the young Gunala would not hear of this, for he refused to doubt that the seal was genuine. So he sought out a man depraved enough to do the monstrous deed; and after suffering patiently the loss of his eyes, went away with his wife into the forest.

For some years the couple lived by begging alms, while Gunala told the tale of his misfortune in song. But one day, in their wanderings, they chanced to be near Asoka's palace; and when the king heard the blind singer's voice, he seemed to remember it. He had the beggars called to him, and learned of the shame that they had borne. Then the king tenderly embraced his son, and soon afterwards ordered that the cruel queen, with all who had helped her plot, should be burnt to death. Later, the king related his great grief to a Buddhist saint, whose goodness and piety had brought him strange powers. The saint advised the king to call a meeting of holy men, whom he addressed with such eloquence upon the blessings of Buddhism, that their eyes overflowed with tears. These tears the saint

gathered in a golden cup; and after praying for a miracle, bade the prince wash his blind eyes with them. He did so; and at once his sight was restored.

We have described Asoka's conversion to Buddhism at some length, because it played a very important part in the story of India. It was Asoka's work to sweep away the differences which had grown up between various sects; thus he gave Buddhism the chance to spread, and by his power as Emperor caused Buddha's creed to be taught far and wide through the lands he governed. Moreover, he had the Buddhist scriptures translated from the Maghadi tongue into Pali, which by this means became the common speech of India; a change which not only helped the growth of Buddhism, but also increased the unity of the king's empire. Also, the arts of painting and of building were directly helped, since they were used a great deal in the service of the Buddhist religion.

Indeed, Asoka's love of Buddhism had even wider results. Before his time, two forces governed India's destiny—the call of religion, and the call of her kings' ambitions. The Indian empire might have gone forward then, to spread all over the world. But when

Asoka was converted to Buddhism, he had no longer any wish to conquer the earth with his armies; and having made peace with Kalinga, he wished to rule far lands by the creed of Dharma only, and not by the sword. This policy he caused his sons and grandsons to follow; so, at the moment when the Indian state was ready to advance to wide power, Asoka's hand turned it back. Thus it befell, that not long after the king's death, the Greeks swept over India's north-west frontier, made their way easily into the heart of North India, and overthrew the Maghada empire; whereas in former days, before the king had taught his people to love peace more than war, the Greeks whom Alexander led had been driven back in defeat.

The Greeks were followed by more barbarous tribes, who kept invading India till the sixth century A.D. Yet it should be remembered that, if India lost some temporal greatness by King Asoka's policy, she has gained something which, perhaps, is worth more: namely those qualities of humanity, and that aptness for religion and wisdom, which are today so much a part of the Hindu mind.

AKBAR

The great Emperor Akbar came of a race of famous fighters; and before starting to speak of his life, it may be well to turn to that of his grandfather, the famous Babar. For it was Babar who, by his prowess as a soldier, laid the foundations of the empire which in later years Akbar was able to establish.

Babar began his soldiering at an early age, and at twelve was already a conqueror; for he captured a city then, and two years later he besieged and took the great city of Central Asia, Samarcand. Three years of various adventure followed, with much fighting; till in 1504 he managed to capture Kabul, and with it the kingdom of Ghazni. Starting from these successes, Babar gradually extended his power till the year 1526, when he gained Panipat and so became master of North India. But when he tried to press still farther, towards the south and east, he found that the Hindu folk were hostile to him; and his own troops, being mountaineers from

Afghanistan, could not bear the fierce heat. Bábar did not lose hope, however. but still pursued his task of subduing more provinces, helped by his four sons Humayun, Kamran, Hindal and Askari. So that by the time he died, in the year 1530, he was lord of all the lands that run southward from Samarcand, to where Allahabad now stands.

When Babar died, his eldest son Humayun succeeded him. And about this event, a touching tale is told which shows how generous was the great Babar's nature. Early in 1530, so men say, the young Humayun fell ill in Agra, so sorely that the doctors despaired of his recovery. But a great sage called Abul Baka visited Babar, and told him there was one only way of saving Humayun's life. He could be cured, the sage declared, if some friend gave up for him the most precious thing he possessed. Babar at once replied that he was his son's best friend; and that his own life was his dearest possession. So after walking three times round the dying prince, he set himself to pray earnestly; and from that moment Humayun began to get better, and his father to fail in health, so that before the end of the year the great Babar was dead.

latter qualities were passed on to his grandson Akbar. Before his death, the father enjoined upon Humayun that he should display the two virtues of justice and mercy, and that he should never forget his duty to God and man. But the great victor, while he lived, had been content with conquering his new lands, and had made very little attempt to bind them together; so that when Humayun, who was brave but unstable, succeeded to the throne, he was unable to keep his distant provinces from falling asunder. Wars followed, waged between him and his three brothers; and in the midst of these most bitter wars, the young Akbar grew up.

The full name of the young prince was Jalal-ud-din Muhammed Akbar, and he was born on the 15th of October, 1542. His mother was a beautiful girl named Hamida, the daughter of a nobleman in the province of Sind. Happy omens have often been found at the birth of princes destined to future greatness; but in the case of Akbar, this was not so. For soon after, Humayun was attacked and routed by his brother Askari. Humayun fled, and the young Akbar and his mother were left as a spoil to the victor. Askari, well pleased at the chance to use the baby as a

hostage, carried him off at once to Kandahar. But Humayun, though for the time defeated, did not intend to let matters rest as they were, nor to give up his son to Askari. So he collected troops and marched into Western Afghanistan, making towards Kandahar for his son's rescue. Meanwhile another of the brothers, Kamran, made an attempt to seize young Akbar and hold him prisoner. But Askari's ministers in Kandahar, feeling that their lord had behaved with treachery to his brother Humayun, made up their minds to send away the child to Kabul, where he was put in the care of a sister of the former emperor Babar. Before long, Humayun took Kabul and won back his son. But his triumph was short; for soon afterwards he fell ill, and Kamran took Kabul and young Akbar as well.

When Humayun got better and came back to try and recapture Kabul, something occurred which might have changed the history of India. For while the troops of Humayun were bombarding the city, Kamran sent word that he was going to put the child on the walls, as a target for Humayun's cannon-balls; so Humayun was forced to desist, and being so handicapped, he had to

go on fighting for six years before he could finally bring Kamran to the point of surrender. Humayun then sent his brother into exile, to the holy city of Mecca, whither Askari also had been exiled two years before.

The Emperor Humayun was now free from his brother's attacks, and began strengthening and extending his kingdom. Already he had in mind an advance against Kashmir and India, where the Punjab was now being ruled by Sikandar Shah. Humayun moved forward from Kabul, with his great general Bairam Khan and with his son Akbar, who was now thirteen years old. This invasion gave Akbar his first practice in war, and his first taste of glory; for while his father and the general were engaged in defeating Sikandar Shah, Akbar was sent to face the enemy's general Hemu, who was advancing upon Agra with fifty thousand men and five hundred elephants. Akbar's task was made more difficult by the death of Humayun, who had fallen from the top of a staircase in the palace at Delhi. News of this sad event was brought to Akbar, just as he entered the city of Kalanaur with his troops.

Meanwhile the armies of Hemu were moving up from Delhi, and young Akbar was

left with Bairam Khan to face them. They met on the plain of Panipat—the very plain where, thirty years before, Akbar's grandfather Babar had fought a great battle which won him the Empire of Hindustan. Hemu's forces were very strong; and although his guns had been captured in a previous raid made by Akbar's troops, he had five hundred elephants which he himself led. But the brave soldiers of Bairam threw this great host into disorder, by aiming their arrows at the drivers of the elephants; so that Hemu's army was defeated, and Hemu himself, who had been wounded by an arrow in the eye, was brought captive by Bairam to his master Akbar. "Strike your sword deep into his heart" the cruel Bairam urged. But young Akbar was too noble to take advantage of a blind man. So Bairam himself slew him.

II. AKBAR TAKES CONTROL

By his great victory at Panipat, India had now fallen into Akbar's hands. But he had still some enemies to put down, among whom was a certain Sikandar Sur, whose fortress was Mankot. Akbar besieged him there for six months, after which he yielded and was allowed to retire to Bengal; but Akbar took his foe's son with him as a hostage, when he returned to Delhi.

The time had now come for the young emperor to take full control of state, and he decided that he could no longer allow his general, Bairam Khan, to manage his affairs. For though Bairam was a great soldier, he was a poor minister; he was too apt to give way to his jealousy of rivals, and to remove them from his path with the sword. Moreover, Akbar was growing older now, both in years and wisdom; and he began to see what means he ought to adopt, in order to strengthen his kingdom. Also, he had a wise old nurse, in whose counsels he put great trust, and she advised him that it was time he began to rule alone. So in the year 1560 he took action.

Bairam Khan had often spoken of his wish to make a pilgrimage to Mecca. Akbar suggested therefore, that he had now a good

chance to do so, since Akbar himself meant from henceforward to take control of the state. But Bairam was far from pleased at this, and called together his supporters in order to make a revolt. He was pursued and defeated, however, by the governor of the Punjab; after which Akbar pardoned him, and gave him a gift of money that he might make his pilgrimage. And Bairam had actually set out, when he was killed by an assassin.

Akbar now set to work to pacify the country, and to extend his empire. He already held the Punjab and the north-west provinces, but the rest of India was still held, in separate states, by a number of princes. Akbar's aim was to persuade the people to look to him as their protector, and as the champion of law and justice. He began by crushing certain revolts, which arose at Kabul and Lahore. Then he conquered Rajputana. At Agra he built a great fortress of red sandstone and founded the city of Fatehpur-Sikri, with a splendid palace for himself in it. Soon afterwards he added to his empire the province of Gujarat, and at Ahmadabad was proclaimed Emperor of Western India.

In all these exploits, Akbar displayed the greatest courage and wisdom. Thus, he attacked the town of Sarsa with only a hundred horsemen, and overcame ten times that number. Again, when a revolt arose in Gujarat he showed his nobility; for, at the head of a small band, he came upon the rebels near Ahmadabad asleep and unready; but he deemed it unmanly to fall on them so, and therefore told his trumpeteers to blow, and warn them of his arrival. But once they were aroused, he attacked them and utterly overthrew them.

By his energy and prowess as a soldier, Akbar had now made himself master of all north-west, west and central India. Yet throughout these campaigns his method was quite unlike that of former conquerors. He thought it best for India's peace and welfare that she should have no more than a single ruler; and though this end could be gained only by war, he had no love for warfare in itself. So he took care not to harm the lands through which he passed, that the farmers might have no cause to hate him; and if his soldiers had done any damage, Akbar made sure that the cost of it was paid.

Two more campaigns, in which Akbar performed great feats of valour, gave him command of the provinces of Bengal and Behar. Now for awhile he had time to attend to more peaceful matters. So he devised a scheme by which the untilled lands could be made fertile, and at Fatehpur-Sikri he raised a building with four halls, for men of wisdom and learning. Here every week he used to spend a night with the sages, talking of problems of religion and statecraft. He also swept away, throughout his realm, the tolls which had long been levied on travellers passing from one part to another, and the tax which the Afghan rulers had imposed on all who did not follow the faith of Muhammed.

For twenty years longer, Akbar went on with his campaigns and victories, now putting down revolts, now adding further provinces to his empire, until at last he ruled all India. He died at the age of sixty-three on the 15th of October, 1605, after a reign of forty-nine years.

III. THE CHARACTER OF AKBAR

Now we may turn to Akbar's personal character and exploits.

It is recorded by his son, the Emperor Jehangir, that Akbar was of medium height, with rather dark complexion and black eyes. His voice was loud and clear, and he spoke pleasantly. His features were full of dignity. He had great strength of body, and could endure much fatigue; so he delighted in all kinds of sport. He had great courage, which was displayed both in his hunting and in his war. He was a good friend, loyal and just, and he knew how to forgive. As he was generous by nature, so was his mind open, and free from those prejudices which were held by most men of his time. That was why he was able to hold talks with men of different religions; indeed, as we have seen, he built a special palace in which such talks could take place. Such was his energy and love of exercise that, we are told, he invented a means by which he could prolong his favourite game of polo after dark; he had the polo balls made of a special wood, called palas wood, which could be lighted and would burn for a long time, so that the game might go on.

But the chief virtue of Akbar was his tolerance. He allowed no distinction to be made between men, because they happened to differ in race or religion. In this respect he surpassed all former rulers. In India, during the past five centuries, there had been a long series of Muhammedan conquerors; yet since they showed no tolerance, they had never managed to unite their empires as Akbar united his. Those former victors spread their faith by the sword, and scorned the faiths of others. Akbar thought otherwise. Though he was born a Muhammedan, he studied other faiths, and tried to find out all the good they contained; and the historian Badauni says, that these enquiries taught Akbar the great truth that there are good men in all religions.

Two brothers helped him greatly in these studies. Their names were Faizi, and Abulfazl, and they were his advisers for many years. Faizi, who was a doctor and a poet, had first met Akbar in the following manner. He had applied to one of the king's officers for the grant of a piece of land; but in the Muhammedan faith there were then two sects,—the Sunni, or orthodox, and the Shiah. The officer was a Sunni and when he found that

Faizi was of the other sect, he refused his request and drove him angrily away. At that time Akbar was in camp, besieging Chittoor; it happened that he had heard of Faizi's skill, and summoned him to his presence; the doctor's enemies, thinking that this summons was a call to judgment, sent him to Akbar's camp in chains. But when the Emperor had talked with him, he so admired his wisdom that he made him the tutor of his sons. Later, the clever doctor became court-poet; we hear that he wrote a hundred and one books, and collected a library of four thousand three hundred manuscripts.

