

HONORIA LAWRENCE :

A Fragment of Indian History



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NOVELS BY THE SAME AUTHOR

UNCONQUERED

STRANGE ROADS

THE STRONG HOURS

LONELY FURROW

SIEGE PERILOUS (Stories)

'BUT YESTERDAY——'

A WILD BIRD

History of the First Afghan War

THE HERO OF HERAT

THE JUDGMENT OF THE SWORD

Second Afghan War

KABUL TO KANDAHAR

(Peter Davies Ltd.)

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HONORIA MARSHALL, aged 21
(Afterwards Lady Lawrence).
From a miniature.


HONORIA LAWRENCE

A Fragment of Indian History

By MAUD DIVER

*High hopes, noble efforts : under thickening
difficulties and impediments, ever new nobleness and
valiant effort—a life which cannot challenge the
world's attention, yet does modestly solicit it : and
perhaps, on close study, will be found to reward it.*

Carlyle.



*Strength for the daily task,
Courage to face the road,
Good cheer, to help me bear the travellers' load ;
And, for the hours of rest, that come between,
An inward joy in all things heard and seen.*

Henry Vandyke.

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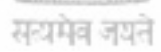
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TO
GRACE MAY LAWRENCE,
WHO ENCOURAGED ME TO ATTEMPT IT,
WITH MY LOVE
MAUD DIVER.

*Outliving beauty's outward, with a mind
That doth renew swifter than blood decays.*

Shakespeare.





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AUTHOR'S NOTE

IN attempting this portrait of a great man's wife I have aimed also at re-creating the whole stormy period in which Henry and Honoria Lawrence courageously lived and worked together ; at giving some idea of what life in India meant for an Englishwoman, who followed her husband's fortunes, in those distant days, when British India was a mere fragment of the Great Peninsula ; wedged north and south between the Sikh Punjab and the States of Rajputana ; west and east between unconquered Sindh and the kingdoms of Oudh and Nepal : when Indian service, as often as not, meant life-long exile, constant ill-health and an early death. In a portrait of this kind, though every stroke be verified, incessant footnotes are tiresome to the eye and mind. I prefer to state my chief authorities in this brief foreword ; and to add that all recorded thoughts and sensations, of any character concerned, are not guesswork, but taken from intimate letters and journals, though I have refrained from encumbering my true story with over-much reference to these, except when quoted. They detract from the illusion of life, and surely a ' Life ' should live.

I am chiefly indebted to Sir Alexander Lawrence, grandson of Sir Henry, for my first-hand material—journals, letters and so forth—and for permission to reproduce certain portraits that appear in the book. I am also indebted to Professor Morison's *Lawrence of Lucknow*, and Sir Herbert Edwardes' original *Life* of Sir Henry.

I have to thank the India office and my friend Mrs. Henry Lawrence for the loan of many books on the period : two decades packed with events of vital significance to England and India, crowded hours of glorious and inglorious life.

As those two decades cover five administrations and six

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wars, I append a list of these, that may be useful for reference.

Governors-General.

1837-42	Lord Auckland.
1842-44	Lord Ellenborough.
1844-47	Lord Hardinge.
1848-56	Lord Dalhousie.
1856-	Lord Canning.

Wars

1839-42	Afghan War.
1843	War with Gwalior.
1845-46	First Sikh War.
1848-49	Second Sikh War.
1852-	Burmese War.
1857	The Mutiny.

As regards the problem of spelling Indian and Afghan names, I have adhered, in most cases, to modern spelling, except where it would confuse readers by being too unfamiliar. I append a short guide to vowel sounds.

<i>d</i> —arn	<i>in</i> —cen
<i>a</i> —as ‘u’ in but	<i>ai</i> —as in vine
<i>i</i> —ce	<i>o</i> —as in note
<i>ir</i> —cer	<i>u</i> —oo

A list of books consulted will be found on page 510.

MAUD DIVER.

INTRODUCING HONORIA

THE name and fame of Sir Henry Lawrence must endure while India endures, not merely as an administrator of personality and genius, the first British Ruler of the Punjab, but as a practical philanthropist, whose works live after him—and will continue to live ; as a born leader of men, gifted with a singularly profound understanding of Indian motive and character. In the troubled decade before the Mutiny, he was recognised, by the discerning, as one of the great figures of his time : a period rich in men of outstanding qualities—Nicholson and Eldred Pottinger, heroic George Broadfoot and the redoubtable John Lawrence, who lived to rule all India. It was under Sir Henry's inspiring leadership that the famous group of soldier-civilians—James Abbott, Herbert Edwardes, Nicholson and Reynell Taylor—virtually created the North-West Frontier : and he shared with all of them that ' powerful, insubordinate sense of individuality essential to high achievement.' Of that group, known as Lawrence's young men, I have written elsewhere that they were ' far from faultless, differing widely, with the individual difference of strong natures, yet alike in one essential quality—they feared God, and they feared nothing else in heaven or earth.' ¹ Through that very compound of faith and fearlessness, they set up a standard of British character in Eastern eyes ; and they looked unanimously to Henry Lawrence as leader, exemplar and friend.

To a man so diversely compact of generous impulses and fiery temper, of dynamic energy and far-seeing vision—a man with the seed of greatness in him, though it came slowly to fruition—marriage was bound to be the most critical venture in all his venturesome career, the most

¹ *The Hero of Herat.*

INTRODUCING HONORIA

potent influence for good or ill. And he himself, innately religious, must have seen the guiding 'Hand of Providence' in his early meeting with Honoria Marshall, a lively intelligent Irish girl from the wilds of Donegal, a creature of natural grace and unspoilt charm, recognised, almost at sight, as his true and destined mate. Though fulfilment tarried many years, the event more than justified the instant conviction of his heart. It has been aptly said that no two early factors were more vital to the later achievements of his manhood than his six years in the Indian Revenue Survey and his marriage to Honoria Marshall. Irish like himself—a cousin in the second degree—ties of country and of blood wrought in them a rare congeniality of mind and spirit, a veritable union such as few modern novelists would dare to depict.

'She seemed the female power—in Eastern phrase—of himself:' wrote James Abbott—'entering into his interests and pursuits with all her soul, counting nothing evil that was shared with him. . . . Whatever his occupation, she applied herself to understand and share it. Her enthusiasm never flagged. Rather it burned with a steadier glow to her life's end. . . . Never had great public servant a help more meet for him.'

Both, undoubtedly, contributed notable qualities to the partnership; but, for Lawrence—with his flame-like temperament and high aspirations—it was everything to have won that rarity, a wife who would never be jealous of the work that devoured his days and over-taxed his health. Being in full sympathy with his aims, she lent grace to the strength of his career; knew how to help him, in difficult moods or times of stress, through a human closeness, offered in a spirit of understanding, not of demand. More: she could genuinely find her own happiness in 'being the tributary stream that swelled the volume of a noble river.'

Stevenson's lines to his own wife might fitly have been written for Honoria Lawrence:

'Honour, anger, valour, fire,
A love that life could never tire,
Death quench, or evil stir—
The mighty master gave to her.'

If, in thus introducing her, I have dwelt mainly on those qualities that most distinguished her as wife to a remarkable man, it is not only because they reveal her genius for that high calling, but because she would have wished, above all things, so to be remembered. Though the full revealing of love in marriage did not come to her till nine-and-twenty, it brought so fruitful an enrichment of life and character, that from first to last she could have said, in simple truth, 'Let me lose all, to lose my loss in you.' Yet was she neither echo nor shadow of the man she loved almost to the point of idolatry. Like himself she was a positive personality, eager, ardent, adventurous: a born comrade for the wild camp life of their early days: a shrewd observer of men and things; a lover of nature in every mood, peculiarly a lover of the sea. Vignettes of description, of scenes vividly and freshly noted, are scattered throughout her journals and her long detailed letters to England. For all her love of her fellows and natural gift of humour, she was happier in plying her pen, in the companionship of books and her Bible and solitary thought, than in any form of social intercourse. She observed her fellows with a humorous and often critical interest: but on the whole she preferred their room to their company.

After six weeks in the jungle, alone with her new-made husband, two weeks of a cantonment station damped her spirit and set her longing for the wilds. 'I was very glad to leave it,' she wrote to her dearest friend. 'A small station in India . . . is worse than a country town at Home. . . . I never *did* like what is called company . . . and the superficialities of society came like a wet blanket upon me after weeks in which I had only heard and said words that came straight from the heart.'

A marriage so romantically begun might well have dropped plumb into the trivial distractions of life in a punishing climate, on inadequate means. Their singular accord in taste and temperament might well have bred the discord that often so curiously springs from too close a likeness between man and wife. Instead, their early romance evolved into a genuine comradeship 'durable from the daily

dust of life'; a mutual conviction—confirmed by experience—that neither cares nor difficulties, nor the strain of frequent separation, could undermine married happiness grounded in admiration, faith and love. Even the close likeness worked towards a fuller understanding and forbearance; a '*togetherness*' of experience deepened by one vital point of union—the religious outlook which they shared to the full.

In her whom he first met as a girl of nineteen—loved at sight and could not marry for nine years—Henry Lawrence found the one being of all others who could temper his peculiar ruggedness, his dæmonic energy and over-scrupulous devotion to work. And she, for her part, could write with simple sincerity to her oldest friend, 'I am *happy*. . . . In Henry I have found that on which my understanding heart can fully rest.'

Though, in after years, they were often wrenched apart, at other times they were flung together in complete isolation; and so entirely each came to depend on the other, both in life and work, that the death of one must hurt the other beyond hope of healing. She—more sternly disciplined by sickness and sorrow—'went before, as it were, and carried the lamp. So she came first to the end of the journey—'

सत्यमेव जयते

PHASE ONE
TO INDIA

(1827-1837)

*Suddenly revealed,
Is all that we, in our desire might be.*

*For love has touched us with his majesty :
We grow beyond the bounds of time and pain,
Then in one heart-beat, wondering, meet again.*

Laurence Binyon.





सत्यमेव जयते

IT was a boisterous yet radiant April evening in the year 1827. The first whisper of spring had but lately reached Innishowen, the moorland peninsula that thrusts a rugged shoulder between Lough Foyle and Lough Swilly, and ends, where northern Ireland ends, at the rocky point of Malin Head. As yet the mummied heath bells, the russet mass of crumpled bracken, showed no sign of returning life. But golden buds lit the dark gorse bushes ; and high above the dusky moor, Slieve Snacht loomed ink-blue against a flaming sky.