Akbar was guided even more by Faizi's brother, Abulfazl. The father, a Shaikh of Arab descent, had been persecuted because of his broad views on religion; so at an early age young Abulfazl learned how desirable a thing is tolerance. After he came to Akbar's court, he took a leading part in those religious arguments which, as we have seen, were held week by week in the pavilion specially built by the Emperor. Akbar himself had often pondered, during the past twenty years, how hard it would be to make men tolerant in a country so large as India, and with so many different sects; but when he

came to know Abulfazl, and to hear his weekly talks with the Muhammedan doctors of law and religion, he began to see that his trouble could be met by only one method, and that was to make the Emperor the judge of all disputes concerning the Muhammedan faith. So they drew up a document to this effect, which was signed by all the Muhammedan leaders. This agreement is most important in the story of Akbar; for it enabled him to have advisers belonging to other faiths, such as Hindus, Parsees and Christians. It made it easy, too, for him to insist henceforward that all his subjects, whatever their religion, should be treated alike in law.

Akbar had thus won freedom from religious troubles; now he went further, and drew up a religious code called the Din-i-Ilahi, or Divine Faith, in which he chose the noblest precepts from various creeds. Its prayers were based on those of the Parsees, and its ritual taken from the Hindus. Moreover, he gave high places at court and in the army to Hindu princes and nobles.

We may now turn to the system by which Akbar governed India; a system of special interest to us, since many methods introduced

by him are still used by the Government of this great country.

For some time after the death of Bairam Khan, his first minister, he had continued ruling like former conquerors without much regard for the interests and rights of his subjects. But he soon saw that he could never hold together his great empire in such a way. So he began to plan a more lasting system of government. His first step was to allow Hindus as well as Muhammedans to hold office in the state, without distinction of faith. His second principle was to organise the provinces which he had conquered. This he did chiefly on military lines, with a series of different ranks. The monarch himelf had absolute power, with a few ministers to help him. First came the Prime Minister, called the Vakil; next, the Vizier or minister of finance; there was also an officer called the Bakhshi, whose duties were to recruit the army and to maintain various lists of officials, both civil and military. Likewise, he planned in all departments of state such organised ranks of advisers. But despite all this careful organising, he did not keep a large army. Instead, he depended mainly, on separate bodies of troops, sent by the smaller chiefs

who were his vassals, and whom he willingly allowed to keep their lands and power, so long as they did homage to him and sent troops to his help in war. We read that at the height of his power he had no less than twenty such minor princes attendant on him.

But in the upkeep of his army, he placed most reliance on special officers, who were appointed to provide fixed numbers of men, horses and elephants. These officers were graded in thirty-three ranks, each rank being ordered to recruit a different number of troops; they received salary according to rank, but this payment was made to them in money, and not in the form of grants of land (called Jagirs) as had deen done by the kings who reigned before Akbar.

Akbar was specially interested in the founding of cannon; but in this art he seems to have been less successful. Neither his infantry nor his artillery were as good as his cavalry and elephants, on which he chiefly relied.

But the success of Akbar was due rather to his own bravery and energy than to the strength of his army. For instance in 1573, when he made war on Gujarat, he rode with

a small company mounted on swift camels for nine days without rest, travelling through stifling heat as much as fifty miles a day. His force numbered no more than three thousand in all; yet when he met an enemy of twenty thousand, he led his little band at them with the greatest boldness, and took part in the fiercest contests, hand-to-hand, with no fear of danger.

In other campaigns, such as the attack launched by him against Kabul in 1581, his army was hindered by a great train of stores and treasure, and by all the pomp of the imperial court. This habit of burdening an army with an unwieldy escort was quite usual among eastern monarchs; indeed, in the reign of Akbar's great-grandson Aurangzeb the size and luxury of the imperial camp became so overgrown, that the army was almost useless.

The reform of finance was an important matter to which Akbar gave great care. No country can be prosperous and well governed, if its finances are not wisely directed; on the one hand, the taxes which a king must levy in order to govern his state have to be fairly imposed and justly collected; on the other, the money thus amassed must be usefully spent—on keeping order, on the making of

roads and bridges, on digging canals for the farmers, and so forth—so as to keep these vital services in good repair, and yet to avoid any waste in the spending of the king's funds. Akbar was very careful to ensure that the revenues of his kingdom should be properly organised. His viziers, acting under his control, had taxes to collect which were as heavy as the people could bear; but it was their duty to make sure that these taxes were fairly assessed, and collected without hardship.

To make the government of his empire more easy, Akbar divided it into provinces. Over each province was a Subadar, who was appointed by the emperor himself and possessed great power. He was in sole command of the people and troops of his province. It was his duty to collect the land-tax, punish criminals and administer justice. The provinces in turn were divided into districts, each of which had its own officials.

So we may see that Akbar was the first Indian Emperor to set up a system of government on modern lines.

IV. AKBAR'S RELIGIOUS VIEWS

It remains now to discuss the religious views of Akbar, in somewhat fuller detail. As we have seen, the emperor was deeply interested in religious problems; and was so free from prejudice and intolerance that he had built a special meeting-place, his House of Worship, in which debates about religion could be held. This became, in the words of his close friend and adviser Abulfazl, "an assembly of the wise of every faith and sect." even though at first it had been meant for Muhammedans only. The ancestors of Akbar had been closely connected with Persia, and he himself had always a strong leaning towards the Parsee faith; this is called Zoroastrianism, and its chief duty is to revere fire and the sun. Akbar had made a grant of land to the teacher who instructed him in this faith; and though he never actually became a Zoroastrian, at one time he went so far as to adopt the Persian names for the days and months, and to celebrate the fourteen Persian festivals.

A little later he began to show great interest in the Jain religion, so much so that some Jain writers have averred that he was converted to their creed. At any

rate he received an eminent Guru, or holy man, of their faith, called Hiravijaya Suri; he held discussions with him, and under the influence of the Jain teaching he gave up hunting and fishing and ordained that in certain periods animals should not be killed.

Some time before this, from 1572 to 1578, Akbar had met some Christians in the persons of Portuguese merchants, English travellers and Jesuit priests. With them he talked of their beliefs, but they were not able to tell him as much as he desired. So in 1578 he sent an invitation to the Christian rulers in the Portuguese colony of Goa, that they should send him two of their learned men with their sacred books, in order that he might "understand their perfection." For many years the Portuguese had vainly sought to obtain entry into the Moghul Empire; so they were greatly pleased by this request, and chose two Fathers of the Jesuit order, full of zeal and devotion, to go on this important mission. In those days travel was slow, difficult and dangerous, and in some parts of the country men could not travel at all unless they went as members of a large caravan; so it was three months

before the mission from Goa reached Fatehpur-Sikri. But Akbar was so eager to meet them, that he had them brought before him as soon as they arrived, and kept them up till two o'clock in the morning to discuss their religion with him. At this interview the emperor wore Portuguese dress, as a sign of courtesy, and offered the two priests a large sum of money; but they refused this, and would accept nothing but food and shelter. The Jesuits are a special order of the Catholic Church, which is the oldest and largest sect of the Christian religion; and they had brought with them, by the emperor's request, a copy of their sacred book, the Bible. He paid great reverence to this, taking off his turban, placing each volume of the holy scriptures on his head, and then pressing his lips to it. He also bade his artists to make copies of the pictures of Christ and the Virgin Mary, who was the mother of Christ; and he allowed the Jesuits to set up an altar of worship in the royal palace. Moreover, he gave them leave to preach their faith in his city; and when a Portuguese who was at the court died, he let them hold a funeral procession according to the Christian rites. Lastly, he

handed over his second son to their care, to be taught Christian morals.

It will be seen from this, how wide was Akbar's interest in religious questions, and how his desire to learn the truth made him unusually tolerant of other men's faiths. In 1590, he made further enquiries, and a second mission was sent from Goa to the emperor at Lahore. A war broke out in Sind, just at this time, and for a while the work of the mission was interrupted; but a third mission came in 1595, whose members were received with every mark of kindness and stayed for many years—one of them living in the empire long after Akbar's death.

But although Akbar showed such eagerness to be instructed in Christianity, and although many talks were held at which the learned men of Christian, Hindu and Muhammedan faith were all present together, Akbar himself seems never to have actually become a follower of Christ. More than one war claimed his attention during this period and even in peace his duties as ruler of so great an empire were very heavy; so he had never so much time to give to his religious studies as he perhaps would have wished. It may be, too, that the great

emperor would never have been really content to embrace any of the creeds which he studied. Perhaps he wanted to evolve a new creed of his own, which should include the noblest principles of all the current religions. We may believe that he was feeling his way towards that; but a great ruler's duties are many and various, and he never accomplished it.

VICTORIA

I. THE CHILD

Among the rulers of great empires, whose high positions and ability have influenced the lives of countless millions, the names of three women stand out above all others in the history of the world. Elizabeth of England is one of them; and long years after her, Catherine of Russia; and later still, Elizabeth's great successor Victoria, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, and Empress of India. These three great rulers had many qualities in common; but when we weigh their influence on their subjects' welfare, we can see differences between them. Under Catherine, Russia rose to a leading place among the states of Europe; her reign is chiefly famous for that; yet the great bulk of Catherine's people remained in abject misery. Elizabeth showed more thought for the good of her folk; yet she too spent most care on her task of raising England to greatness. But when we come to Queen

Victoria, we see how well she earned her name of "The Good." However poor her subjects might be, whatever their race and colour, whatever creed they held, the queen's thoughts were turned constantly to plans for their welfare. Nor did this love for her subjects cause her to neglect the power of the empire abroad; during her long and brilliant reign, the place of England among nations rose higher than it had ever been; its trade and industries increased, and in so doing added to the national wealth; while every class of subjects had its own share in the general well-being.

The future queen was born at the Palace of Kensington, on May 24th, 1819. Today, there is no break between London and Kensington, for the busy streets run all the way to it, and indeed many miles beyond; but when Victoria was born there, it was still almost like a village in the country.

Few people at that time would have said that the baby had much chance of ever ruling England. True, her grandfather George the Third was old and ill, both in mind and body; but he had four sons still alive, of whom Victoria's father, the Duke of Kent, was not by any means the most

important. The Duke, in fact, never wore the English crown, though his two elder brothers George and William had each a short turn at ruling; the one became George the Fourth, and reigned for ten years from 1820; the other William the Fourth, from 1830 to 1837.

Neither of these two royal brothers, however, left an heir. Victoria's own father died in 1820, leaving the Duchess to bring up the little girl in a manner befitting a princess. The child's life was very simple, in those early years. In the big quiet palace at Kensington she and mother lived without much notice being taken of them; for not only did the child seem to have little chance of succeeding to the throne, but also her father had left little but debts, and his widow's income was small. But in 1830, when her uncle William became king, her position was changed. Henceforward she was next heir to the throne, if William should die childless; so he allowed her mother money enough to bring up the princess in a style more worthy of one, who might some day be queen of England.

The Duchess had a good friend and adviser in her brother Leopold, afterwards

king of Belgium. On his instructions she began now to impress the little girl with a sense of her future greatness; and she bestowed much care on her education, as soon as she reached an age to be instructed in subjects, which were thought suitable for a princess to study. Mother and daughter were seldom parted, till the day came when Victoria was proclaimed queen. There can be no doubt that the Duchess played an important part, in moulding the character of the young princess. Certainly, the moral tone of the Court had improved since George the Third's time; but there was still a lack of restraint in the highest circles, and it might easily have happened that a young girl so inexperienced might have been led astray by that, had not the Duchess guided her with a kind but firm hand.

Victoria was still in her twelfth year, when her uncle William ascended the throne in 1830. So she was still too young to take much part in public affairs, but pursued her studies more earnestly than ever under her mother's eye, and became even at that early age a good linguist and musician.

With the Dutchess, she visited many of the larger towns and cities of England,

where she could see her future subjects at work. England at this time was beginning to change. The invention of steam power had brought many great differences in the daily life of the land. Railways were being built, steamships were coming into use, and factories were springing up in the north of England, a district which hitherto had lagged far behind the south. It will thus be seen that the young princess was to inherit the throne, at the time when the country was beginning a new epoch of its great history.

II. THE GIRL QUEEN

After a brief illness, William the Fourth died at the royal palace of Windsor, just after two o'clock in the morning of June 20th, 1837. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chamberlain were at the aged king's deathbed, and at once hurried to Kensington Palace on horseback; for at that time there was no railway between London and Windsor. Arriving at five, that summer morning, they had great difficulty in rousing the porter; and even after they had been let in, it was some time before they could induce the servants to wake the

young princess, that they might bring her news that she was now queen of England. At last, however, when they had told how urgent their errand was, the young girl was roused, and came down to them clad in a dressing gown and shawl, her feet in slippers and her hair falling on her shoulders. She listened to them calmly, but with tears in her eyes, and agreed that a meeting of the Privy Council should be held later in the morning. At this meeting, the new queen read a speech prepared for her by the Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, in which she spoke of her high duties, and promised to respect the liberty and religious freedom of all her subjects. Headed by her two aged uncles, the Dukes of Cumberland and Sussex, the councillors then knelt to swear loyalty to their new sovereign. On the next day she drove to St. James' Palace, where she was publicly proclaimed queen. As she appeared, high up at the palace window, the crowds roared their welcome; and it was clear that Queen Victoria was going to be much more popular than the two aged kings who had held the throne before her; for of these, neither had endeared himself to the bulk of the English nation.

A full year passed before the queen was crowned at Westminster Abbey, on the 28th of June, 1838. It was a long and tiring ceremony, but the queen bore herself with dignity from beginning to end. At ten o' clock in the morning, her procession left Buckingham Palace, the queen riding in a state carriage drawn by eight cream-coloured horses, and escorted by troops of Life Guards in their gorgeous uniforms. From Buckingham Palace to the Abbey is but a short distance, but the procession wound its way through many main streets of the capital, so that the waiting crowds might all have a chance to see, and it was not until half-past eleven that the Abbey was reached. The young queen was then arrayed in her state robes of crimson velvet and ermine, and was led to the altar by a retinue of royal persons, of nobles and of bishops. After taking the oath, she was anointed with the holy oil, sitting in that ancient chair in which the monarchs of England are crowned. The signs of royalty were handed to her—the sword of state, the sceptre, and the orb. Then the Archbishop of Canterbury set on her head the crown of England. The trumpets sounded, and loud

cries of "God save the Queen!" rang out. High overhead the bells were pealing, and the guns booming in the park announced to the joyous crowds who stood outside that their young queen was crowned. Then followed the homage of the nobles, each of whom knelt in turn to kiss the queen's hand. A touching incident at this stage proved how the queen respected the age and bodily weakness of her elders; an aged nobleman, Lord Rolle, while mounting the steps of the throne, was so weak that he stumbled and fell; at once, and before the old man had time to rise, the queen herself stepped towards him and held out her hand for him to kiss. Many public festivals followed the coronation, marking the opening of a new and happy epoch in English history.

III. EARLY DAYS OF THE QUEEN'S REIGN

We have seen that during the first part of Victoria's reign, there befell many changes which led to a great growth of the nation's wealth. The land was soon covered by a network of railway lines, so that journeys which had once taken several days could now be made in a few hours. Steamships

began to cross the Atlantic; and India, even before the opening of the Suez Canal, was brought many days nearer to England; nor was it long until the new canal made the distance still shorter. The first attempt to send messages by telegraph had been made in 1837; and in a few years after that, urgent news could be sent in a few minutes to the most distant parts of the country. In 1840, the Penny Post was adopted: so that now even the poorest of the queen's subjects could have news of their friends and relatives, without the heavy expense which letters had formerly cost. At about this time, too, Fox Talbot found out how to make pictures by means of the camera: and thus the rich were no longer the only people who could own portraits of themselves and their families. Such benefits, and many more, are now so common that we take them as a matter of course; yet when Victoria began to reign, they had been still unknown.

In early days, Victoria had of course to take the advice of others, when she needed help with her many and difficult tasks. Her first Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, aided her in a most loyal manner; and even after 1841, when the Whig party which he led was

defeated at the elections, and he retired from office, the young queen continued to make use of his wise advice. But she had gained an even better helper, before this time. That was her husband Albert, the Prince Consort.

Unlike Elizabeth, Victoria listened to the counsel of her ministers when they urged upon her the duty of getting married. Nor did she need a great deal of persuasion, to accept the hand of Prince Albert of Coburg, a young German prince and a first cousin of hers, whom she had met some years before she became queen. He had come visiting to Kensington, in those early days, and it is said that even then the princess had grown to love him. The young man was handsome and graceful, but that was not all; he was an eager, clever student, who soon proved himself an ideal mate for the queen; so that their married life, brief though it was, was happier than that of many lowlier couples. They were married at St James' Palace in February, 1840, amid general joy.

England however was not so prosperous, about this time, as it was to become later. More than one harvest had failed recently, which made food dear; and trade, too, had

been so bad that wages were very low, and poverty common. In those days the working classes had no vote at elections; yet their one hope of happier times lay in the counsels of Parliament, and they were beginning to urge that they should have some share in electing these national councillors. Some, bolder or more desperate than the rest, had drawn up a petition called "The People's Charter", in which these claims were set forth; and when the Chartists, as they called themselves, found that they were not heard, they stirred up trouble which led to riots and even to bloodshed in many parts of the country. In 1841, after Lord Melbourne's party had been defeated at the Elections, his opponents came into power. They were called Tories, and their leader was the famous Lord Peel. Soon after the Tories had gained power, better times began. The harvests also became more successful, and the trade of the country improved.

Meanwhile a daughter had been born to the royal pair. Her title, according to British custom, was the "Princess Royal," and she was the first of a large family of sons and daughters; among whom was Prince Edward, born in 1841, and afterwards known as King

Edward the Seventh. The Queen and her consort now began to make a series of state visits to different parts of their kingdom. In 1848, for the first time, they visited Balmoral in Scotland, which the Queen later made into a royal palace, living there at frequent intervals till the end of her reign.

These royal journeys brought their dangers. Twice, about this period, attempts were made to murder the Queen and Consort as they passed by; both times the assassins were arrested, and found to be insane. But the attempts at least had this good effect, that people admired the Queen for not ceasing to show herself in public, and she became more popular than she had formerly been. None the less, it was thought wiser to postpone a visit to Ireland, which the Queen wanted to make; nor did this visit take place till 1849, when she received a very joyous and loyal welcome in Dublin. Ireland was never really quiet, throughout Victoria's reign; yet she paid three more visits there, the last not long before her death. And however restless the Irishmen may have been under English government, they bore no ill-will to the Queen herself, but always made her welcome.

Now we may turn awhile to foreign affairs, and see what was happening in other countries about this time. In 1842, England was thrown into deep gloom by the fate of an English and Indian force, which had been sent up to Kabul to dethrone the reigning Ameer, and to replace him by a rival. As the army was on its way back to the north-west frontier, it was attacked by the Afghans, and out of four thousand only a single man won his way through to Jellalabad. Later that year, however, another English force under General Pollock retrieved the honour of British arms, by defeating the Afghans and releasing the many British women and children who had fallen into their hands during the fatal retreat.

Meanwhile, in Europe, thrones were tottering, and revolt was in the air. Victoria herself had always felt very strongly for the dignity of a monarch's position; and when in 1848 a republic was once more set up in France, and King Louis Philippe was exiled, the Queen welcomed him and his family to England, and gave them a home in Surrey till 1850, when the banished king died. Other monarchs, too, had similar revolts to face, and were finding it hard to retain their thrones in

Germany, Austria and Italy; some of whom were relatives of the English queen. But Victoria and her consort were now very popular with their people: and though the Chartists would have liked to stir up revolt, they were not able to shake the English throne, as other thrones in Europe were now being shaken. We must remember, however, that a good deal of the unrest abroad arose, because the nations were demanding a reformed system of government in which the common people should have some share. In England, such government had long been established; and while other peoples were getting rid of their kings, the royal power of Victoria was becoming stronger, rather than weaker, than it had formerly been.

IV. ENGLAND PROSPERS UNDER VICTORIA

As peace slowly returned to Europe, and trade revived, Prince Albert formed a plan by which to encourage trade still more, and to make London a friendly meeting-place for people of all nations. He planned to hold an Exhibition: that is, a sort of grand Fair at which the arts and crafts and trades of all nations should be shown. This idea was

welcomed by the English; for men were now hoping that a new era was about to begin, in which the nations would no longer make war on one another, but would try only to excel in the arts of peace. So the Great Exhibition of 1851 was set up in Hyde Park, which is in the middle of London; and the glass building in which it was housed was so huge, that some of the elm-trees of the park could be left growing where they were, inside it. On the first day it was opened by the Queen herself, in the presence of people of all classes and nations; and as time passed, it was visited by folk from not only all the British Isles, but all parts of the world. Prince Albert's plan was thus a great success—both in the money it brought, which paid for the heavy expense of holding the Exhibition, and in reviving the country's trade; so much so, that other similar exhibitions soon followed it, both in England and abroad.

Yet the Great Exhibition does not seem to have brought peace to the world, after all. For soon after this, a series of wars began, which held back the growth of industry in all countries. France had now once again become an Empire, ruled by Napoleon the

Third, who was a nephew of England's old enemy, Napoleon Buonaparte; and now the two countries, no longer foes, made an alliance to help Turkey defend herself against Russian attacks. They declared war on Russia in 1854; in the Crimea, which lies to northward of the Black Sea, French and English soldiers fought side by side; and despite bad leadership, disease, and a terrible winter, the allies captured Sebastopol. The Russians yielded then; and in March, 1856, a treaty was signed, in which they promised not to meddle any more with Turkish affairs.

During the Crimean War, the French and English Royal Families exchanged visits. The Queen welcomed Napoleon the Third cordially; and later, when he was exiled by his people, he too made his home in England and stayed there till he died. England was also on good terms with Germany now, since a good many of the German princes were relatives of Victoria. And about this time the Queen's eldest daughter, Princess Victoria, married the Crown Prince of Prussia, who was known later as the Emperor Frederick the First, and was the father of that William the Second who lost the German throne

in 1918, at the end of the Great War. This marriage, however, was disliked by many Englishmen, as it led the Queen to take an even greater interest, and to show more sympathy than ever, in German affairs.

The country had hardly recovered from the effects of the Crimean War, when another great conflict disturbed her peace, and brought upon the Queen new and even greater anxieties. By 1857, almost the whole of India had been brought under British rule, though the direct government of the country was still in the hands of the East India Company. For some time past, many of the Indians had been in a state of revolt against their European rulers. Moreover the English troops were few, compared with the Indian armies in the service of the Company and of the Indian princes. In 1857, some of the Indian troops mutinied and killed their English officers. The revolt spread swiftly, and before long the British garrisons were being besieged in many towns, such as Delhi, Lucknow and Cawnpore. The relief that was sent to the latter place arrived too late, for the whole garrison had been already massacred, including women and children. But the troops shut up in Lucknow, were more

fortunate for they were saved in time by the arrival of General Havelock. This proved to be the turning-point of the Mutiny; for at about the same time, news came that General Lawrence had joined forces with the troops shut up in Delhi; and by the end of 1858 the Mutiny was over, and peace restored in India. As a result of this outbreak, however, the rule of the East India Company came to an end, and India was brought under the direct government of the British crown. In later years, as we shall see, the Queen assumed the title of Empress of India.

England had colonies in South Africa and in Canada. And it now seemed good, that the friendship between her and these colonies should be strengthened. So the Queen's second son, Prince Alfred, went on a visit to South Africa, in the British warship of which he was an officer, and was warmly welcomed both by the European and native people there. In the same year the Prince of Wales (who was afterwards known as King Edward the Seventh) made a tour of Canada, where he too was loyally and gladly received; the fact that Home Rule had recently been granted, made him

especially popular. From there he went on to the United States—not now as a prince, but as a private visitor, and found everyone most friendly and ready to welcome him. But not long after this, England and the United States became less good friends; a Civil War broke out between the northern and southern states; and Englishmen were almost as divided as the Americans themselves, which side to take. At one point, England was very nearly drawn into a war with the Northern States on account of an incident which occurred. Two Southern envoys had embarked on a British mail-steamer, which before long was stopped and boarded by the officers of a Northern warship; the Northerners found the two envoys, and insisted on taking them prisoners. The British government, however, maintained that no foreign power had any right to stop their ships at sea, when they were not at war. They demanded that the two envoys should be released; and after some days of suspense, the Northerners yielded, and the threatened war was averted.

Late in 1861, the sudden death of the Prince Consort cast a gloom over the whole country and empire. Ever since his marriage,

Prince Albert had acted as adviser and guide to the Queen in her many difficult tasks. He had great influence over the country's policy, both at home and abroad; and he was wise enough to use that influence justly, and for the nation's good. But the Prince had not merely been Victoria's consort in affairs of state. All through their too short married life, he and the Queen had lived most happily, setting their subjects an ideal example. For several years, now, Victoria was so overcome by her sorrow that she withdrew from public life and was hardly seen. Her daily duties she still carried out with the same zeal as ever; but she quite ceased to show herself in public; and it fell to the Prince of Wales to represent her on all state occasions.

But the affairs of England could not stand still, although the Queen was in retirement. And during the first years of her widowhood, a number of important events occurred. In 1862 there was held a second Exhibition, for which the plans had been prepared by the Prince Consort shortly before his death. This time, the Exhibition was held in South Kensington, and there was gathered from the colonies

a still wider variety of produce, as well as a costly collection of art-treasures which their owners had lent. In 1863, the Prince of Wales was married, and the period of national mourning for the Consort came to an end. Despite her grief, the widowed queen had found time to choose a bride for her eldest son, in the person of Princess Alexandra of Denmark. This young and lovely princess was a distant connection of the Queen by marriage; and since the Danes and Anglo-Saxons are kindred nations, the match was very popular both in England and Denmark. A splendid royal wedding took place at Windsor Castle in March, 1863. The Queen herself, dressed in deep mourning, watched from a private gallery, though she did not take any part in the actual service; people had hoped that such an event, perhaps, would induce her to return to public life once more, but her grief still prevented her from re-opening her Court. However, the Prince of Wales and his bride took her place so far as they could; and the social life of the Court began to show some of its old gaiety.