The silence and the splendour were troubled only by the soft crash of breaking waves, the cry of nesting sea-birds and the solitary figure of a young girl, scrambling among the rocky boulders, or stooping to examine some fragment of plant life.

Lithe and swift, with the natural grace of a young Diana, Honoria Marshall, at eighteen, had little beyond her full skirts and flowing cloak in common with the correct, house-bound young ladies of her day. Enjoying the larger freedom of country life, she could indulge at will her unfashionable taste for lonely rambles, that had bred in her a rare familiarity with wild Nature, a deep personal love of her home surroundings that neither years nor absence could dim.

To the fine old house at Fahan—set among hills and woods above its own lake—a four-year-old Honoria had been transferred by a kindly uncle, from the over-stocked Rectory at Cardonagh, a straggling village, not many miles off, where the Reverend George Marshall and his fruitful wife, Elizabeth Sophia, were simply and piously tending their few parishioners and rearing their many children. Nine sons and seven daughters, in twenty-three years, was a heroic

maternal achievement little regarded at a time when dutiful wives faced again and again—without chloroform—the certain pangs and uncertain rewards of motherhood. Bidden by Scripture to be fruitful and multiply, they multiplied accordingly, to the glory of God, and often to the great benefit of their country.

It was on Christmas Day, 1808, that the good Elizabeth had presented the Reverend George with his twelfth child—afterwards adopted by his brother-in-law, Admiral Heath, who already had five children by his dead wife, Rebecca Marshall. The second Mrs. Heath, being childless, had welcomed and loved the small niece as her own : and when the Admiral himself passed away, Honoria was left with his widow and unmarried daughter Angel, to whom she indirectly owed the turn of fate that linked her life with India and Henry Lawrence.

For it befell, in the winter of 1826-27, that Angel's dearest friend and Honoria's second cousin, Letitia Lawrence, had come over from her father's home at Clifton for a few months of rest and congenial companionship. Not yet six-and-twenty—spirited, capable and unselfish—she had for years been sharing her mother's incessant struggle to feed and clothe, on a slender income, eleven sturdy boys and girls. Three of the boys—Alexander, George and Henry—were already officers in India, whither John would presently follow them ; and the pain of losing Henry—her brother-in-chief—had told upon more than Letitia's heart. For the two were linked by a singular unity of thought, feeling and interest, that defied twenty years of separation.

Henry had already been gone four years : a trifle of time in those days, when furlough—except for illness—was only granted after ten years' service ; and they were fortunate who returned at all. Yet that half-legendary country was then attracting, like a magnet, the most promising and adventurous young men in the three Kingdoms. From copious Georgian and early Victorian families—from country vicarages, where money was scarce and children plentiful—brother followed brother to India : some seeking a career, some a fortune ; the racial spirit of adventure

quicken, no doubt, by the narrow bounds and piously rigid discipline of the period. In effect, it may almost be said that the dullness of British homes has been the making of the British Empire. Not that young Henry Lawrence had any active wish to break away so early from all he loved most on earth. It was knowledge of his father's dwindling patrimony, of the hardships imposed on his mother and sister, that prompted him to accept service in the Bengal Artillery.

So he and Letitia must part ; a wrench for both ; an end to the sharing of every interest, every new book they could borrow or manage to buy. Even of old books there were not many at home. Colonel Alexander Lawrence—a retired soldier—actively discouraged promiscuous reading. It was bad enough, he declared, that ' the family filled three post-chaises whenever there was a move, without carrying a library about the country.' But Henry—whose teaching had ' consisted chiefly of kicks '—had set about teaching himself, with Letitia's unflinching encouragement. Through out the many years apart, they wrote to one another at great length ; and for Letitia those long, intimate letters were among the chief of her treasures. She now shared them with Angel Heath, and with her attractive cousin, Honoria Marshall.

To the girl herself—a creature of brooding emotions, quick sympathy and imagination—Letitia's talk of India and her brother's exploits became absorbing as the latest Waverley novel. On fine spring mornings the two would sit together by the lake ; Letitia would produce a packet of her treasures ; and Honoria would be translated to the land that was destined to take so strong a hold on her imagination and her heart.

At other times—as this evening—she would wander off alone and let her inward-looking mind brood upon it all. Those lonely wanderings were her chief delight—round Fahan and up the Gollan, a wild region of rock and gorse and heather : or along the bird-haunted shore of Lough Swilly, the lovely Lake of Shadows. ' Earth and sky were comrades to her.' Unaccompanied as she was, they had

given her the most—possibly the best—of her schooling. From them she had derived a lasting love of Nature, ‘a habit of self-communion, and a content with solitude that would have made poetry of any lot.’ Life at Fahan offered no social frivolities, no balls or theatres; nor would these have been approved by her Evangelical aunt, in whose opinion there was ‘no lack of society for the young girl’; boating and riding, or driving to take a dish of tea with their nearest neighbours—two earnest-minded maiden ladies, a married Rector, and the Squire lording it over his estate. Only in her solitary wanderings could she enjoy the exhilaration of perfect freedom.

Gold-haired and blue-eyed, with her freshness of youth and zest, she moved like a light about the quiet old house at Fahan, where Mrs. Heath—in funereal widow’s weeds—would stroll round the garden, or sit by her vast mahogany table in the bland lamp-light, perpetually cutting out little figures in black paper to stick on pin-cushions, that were made and sold in dozens to help an asylum for the blind; while Angel copied ‘extracts,’ in her neat desiccated handwriting, and Honoria read aloud from some serious, improving book—a favourite divine, Dr. Watts *On the Mind*, or an article from the *Quarterly Review*; since the best Evangelicals had an intellectual bias, for all their narrow code of morals and belief.

Now into their well-regulated lives had come Letitia Lawrence; a welcome event for Angel; and, for Honoria, the new delight of being transported to India by those letters from the far-off Henry, whom Letitia so devoutly loved. But on this particular April evening, letters from India were eclipsed by a letter from Clifton containing the incredible news that Henry himself had been invalided home on account of Arakan fever; that he might be expected to arrive any day. Colonel Lawrence wrote in high delight, bidding Letitia return at once to ‘head quarters.’ For if she were absent, Henry—ill or well—would be running off to Ireland in search of his favourite sister. Letitia, all impatience, was distractingly held up for lack of a suitable escort, among their select acquaintance. A young lady of

TO INDIA

good birth could not conceivably be allowed to travel all that way alone. So she must wait. And wait she did : a form of spiritual discipline ruthlessly imposed on the women of her day. And when at last the desirable escort was found she persuaded her 'dearest Angel' to accompany her ; consoling Honoria with the hope that, later on, she might join them and meet the soldier cousin from India.

Doubly deserted, she must return to her copying of extracts and reading aloud, her lonely rambles up the Gollan and along the Lough-side by the sounding sea.



IT was in August of the same year that Honoria Marshall first met Henry Lawrence—a tall, lank subaltern, carelessly dressed in clothes that hung loosely on his thin frame ; his grey eyes deeply set ; his reddish hair clustering thickly over a well-shaped head. They were almost of an age ; she nineteen, he just one-and-twenty ; but so wasted with fever and rough campaigning in Burmah, that he looked nearer forty. By August he was regaining his normal energy, spirits and humour—the high lights on a nature profoundly in earnest, dominated by a resolute will and a fiery temper, that flared up at any act of meanness or injustice, any reflection on his beloved Ireland. For, although his father had settled at Clifton, the Lawrences were of Scoto-Irish stock ; and Henry's years of schooling in Ulster had intensified his devotion to the land of poetry, laughter and fierce passions.

Honoria—in the freshness of her youth and eager interest—made a swift and deep impression on her shy cousin. Of his effect on her no record remains. It was a brief uneventful meeting, 'an unmarked festival' ; and they parted unaware of its vital significance for both. She returned to her wild north-west coast with a dream in her heart ; and he soon found a good excuse to follow her there in a natural wish to revisit the Londonderry College, where he and George and John had spent four not very studious years without ever returning home. Their next meeting was not till the spring of 1828, when Honoria came to stay with Angel's brother Josiah Heath, who had taken a house in the village of Twickenham, near London, and another at 24 Bedford Square ; an event that enabled Henry to see a good deal of his charming Irish cousin. Together they wandered through the wide pleasant London



HENRY LAWRENCE IN YOUTH.

*From a portrait painted during his first furlough, in the possession of
Sir Alexander Lawrence, Bt.*

streets, where unwieldy horse buses rumbled, landaus rolled by, hawkers cried their wares and riders of all grades went trotting past ; Honoria staring at the shops, Henry staring at Honoria. Very fresh and fair she looked, in her simple cotton frocks, interested in everything, observing everything, with a lively intelligence that matched his own.

Bent on exploring London, they set out alone, one memorable April afternoon, for a pilgrimage on foot through the City ; an unknown land to both. First Honoria must visit 'a shoe mart in Holborn' ; then she must take her first look at London river. A long hot walk led them, at last, to St. Paul's Cathedral, with which she was frankly unimpressed. By that time it was five o'clock—and they had left Bedford Square at two. But there could be no thought of returning till she had seen the Thames. So they wandered on, absorbed in London and each other, 'through such alleys and lanes and courts'—she wrote afterwards to 'Aunt Heath'—'as I hardly believed human beings could exist in for an hour' ; till they reached the river with its barges and sailing boats, its reflections and noble bridges—Southwark and Waterloo. Honoria was enchanted with the scene ; Henry enchanted with her ; neither of them very clear about getting back to Holborn. When they finally found it, by an indirect route, the girl was so exhausted that Henry must hire a coach to lift her home, where 'no small surprise' had been excited by their long absence.

But, it seems, they were not chidden : and four days later Henry carried her off to the British Museum, where they spent two hours, delighted with the natural specimens, less delighted with the galleries of ancient sculpture. To Honoria's untutored eye they seemed 'clumsy and ill-proportioned' ; and she herself was troubled by a sense of shame and shyness at 'going in among all those naked statues' with her masculine escort. But the pleasure of his companionship was responsible for other sensations, that imprinted those two hours indelibly on her mind.