V. TROUBLES IN EUROPE, AND PROGRESS AT HOME

Meanwhile, the attention of the Queen and her ministers was called urgently to certain events, which were impending both at home and abroad. In Europe, the growing power of Prussia seemed likely to lead to serious trouble. This first began with the question of Schleswig-Holstein, a Danish province which was claimed by both Prussia and Austria. On the one hand, the Queen had many relatives among the rulers of Germany; on the other, a Danish princess was the wife of her own son; so that she could not very well favour either side. She therefore stayed strictly neutral, although her subjects wanted to take Denmark's part.

Had the Queen promised to help either one or the other side, it is most likely that its enemy would not have dared to make war. But since the states were left to themselves, war could not be prevented. Almost at once, in 1864, the Danes were easily defeated by the Prussian and Austrian troops, and had to give up their province. This did not settle, however, which of the victors was to govern it; so before long the allies quarrelled among themselves, and a fresh

war broke out in 1866, with the result that Austria was defeated by Prussia.

Prussia, triumphant, began now to gather round her all the smaller German princedoms, so as to form a united German empire. But she was watched with jealous anxiety by Napoleon the Third, who was still Emperor of France, and who feared lest his growing neighbour might threaten his own country's peace. In 1870, Napoleon declared war on Germany. It was a rash act, for the French were far from strong enough to fight the new power of such enemies: and after a brief campaign, Napoleon was defeated at Sedan, and there surrendered with a large army. Paris itself was now besieged, and held out for four months, but at last had to yield. The Treaty of Frankfurt, signed in 1871, forced the French to pay a huge fine, and to give up to Germany the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine: a loss which the French were never able to forget, and which was one of the chief causes of the Great War of 1914-18. The people of England favoured France; but Queen Victoria herself must have felt sympathy with Germany, since her eldest daughter was married to the German Emperor a title taken by King William of Prussia, after his victory at Sedan.

During this time, events in England were taking place which we must not overlook. After a struggle lasting many years, the law had allowed trade-unions to be formed-that is, alliances of all the workers in each trade, to protect that trade's interests. And in 1867 came the Reform Act, by which the English working-classes were given the right to vote at elections. A few years afterwards came voting by "ballot"—that is, a system by which the voter need not tell anyone which side he has taken. Under the great Prime Minister, William Ewart Gladstone, the Education Act of 1870 provided schools for all children, even if their parents were too poor to pay fees. This reform made it possible for even the poorer people to profit from the many chances which were now open to all. And henceforward, rights which had formerly been enjoyed only by the wealthy, came to be gradually brought to the reach of the working-classes.

In Ireland, matters were not in so good a state. The greater part of the people were still very poor, and were very far from content with British government. In 1867, a secret society called The Fenians caused much alarm by wicked deeds of violence; for they

hoped that if they could frighten the government enough, the Irish would be granted more liberty. The Fenian outrages were not limited to Ireland itself, but took place in England and even in Canada, too. But in due time the leaders were arrested. They had succeeded, however, to this extent, that several Acts of Parliament were passed to amend Irish grievances; one of these acts removed the Irish Church from the control of the State; another tried to improve the land-laws, so that the tenants might be more secure in their farms.

The Prime Minister who followed Gladstone was Disraeli, later created Lord Beaconsfield. In 1875 he formed a plan that the Prince of Wales should pay a visit to India, on behalf of the Queen. The Prince did so, and was received in a most loyal way by the many Indian princes and rajahs; in his honour, too, a number of gorgeous pageants were held, because the Indian rulers wished to show how deeply they respected the English crown. Disraeli also proposed, as a means of still further increasing the loyalty of her Indian subjects, that the Queen should now assume the title of Empress of India. This title was confirmed on her by the Roya

Titles act, in 1876; and the Queen bade that the occasion should be marked by the creation of a new Order, that of the Indian Empire.

Thus in India, the outlook was now brighter. But the peace of Europe still kept being disturbed by the outbreak of wars. In 1877, the Turks were defeated by the Russians, who had invaded the mountain-country of the Balkans to defend Turkey's Christian subjects, now oppressed by the Turks. Once more, the people of England were in two minds. Disraeli's party were a little afraid that Russia might grow too powerful, after this success; whereas Gladstone and his followers wanted to drive the Turks out of Europe, whatever the cost. At last, Disraeli prevailed; but it was now too late for England to save the Turks from defeat, although there was still time to prevent the Russians from seizing the Turkish capital, Constantinople. After the war, a conference of the great Powers of Europe was held in Berlin, in 1878; and there a treaty was drawn up, whereby some of the Balkan states gained freedom to govern themselves, and Turkey retained her provinces nearer Constantinople. Disraeli, who was now Lord Beaconsfield

gained much credit for this, because men saw that he had helped to settle the dispute and to thwart the Russian schemes. When he came home, he claimed that he brought with him "peace with honour"; and for a time this claim seemed to be justified, although the peace made in the Balkans turned out to be rather a brief one.

England herself was now involved in several minor wars. It was thought that the North-west frontier of India was unsafe against Russian attacks; and to secure it, two campaigns were carried into Afghanistan in 1878 and 1879. Both were successful; and it was in the second of these that Lord Roberts first began to make his name as a soldier. In South Africa, one or two small wars against the Kaffirs were fought; and these were hardly ended, before the peace of Natal was broken again by a revolt of the Zulus, a race of savage warriors. The English government made the mistake of sending too small a force of troops to protect Natal—a mistake which was repeated in South Africa, later on; and at Isandlwana, a British army was massacred. Nor was England far from suffering another such defeat at Rorke's Drift, where a small

company of the Twentyfourth Regiment was hard pressed, though it managed to hold out against odds of thirty to one till help came. Then England sent a larger force. The Zulus were conquered; and their king, Cetewayo, was taken prisoner and brought to England.

But before long, fresh trouble broke out in the country. The Transvaal had been colonised, first, by Dutch settlers, whose descendents were called the Boers. These Boers had been unable to hold their lands, however, because the Zulus were too strong for them; and they had agreed in 1877- that the Transvaal should become a British colony, in return for the help of British troops against their savage foes. But when the British conquered Cetewayo, and peace came, the Boers repented their bargain, and broke out into revolt against British rule. Once again, the bodies of British troops were too small for the work they had to do, nor had they been given proper training in the open kind of warfare which the Boers waged. They suffered several small defeats, until once more the government sent larger forces to their relief. But the Prime Minister then in power, Gladstone, believed that

England ought to give way; he made a treaty with the Boers, by which they were recognised as a nation; and the South African Republic, which the Boers then formed had for its leader the famous President Kruger.

In 1882, trouble arose in Egypt. The Suez Canal had been opened in 1867, and England was bound to keep watch on the affairs of Egypt, so as to guard this new gateway between her and India. For if an enemy of England were to seize the Canal, it was quite evident what harm could be done to the trade between her and the Far East. In 1882 a leader named Arabi Pasha rebelled against the Khedive, as the ruler of Egypt was called, and seized the forts of Alexandria. England consulted with the other countries of Europe, and they agreed to give her leave to suppress the revolt. Admiral Seymour was then sent. He shelled the forts, drove out the troops of Arabi, and restored order in Alexandria. Meanwhile an army under General Wolseley, which had landed at Ismailia, defeated and captured Arabi at Tel-el-Kebir, and made their victory complete by putting a garrison into Cairo.

The next Egyptian trouble was a revolt in the Soudan. Egypt claimed to own the

lands along the banks of the Upper Nile, and had made the English general, Gordon, governor of those provinces, which had not yet been fully conquered. Making Khartoum his headquarters, General Gordon had carried out much useful work towards keeping order in the provinces, though he had been unable to stop the trade in slaves. In 1883, a fanatic called the Mahdi revolted against Egypt. Gordon had lately given up his post, and had returned to England; but when the Khedive asked him, he resumed his old duties at Khartoum, where he was soon besieged by the Mahdi. When news of this reached England, Lord Wolseley was at once sent out with a relief force. But Wolseley had to fight his way up the river; and the Nile Cataracts, or water-falls, made it very hard for him to get his troops past that point. When he rode into Khartoum at last, he found he had come too late; only two days ago, the Mahdi's hordes had breached the city-walls and killed what were left of the garrison; and among the slain was General Gordon himself. The Queen, who knew the general well, was greatly distressed on hearing of his death, and wrote a touching letter of sympathy to his sister. But the

Soudan was allowed to fall back into savagery, nor was the death of General Gordon fully avenged until 1898, when Lord Kitchener finally defeated the rebels at Omdurman.

VI. THE TWO JUBILEES

In 1887, the fiftieth year of Queen Victoria's reign was complete. All over Britain, and throughout the Empire too, great festivals were held to mark the occasion. A solemn service which took place in Westminster Abbey was attended by ten thousand of the chief persons in public life from all parts of the Empire, while four European kings and many other foreign royalties came to London, to join in the jubilee of the great queen. Victoria's way was lined by huge crowds, who shouted their applause as she drove in state to the Abbey.

For indeed, great progress had been made in the Empire's growth, during those fifty years. By the time of the first jubilee-the Golden Jubilee, as it was called—the British Empire had become the mightiest ever known in the story of the world. Its nations varied widely in religion, customs

and laws; but they were all united in their loyalty to one ruler, their Queen and Empress. Once Canada had been a number of separate colonies, with little to bind them together, under Victoria it had become a strong and united dominion. Australia had grown likewise, largely at first through the finding of gold there, in 1851. New Zealand, which had not been settled by English colonists until after the Queen came to the throne, was now another thriving colony. Indian affairs had suffered a check, through the great mutiny; but once the mutiny was over, India began to enjoy its share of prosperity; on the North-west its frontier was pushed forward, and in 1885 the kingdom of Burma was annexed. In Africa, large areas of land had been brought under the British flag, some of them destined to prove very valuable as a home for English-speaking settlers; among these was Rhodesia, named after the great pioneer, Cecil Rhodes. But there were troubles in South Africa still, for the Boer colonists were trying to keep new settlers out of their land. Many of these had come in search of gold and diamonds; and before the Queen's reign was ended, the bad feeling between these rival settlers caused a

second Boer war, far larger than most of the campaigns which English soldiers had fought during the past generation.

At home, meanwhile, many changes had taken place. The Irish trouble had broken out again, during the 1880's. For the Land League (which was at first a union of tenants, formed to win better terms from their landlords) had grown into a body of desperate men, and were prepared to stop at nothing in their efforts to secure Home Rule for Ireland. In 1881, Gladstone was Prime Minister; he wished to meet the peasants' demand for better terms, and therefore passed an Act, by which a number of the tenants' grievances were redressed. But this of course did not meet the wishes of those, who were urging that Ireland should break loose from the English rule; and some of them murdered Lord Cavendish in Dublin, in the Phoenix Park. At this, the English government took sterner measures, for they were resolved that such an outrage should not occur again; and for a time, an end was put to the plots of the League. But Ireland did not cease to demand Home Rule; and some years later, as a protest against Gladstone who upheld

this policy, many of his Liberal followers joined the Conservative Party, which then became known as the Unionists.

When we consider the lives of the English people themselves, we can see how much their conditions had been improved, by the time of the Golden Jubilee. Wages had risen, largely through the efforts of the working-class and its leaders. Food had become more plentiful and therefore more cheap, since large supplies of frozen meat, of corn and other foodstuffs had been imported from all parts of the world. This was made possible by the use of steamships, and by the growth of the Queen's empire The new machinery had made clothes cheaper, too; for it could turn wool into cloth, at a cost far less than that of hand-woven fabrics. Another cheap material was made from the foreign cotton, which was being used in ever-larger quantities by the Lancashire mills.

Laws, also, were becoming less severe. Debtors could no longer be retained in prison, unless their debts were proved to be the result of fraud. The penalty of death had been abolished, except for wilful murder; and when such a criminal was punished, he

was no longer hanged in public. Many cruel hardships, too, which children had once suffered, were now swept away by law; for instance, Lord Shaftesbury succeeded in passing an Act, by which the chimney-sweepers were forbidden to do their work by making small boys climb the chimney-shafts to remove the soot. Many new measures had been passed to improve public health; so that the average length of life in England was increased.

During the years that followed the first jubilee, the Queen showed herself more often to her people than she had done since the Consort's death. As time went on, too, she paid frequent visits to France and Germany- the latter especially, because several of her children and grandchildren had married German princes. In 1891 the Duke of Clarence became engaged to Princess Mary of Teck; he was the eldest son of the Prince of Wales, and so was heir to the throne after his father; but to the great grief of the Queen and country alike, he died next year. A second son, George, was now the Princes' heir; in 1893, he married the princess to whom his brother had been engaged. That princess is now Queen Mary of England;

and Prince George, King George the Fifth. In 1894 the royal pair had a son; so a new heir, in the fourth generation, was added to the old queen's family, and she became a great-grandmother.

In 1897, the Queen completed the sixtieth year of her reign. She had now worn the English crown for a longer time than any monarch before her; and it was resolved that her second or "Diamond" jubilee should be marked by a series of festivals, even more grand than those of ten years before. On June 22nd, 1897, the old queen drove in state from Buckingham Palace to St. Paul's Cathedral; the Royal Family attended her; and after them came the great people of her Court, the envoys of foreign princes, high ministers of India and the Queen's colonies, and an escort of troops from the British and Indian armies; besides mounted infantry from Australia, South Africa and Canada. After a service thanking God on the steps of St. Paul's Cathedral, the pageant crossed the river Thames, and entered the poorer districts of south London, so that the Queen's humbler subjects might share the joy of that day. The festival lasted a full fortnight; the Queen took part in it throughout, old though she

was; and meanwhile, her subjects of every rank showed how deep was their love for her, by loyal messages which they sent from all quarters of the land.

VII. LAST YEARS OF THE QUEEN'S REIGN

The last years of Queen Victoria's reign saw a war break out, greater than any which had occurred since the Crimean campaign of many years ago. For some time, the enmity between the Boers and the British settlers in South Africa had been growing more and more bitter; but it was brought to a head by an exploit called the Jameson Raid. A number of English colonists—incited, as some say, by the famous Cecil Rhodes—made an attempt to seize the gold mines of the Transvaal. The attempt did not succeed. But it made England hated more than ever by the Boers; and as both Germany and other powers were just then showing jealousy of Great Britain, President Kruger felt encouraged in the autumn of 1899 to declare open war. The Transvaal Boers were joined by those of the Orange Free State, and by a number of Dutch rebels in the Cape Colony; and they began by invading the latter country, as well as Natal. At first, the campaign went badly for the British forces. The Boers again made full use of their better knowledge of the ground, and of their greater mobility. More than one British column was ambushed by them; while at

the same time Kimberley, Ladysmith, Mafeking and other towns were closely beseiged, their garrisons suffering many hardships before their relief came. For these set-backs, the English War-Office was partly to blame; for it had once again begun with too much confidence, not thinking it possible that the Boers should prove better soldiers than their own. The Queen was closely interested in the war, although her failing years prevented her from paying such attention to its details as she would formerly have done. But she took thought for the welfare of the wives and children of her soldiers, who were away fighting in South Africa; nor did she overlook the needs of the sick and wounded, whom the troopships were now beginning to bring home. The old queen was not destined to outlive this war; and there can be no doubt, that the grief and anxiety which she now felt injured her failing health and hastened her death.

Meanwhile, the War-Office had been alarmed by the news of British defeats towards the end of 1899. It now took firmer action, and sent out a larger army under Lord Roberts, with Lord Kitchener as his Chief of Staff, fearing the nation was about

to suffer a great disaster. The colonies, loyal as ever, came to their mother-country's aid. They sent not only horses and supplies of all kinds, but troopers who had been brought up in country similar to the South African plains. Early in 1900, the tide had begun to turn. One after another, the besieged towns were relieved and their besiegers put to flight. The relief of Mafeking, in May 1900, caused special joy all over England—not only because the subjects of the Queen rejoiced that the gallant little garrison was saved from its foes, but also because they now began to foresee that the Boers' power was broken. And indeed this was so. The relief of Mafeking proved to be the turning-point of the war; and soon afterwards Kruger's capital, Pretoria, fell into British hands. This did not end the war at once, however; and when the peace at last was signed, the old queen had passed away and had been succeeded by her son, King Edward the Seventh.

During this time, the country made little progress in other ways, because of the South African war. In April 1900, the Queen announced that she would pay a visit to Ireland. She had not been there for nearly forty years—perhaps because she did not sympathise

with the Irish in their efforts to win more freedom; but this year she gave up her usual visit to the Riviera, and went to Dublin instead. Some of her ministers may have been doubtful whether she would be well received; but the people of Dublin gave her a great and loyal welcome; and it is possible that, had she lived longer, her feelings towards the Irish might have changed. The Queen was also taking a close interest in the Australian Commonwealth Bill, which in 1900 allowed the Australian colonies to bind themselves together in a union of states. She was still able to give close attention to details; for instance, she objected to the name "Commonwealth," because she thought it sounded too like that of a republic; she would have liked the word "Dominion" to be used instead. Her ministers pointed out, however, that the first name took nothing from the ancient dignity of the Crown; then she was satisfied, and agreed that the new Commonwealth's first Parliament should be opened by the Duke of York, who is now King George the Fifth.

Towards the end of 1900, the Queen's enfeebled health suffered greatly from the death of near relatives; among these was

her grandson, Prince Christian Victor, who died of disease while on active service in South Africa. And she was also deeply distressed to hear that her eldest daughter, the Empress of Germany, had been stricken by an illness which could never be cured. The Queen herself had suffered for some years from rheumatism, so that she was no longer able to walk; and not long before the South African war began, her sight had failed so much that she could hardly read, and found it difficult to sign her name on state-papers. Her mind, however, remained clear, until within a few days of her death. Even in January, 1901, she was able to receive Lord Roberts on his return from South Africa, where he had now left Lord Kitchener in command. She made Lord Roberts an earl, and gave him the Order of the Garter, as a reward for his services in the war. But this was the last work which the old queen was able to do; she was already very ill, and in a few days her doctors gave out word that there was no hope of her life. On January 22nd, 1901, in the presence of two of her sons, the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Connaught, and of other members of her family, she passed away: after a reign of more than sixtythree years, and in the eighty-second year of her own life.

Her funeral will never be forgotten by those, who were present at any of its various stages. The Queen had died at Osborne, and the sea-passage from the Isle of Wight was marked by a great naval pageant. When her body was brought to London, the procession which followed it from there to Windsor was one of the most striking ever known. Four reigning monarchs rode in it, and members of every royal family in Europe. After a funeral service at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, the Queen's body was laid to rest in the tomb at Frogmore, where the Prince Consort had been buried forty years before.

The national mourning was more sincere than is often the case, when a monarch dies. The late Queen had occupied the throne for so long that her name was almost a tradition. Few people living could recall a time, when any other sovereign had ruled over them. As years passed, she had grown to seem the living symbol of Britain. During the middle of her reign, when she withdrew for so long from public life after her loss of the Consort, people had sometimes criticised her; but towards the end of her life, she had won even more love from her subjects than ever before.' The strictness of her private

life set her folk an example, and had great influence in moulding the nation's character, during the period when England's wealth was increasing. Victoria was therefore respected, as well as loved. To her ministers, sometimes, she was firm and even headstrong, when they differed from her views; but when the need arose, she was ready to admit that she was in the wrong, and to act upon good advice. Her faith in Britain as an Empire was firm and unshaken, and she believed it her country's duty to take part in shaping the destinies of the world. Though apt to favour Germany, because she had so many relatives there, she tried to follow a course which should benefit England and Germany too; but when the interests of the two countries clashed, she did not hesitate to act for the welfare of her own. In her views on morality she was strict, and indeed narrow; but like the great Asoka of whom we have read, she believed firmly in tolerating all creeds. In her Proclamation of 1858, issued to India after the Mutiny, occurs the following passage:—

> Firmly relying ourselves on the truth of Christianity, and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of religion, we

disclaim alike the right and desire to impose our convictions on any of our subjects.

In a letter written by her to the Viceroy, Lord Canning, the Queen said she had strongly insisted that these words should appear; and from her later actions, we may see that they were not empty phrases.

It is still early to assess the full debt, which future citizens of Britain's empire will owe to Victoria,—to her good sense, and firmness, and devotion to the country she served. But of one thing we may be sure. It will be long before any monarch wins a higher place, in the love and respect of his subjects, than did this great Queen and Empress.

KING GEORGE V

I. CHARACTER.

Prince George Frederick, the second son of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra was born at Marlborough House, London, on June 3rd, 1865. Throughout his boyhood and young manhood, therefore, there seemed no likelihood that he would ever be King of England; but in January 1892 his elder brother Albert died, and so Prince George became King on the death of King Edward VII, on May 6th, 1910.

His early years were spent chiefly in the Navy. In 1877 he and Prince Albert began a two years' course on the training-ship *Britannia* at Dartmouth. This was followed by a voyage round the world in *H. M. S. Bacchante*, which lasted from August 1879 till August 1882. On this trip the two princes shared the life of their fellow-officers in every respect, and no attempt was made to lighten duty for them because of their rank. They were popular with their messmates, and

were given friendly nicknames. By the time he was twentyfive years old Prince George was in command of the *Thrush;* he was a Rear-admiral in 1901, a Vice-admiral in 1903, an Admiral in 1907, and an Admiral of the Fleet in 1910.

Meanwhile Prince George was not neglecting his books. He early showed a taste for reading which he has never lost, and the desire to see all sides of a question which persuades him now to look through some thirty newspapers every day. Further, he developed a firm will, a power to face troubles calmly, and temperate habits.

He soon made stamp-collecting his chief hobby, and he now owns the finest private collection of stamps in the world. For outdoor sports he has always had a strong liking. He is an excellent shot, and shows great interest in cricket, football and horseracing.

When he became King George, he at once approached his work with tact and industry, and found an excellent helper in Queen Mary. Today, almost all the official acts of a British king are performed on the advice of his cabinet ministers, but much depends on the way in which they are carried out. King George has always discharged his

public duties with great dignity and cheerfulness, and he soon made himself a popular figure in the country; but his work has not been limited to his official acts. He has always shewn deep and real interest in the way in which all the subjects of his empire live and work, and has never ceased trying to know more of them by mixing with his people. During the war he paid visit after visit to workshops, mines and factories, besides spending some time each year with his armies and fleet. When the Armistice was signed, the King and Queen drove through all the chief parts of London; and to this day, they still show the keenest desire to see all sides of the life of their Empire.

Further, the King has made it clear that he is prepared to set an example to his people, when an example is needed. In march 1915, he announced that while the war lasted no alcohol would be used in the Royal household; and he was the first to be careful in the use of food, when food began to be scarce. Mr. Page, who at that time was the American Ambassador in London, wrote of a dinner-party at Windsor Castle in 1917: "I spent a night with the King a fortnight ago, and he gave us only so much bread, an egg paiece, and—lemonade."

The King is clearly convinced that it is his duty to stand outside party politics; and he has several times done excellent work in bringing rival parties together, and helping them towards a happy agreement. Thus, when Irish affairs were causing trouble in 1914, he arranged a conference of party leaders at Buckingham Palace. By his sympathy, hard work, good sense and fairness he has won the heart of his people, and he has always seen as his goal a British Commonwealth of self-governing nations, held together by a common sovereign.

II. THE VISIT TO INDIA, 1911.

King George was crowned in London on June 22nd, 1911. He then set out with the Queen to pay his first royal visit to India. Amid scenes of great splendour, he was crowned Emperor at Delhi on December 12th, 1911. His visit touched the warm and quick feelings of the Indian people, and its complete success proved their loyalty and devotion to a personal sovereign. The message from the Princes and peoples of India to the people of Great Britian and Ireland spoke of the certainty that "this great and historic event marks the beginning of a new era ensuring

greater happiness, prosperity and progress to the peoples of India under the authority of the Crown."

At Delhi, the King-Emperor made a surprise announcement. The seat of Government was to be transferred henceforward from Calcutta to Delhi and Bengal was to become once more one province with a Governor in Council. In the despatch describing the proposed changes, it was made clear that Great Britain looked forward to a time when India would consist of a number of self governing provinces, with a Government of India above them all but attending normally only to those matters which concerned the whole of India. The changes were proposed for three reasons: first, because it was thought the presence of the Indian Government in Calcutta lessened the dignity of the local government there; secondly, because the Indian Government at Calcutta might be unduly influenced by local opinion; thirdly, because it was thought that the changes might help India onward towards sound local government. The scheme was criticised because it was thought that Lord Curzon's partition of Bengal would be undone, and because it was feared that at Delhi the Government would lose touch with

the Indian people. But at any rate the government of reunited Bengal has proved an undoubted success.

King George's first Viceroy was Lord Hardinge; and under his leadership there followed steady progress in government, social reform, and education. In accordance with the reforms proposed by Lord Morley in 1909, the control of the Indian Government over local governments was relaxed in a great many details. Gradually the provinces and towns became more and more free to decide their own affairs.

In March 1912 the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, announced that it was the duty of the Indian Government "to turn all our energies to the uplifting of our people; only by the spread of knowledge, and by the resolute struggle against disease and death, can India rise among the nations."

In accordance with this resolve, an advance in the education of the people had been already begun at Delhi in 1911, and now continued happily. Between 1911 and 1915, the amount spent each year on education rose by nearly 4 crores of rupees, and the number of boys and girls at school and college increased by one and a half millions. The Universities

of Dacca, Rangoon, Patna and Lucknow were founded during this period; and in these actual teaching, rather than the results of examinations, was to be made the chief concern. In addition, the Government had in hand a plan by which they hoped to reform the whole system of secondary schools; but the war unfortunately delayed their progress in this direction.

In 1913, much discontent began to be felt in India over the way in which Indian residents were being treated in South Africa and in Canada. Led by Mr. Gandhi, the Indians who had settled in South Africa tried to arouse public opinion by means of massed marches and hunger-strikes: a policy which was known as "passive resistance," or resistance to authority by peaceful methods. It might have been expected that Lord Hardinge, as Viceroy of India, would feel himself bound to side with his own nation, whether he considered them to be right or wrong; Lord Hardinge, however, showed himself altogether sympathetic with the Indian cause; and at Madras in November 1913, he spoke plainly of the "unjust laws" which he considered should be altered. His fearless attitude and statement made him still more

popular with the people of India, and led to a full enquiry by the Government into the situation. Such reforms as Lord Hardinge would have liked to see cannot always be fully carried out at the first attempt; but the trouble was at any rate partly remedied.