Thus the spring days passed, too swiftly for both ; and Angel Heath, looking on, saw them as little more than

children. So it pleased her to exchange Honoria's cotton frocks for silk ones—that enhanced her natural charm—without considering the possible effect on Henry, who had been living a man's life for six years, and was fully alive to the commanding emotion at work in him. But a direct proposal was not the fashion of the day. Young people must marry less to please themselves than to suit their elders, whose true intent was all for their delight—in theory, at least. Thus the ardent youth, reared in habits of self-control, unwisely refrained from word or look that would have revealed to the girl the source of her new happiness. Instead, he opened his heart to Letitia, who had already discovered, in Honoria, qualities befitting the high and difficult rôle of life-comrade to a Henry Lawrence. But even her encouragement failed to overcome his humble-minded conviction that so enchanting a creature could never care seriously for such as he.

Again unwisely—he decided to consult Angel Heath, who might have an inkling how the land lay. But whatever Angel knew, or suspected, she decreed—with all the authority of the middle thirties—that it would be most imprudent. She made the eager young lover feel that he had no right, as yet, to think or speak of marriage; and for Henry, her decree was final. Chill counsels of prudence, like frost in May, nipped his blossoming hopes in the bud. He had little or nothing to marry on. He could look for no help from his father, whose failing health had awakened his sons to the knowledge that, after his death, their gallant mother would be left with a mere pittance in her old age: another nip of frost in spring for a boy dutiful and devoted beyond the common, even in those dutiful days. There could be no thought of marriage for years to come. He and his three brothers must combine to help their mother; each setting aside month by month a fixed portion of his slender pay. To the amassing of that pious hoard, 'the Lawrence fund,' Henry devoted himself with the fervour of an apostle and the simplicity of a child. He was young. He must wait—and accept the risk that waiting involved.

But at least he could and did see Honoria as often as

might be. And that autumn he had the happy idea of gaining leave to join the Trigonometrical Survey in Londonderry. If he wished to earn more money, he must qualify for special work outside his regiment : and in Londonderry he could combine practical surveying with occasional chances to visit the cousin who had captured his tenacious heart. But religiously he kept the door of his lips ; and if his silence ever puzzled Honoria, none could be allowed to guess at sensations so damaging to maidenly pride.

The spring of 'Twenty-Nine found him still in England, preparing to sail for India that autumn, happily not alone. Before his return, John had been offered a writership in the Civil Service by a family connection of high position and influence ; but the prospect of a year's ' quill-driving ' in the East India College at Haileybury was far from acceptable to the stalwart youngster, whose heart was set on a cavalry commission, decent pay, a stable full of Arabs and a dashing uniform. He, who lived to offer the people of India their choice between the pen or the sword, was himself, at sixteen, all for the sword. He had yet to discover the power behind ' a good broad nib in a good strong fist.' His father, an ill-rewarded soldier, was all for the pen : Letitia—the family oracle—had vexatiously sided with him. And Henry, after four years of soldiering, had vowed there was no comparison between the services, as regards pay, promotion and prospects, the three essential ' p's ' for any young man with a head on his shoulders. To the wisdom of Letitia, backed by Henry, the reluctant John had surrendered at discretion : and at Haileybury he had laid the foundation of a great career. Now—his college course ended—he was glad enough to be sailing with Henry and their sister Honoria.

If Henry's carefully repressed heart craved for another Honoria, he was thankful for a brother and sister to enliven the four months' voyage ; thankful for one more sight of his cousin in August, when she and Angel were again visiting Josiah Heath. Temptation to tell her of his love, to ask if she would wait till his prospects improved, must have been

overwhelming. But character is fate. An ingrained sense of duty withheld Henry Lawrence from saying even the few simple words that would have saved a boy and girl, created for each other, from years of vain longing and uncertainty. Dreading the wrench, he deliberately avoided the strain of a final farewell. On his last evening in Town he proposed taking them all to see *Tam o'Shanter* : and on the steps of that shilling show, in the lamplit darkness, he took leave of his cousins, as if he would be seeing them next day as usual ; though Honoria knew, and he knew, that in all likelihood they might never meet again.



EARLY autumn found Honoria back at Fahan with Mrs. Heath and Angel ; all her familiar surroundings unchanged : the Gollan, clothed in September's regal tapestry—heather, and gorse and bracken ; Lough Swilly, a tumult of green waves, lashed by autumn gales. But here was not the same Honoria. An angel had troubled the waters. Though she still loved solitude, hills and the sea, she would never again know real peace of heart and mind apart from the man who had awakened her, seemingly to no purpose. With her heightened sensibilities, baffled emotion and wounded pride, she must pick up the threads of her quiet life again as if that unforgettable interlude had never been.

Yet the fact remained that it *had* been ; and as winter dissolved into spring, and spring blossomed into summer, she found herself more and more at odds with her pleasant, desultory home life. For any young woman of her period, there was only one way out of it—marriage ; yet the one man her heart could accept was at the world's end. And she—too young, as yet, to assert her emerging self—continued to fill her large leisure with serious reading, sermons, philosophy, history. She studied French and Italian, read the New Testament in Greek ; tried her hand at essays, verses, tales. And if her fluent pen produced nothing of note, the mental exercise provided a wholesome outlet for suppressed emotion and an active brain. But the impulse to write was fitful and spasmodic. ‘Much begun and little finished’ was the tale of those early attempts at self-expression by an ardent, undirected mind, striving constantly to better its own best.

From that sad home-coming, till the spring of 'Thirty-Six, she passed through a time of changes and perplexities,

estrangement and ill-health : a valley of shadow, lightened only by the sustaining belief of her kind in an all-wise personal God, sleeplessly designing every detail of their lives, inflicting ' trials ' as a form of discipline, and conjuring their evil into good. Of all that she learnt and endured, in those eight years, she left no record beyond fragments of comment in the fitful journal kept from July to November, 1836, when at last the clouds had lifted, and the certainty of Henry's abiding love had unfrozen her heart.

In the spring of 'Thirty-One, she and Angel Heath left Fahan for good : but the wild and lovely region, mainspring of her earliest happiness, haunted her mind and imagination to her life's end. That first of her many uprootings must have been caused by the death of kindly Mrs. Heath ; and there remains no record of any settled home in England ; no hint of her whereabouts during the long illness, in 1832-33. Some form of nervous trouble, ignorantly treated as divide, forced on her impatient spirit the discipline of quiescence. She who delighted in wandering at will, must divide her days between bed and sofa, in a chronic languor of body and mind ; in fitful moods of nervous depression, darkened by a haunting fear of insanity that troubled her all her days. In happier intervals she beguiled the long solitary hours with books and writing, or dreams of Fahan.

It was then that she began her one attempt at a novel, unfinished at the time, like most of her beginnings. Beyond serving to distract her mind, the story itself had little merit. Diffuse, conventional and didactic, it hardly seems written by the same hand as her later journals and letters, living fragments of herself.

More profitable were the hours devoted to solid books on science and philosophy ; books tabooed by orthodox Evangelicals, who trod the narrow way in blinkers, and restricted God's mercies, here and hereafter, to the inner circle of the elect. In this day of open windows and open minds, it is hard to realise the full impact of natural laws, revealed by science, on simple God-fearing folk who accepted as inspired truth every sentence of Holy Writ. But Honoria Marshall, Evangelical or no, refused to run in blinkers. A

seeker after truth, however disconcerting, she explored the mysteries of mesmerism, and studied a solid volume on the *Physiology of Man* by the famous philosopher and phrenologist, Dr. Andrew Combe, whose heretical insistence on the basic harmony between Man and Nature was denounced in pulpits and newspapers as inimical to revealed religion. Her young, clear-seeing mind recognised, in that particular heresy, the stamp of truth, for all the clash it wrought between beliefs her faith could not question and contradictions her mind could not resolve, when it came to 'setting in opposition the words and works of God.' Puzzled yet never sceptical, she resolved to seek further knowledge through the last, in the full conviction that 'the more we know of both, the more they will elucidate each other.'

So she continued to study Combe, whose *Physiology* had to wait forty years for full recognition, while his phenology—soon to be discredited—raised a storm in a tea-cup among the elect. For, at that time, the new 'science' was creating active interest and controversy in both hemispheres. Thirty Phrenological Societies and journals, supported by men of note, gave it a standing even in thoughtful circles. Only the 'Elect' looked askance at its probings into divine mysteries by unauthorized human finger-tips exploring the skull; its implicit challenge to the Christian doctrine of responsibility for sin. But none saw it as the thin end of a wedge, destined to be driven deeper by one Charles Darwin: deeper still by the delvings of a Freud into the mental sub-soil of the Unconscious—that dark and strange substitute for the good and evil angels of Mrs. Hemans and the hymn-book.

In the mind of Honoria, it raised the whole vexed question of specific prayer, reasoned out in her journal with characteristic honesty.

'Say I have a sister at sea, and I know not whether her ship is, or is not, fit to stand the voyage. I naturally pray that God may bring my sister home safely; and I bless Him for her preservation. Yet I know that if the ship is built and managed in accordance with natural laws, it must make the port; if not, it must sink. Do I seriously

expect that God will work a miracle for me? Thus a wall of second causes is raised between me and my Creator. Again, how can I thank God for the spiritual discipline of my long illness, when I now know that I brought it on myself by disregarding normal rules of health? I cannot'—she ruefully concluded—'with such confidence as formerly bless Him who gives and takes away.'

For Honoria Marshall problems of character and of religion had always a peculiar attraction. But in 1833 renewal of health and activity brought problems more personal; not least, an offer of marriage from one Briggs, of whom nothing is told but his clerical profession and plebeian name. That she was not in love with him seems certain; but was she prepared to accept the feminine stigma of failure, to live on, indefinitely, unwed? No word had come from India: nor had Letitia ventured to reveal Henry's personal secret, though she often wrote of him and his doings. So it befell that an unenlightened Honoria was persuaded into an engagement that caused her much unhappiness, cruelly pained her friend, and created a passing coolness between them.

That brief engagement, never mentioned by her, lasted just long enough to reach Henry Lawrence, to extinguish the last gleam of hope in his constant heart; and Letitia—who alone knew of that hope—must have regretted, too late, her over-scrupulous reserve. But even she could scarcely measure the full height and depth of his love. For him—religion apart—there were but three mainsprings of life during those lonely years: his hope of winning Honoria, his devotion to Letitia and the completing of their pious hoard, the 'Lawrence Fund,' when he and his brothers should have saved and invested a sum large enough to ensure for their mother a moderate income after her husband's death. The filial achievement enforced on them a strict economy of which their father had been incapable: and its demands on Henry conspired with his taste for work and books to save him from the plague of debt that embarrassed most of the hard-riding, card-playing ensigns of

his day. The need of all three brothers, then in India, for more than bare regimental pay was no doubt responsible for a story current in the Punjab of Alexander, George and Henry, boldly deciding to pay a collective call on a senior officer, in the hope of securing a staff appointment.

One can picture their instinctive pause in the verandah—Henry, long and gaunt even then ; George, short and spruce ; Alexander, with his grave Victorian face—faintly alarmed at their own temerity : Henry the humble-minded, posing the awful question, ‘ How if he asks us what we can do ? ’ George, the uncrushable, retorting, ‘ Well, anyhow, we can stand on our heads—— ! ’

And the story tells how the Senior Officer did at once confound them with the awkward question : ‘ Well, what can you do ? ’

For a moment they looked at one another in dismay. Then, without a word, each went into a separate corner of the room—and gravely stood on his head.

It was the kind of answer that could only have been given by three very young Irishmen ; and the story does not reveal what the Senior Officer said, or whether the desired appointments were ever bestowed on three deserving, if uniquely impudent young men.

Henry, at all events, lost no time in qualifying for staff work. A poor linguist, he slaved at Urdu, Hindi and Persian, passed his examination with honours, and prayed for an appointment that would enable him to marry.

Fate and his own industry favoured him. It happened that surveyors were needed for a land assessment scheme designed by Robert Bird, one of India’s many forgotten benefactors. George Lawrence, knowing of his brother’s survey experience in Ireland, named him to the Governor-General. An unknown Revenue Officer asked for his services ; and, amazedly, he found himself told off as Assistant Revenue Surveyor, with promise of individual work after his own heart : since it was to save public money and benefit the people. For land ill-assessed—as it had been—meant unfair taxation that struck at the root of India’s village life. Bird’s rapid and comprehensive survey

of both Provinces aimed at sweeping reforms : and Lawrence, a born reformer, could have found no finer scope for his formidable industry, his rough originality of mind. Driven, as he then was, by the spur of unsatisfied love and longing, there was danger of his body being ridden to death by a spirit that could not rest if it would. Those strenuous years of surveying gave him his first taste of independent outdoor work, among the people in their own fields and villages. Mapping out their districts, listening to their tales of tyranny and corruption, he acquired a first-hand knowledge of Indian character, at its best and worst, that equipped him to become a leader of Asiatics unrivalled in his day, loved and honoured far beyond his day.

In these years he gave, for the first time, unmistakable proof of his quality. Men who had seen small promise in the unlicked Irish cadet, or the bookish ensign, now discovered with astonishment his 'vast powers and superior mind' : though these were, as yet, only beginning to unfold. Sir Herbert Edwardes, his life-long friend, has left an unmatched pen picture of him at that emerging period.

'Time had subdued nothing in him. There he was, in the vigour of early manhood, self-taught, self-disciplined, self-reliant ; fiery in his zeal for public work ; hot of temper with reprobates and idlers, and as hot to reward the diligent ; impatient of contradiction, ignorant of the impossible, scorning compromise . . . rough, angular, strong.'

And now, at last, he was free to discover whether he had been remembered or forgotten by the girl whose image was enshrined in his heart. Had he, then, like any modern lover, written to her direct, he might have saved both her and himself years of suspense and delay. But no—it was Letitia to whom he wrote of her, in July, '33 : 'I really think I shall be mad enough to tell her my story ; try to make her believe that I have loved her for five years and said nothing of my love. The thing seems incredible, but it is true.'

And while his letter sauntered homeward round the Cape one from Letitia was on its way that would extinguish hope and rob achievement of half its value. From it he learnt

that his brave old father was dying, that Honoria was to marry another man ; leaving him to lash his own dutiful folly—years too late. And again it was only to Letitia that he could write of these things.

'Now and then are very different words. Had I but tried, as one in his senses would have done, to gain her heart, matters might have been managed. . . . If anyone is to blame, I am the culprit, as I am the sufferer. The chances are now very many against my ever being married. This I say, not as a boy of seventeen, but as one—though unattractive in himself—not easily captivated. Tell me always where and how she is. Keep up your correspondence with her.'

He could trust Letitia for that. For himself, there was urgent work, in plenty, to keep mind and body going at high pressure : and the demon that drove him, then, to measure too many fields and ride too many miles in the blazing Indian sun, became in after years, a familiar spirit ; urging him always to work at top speed and seriously threatening his health. He made light of eighty miles in the saddle at a stretch, of twelve to fourteen hours at his desk. His 'ferocious industry' set a new standard in the Department, to the delight of his superiors and the vexation of his less industrious fellows, who heartily cursed 'Lawrence's confounded zeal.' Then and always he put the whole of himself into everything he did. In village or jungle, he was surveying more than the land. He was studying the people, their Rajahs and landowners, the benefits and failings of British rule. He was already beginning to understand them as few of his race have ever understood them, even after a lifetime of service. Instinctively he was laying a sure foundation for greater work to come.

AND there was Honoria Marshall in England, unaware of the shock she had administered, discovering that she could not bring herself to accept the second best ; breaking her engagement ; schooling herself, as a matter of pride and sanity, to ' give up love and take to learning ' : in practical terms, to seek some useful occupation for her active brain, let her orthodox belongings never so furiously rage.

By now, she was in open revolt against the desultory domestic round, the dearth of outside interests, that adversely affected her spirits, her nerves and her irritable temper. In her own words, ' the unemployed energies, the unsatisfied desire for usefulness would eat me up ' ; a sane confession, in advance of her age and period. Some active occupation she needed, to employ all her faculties ; and as she could not be wife and mother, she would be a teacher. The fact that she had no training and few qualifications, mattered little at a time when surface aptitude sufficed in a governess for mere daughters ; and she herself could see nothing unbecoming or unladylike in thus using her natural gifts for the good of others. But her friends and relations thought otherwise. In their view to go out as a governess was to sink in the social scale. If the Marshalls had little money, they had breeding. They owned a pedigree that ran back to early Irish Kings with impossible names. They were Church ; and the Church had, then, a social status, not yet extended to doctoring, teaching or the law. But Honoria, though proud and sensitive, had mettle enough to follow her own wise instincts ; even in the teeth of wholesale disapproval. Already her engagement had partially strangled her best-loved Letitia, and the new departure would mend matters.

'People thought'—she wrote afterwards— that I was disgracing myself and them by trying to be useful and independent, instead of occupying the pleasant post of living among my friends . . . and at the time I was rather touchy on the point.'

For all that, she conquered her dread of going among strangers, and accepted a position of teacher at Prior Park, Ashby-de-la-Zouche, where she spent two years in moulding young minds and forming new friendships ; satisfied, at least, to have found a 'nourishing life,' an escape from the 'starved life' of polite spinsterhood. But through it all she never quite lost touch with Letitia, who was still bent on winning for Henry the girl he so doggedly loved.

There seemed, now, nothing for it but to tell Honoria of the great love that Henry, discouraged by Angel, had too scrupulously suppressed. The very fact of her broken engagement gave cause for hope that Henry might have not been forgotten. And no doubt Letitia was further prompted to speak by the sad tone of his letters after hearing the fatal news. So, in the ultimate end, his belated offer of marriage came—not from him, but from the sister who had long ago seen Honoria as his destined mate.

Nor was it, now, all plain sailing. For here was no romantic girl of nineteen, but a woman deeply moved by that unexpected revealing, yet unable, all at once, to face the practical issues involved. In eight years, Henry had become a memory ; and the happy girl of their London adventures seemed very far away from the confirmed spinster, turned twenty-seven, who had suffered much in mind and body ; had worked hard and over-taxed her strength. Since he could not return home, she must be prepared to join him in India : a momentous decision. And the years of teaching had so enlarged her mind, so tranquillised her emotions, that she could seriously ask herself—was it wise to give up the certainty of useful employment, for the uncertain venture of marriage with a little-known man in a worked country ? The boy Henry, she had ardently loved had admired. The man Henry, she could only guess at through letters to his sister and his unselfish zeal on behalf

of their mother. Her present feeling for him was compounded of intense gratitude for his constancy and acute regret for the pain she had inflicted on him by her abortive attempt to marry the wrong man. Here, then, was her chance to make amends ; to face, for his sake, the endless voyage and those unknown quantities—marriage and India : a generous impulse quickened by the secret urge of her own heart.

So the letters that were to lighten his darkness left England in March ; and might possibly reach him by the end of June ; might find him, she argued—only half in joke—already married to someone else. Letitia scouted the idea ; and Honoria gave it no serious credence.

At first there had been pain—‘ as of life tingling through a frozen limb ’—in reverting to bygone days and dreams ; but soon the glow of increasing assurance, increasing response, diffused all through her a healthy warmth of happiness such as she had not known since leaving Fahan.

In England she had found nothing comparable to that wild Irish coast, till Letitia—once more sister and friend—persuaded her to leave Ashby, to seek rest and refreshment at Lynmouth. There, between South Wales and the noble forelands of North Devon, she re-discovered Nature in the wilder mood that most delighted her—rocks and headlands, gorges and streams ; voices of breaking wave and running water, where East and West Lyn flowed together past the single village street, that was Lynmouth in June, 1836. The grandeur of that entire coast, with its blending of rugged Cornwall and fertile Devon, stirred deeps within her that had been frozen over during the blank years of illness and proud refusal to admit hidden pain. And the inspiring change of scene came aptly at a time of transition from the half-satisfied worker to the wholly satisfied woman : a time when only the companionship of sea and sky could induce :

. . . ‘ That blessed mood,
In which the burden of the mystery,
The heavy burden and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world
Is lightened.’

In her sensitive response to Nature, then and always, Honoria was akin to Wordsworth, a 'comparatively new poet, still read only by the thoughtful few. It was Byron, with his splendours of scene and diction, who basked in public favour. Wordsworth's clear recognition of harmony between man and Nature antagonised orthodox religion—then a power in the land. But his heresy—being grounded in truth—grew and prevailed. It inspired all the greater poetry of an awakening era : and Honoria's truth-seeking mind found in it the hidden source of her joy in this renewed contact with wild nature, hills and the sea.