We have seen that Lord Hardinge's aim tended fearlessly towards justice; yet, despite the personal wishes and efforts of the Viceroy, the latter part of his time of office was marred by some disappointments. A habit of violent political crime seemed to be growing up in the country. Secret societies were formed, where men discussed their economic discontent and their crude notions of self-government; in short, the aim of such societies was to rid India altogether of foreign rule. In 1912 occurred an outrage; a bomb was thrown at Lord Hardinge's elephant, in an attempt to kill the Viceroy which very nearly succeeded. However, Lord Hardinge recovered from his injuries; and when at last he was able to resume his duties, he said in public that his confidence in the loyalty of the great mass of people was still unshaken. But there was further trouble during 1913; and in the two years which followed, German agents, it is alleged, were busy doing their best to persuade

Indians to assert their rights by resorting to crime. To these efforts on the part of Germany, the Government's answer was to create certain special powers to ensure public safety; this they did by means of the Defence of India Act of 1915.

From August 1914 to November 1918, the Empire's absorbing interest was the World-War. To this, and the causes which led up to it, we may now turn.

III. THE ORIGINS OF THE WAR.

It is never possible to trace back the origin of a war to one cause only. As a rule, certainly, we can see that the actual outbreak of fighting has been the result of one particular incident, or set of incidents; but behind that one event, there must lie always deeper reasons for enmity; and very often these deeper reasons will be hidden from the ordinary man's view. To trace these reasons accurately is never easy; and it is harder still, when the war is still recent in history. We may form theories; but as more information comes to light, we may find need to revise them here and there. Thus in deciding the origins of the Great War, we may suspect that the last word cannot yet be said; though now,

after ten years' interval since the war ended, the alterations in the theories we form are not likely to be many.

At present, then, it seems as if the chief cause of the Great War was Germany's ambition to become a world-power. From that ambition came the dangerous German policy in Turkey, and the rapid increase of the German Navy, which led to a contest among the chief countries of Europe to see who could maintain the biggest army or navy.

This ambition on Germany's part was directly connected with the rise and ambitions of that State of Germany which is called Prussia. Prussia became an important state in the beginning of the eighteenth century. After the Franco-German War of 1870, Prussia was without question the most powerful of the German states; and from that time onwards, the destiny of all Germany has been in the hands of Prussian statesmen and soldiers. Of these, the greatest and wisest was prince Bismarck. But when the Kaiser Wilhelm II came to the throne in 1888, he dismissed Bismarck, and listened to the schemes and advice of men who had great ambitions for Germany but who lacked Bismarck's care and wisdom. The Kaiser himself had a passion,

amounting almost to madness, for Germany and everything German. He was ready to believe the most absurd historical theories, and was convinced that it was the chief desire of God Himself that Germany should rule the world.

This passion of the Kaiser was fanned by soldiers, sailors and statesmen, but especially by Prussians; and it is difficult to say whether the Kaiser or his advisers did more to inflate the ambitions of Germany. Those ambitions were growing, undoubtedly; and in 1913, the German Chancellor Prince Bulow wrote in his book *Imperial Germany*: "We must never forget that the consolidation of our position as a Great power in Europe has made it possible for us to transpose our industrial activity into a world activity, and our continental policy into a world policy......The new era of unbounded German world-policy, so often foretold abroad, has not yet dawned."

Germany and Turkey. Meanwhile, between 1890 and 1914 there had been a steadily growing friendship between Germany and Turkey. This became quietly but surely manifest in various ways. German officers were sent to help in the training of the Turkish Army; German engineers and merchants

obtained many important rights in Constantinople and in Asia Minor; in 1899 it was agreed that Germans should build a railway from Konieh in Asia Minor to Bagdad, and thence to the Persian Gulf; this would, in the end, connect Berlin with the Persian Gulf, and it seemed likely that the final result would be a German attempt to seize India from the British.

The Agadir Incident, 1911. Another proof of German ambition was given in 1911. Both French and Germans had settled in Morocco for the purpose of trade. At a conference at Algeciras in 1906, Great Britain, France, Germany, Russia, Italy and Spain had decided that the Sultan of Morocco was to remain independent, while all nations should be equally free to trade in his lands. But the Sultan was unable to keep his people free from civil war and robbery. Hence, in April 1911, France announced her intention of sending a small army to police Morocco. Germany regarded this as a direct challenge to her interests there and at once sent a gunboat and a cruiser to the harbour of Agadir in July. This action almost caused a war, even then; but Great Britain made it clear that she would support France, and finally Germany had to give in.

Armaments. The increase of the German navy was perhaps the greatest interest of Kaiser Wilhelm II. In 1900 a new Navy Law was passed in Germany in the belief that, as the law said: "Germany must have a battle fleet so strong that even the adversary possessed of the greatest sea-power will attack it only with great risk to himself." It was quite clear, of course, against what rival nation this law was aimed; but in 1906, the British Government announced that it would restrict its construction of battleships, destroyers and submarines. In spite of this, further German increases were announced in 1906 and 1908. In 1912 came the most formidable German increase; a third battle-squadron of eight battleships was to be built, and to be kept at all times ready for action. The effect of this was described by Mr. Winston Churchill in the British House of Commons: "Nearly four-fifths of the entire German navy will be maintained......instantly and constantly ready for war. Such a proportion is remarkable, and, so far as I am aware, finds no example in the previous practice of any modern naval power."

Naval experts declared that the arrangement of the guns, as well as other details, on the new German battleships showed that they

were clearly intended for attack and not for defence. Britain was building chiefly cruisers, for the obvious use of defending her colonies and her own shores. Germany had few colonies; and it seemed more than likely that the final purpose of the new German fleet was to be attack upon British possessions.

As a result of this, British battleships were withdrawn from the Mediterranean and stationed in the North Sea; while the French navy concentrated in the Mediterranean, thus leaving the French Channel—and Atlantic—ports unguarded. It was understood that the British navy would not allow the German fleet to enter the Channel and attack France; and before long, in 1914, this informal understanding was destined to be of the utmost importance.

In February 1912, Lord Haldane paid a visit to Berlin at the invitation of the Kaiser Wilhelm, and held certain conversations with the Emperor and his Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg. In the course of these, Lord Haldane tried hard to discover some way in which an agreement might be made between Britain and Germany, to limit the building of ships. The German Government, however, refused to alter or even to discuss the terms of

the new Navy Law; and before the Kaiser would consent to any agreement, he demanded an absolute pledge from Britain that she would remain neutral if Germany became involved in a war. This pledge could not be given; and so the Haldane Mission failed.

Meanwhile the anxiety caused by the rivalry in naval armament was having a bad effect upon the councils which controlled the armies of Europe. France revived a former law—namely that every able-bodied man should do three years' forced service under arms. Belgium introduced conscription; and Russia lengthened her term of conscription to three-and-a-quarter years. In 1913, the Continental States are said to have spent an extra £ 50,000,000 upon their armies. The British army also was reorganised, and settled at the following strength:

Men available for service abroad in Europe	167,000
Men enlisted for long-term service overseas ...	300,000
Army for home defence ...	270,000

The chance that Great Britain might be involved in a European war against her will

was constantly in the mind of the Government. A Committee of Imperial Defence was now formed, which discussed the possibility of a sudden invasion of Britain, the possibility of a blockade of Britain, the British position in Egypt, and the need for Great Britain and her Dominions to act together in the event of war.

The Triple Entente. By the beginning of 1914, however, the feeling of tension caused by the contest in armaments was much easier. The Prussian Foreign Secretary announced in February 1914 that relations between Britain and Germany were very good. Meanwhile there had been a growing friendship between Britain and France, and between Britain and Russia; and in due course this friendship developed into an informal agreement, which became known as the Triple Entente. This agreement was never an Alliance; so that even as late as July 31st, 1914, the French Prime Minister Monsieur Poincare urged King George to declare definitely that Britain would not leave France to fight Germany and Austria alone. The terms of the agreement had not made it in any way clear that Britain was bound to join in. This fact alone would disprove the statement often made by the

Kaiser, that Britain, France and Russia were conspiring before 1914 to "encircle" Germany and prevent her by force from playing any large part in the politics of Europe.

The Murder at Sarajevo, June 28th 1914. So far we have dealt only with those ambitions and suspicions which, working over a period of some fifteen years, were the real causes of the Great War. Fighting actually began as the result of events following from a political murder. On June 28th, 1914, the heir to the Austrian throne, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, was killed in his carriage as he rode through the streets of Sarajevo, which was then capital of the Austrian province of Bosnia. It was believed that this murder had resulted from an elaborate plot; and it was suspected that at least some share in the plot had been taken by the Serbian Government. And yet an envoy sent from Vienna to Sarajevo reported to the Austrian Government "Nothing proves the complicity of the Serbian Government in carrying out the attack, or in its preparation, or in the supply of arms; and it is not even to be presumed. There are, on the contrary, indications that give reason to consider such complicity as non-existent."

Nevertheless, on July 23rd the Austrian Government made many harsh demands to the

Serbians; and only fortyeight hours were allowed for an answer. The Serbian Government found themselves unable to agree to the harsh terms proposed, and when the time had expired, Austria at once declared war on Serbia.

Now, Austria had fixed her eyes on Serbia ever since the Balkan Wars of 1912-3. Peace had been patched up at Bucharest in August 1913, but the Austrian Emperor had declared in May 1914: "The Central Powers cannot accept the Treaty of Bucharest as definitely settling the Balkan question: nothing but a general war can bring about a suitable solution." Behind Austria stood Germany. The Kaiser has denied that Germany had any share in persuading the Austrian Emperor to make such demands to Serbia, that the Serbian Government could not possibly accept them. But the notes which the Kaiser made, on the margins of official communications sent at this time from Austria, show clearly that his own thoughts were turned towards war. On June 30th, for example, the German Ambassador in Vienna wrote: "Here even serious people are saying that accounts with Serbia must be settled once for all—" And in the margin the Kaiser added: "Now or never." On the other

hand Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, was doing everything in his power to bring about a peaceful settlement of the dispute. Russia was pledged to help Serbia, and at the end of July she began to get ready her armies. Germany declared war on Russia on August 1st: and on August 4th began to advance against Russia's ally France, by way of Belgium.

The British Attitude. In the week before August 4th, 1914, the British Cabinet was holding daily meetings. The main question to be decided was the exact nature of our agreement with France. The Cabinet was divided on the question whether we should support France by arms, or not. But on August 2nd, they went so far as to give France the assurance that "if the German fleet comes into the Channel or through the North Sea to undertake hostile operations against the French coasts or shipping, the British fleet will give all the protection in its power."

That much at least was due by the informal agreement. Moreover, the British Government for its own sake dared offer no less; Britain could certainly not afford to be faced with an army of ambitious Germany on the other side of the Channel. Whether the British obligation

to France would alone have brought Britain into the war, is a question that we need not try to decide; for as events turned out, the German invasion of the neutral Belgium, and the appeal of the Belgian to the British King, was soon to unite the British Cabinet in favour of war.

The Treaty of London, made in 1839, bound Great Britain, France, Austria, Russia and Prussia to respect Belgium as an independent and neutral country. Great Britain had readily agreed, not only from a sense of justice, but because for more than a century she had fought to keep the greater powers of Europe out of a country, where they could so easily threaten herself. On August 2nd 1914, the German Government declared to the Belgians that " the measures of Germany's opponents force Germany, for her own protection, to enter Belgian territory "—in other words, Belgium formed the least difficult route to France. The British Government followed this with a demand that in no circumstances should German troops enter Belgium. No reply was received; the Germans held to their plan; and so at midnight on August 4th, Britain declared war on Germany.

IV. THE GREAT WAR—1914—18.

1914. On August 18th, the British Expeditionary Force was landed in France. This numbered 80,000 men, of whom not a man had been lost nor injured in the Channel-crossing. The aim of the British Army was to go into battle on the left flank of the French, so as to stop the rapid German advance through Belgium and northern France. By this time the German attack was being hotly pressed all down the long frontier; but it was in the north that their advance, bearing finally on Paris, seemed most dangerous. Already the fall of the great fortress of Liege had shown, that the German and Austrian artillery were more than a match for the most modern fortifications. Yet there were high hopes, throughout the Empire, that once the British army had joined hands with the French, some swift and decisive victory would settle the issue of the war. "Peace before Christmas," in those early days, was a hope which was often publicly expressed by the English.

Such hope was dashed, however, by a disaster which took place as early as August 23rd, namely the fall of Namur. By now, the British had established contact with their allies, and had taken up a position near the small

town of Mons, with the French chiefly on their right. The French held Namur; and when this was stormed by the Germans, the French were forced to retreat. But by so doing they left the British flank exposed; whence followed the inevitable result, that the British army had to retire along broken and blocked roads, and under the incessant attack of a foe who was flushed with victory. Yet despite difficulties and incredible hardships, the retreat from Mons was successfully carried out.