There was equal joy in renewed intimacy with Letitia Lawrence, to whom she owed all, and from whom she now learnt more of Henry the man, than she had ever known of the boy. Enforced rest and returning health revived her mental activity, her appetite for new impressions : and early in August, she enjoyed a trip across the Channel to Tenby ; but in a mixed party of nineteen she found only one kindred mind, whose interest in fresh surroundings matched her own.

'How few people'—she afterwards wrote in her journal—'have a love of scenery for its own sake. I could not detect in any but one of our party a trace of enjoyment from the trip, which they might not have had if they had all been assembled on a bowling green. . . . There were, in our group, some curious studies of character ; and I noticed, in two of the younger ladies, flirtation in a new form : a passive delight arising from the sense that men were near them, as a cat basks in the sun. These damsels were evidently uncomfortable if the gentleman most in request paid attention to anyone else. An appeal for assistance in moving, or some newly discovered want would send a knight errant on an embassy of gallantry, and so recall the straggler to his allegiance. But there it ended. No attempt at conversation : not even the kind of small talk which ladies find very tedious from one another, but which is amazingly agreeable from a gentleman to a lady. For my own part, I am very fond of the society of men. . . . Their minds, being essentially of a firmer texture, call into play all the energies within us. But the stimulus is apt to

leave a craving after excitement . . . and I do not think much of it is advantageous.'

In such terms might one of Jane Austen's heroines have criticised others and reasoned with the frailties of her own heart.

By now she was able to think of Henry's answer as speeding back to her at the record rate of twelve knots an hour ; and as impatience increased with each passing week, she welcomed the mental distraction of no less an event than the summer meeting of the British Association.

That august body—founded in 1831, for the advancement of science—had chosen Bristol for its yearly session ; and thither flocked many thinking men and women, to enjoy a feast of reason and a flow of argument, a chance to improve their minds—the intellectual hobby of the age. Thither, inevitably, went Letitia and Honoria, eager for a week of stimulating, if unorthodox, mental fare. Leaving Lynmouth at noon, by one of the new little coasting steamers, they took seven hours to reach Bristol and their friends in Park Street ; an intellectual circle where the talk was of mesmerism, magnetism and phrenology, of the distinguished men, who were to discuss scientific theories at the meetings. Night after night, men and women of all sects and non-sects thronged the Bristol theatre. The ' wall of human faces from floor to ceiling ' stirred Honoria's imagination ; and her impressions of the scientists themselves bring them to life with vivid touches.

There was Hallam, the historian, ' massive and fine-featured, with immense breadth of head above the ears.' There was Babbage, a famous mathematician, who had scandalised the pious by his unholy calculating machine and his use of mathematics to prove creative design in the Universe : ' a little thick man with a look of repose about him, as if he reached his conclusions by some mathematical process, and was immovable.' Of quite another type was Sedgwick, Professor of Geology : very thin and aular, a penetrating eye, a restless hand at his chin pounding his adversary with sledge-hammer arguments, ' sparkling and

dilating, and twisting the stick he held, while he *cataracted* forth . . . !'

There was a distinguished Professor of Moral Philosophy, Dr. Carpenter, the phrenologist, and a score of other highly argumentative men, whose discourse filled the small Bristol theatre, where the two insatiable young women went nightly, with their faithful escort Mr. Hayes, an elderly cleric, who had discovered in Letitia Lawrence—now turned thirty-four—a woman entirely after his own heart.

On the last Saturday of August the feast of reason concluded in a feast of peroration and a purely formal reference to the Deity, which conveyed—to one critical young woman at least—about as much genuine feeling of respect as 'Your most humble servant' at the end of a letter. Strange that her youthful criticism—of no account at all to those distinguished men—should have survived a hundred years to be recorded, when their own learned papers had become so much scientific lumber gathering dust on the shelves of Burlington House. Of no account also, yet worth recording, was her own sane conclusion of the whole matter—that science remained, and would remain, inadequate to fill the needs of the human heart; since 'the tree of knowledge was not the Tree of Life.'

Back at Lynton, while the slow-footed weeks crawled past, she filled her journal with descriptions of that noble region and fragments of thought, often in a quaintly metaphorical vein, as in her entry of October 5th :

'To-night, winding up my watch, the key-pipe slipped off the pivot which it ought to have turned; . . . both being so worn away that the first had lost its hold over the last. . . . "And so," thought I "we must have a new pipe for my watch key." This trifling chance suggested to my mind the almost imperceptible wearing away of the keen edge of affection. While love is fresh, you need only apply the least influence—and you are obeyed. . . . The willing spring yields to the slightest pressure. A change comes—you know not whence; but it comes . . . and your influence is no longer what it was.—Where are we to get new pipes for our watch keys . . . ?'

'*Nov. 1st, Tuesday,*' she wrote a month later—in no mood for random thought. 'A cold, foggy day. I feel very low. Hope deferred has made my heart sick. I am determined to expect no more.'

'*Nov. 2nd, Wednesday.* A finer day. I came downstairs fortified by my determination ; and occupied myself after breakfast without even enquiring for the post. That day brought *the* letters !'

That day, at last, she knew beyond any perverse torment of doubt, that Henry Lawrence had loved her for nearly nine years. She had his written assurance that if, indeed, she loved him well enough to face the lonely voyage, she could count on him to meet her whenever and wherever she would.



THAT summer of hope renewed for Honoria Marshall, brought to Lawrence, in his jungle camp, relief unspeakable—relief from years of tension which had forced even his invincible spirit to the edge of despair. In that very June he had been writing to Letitia as his supreme object of affection: ‘Had I married, I suppose I might have cooled, though I think not. I have not been tried, nor am I likely to be; so you may consider me as wedded to you for better or worse.’

And scarcely had his letter left Gorakhpur, when there arrived a certain double packet from England that refuted his prophecy and turned his sorrow into joy: ‘More joy than even your faithful heart can picture,’ he was writing again to her, only a week later. ‘You have all along acted like yourself, as few else could or would have done. . . . You have thrown light on my dark and lonesome path . . . my more than sister, the good genius and directing star of our house.’

And again, on June 25th: ‘My brain has been in a whirl the last four days. I sit with my papers before me and do nothing; have not even the energy to sign and despatch some documents that have given me weeks of trouble to prepare.’

Then the good news must be posted to John, the one brother who had his confidence, and who now rejoiced with him in his own practical fashion: ‘Honoria Marshall was certainly, when I knew her, a delightful creature. You are a most fortunate fellow. You must try and get some other appointment than the Survey, which will never do for a married man. You can’t drag your wife about in the jungles, and the hot winds.’

As to that, Henry had his own opinion; and he was to

find it shared—like most of his opinions—by the ‘delightful creature’ herself. All who knew him were curious—in James Thomason’s phrase—‘to behold the lady who is to rule your rugged destiny.’ Impatiently he awaited her coming, while letter followed letter to lift his heart and spirit. But his overwrought body suffered from inevitable reaction ; and the doctors insisted on Simla for the hot weather.

‘How about meeting Honoria?’ asked practical John. ‘You can’t go down in the rains.’

Again he was mistaken. Whenever Honoria reached Calcutta, monsoon or no, Henry would manage to be there. But, by way of precaution, he made arrangements with Mrs. Hutchinson—a married sister of his friend James Thomason—to receive Honoria Marshall, come when she might.

She herself—still plagued by the demon of delay—had many months to wait between the day of decision and departure. It took weeks to achieve her round of farewell visits in England and Ireland : more weeks to prepare her Indian outfit—the wedding dress, the muslin frocks and every form of underclothing, not singly but in round dozens ; for fresh water would be scarce on board, and laundry work could not be counted on, during the four months’ voyage, except at a port of call, which also could not be counted on in sailing-ship days. It was no simple affair of sitting at a counter, and running up a bill. They must all sit round the fire, in the winter lamplight, running up endless seams for the bride-to-be.

Nor was the personal outfit all. Not a stick of furniture would she find in her box of a cabin, for which she must pay £110 to £120. Carpet, washing-table and tub, a cane chair and a couch with capacious drawers, must all be provided, and carried away, for home use, on the other side. To an untravelled woman of slender means, the list of bare necessities seemed formidable enough : the swinging lamp and tray ; hanging straps and a few cherished pictures ; a lamp for heating water, a store of tea and coffee essence, biscuits and the new ‘inspissated’ milk for travelling. We candles and matches must be laid in freely. ‘The amount

of soap needed, for fresh and salt water,' ran her printed slip of information, 'must depend upon the passenger's habits.' So that also must be laid in freely.

By the time everything had been made and bought and packed, there was small chance to catch the February boat hopefully suggested by Henry. There were family conclaves and obstructions, of which she wrote to him later : 'Had I waited till I got any efficient help from others, I might still be in England now. When letter after letter came, saying there was no eligible opportunity for sailing, I said, "I'll go to Town, and see if I can't find a ship within a week . . ." So to London I went ; and in a few days I pitched on the *Reliance*'—an apt name for the ship that should carry to India so resolute a young woman. And she needed every ounce of her resolution to make the great venture of faith : to leave everything for the one man—loved, yet little known ; for a country and way of life unknown utterly. Ahead of her lay three to five months of isolation : no letters from either world ; probably no sight of land till they reached Ceylon or Madras.

On Monday, April 3rd, the *Reliance* was due to sail from Gravesend ; and on that day Honoria Marshall boarded the 'noble vessel of 1,500 tons,' companioned to the last by Letitia, lately married to Mr. Hayes. Her half-furnished cabin was still in confusion, when the great bell rang out, and the two, who were like sisters, must part.

Honoria, deserted, left most of her unpacking to the new maid, Phœbe Saunders. Sitting down on one of her many boxes, she opened a large extract book of a hundred and thirty-five pages, trimmed her pen, and began upon the journal that was to be, in effect, a daily unpostable letter to her lover. Faithfully it was kept throughout the voyage ; but fragments must suffice for the telling of her uneventful tale.

Still combating a bewildered sense of unreality, she wrote :

On Board the *Reliance*.

NORTHFLEET : April 3rd, 1837.

In this first moment of finding myself alone in my cabin
in this hour when I have broken all other ties, and,

trusting implicitly to you, have embarked for a foreign land—how should I occupy myself but in pouring out my heart, first to God that He may bless us ; then to your beloved self, for whom I cheerfully encounter these trials. —Yes, dearest Henry, four hours ago I came on board ; and in two hours' time, Mr. Hayes and Letitia left me. While Phœbe Saunders is arranging my things I take out this book, which I got on purpose to hold the journal that will be my chief delight while pent up here. When I think that in this little cabin we shall meet, and be overpaid for all the cares and troubles of the last nine years, my elastic spirit rises and I fear nothing.

April 4th.

We are still in the river and have not had any uncomfortable feeling ; but the dinner was to me most disagreeable. Sitting down so large a party, the strife of tongues and clatter of knives, was quite bewildering to my head. Besides, the conversation of the gentlemen near me was not suited to my taste, even as a listener. So I gave short answers, returning to my cabin when the cloth was removed. Before long, I had a message from Mrs. Stewart, asking to see me. She is first cousin to Mrs. John Stokes ; and I had been specially commended to her. I went to tea in the cuddy, and afterwards had a visit from Captain Warner, who was polite '*al' ultimo signo*,' offering to walk with me, and perform all other knightly service. As I did not ask him to sit down, he soon made his bow. And here I am, dearest Harry, recording the day's doings for you. . . . Oh, that I could send a carrier pigeon to tell you I am actually on my way. . . .

Thursday, April 6th.

'What I want in a letter is the picture of my friend's mind, and the common course of his life. I want to know what he is saying and doing. I want him to turn out the inside of his heart to me.' So says Hannah More whose *Life* I this day began to read. One would think you had taken this for a motto in your letters, my beloved Harry and I desire to do the same in this. . . . Captal Warner came a little before noon to ask me to walk, so I went out for half an hour. I was determined to tell him how

I am situated. For, as Annette Stewart sagely remarked, 'his being the Captain gives him no dispensation against falling in love!'

Having enlightened the friendly Captain—blushes mounting beneath her bonnet and veil—she entertained her lover with thumb-nail sketches of certain passengers, in her keen-eyed, critical vein :

Captain Warner is a gentlemanly man, with tact and good taste. Captain and Mrs. Davis amuse me much : he a mulatto ; she with a broad unmeaning face, and stiff curls like a doll's all over her head. These little people do so ogle one another, and appear so happy in their married state, that it does one good to look at them. Miss Mackey (my cabin-sharer) is a lady-like, inexperienced girl. Her brother seems to me too much of an animal, and he always smells of tobacco. Dearest Harry, surely you do not smoke ? I abhor every form of tobacco, from pig-tail to cigar. Mrs. Stewart is a clever, kind-hearted woman of the world.

These are all I yet know ; and the only ones I envy are their ladies who have their lords. Not that I am in danger of coveting them ; but I feel miserably *half-ish* ! . . . I long to be invisible, that I might go when and where I please over the ship, without the bondage of a live walking-stick by my side ! . . . I have been looking at your picture and reading your letters till I can almost fancy I see and hear you. The worst part of the voyage is, that so long a time must pass without tidings of you. Sometimes I feel rather ashamed of the contents of my letters. My prattling would better besee a girl in her teens, than one of my sober age—But it seems as if the last nine years were wiped away, and my heart as fresh and young as when we parted. Take the consequences then : for much of what I am, you have made me. Good-night, my best beloved.

Tuesday, April 11th.

Yesterday evening I began a work I had reserved for the sea—reading and tearing up heaps of old MSS. I looked through these records of past thoughts and feelings with a strange mixture of pleasure and pain. They seemed belonging more to some other person than to myself. . . .

Fragments of tales and verses, opinions of books read—all, all *begun* ; hardly anything finished. Like broken shells on the shore, they all lacked value from being imperfect. . . . So far I have felt sadly disinclined for occupation ; but I think of you as often as there are minutes in the hour. . . . My heart outflies the ship, swiftly as she moves. I trace our way on the map. I reckon days and weeks. In fact, I feel more of what one may call being in love than suits the balance of mind I have long been aiming at. I can't help it, dear. Good-night.

Saturday, April 15th.

Yesterday after dinner I went out on deck, walked with Captain Warner, and then sat down. The moon, ten days old, shone out above our heads in such lustre as my eyes never beheld. Jupiter and Mercury were apparently within two feet of her. The west still held a blush of red. In the east clouds were massed, like grey and white swan's down ; above them the clear, deep sky ; below them, the leaden-coloured sea. Then the stately vessel, all her sails outspread, ' walking the waters like a thing of life.' The moonlight on snowy canvas, the figures of men as they moved about the rigging, now in shadow, now in light ; the lamp at the binnacle, shining on the rough face of the steersman ; the murmur of little waves, the shouts of laughter from groups of young men on the other side of the deck ; all was so new, so magic in its effect on me, that I sat like one entranced . . . your presence so strongly with me, that I could have spoken to you. . . . Now I must say good-night, dearest love, only adding a sentence I once met, which I quote from memory, because it is à propos of my present journal.

' Le moi, est un sujet interdit dans la société, cependant c'est le seul où la plupart des hommes ont fait des découvertes. Laissez-les parler d'eux-meme, et ils vous amuseront bien plus, qu'en répétant les lieux communs de la conversation.'

I have always taken it as an excuse for writing about *Le Moi* !

Sunday, April 16th.

I often ask myself what I expect in married life ; and I think what I look to is merging my own being into that

AN INDIAMAN BY MOONLIGHT.



of another. This is what I deceived myself into thinking I had found . . . I could not have believed that any man could so enter into a woman's feelings as you do. It seemed to me that the difference of apprehension between a man and woman was the great bar to happiness in married life ; and I had made up my mind that if I ever married I must be satisfied with looking for sympathy only from friends. But your letters convince me you are so strung that the chords of your being will respond to mine. . . . Oh, how I weary for tidings of you—more from a craving for your expressed thoughts, than from anxious fears ; for I do feel such hope as I *never* before experienced. . . .

I can hardly guess how I shall be affected when we meet. I fear I shall be paralysed, and you will not know what to make of me. Even now, when I think of our meeting, a sort of shyness comes over me. I think what a great baby I am ; and, in fact, feel very like a fool. I believe I am writing like one too, so I had better leave off. Good-night, my most valued blessing. Yours entirely—

Monday, April 17th.

Another day over ; and a splendid day it was. We are making a glorious run. After dinner, when I was on deck, I felt *intoxicated* with the beauty, longing for some one to share it with me : not the intoxication of high spirits, but that deep, still feeling, which, even had you been there, would hardly have found expression. . . . Dearest love, when I think of the struggle in my heart this time last year and trace the progress of my feeling towards you, how I am stirred up ! *Then*, my only hesitation about going to you was from thinking I did not love you enough. *That* fear is effectually removed. Now I have none. Good-night, my beloved.

Wednesday, April 19th.

Evening again—and I gladly come in, from the surpassing beauty of a full moon to sit and talk, with your picture beside me, and fancy you are here. This evening was perfectly bewitching in its loveliness ; the brief twilight of the tropics, followed by a roseate glow right across the heavens. Then the full moon pouring her flood of silver over sea and sky : the stars shining with a lustre

unknown to our northern latitudes. I could have cried with delight. . . . Presently there was dancing proposed. I had made up my mind not to join it ; though I am very fond of dancing . . . and I should like the exercise. But were I to join it, I should be introduced to more than I wish. I could not dance with one, and refuse another. Besides, I like to come in at eight, that I may have a little quiet time before going to bed.

Thursday, April 20th.

As usual, I sit down to recount my *non*-events for you, dearest.

I accomplished at dinner a manœuvre that delighted me—getting away from Major Beatson's neighbourhood. There was a leg of the table in my way, so I asked Mr. Wynard—the Captain's nephew—to change places with me ; thus I got between him and little Johnnie Stewart. Captain W. is most gentlemanly in his manner ; yet I do not like walking with him alone, lest people should remark it. Oh darling, I want my lawful care-taker ; and when I see the married ladies with theirs, I feel envious.

Friday, April 21st.

My place at table is much more to my taste since I escaped from that confident, bad-looking man's neighbourhood ; and I took care not to go on deck till my chaperone was there . . . I hope you are an admirer of Wordsworth. He is my companion at breakfast, and I feel *better* always for reading him ; but I want some one to share the pleasure. After striving to suffice unto myself, to lop off all shoots that would twine round another, I scarcely know myself now, when I give full room to such feelings . . . Beloved Harry—I know not how to lay down the pen, tho' I have nothing to say except what I say over and over, that I *am* yours entirely—

Tuesday, April 25th.

My heart sickens with apprehension, when I think of all that may have befallen since January last ; and having no one who can at all enter into my feelings, they prey the more on my mind. . . . How curious is the alchemy by which an emotion extracts food for itself from everything.

TO INDIA

Even when I am resolutely attending to a book, some word or sentence chimes in with the under-song of my mind. Thus was I struck with these lines of Wordsworth . . .

"The gods approve
The *depth*, and not the *tumult* of the soul,
A fervent, not ungovernable love."

Never could two lines more exquisitely convey your affection ; and believe me, dearest, my love for you is enhanced a thousand-fold by my respect for the self-denying firmness with which you held your peace, and resolved to remain in India till you had redeemed your pledge.

Thursday, April 27th.

It is very irksome to me to associate with my fellow-creatures, and yet have no real communion with them. I like Miss M. very much. She is remarkably unselfish, and naïve. She seems much amused by the glimpses she discerns of what passes in my mind. To-day she asked me if I never feared your changing. I only smiled : and she said, 'Well, I should like to set up as your rival, and make you a little jealous.'

'That you could not do, were you an Angel of Light,' replied I.

This book contains at least a faithful picture of my thoughts, and if it contains inconsistencies, abruptnesses, prejudices, you will judge these leniently. . . .

I am persecuted by finding likenesses between the people at table and the dishes on it. Captain Cobb is the image of a shoulder of mutton. Captain Davis is like a dried reindeer's tongue ; and Mr. B. who sits near me, is exactly like a piece of crisp, brown roast pork. These odd notions dance before my eyes, and I find myself on the verge of laughing aloud at my own whimsies. Oh, if only you were here, I could never feel dull ; and what multiplied delight will be our unreserved companionship, after this *screwed-up* condition. Good-night, my beloved.

April 30th.

This morning I rose at five, hot and uncomfortable ; and went to the port, where I beheld the sea, still as a

looking-glass, and of an inky hue. The old moon, a slender crescent, newly risen, shot along it a stream of quivering silvery light from a clear sky, clouded towards the horizon. Gradually this heavy curtain rolled away, leaving a space of amber and rose colour, streaked with purple, while the sea became silver clear. Miss Mackey was asleep ; and as I sat by the window, absorbed in the changing glories of the sky, I felt a painful sense of loneliness. But as the first faint streak of daylight 'shone more and more unto the perfect day,' a deep tranquillity came over me . . . peace unspeakable. . . .