On September 3rd it was discovered that the German army in Belgium, which had hitherto been heading straight for Paris, was now turning towards the south-east—perhaps to cut off the British army from the French: or perhaps to cut off the French themselves from their capital, Paris. This change of plan exposed the Germans' right flank, which was now attacked in a fierce six-days' struggle known to historians as the Battle of the Marne, from the name of the river around which it took place. Under the pressure of the allies, the Germans were forced to retire until they reached the Aisne, a river parallel to the Marne but at some distance northward. "Here" says a modern historian "the methodical Germans, even in the time of their victorious advance

towards Paris, seem to have planned to make defensive lines. They dug themselves in behind the Aisne, receiving at the same time large reinforcements, and the war of movement ceased. A new thing in history appeared-siege-warfare conducted by opposing field-armies which, in many places less than one hundred yards apart, hid from each other in shallow pits which ultimately stretched from the English Channel to the mountains of Switzerland, from Dunkirk to Belfort."

Meanwhile, the Russian allies had not been idle. A huge Russian army was invading East Prussia, at first with success enough to cause the German Government very acute anxiety. But on August 26th- 28th, near Tannenberg, it met a terrible defeat. Its power was completely broken, and the Germans under von Hindenburg took nearly one hundred thousand prisoners.

Elsewhere, on October 9th, the most important Belgian port of Antwerp was captured by the enemy. There followed attempts by both sides to reach the French coast, by outflanking their opponents. Both armies reached the coast about October 17th. So that a deadlock now ensued in the north also, and the fighting became trench-warfare. One large

"salient," or bulge, broke the straightness of that long double line in the north; the British held the city of Ypres at great cost, though the Germans were half-surrounding them; and they continued to hold it, as the long months dragged on.

On the sea, the British had suffered one defeat and gained one important victory. On November 1st, Admiral Cradock's squadron fell in with a German squadron much superior in guns and in speed, and was sunk off Coronel. But on December 8th the odds were reversed; the victorious German squadron was engaged off the Falkland Isles by Vice-Admiral Sturdee, who destroyed it.

It was now clear, whatever men had thought at first, that there was to be no rapid victory for either side. The Empire settled down to a grim struggle. Recruits poured in from all sides. At one time the war office was forced to make a rule that no man of less than 5 ft. 6 ins. in height could enlist, because it was unable to cope with the rush. The Dominions were responding with enthusiasm, and India was making the great efforts which will be described later. Indian troops had already arrived on the Western (or French) front; they had fought gallantly at Neuve

Chapelle on October 28th, and had done excellent work at Festubert on November 2nd, although the French winter was a severe trial to their physique.

1915.—On the Western front, little headway was now being made by either side. A new weapon was introduced about this time poison-gas, which seems to have been first used by the Germans on April 22nd. It figured in an attack on the Ypres Salient, which lasted three weeks; but the British line still held. There was some fighting now in German East Africa, where earlier operations had been carried out mainly by troops from India; but we made little advance there until March 1916.

Meanwhile the Russian invasion of Galicia (which then lay at the north-east corner of the Austrian Empire) was leading to a miserable reverse. A combined attack of Germans and Austrians killed or captured about a million Russians; and this rout dealt the Russian Empire a blow from which it was destined never wholly to recover. For by this time, with the Baltic Sea commanded by German warships, and the Dardanelles controlled by the Turks, Russia was almost in a state of siege. This was one reason which induced the British to risk the Dardanelles campaign - an attempt

to capture the peninsula of Gallipoli, and to force a passage through the straits to the Black Sea. The wisdom of this plan, and the method in which it was executed, have been perhaps more harshly discussed than any other question relating to the conduct of the war by the British Government. Yet it was clear that, for the present, there could be little progress in France, and that some men could therefore be spared for a brilliant thrust elsewhere. Nor is there any doubt that, had the Allies reached Constantinople, the war would have been greatly shortened. The Dardanelles campaign involved risk; and it appears that the War Office, in the end, was not prepared to increase the risk so far as was necessary. For the attempt on the Dardanelles was made at the same time as an attack in France; and it was found that not enough men could be spared from the West to ensure success in the East.

The landing on Gallipoli was begun on April 25th 1915, and was carried out in spite of a strong Turkish defending-force under German officers. The fleet had failed to make a passage through the straits, proving the strength of modern forts against battleships. The army slowly gained ground, but under

terrible conditions and with great losses. "The soldiers endured every sort of privation: water had to be brought in ships from Lemnos: the men, even when resting behind the lines, were never out of the range of Turkish gunfire... Flies and blown sand made food almost uneatable... Casualties from sickness were about five hundred a day."

The Allies were gaining ground, but their advance was too slow and their losses too heavy. At last the British Government decided to give up the campaign. It was feared that, however skilfully the troops were withdrawn from the peninsula, they would be unable to escape heavy losses. The withdrawal, or evacuation as it is called by soldiers, began on the night of December 19th. "When dawn broke on empty trenches and famous positions, bought at so terrible a cost, now silent as the graves with which they were surrounded, the haggard Turkish soldiers and their undaunted chiefs could hardly believe their eyes." Two men, no more, were lost.

1916. The year opened with great misfortune for the one campaign, involving Indian troops, which was under direct control of the Indian Government. Some time ago, there had been planned an advance from the

head of the Persian Gulf into Mesopotamia. This had at first been meant as a defensive measure; but as time passed, it had been found necessary to penetrate farther up the rivers Tigris and Euphrates, and on September 29th 1915 General Townshend had captured the city of Kut. Having gone so far, the Indian Government now thought fit to make a dash for Bagdad. General Townshend protested against this, but was overruled. Unhappily, the equipment and transport of the army were not equal to so ambitious a plan as the Government had undertaken. The advance of Townshend's troops was soon turned into a retreat, and by December 3rd they had fallen back into Kut, after enduring many hardships. In a few more days, Kut was surrounded by the enemy, and a long siege began. Repeated attempts were made to relieve Townshend and his garrison; but as spring advanced, the melting snows in the Armenian hills caused a flood which made relief quite impossible. On April 29th 1916, after a siege of nearly five months, the town had to surrender, with six thousand Indian and two thousand British troops.

Meanwhile in France the Germans had begun, on February 21st, a relentless attack

upon the allied lines near the great fortress of Verdun. "Literally every foot of ground had to be fought for, and every yard cost thousands of lives." But the French held firm: and although the offensive did not end till November 30th, it slackened after July 1st because of the British push on the river Somme. The Germans had put out every ounce of effort to capture Verdun, and they had failed.

By the time the battle of the Somme was begun, the British army had increased to about 500,000 men. Now was the chance for the New Armies, created by Lord Kitchener, to show their worth. Ground began to be gained by inches, though our losses were very heavy. But Verdun was saved, and the German lines were shaken. In September a new invention went into action for the first time. This was the "Tank." These heavily armoured vehicles were designed to break down defences, and to cross even the most exposed ground under heavy fire. They came as a surprise to the enemy, and were very successful. Later, they seemed to be of less use for a time—mainly because the heavy mud of the French battle-fields proved too much for them. But towards the end of the war, they were destined once more to prove their value.

By December, the mud which clogged the Tanks forced us to end our Somme offensive. The struggle was now becoming ever more grim. Decisive victories were rare, and the final result was to be reached as much by blockade and starvation as by arms. In this connection the Battle of Jutland (May 31st 1916) is of great importance. The British and German fleets made contact with each other, by accident, in the North Sea. Losses were heavy on both sides; and the main German fleet, helped first by mist and then by the approach of night, made good its escape. But although this action was indecisive, it had a very great effect upon the spirit of the German navy. Officers and men realised, that only good fortune had saved them from destruction at the hands of superior forces, and henceforth the German cruisers and battleships remained in harbour. The British command of the seas, on the surface at any rate, was now undisputed; and it was possible to maintain a blockade of Germany, which even the submarine warfare could not destroy.

On the whole, 1916 had been a more hopeful year. The Russians were once again advancing at the expense of the Austrians in Galicia; and the Italians, who had entered the

war in May 1915, were now nearing Trieste. Meanwhile in England conscription had been introduced, munitions were being plentifully supplied, and food was still sufficient.

1917. On January 31st, the German Government began a new policy. They declared that henceforward any ships, whether allied or neutral, sailing to British ports were to be sunk without warning. This was the beginning of the serious campaign by the German submarines. In acting so, the Germans were taking a risk, because the new policy was likely to bring America into the war against them. But it was reckoned that England would be starved into surrender before America could send an effective army to France. Early in the war, the British Government had started a system of national insurance for shipping, and even when losses were heaviest the merchant companies never shirked sending out their boats, while, the British dockyards did their best to make good the losses. Each month an increasing number of boats was torpedoed, until May 1917, when the Navy began to get the German submarines more under control. In April, 169 vessels had been sunk. Meat, sugar and butter became steadily scarcer; but in June a Food Controller was appointed and, as

his rationing became more and more effective, the situation was eased. Strong pressure was brought to bear on the public, that they should be as economical as possible in the use of those foodstuffs which were not rationed; and as we have seen, King George himself set his subjects a splendid example by the frugality of his own household.

By this time, air-raids had become very common. In London especially, the people came to expect a bombardment on every clear and still night. Much damage was done—far more than private citizens could know at the time—by airships and aeroplanes; but the defence was good, and the Germans soon learned that a raid was a dangerous operation.

Meanwhile, on April 6th, the United States of America had entered the war on the side of the Allies. They had long waited to make up their minds to this step; it was of great importance, for the Allies could now be sure that in due time their resources would be greatly strengthened in money and ships, and that some millions of reinforcements would appear in France. But a long time was bound to elapse before these new troops could arrive on the scene of action; and this interval was one of the most critical periods of the war.

While the Allies thus held out tenaciously, and awaited their new friends' help, Russia was offering less and less resistance to the enemy. In March, the Tsar of Russia had been forced to abdicate. This revolution was brought about by the Moderate party; but they were unable to control it for long. In November, the Bolsheviks or Extremists obtained supreme power, and in March 1918 they concluded with Germany the Peace of Brest-Litovsk. This, of course, freed Germany from danger on her Eastern front, with the result that she could at once send heavy reinforcements to the Western.

On April 16th 1917, the French began a determined attack in Champagne. But the first fortnight cost so many lives, that the attack was stopped, and it was agreed that for the time being the French should merely hold their line, while the British bore the brunt of the German offensive. To do this, the best method seemed to be for the British to begin another offensive themselves; and this was started on June 7th, in the Ypres Salient. "For three months the British infantry fought over the bloodstained mud of Flanders in an enduring agony of which the public at home were scarcely conscious.…It was meant to

clear the Belgian coast of German bases for submarines: it got nowhere near the coast; but, at a cost of 230,000 men, it occupied the attention of the Germans and to some extent relieved the French."

But the Allies were destined to suffer another blow, when in October the Germans and Austrians forced the Italians to retreat. French and British troops were rushed to Italy, and the Italians held on to their position on the river Piave. The situation had been desperate, but disaster was just averted.

Yet 1917 was not entirely a year of gloom. In February, Kut had been retaken; and on March 11th, Bagdad itseslf fell, "thus concluding a model campaign which reflected glory alike on the British and Indian troops engaged, and on their commanders, and raised British prestige in the East higher than it had been before the fall of Kut." Here, as in Palestine the chief burden of the campaign had been borne by India.

1918. In March came the Russian peace of Brest-Litovsk; and Rumania, who had come into the war during August 1916, was forced to make peace likewise. The outlook for the Allies was still not too hopeful, but the spirit and optimism of their leaders restored confidence. It was in times like this that the visits

of King George to the army and navy had such a good effect upon public opinion.

On March 21st, the German army in France began its most strenuous attack of the whole war. Actually it was a last desperate offensive, a gamble on which everything was staked. But at the time the Allies knew little of this. All they knew was that, weary though they might be, they were called on to put out every ounce of energy to resist a relentless attack.

On March 22nd, the British line was broken at St. Quentin, and there followed a steady but still orderly retreat, in which every yard of ground was held to the utmost point of resistance. The Commander-in-Chief, Sir Douglas Haig, issued on April 13th his famous Order of the Day. "There is no other course open to us but to fight it out. Every position must be held to the last man: there must be no retirement. With our backs to the wall, and believing in the justice of our cause, each one of us must fight on to the end. The safety of our homes and the freedom of mankind depend alike upon the conduct of each one of us at this critical moment."

Urged on by the obvious need of an entirely united resistance to the German

advance, the Allied ministers appointed the French Field-Marshal Foch, on March 26th, to have supreme direction of all Allied armies in France. Men and materials were all to be used in common under his control. Meanwhile the American troops were reaching the front in ever-increasing numbers, and on April 24th Foch was able to bring the grey line of Germans to a standstill before it reached Arras and Amiens.

Two days earlier, one of the most spectacular and daring feats of the war had been accomplished by the British navy. A plan had been made, to block up the Germans' chief submarine base at Zeebrugge. Between midnight and twelve-thirty on the night of April 22nd, the cruiser *Vindictive*, two converted Liverpool ferry-boats, and a number of destroyers blew up part of the Mole, or long breakwater, and choked the mouth of the Bruges canal with three ships loaded with cement. The German faith in their submarine warfare was badly shaken.

But in France came renewed attack. The Allies had checked the German advance, but not for long. They were now driven back upon the river Aisne, and thence to the Marne. Foch guessed, however, that the Germans had

advanced farther than their numbers warranted. All the way down the line, he felt for the weak spot which he knew must exist; and finally, on July 18th, the counter-attack was begun. "The German lines were pierced on a front of twentyfive miles. Then with splendid cooperation, one army after another took up the task; and the Germans, who to the end fought steadily and without panic, were driven back, losing about 10,000 prisoners a day, over the ground that they had been occupying and making desolate for the last four years."