Saturday, May 6th.

Another week is over ; a steady wind carrying us seven knots an hour. The 'hish, hish, hish' of the ship going through the water is music after the dead calm of recent days. . . . There are some things that no custom renders less interesting to me. One of them is the undeviating certainty with which we pursue our way over the trackless deep, that bears no mark to tell us whither we are going ; yet we proceed as if on a railroad. And I am always surprised. Another thing I never can look at without the same fresh wonder as at first, is a lamp-lighter gliding along in the dusk ; the ladder set to the post, the magic touch to the burner—then the blaze, brought into being by a man who knows as little of its cause as the post itself. All these things set me thinking, and give me great pleasure. But I rarely speak of them. Most people seem to think it mere foolishness to wonder at what happens every day ; as if its very frequency did not give fresh food for reflection.

Friday, May 12th.

Sometimes I have wished to write an amusing letter, sometimes an instructive one, sometimes a sympathising one ; but for you I wish simply to *write*, just to give you each thought as it rises ; to let you have a faithful picture, with the lights and shades. . . . You say you 'have nothing to offer but unbounded love.' And what more, dearest, can mortal give to mortal ? We have each of us tried to be sufficient to ourselves ; to find, in intellectual pursuits and friendship, a substitute for the *one* object

and we have both learned that we were formed, as Coleridge says : ' to find in another being the complement of our own.' This time last year, when weighing the chances of going to you, I used to feel with a pang, this may be my last spring at home, the last time I shall see the buds open or hear the birds sing. Now, I say to myself without one regret : ' I have left England—I am on my way to Harry.'

Monday, May 15th.

The 43rd day of my imprisonment. A bright, clear morning and favourable wind, but I feel depressed and uncomfortable. For the last few months at home, I was in perpetual excitement, my circumstances called into activity the sympathy and affection of my friends ; and as I went from place to place my heart was stirred up, my strongest feelings brought into play. Suddenly, I am removed from them all, placed among total strangers, dependent on internal resources for any intellectual or religious advantages, in close bodily contact with others, yet living in a world wholly my own. The revulsion is very sickening. . . .

I console myself with fancying our unshackled tent life ; our roaming abroad at all hours, ' thought meeting thought, and will preventing will.' Surely this is no impossible day-dream. We are both constituted, more than most people, to find all we want in each other ; our principles and tastes are similar, and our habits will soon become so——

Good-night, most beloved one.

Thursday, May 25th.

A delightful breeze, more nearly allied to a gale, sprang up this morning, and on we speed. I did not go out ; for yesterday, when I came in, Miss M. said : ' I have had the Doctor here. He says you quite monopolise the Captain and are flirting with him !'

Of course I knew I might as justly be accused of flirting with the main-mast, because I pass it so often ! But I do not wish to have my name linked with any one else's.

And now, as May drew to an end, they were nearing Cape

Town with small chance of making the port, owing to heavy weather.

For several days light airs had hardly stirred the sea. The groaning of the yards proclaimed a calm. At sunset, half the ship's world was on deck. Passengers in groups, 'discussing' their after-dinner dish of tea, their cigars and each other; while the officer of the watch stood aft, whistling for a wind. The graceful ship, every stitch of canvas set, rolled for lack of a steadying breeze. The sky was clear. None dreamed that a gale was at hand.

Only the Captain knows. His barometer has fallen sharply; and he bellows an order to shorten sail. Still the heavens give no sign of coming fury, beyond a sinister gloom along the eastern horizon. And still, point by point, the barometer falls.

'All shorten sail!' Again the order rings out, sudden and sharp. With magical speed the sailors 'make snug' to meet the coming storm. The squaring of yards, reefing of topsails, and closing of ports send passengers hurrying to their cabins.

The sky darkens, the rising wind hums through the rigging; the tall masts quiver; the vessel groans and tosses like a soul in anguish.

'Down with the helm' roars the officer of the watch. 'Let her come up! *Hard down!*'

And 'down it is,' with a mighty heeling over that rolls passengers out of bed, and sends ill-secured furniture crashing across their cabins. . . .

But the Indiaman, well-built and skilfully handled, weathered the storm. Before morning, the worst was over. Only a sail torn to shreds attested to the fury of the gale; and on May the 30th Honoria was writing to Henry:

'To-day is beauteous, and the swell is gone down; but I am so weak and worn out that I am good for little. The last few days appear a blank. I almost wished to feel afraid, that I might be stimulated. Though I am excited by the elemental stir, I have no idea of danger, in a well built ship with plenty of sea-room. When I think of the uncertainty of life, my mind turns to disease, not to acci-

dent. And just now I feel as if I bore a charmed life. Your happiness being bound up in it, gives it a value such as it never had before. . . .'

Saturday, June 3rd.

The gale has freshened again, and we are bumping about in great style. For a few moments to-day I believe we were in danger ; for, owing to some mistake at the wheel, the ship turned completely round. . . . At 6, when the wind was really rising, Captain Warner sent to know if I would like to come out and look about. I went ; and the sight was very fine. The sky looked as if there was a red lining, with a grey veil over it. The mainsail and main topsail, the foresail and fore-topsail were up, but close reefed ; the sea was an angry bluish brown ; and the waves rose, one higher than another, with their white crests. The ship dipped, and struggled and plunged, like a horse that wanted to throw its rider. There was something sublime in the sight. How I longed for you !

Often at night I try to fancy what will be your appearance, manner, tone : and then the fearful *if*—the possibility that all may be a dream . . . till I am sick at heart ; and the Doctor orders me quinine and plaisters, feels my pulse, and has as much notion of what ails me, as I have of Arabic. Above all, I feel extremely irked by never being alone. . . .

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Tuesday, June 6th.

Last night I had such a vivid dream of home. I thought myself at Lough Swilly. I saw the mist roll up the mountains and the sun burst out over its waters. I saw the hills glowing with purple heather, and the garden at Fahan. My heart leaped with delight. 'I awoke, and behold it was a dream.'

This day is close and damp ; but I have, for a little while, the cabin to myself. By the bye, ever since I came on board, I have cast a covetous eye on Mrs. Stewart's cabin, and wished to have it when she leaves us. But I had not courage to ask, because I knew my motive was that I might have some quiet place to meet you. And on Sunday last, Captain Warner suddenly offered it to me, provided no one at Madras takes it. I thought this great

good luck ; and now, instead of fancying your coming in to this wee box, I picture our meeting there. The kind Captain has just sent me a sketch of the ship in the late gale. I suppose to return my civility in giving him a set of pencils the other day, when he said he had none.

Clearly Captain Warner—for all her confession, and his own later confidences as to an unattainable She—was not impervious to Honoria's charm, her frankness and spontaneous humour. They walked and talked almost daily ; to the last he evinced more than politeness in his concern for her welfare.

Next day the monotony of her endless voyage was broken by the stirring news of a homeward bound vessel in sight. For ships that sailed half across the world, seldom calling at a port, it was a moment of intense excitement that chance meeting and 'speaking' on the pathless deep.

At dawn, a white speck seen on the far horizon ; at noon a fully-rigged vessel—foreigner or friend ? All eyes and glasses were on the look-out for the national flag ; and a Union Jack floating from the mast head was greeted with cheers. In no time, conversation flags were swiftly running up and down between the spanker gaff and the deck. No letters for the *Reliance*. But again, as the ships drew closer, cheer on cheer rang out ; fainter and fainter, as they drew apart, carrying their living freight to opposite ends of the earth. And, at dusk, they were once more two specks of life on the skyline.

It was over. The sailors reverted to their routine ; the passengers to their gossip and Honoria Marshall to her journal.

Sunday, June 11th.

This is an exquisite day and I am enjoying the relief of being alone. The ship is going light before the wind, flocks of Cape birds still following our track. These creatures are a great delight to me ; their steady, sweeping flight, their descent upon the sea, their easy breasting of the 'water. I feel more friendly with them than with

'the two-legged animals minus feathers' who are in the ship.

8 p.m. I have just come in from two and a half hours on deck walking with the Captain and Miss Stewart. They call me the Almanac, and amuse themselves with asking me 'What day of the voyage is this?' 'How many weeks since we left England?' and so on. Indeed, I wonder that I comport myself like a sane creature, wrought up as my mind is: but it would vex me sorely if they guessed my feelings. Yesterday evening, with Miss Stewart and Captain Warner, I thought she might keep up the conversation, so I walked silently, till the Captain called out: 'Hullo, Miss Marshall, where *are* you going?' And I found I had unconsciously been walking at such a pace that the others could not keep up.

I apologised, and he said: 'Oh, never mind, I always know when you are in a meditative mood, by your going ten knots.' I was annoyed at finding my thoughts thus detected.

The play they are getting up is to be on Friday, and we ladies have been preparing dresses for it.

Sunday, June 18th. 10 a.m.

I had been feverish and restless all night; but at last fell asleep and dreamed I was at Fahan. . . .

After waking, I could hardly tell where I was, till I heard six bells. Then I saw that the moon was bright; so I got up. And no tongue can tell the beauty of the view. The Moon, just full, hung brilliant in the western sky, and flung down a quivering path of radiance. White clouds were drifting about; and when one crossed her path, it formed a circular rainbow round her, the colours perfectly defined. The Southern Cross had just set, the Scorpion was in front of me. The sea was stirred by the Trade into a thousand sparkles of foam; and our gleaming track shone brightly. To the South East, I saw bluish light—the approach of the sun; and my heart so *ached* with intense feeling, that I seemed disembodied. . . .

Now, in the full eye of day, the whole scene feels like a dream.

I dined, as usual on Sunday, in my cabin. This being June 18th, all our Militaries appeared in uniform. There

was speech making and health drinking, which made us all late in going out. The sun had set, and the moon risen—but I must not go on too much about her, or you will judge me moon-crazy! In this monotonous life, she is about the most interesting object I see.

June 21st.

Dearest, I hope this will soon be over, for if it lasts, I shall go wild. I am wound up to the highest pitch. Oh, that I could go to sleep till I have news of you. How shall I endure the next few days? . . .

Do you find, when any matter of intense interest absorbs you, that you are much more liable to be annoyed by trifles? I do; and for some days past I have suffered from acute irritability. I believe I keep this to myself; and I have the credit of being good-tempered—I am sure, undeservedly. What I have is command over my temper—not always from the right motive.