The German gamble had failed, and the Allied leaders now knew that there was no reserve of strength left for another offensive. In Germany itself there was despair, and the prospect of starvation. Meanwhile the allies of Germany were falling away. On September 30th, Bulgaria made terms. In Palestine General Allenby had received strong reinforcements from India, including a magnificent force of cavalry. In September and October his men went from success to success, and on October 30th an armistice was signed with Turkey. The forts on the Dardanelles and on the Bosphorus were to be occupied by the Allies, and before long British ships commanded

the Black Sea, while British troops held a line across to the Caspian Sea, and so to India. On October 24th the Austrians fell back in hopeless confusion before the Italians, and on November 4th Austria signed an Armistice.

Now Germany stood alone. The fleet at Kiel was mutinous, and rebellion was in the air. On November 9th, the Emperor and the Crown Prince astonished Europe by taking flight to Holland. On November 11th, the Allies and Germany agreed to cease fighting at 11-0 a.m. on that day. "Suddenly, as the watch-hands touched eleven, there came an expectant silence, and then a curious rippling sound which observers, far behind the front, likened to the noise of a great wind. It was the sound of men cheering from the Vosges to the sea."

V. INDIA DURING THE WAR.

The history of India during the War is the history of a great effort in loyalty and sacrifice, begun in 1914 and maintained to the end, though tempered in the last two years by a growing spirit of criticism.

The Effort. Before the war, the political reforms begun in 1909 had helped to create a

demand for further advance ; but when fighting commenced, arguments were shelved and differences for a while forgotten. It was not to be expected that the Indian people as a whole should understand clearly the purpose of a war, which was the result of rivalries in distant Europe ; but it was felt that Britain was fighting for liberty against despotism, and the cause of liberty was the cause of India. Such indeed was the response to the Government's call, that on September 8th 1914 the Viceroy delivered to the Legislative Council the following message from the King-Emperor: "Nothing has moved me more than the passionate devotion to my throne expressed by my Indian and English subjects and by the feudatory princes and chiefs of India, and their prodigal offers of their lives and resources in the cause of the realm." On the motion of an Indian member, the Council all declared their unswerving loyalty, promised their steadfast support, and offered on behalf of the poeple of India to share the cost of the war.

It is true that at first there was some bewilderment in the country at large, but India as a whole was so calm that the Government was able to send away troops freely to the Western and other fronts. In

September 1914, 70,000 men were sent to France. By the end of 1915, 80,000 British troops and about 2,10,000 Indian officers and men were on active service. In time the flower of the Indian army, the best of its artillery, and much ammunition had been sent out of the country. The forces sent to France, Gallipoli, Egypt and East Africa passed, when they arrived, under the control of the home government; but in Mesopotamia the expedition was altogether in charge of the Indian Government, as has been elsewhere explained. On every front, however, the normal charges of the troops sent from India were borne by the Indian Government.

Many war-measures were found necessary. Recruitment to the army was voluntary, and normally there had been about 15,000 recruits a year; this number was now raised to about 1,20,000. India was the base of supplies, for the Mesopotamian force, and for Indian troops elsewhere; and she provided also many essential materials for the manufactures of the Allies. To maintain an adequate supply of stores and munitions, much industrial activity was needed; this was not always fully provided by private enterprise, and it was sometimes found necessary to introduce state-assistance

and control. Prices of wheat and rice were regulated by the Government in order to keep them within reasonable limits, and export was controlled. We have seen that similar measures were being taken in England; just as in England, too, a special Defence of the Realm Act had been passed to secure internal order, and to give the Government such extra powers as they might need in a time of crisis, so in 1915 the Defence of India Act gave the Indian Government special powers for securing public safety and defence.

In 1917, the Legislative Council agreed to contribute £100,000,000 to the home government towards war-expenses, over and above the normal charges already undertaken. In the same year a Ruling Prince, a Lieutenant-Governor, and an Indian ex-Member of Council attended the Imperial War Conference in England.

In April 1918 the German troops were invading Persia, and the British Prime Minister appealed to the government and people of India to redouble their efforts in order to prevent German tyranny from "spreading to the East and engulfing the world." In response a conference was called at Delhi, attended by many ruling princes and

by delegates from all the provinces. Recruiting was now reorganised, and the ruling princes undertook both to provide larger bodies of men and to open their dominions to British recruiting-parties. From June to November 1918, over 2,00,000 recruits were raised.

In September 1918 the money question was again raised in the Legislative Council, and the decision was left to the non-official members. These agreed by a large majority to a further contribution which, if the war had lasted, would have amounted by 1920 to £45,000,000.

The following extract from the report of the Montagu-Chelmsford Commission in 1918 is a fitting comment on this excellent response: "The spectacle of Indian troops going forth gladly to fight for justice and right side by side with the British army appealed intensely to India's imagination. It was a source of legitimate pride and delight to her people, that Indian regiments should have been deemed fit to face the most highly trained enemy in the world."

The Reaction. It was only natural that after such an effort as this, there should come some reaction. Among those who wished

for reform, the constructive critics made more and more insistent demands for some form of government, which would leave India free to rule herself in a manner in keeping with Indian ideas. A Public Services Commission had drawn up a report in 1915; but its findings were not made public at that time, when they would probably have been thought satisfactory. They were published in January 1917, when Indian opinion expected much more than it received. It was proposed to recruit some services entirely in India, while the Indian element in others was to be largely increased. But it was still assumed, that in the most important services there must be a majority of British officers. This report was denounced.

Mr. Montagu, Secretary of State for India. sympathised with Indian demands and attempted to understand them better by spending several months' leave in India. He received great help from Lord Chelmsford, who had succeeded Lord Hardinge as Viceroy in April 1916.

On August 20th 1917, Mr. Montagu declared to the British House of Commons: "The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of an increasing

association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and a gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire……. Progress in this policy can only be achieved by successive stages. The British Government and the Government of India, on whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples, must be judges of the time and measure of each advance, and they must be guided by the co-operation received from those upon whom new opportunities of service will thus be conferred, and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility."

These words have been described as the most momentous utterance ever made in the history of India. Two months later, Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford drew up a report upon the most practical way of carrying the new policy into effect. The report was laid before the British Parliament in April 1918, just at the time when the German advance in France had led the government to make their appeal to India for more recruits, and the Government of India Act was passed into Law by the British Parliament.

The New Constitution. On February 9th 1921 the Chamber of Princes, the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly were opened at Delhi by the Duke of Connaught, who read the following message from King George: "For years-it may be for generations -patriotic and loyal Indians have dreamed of **Swaraj** for their motherland. Today you have the beginnings of **Swaraj** within my Empire, and the widest scope and ample opportunity for progress to the liberty which my other Dominions enjoy."

England had been the first European country to develop a system of parliamentary government, and firmly believed that her political freedom depended on that form of government. Many European states and all the Dominions had modelled their governments upon the English.

Hence the new constitution was based on the belief that for many years the final control of India must rest with the British-controlled Government, while political education should be assured by a growing Indian responsibility for provincial and local government. The British Parliament did not contemplate dropping its responsibility for India, but did contemplate giving to the

Indian people an increasing share in their own government. The new order was to be on trial for ten years. After which, an extensive enquiry was to be held, and if the report was favourable further responsibility would be given to India.

In the new constitution political education is to start in the provinces. Provincial legislatures are to hold certain Indian ministers responsible for the control of agriculture and industries, education, public health, excise duties, public buildings and roads, and local self-government. These subjects have been "transferred" to full Indian control, except that the Governor can overrule the Legislature, if he is prepared to certify that this is essential to the discharge of his responsibility to the British Parliament.

Indian Ministers are also members of the Provincial Council. which, with the Governor, has full responsibility for the "reserved" subjects (chiefly concerned with the maintenance of law and order.) For the control of these "reserved" subjects the Governor and Council need answer only to the Viceroy and Secretary of State. This system of divided responsibility is called Dyarchy. It is intended

to be only a temporary educative measure. When the Indian Ministers and the Legislatures have shown themselves able to deal with the subjects already "transferred," these subjects will be added to, until at last full provincial self-government is reached.

A new all-India Legislature has been created, consisting of two Houses, the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State, each with a large Indian majority; but the Indian Government is not responsible to this. However, the number of Indians on the Executive Council has been greatly increased, which means that Indian opinion must have much more influence than before. Also, although the Legislature cannot actually force the Viceroy to carry out its wishes, it has full opportunity for discussion and criticism; and since it will represent the enlightened opinion of India, it is only natural that the Government will pay much heed to its advice. In fact, the Legislature is in the same position as the early British parliament, when its control over government was moral and not legal. No king was then legally bound to attend to its advice, but no sensible king would neglect it. It took the British Parliament about five hundred years to learn all that it had to

learn, before it could take complete control of government.

To reduce the chance of conflict between the all-India and the provincial legislatures, the departments of Government have been classified as Central and Provincial. Normally, each legislature will keep to its own sphere. The provinces will raise revenue for the "transferred" subjects, and will keep a proportion of the all-Indian revenue raised within their borders. They will also make annual contributions to the Central Government.

The Swarajist Party. At the beginning of 1924 the Swarajist party, under Mr. C. R. Das, was strong enough to dominate the Legislative Assembly at Delhi.

The Royal Commission on the Superior Services under the chairmanship was criticised from its earliest days and its report was condemned in the Assembly. It proposed "that the Services should be controlled by the authority which is ultimately responsible for the subjects with which they deal." There was to be no limit to the proportion of Indians in the services dealing with "transferred" subjects; even in the "reserved" departments, there were to be 50% of Indians within 15 years for the Civil Services, and

within 25 years for the Police. Against this, the Swarajists demanded complete and immediate Indianisation.

VI. EUROPE AFTER THE WAR.

The ten years after the War have been marked in Europe by economic depression, by criticism of the Treaty of Versailles, and by attempts to make war no longer the chief argument in an international dispute.

The Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28th 1919, and was followed by some minor treaties which completed a temporary settlement of European affairs. India was represented at Versailles and signed the Treaty; she also became one of the original members of the League of Nations. In territorial settlements, the treaties were not entirely wise. The new states of Poland and Czecho-Slovakia were recognised; France obtained Alsace and Lorraine; Denmark obtained Northern Schleswig; Italy was given the Southern Tirol and Trieste; Germany lost all her colonies.

The charge of repairing the damage done by the War was laid upon Germany, and as a guarantee Allied troops were to occupy the

Rhineland for fifteen years, or until such time as "Germany complies with all the undertakings resulting from the Treaty." The most hopeful part of the peace settlement was the founding of the League of Nations, with a permanent Secretariat and with the purpose of using moral and economic persuasion to induce nations to submit their quarrels to arbitration for several months, in the hope of avoiding war. America, whose President had been the prime mover of the League, refused to enter it. Germany was not allowed to enter till 1926.

On December 6th 1921, Ireland (except the six Ulster counties) was recognised as the Irish Free State, with a President and Legislature of its own, and forming part of the British Commonwealth of Nations. The six northern counties remained in the United Kingdom, with a separate administration called the Government of Northern Ireland.

Meanwhile the German Republic, established on August 11th 1919, had not fulfilled its Reparation payments; and on January 11th 1923, French and Belgian armies occupied the Ruhr Valley, against the wish of the British Government. The Reparation question became acute; and in August 1924 a conference

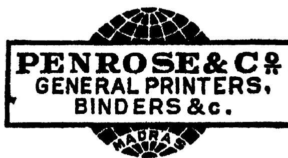
of the European Powers was held in London under the chairmanship of an American, General Dawes, to arrange a settlement. It was agreed that the great railway-system of Germany should be handed over to an international company, whose revenue should be pledged for the payment of Reparations. At present the whole question is again under discussion.

The claim that the Great War was "a war to end war" was not forgotten, and from time to time fresh efforts were made to reduce the danger of an international conflict. On the one hand were proposals for disarmament, steadily advocated by the League of Nations and meeting with varied success at Washington and Geneva (the headquarters of the League.) On the other hand were two successful attempts to persuade European governments to renounce war as a normal expedient.

On December 1st 1925, representatives of Great Britain, Belgium, France, Italy, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia and Germany met in London to sign a pact, which had been worded after long conferences at Locarno, in Switzerland. The undertaking was that the signatories "in order to seek by common agreement the

means of preserving their respective nations from the scourge of war, and of providing for the peaceful settlement of disputes which might eventually arise between them, have given their approval to the draft Treaties and Conventions which respectively affect them, and which, framed in the course of the present Conference, are mutually dependent." Germany, Belgium, France, Britain and Italy guaranteed to maintain the existing boundaries between Germany and Belgium, and between Germany and France.

In August 1928 a new Treaty, inspired by the American Mr. Kellogg, was signed by fifteen nations. This time it was the whole principle of warfare which came under discussion, and the nations definitely renounced it as anything but a defence against aggression. The treaty has moral, not legal force, and its chief importance lies in the spirit which prompted it. At its face-value it is a clear declaration that the nations are tired of war; it now remains for them to cement the pact by a wise support of the Disarmament Conference for which the League of Nations is already preparing.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