For three hours I have been reading and copying your letters, that give me 'ever new delight.' Thus do I while away these leaden-footed days; but bad as I am, I do not send forth such heart-piercing yawns as I hear from the cabins of Captain Cobb and Mr. Mackey!

June 24. 9 p.m.

All day long I have been reading and tearing up old letters. I read dearest Letitia's since 1827, and my heart glowed with admiration and gratitude towards her whom you fitly term our guardian angel. Now that I have the key to the riddle how well I can understand her occasional mentions of you between 1827 and 1832. . . .

June 27th.

We expect Madras to-morrow; and oh, if I there have tidings of you, I shall be over-paid for all this misery. Yet I prepare myself for disappointment; and at times I feel almost dissolving away. I am half ashamed of recording my own want of self-control. But I do not think my outward show betrays the wild work within. . . . Beloved one, my trust is in the wisdom and goodness of God, and in your unchangeable love. But in this trying hour there is only one thought—*shall* I hear of you? I do not seriously

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expect you to be there ; but the bare possibility of seeing you at Madras sets me half frantic—and then the fears. Blessed be God for *hope*—hope, which bears us thro'. If I have one line to say you are well, I shall be happy.



‘**L**AND in sight off the larboard bow !’

That welcome cry, at half-past five on the 29th of June, roused every passenger on board the *Reliance* to a state of excitement only conceivable by those who had been cooped up in a sailing ship for eighty-one days on end. Shadowy figures hurried to the larboard side. Spy-glasses shot from cabin windows. The comparatively quiet ship became a pandemonium of scurrying feet, eager voices and shouts of command.

Honorina Marshall needed no call to rouse her. All night long she had scarcely slept : though her hopes and fears had ‘wearied themselves into a sort of repose.’ Now both sprang to life again : and at the rousing cry from above, she hurried to Mrs. Stewart’s cabin on the starboard side.

‘We’re in sight of land !’ she cried ; and the other sprang out of bed to join her at the port.

They had dropped anchor in Madras Roads. Small craft were swarming round the ship, piled with fruit and goods for sale, clamouring for passengers who might be landing, or spending a day and night on shore. Every living thing in the vessel seemed astir ; all the etiquette of ship-life forgotten. ‘Everybody walked in and out of everybody’s cabin to hear or tell some scrap of news.’

Other sailing ships thronged the harbour, ‘their furled sails, and ropes looking fine as horsehair.’ Behind them lay the waste of waters ; before them that legendary India, flat and glaring in the fierce June sunlight ; houses without glass windows, gardens without trees, except a few dishevelled coconut palms ; and in the distance a faint blue line of hills.

Now the Captain went ashore ; and of course he must call at ‘the post,’ leaving two anxious women consumed

with increasing impatience, as the empty hours dragged by. It was two o'clock when he returned with a letter for Mrs. Stewart. Nothing for Honoria Marshall.

That drop to earth, after hours of tension, seemed for the moment, more than she could bear. Yet, she must manage to keep a stiff lip and a calm countenance; for she could not count on ten minutes alone, till she had parted with kind Mrs. Stewart and taken possession of her cabin. She did not know that Henry Lawrence, in the far-off Simla hills, had not received her letters in time for even his written welcome to reach her on arrival. Still less could he hope to achieve the miracle of greeting her in person, as he had promised to do.

The good ship's record voyage—a mere eighty-one days from Gravesend—had its disadvantages; for she had outrun the slower ship, carrying an earlier mail. So she brought Honoria no sooner to her lover. Happiness delayed, again and yet again, seemed fated to be the portion of her over-anxious heart.

So the longed-for day of arrival dragged wearily to an end, leaving her weighed down with disappointment so keen that she refrained even from the solace of her nightly talk with Henry.

Early morning brought a note from one, 'Mrs. C.,' inviting her to spend the day and night with them. Reluctantly she accepted; thankful to escape from the ship and change the current of her thoughts. In a small boat, scarcely above the water, she crossed the smooth sea to the line of breakers, that lifted her cockle-shell and flung it unharmed on to the beach, where two men waited, with an arm-chair set on poles, to carry her beyond the tide.

For the rest, let her tell her own story, with a freshness of vision that no disappointment could dim.

'Mr. C.'s conveyance, awaiting me, was a palanquin carriage, shaped like an oblong box with a well below for the feet, and venetians all round. The driver was a native in European dress. Beside each horse ran a man with a long tuft of feathers fastened on a stick, for whisking away

flies. We drove along a raised roadway from the beach ; the surf dashing ceaselessly on the left, and on the right a long line of shabby European buildings ; the want of glass windows giving them a ruined air. . . .

Within doors, the lofty shaded rooms and perfect tranquillity were a delightful contrast to the confinement, noise and motion of the ship. Every room had fixed in the walls several branches, with sockets for lamps, and glass bell shades ; high folding doors, opening from one room to another, and on to the verandahs. Perhaps the most striking point is the multitude of servants. I don't think I shall ever get over my dislike of seeing them lie, stand, and sit about the doors, or even in the room, where the punkah is pulled by a man inside. Few of them, certainly, understand our language ; and old residents think no more of their presence than of so many tables or chairs ; but to me the constraint is very irksome. All the rooms have bare, painted rafters, which gives them an unfinished, comfortless appearance. So strange it seems to look up from damask couches and rosewood tables to a ceiling with naked beams.

In the Madras climate, people always live *on the defensive*. White ants attack every species of wood and paper. Beds are surrounded by a gauze cage to exclude mosquitoes. Insects get into the binding of books ; and everything on the breakfast table must be covered to keep out flies. I was struck by the listless *parboiled* aspect of the ladies reclining in their open carriages ; and the children, poor little dears, looked truly like hot-house plants.

I was also struck by the darkness of the closed rooms in daytime, and their lightness at night, when all doors are opened to admit the air. Each room has eight to twelve pairs of branching lamp sockets fixed to the white wall, and all looks brilliant and cheerful. Candles and lamps must have tin tops, to screen them from the punkah. When you seal a letter, you must go into a corner well away from it : when you pepper your food, you must hold out your hand, or the pepper will be blown into your eyes. When writing, you must use a weight on your paper, or the punkah will whisk it against the pen. All through the hot weather, it dominates life. . . .

From the C.'s she parted gratefully after a night of little

sleep, plagued by mosquitoes. Her host escorted her to the shore, where the surf was rising rapidly.

‘As I could get no “accommodation boat”’—she wrote—‘I took the first that offered; sitting uncomfortably on a bar laid across the gunwale with my feet on another, keeping fast hold lest I should be washed off. The surf is much more formidable when faced than when going ashore. Every surge that came towards us, crested with spray, seemed as if it must overwhelm us. But the boat, riding over the wave, escaped with only a sprinkling; and when we were in smooth water the head boatman demanded additional pay for having brought me safely through. Usually the demand is made beforehand; and, if refused, the passenger gets a good ducking! We were soon alongside of the ship, and till I thus saw her, I had no idea of her enormous size. The chair, made like a small barrel with one side cut away, was lowered. I got in, and was wrapped in a flag. The boatswain gave a whistle; the chair was hoisted up—and once more I was in my floating prison.’

Back in her airy cabin, she felt glad of the change, that had given a fillip to her mind and made renewed waiting seem more tolerable. Her journal entry on the 30th had been brief and restrained:

‘I did not write more yesterday, dearest Harry, because I was excited and worn to such a degree that I would only have said what was not pleasant. And after all, my *extreme* disappointment was unreasonable. It was hardly possible that you should have got the overland mail in time to meet me here with a letter, as we have made the passage in eighty-one days eight hours—the shortest ever known; and I am not uneasy or alarmed.’

Next day, having regained a measure of calm, she could write more cheerfully: ‘I entered with great delight my new quarters, and this day week the misery may be over—so I shall bear me bravely. Good-night.—Oh if I only knew that you are *well* . . .’

Wednesday, July 5th.

At dinner there was much talk about our landing—the how and the when. I repeated—not so coolly as before—

'I expect a friend to meet me'; but my heart sank as I thought of the possibilities. I am worn and irritated to the last degree; crazed by the civilities of those around me. Mrs. Cobb as usual bestows her tediousness on me—the *woman*! However, it is kindly meant. Miss Mackey *dots* in and out, as if this were her own cabin—lest I 'should be lonely!' In short, dear, I am very unamiable, just now. I will take a walk, to restore my equanimity.

9 p.m. Well, on deck I went, and walked for nearly an hour with Captain Warner. He advised my landing with him, in the first boat. I simply stated that I expect you (or some one by you appointed) to come for me; but in case you do not hear in time, we left the point to be settled to-morrow——

Friday, July 7th. 5 p.m.

We weighed anchor at 7 this morning; and, oh Harry, we shall be up *to-night*. Mr. Maxwell said so at dinner. Will you be on board, dearest, this very night? You *must* have heard, by now, of our arrival. Every brig, barge, dingy, that comes in sight, I set the glass to, thinking you may be there. . . .

Here that wearyful woman interrupted me; and for above an hour has she sat—I doing every thing short of turning her out. To add to my placidity, came 'the Captain's compliments, we shall not be at Calcutta till to-morrow morning!' But during the night we may have tidings. If you could feel how my heart is beating, you would know that my composure is only skin deep. Never was morrow more longed for. . . . I shall have little sleep to-night.

Saturday, July 8th. 4 a.m.

I have just had half-an-hour's sleep; and I take up my pen to wile away some of this tedious night. Every hour I thought there might be a boat; but in vain did I listen. The lapping of the tide, the bark of dogs, voices in the native boat astern of us, and the snoring of my next neighbour—such were the sounds until the last half-hour: then the crowing of the cocks on board, answered by those ashore, the boatswain's whistle, the fife and the men's steps keeping time. . . .

This suspense is racking. I have just been watching the

first white streak of dawn among dark clouds : 'Heaviness may endure for a night—but joy cometh in the morning.' Will it not come to-day, dearest ?

Sunday, July 9th. Cossipur.

It seems a century since I last opened this——

As we went up the river I continued to expect you every moment. I paced my cabin like one demented. Captain Cobb came in to see me ; and afterwards Captain Warner. To each I replied, that you, or some one, would come for me ; and I would stay on board till then. But, as Captain Cobb was going ashore, I begged him to call at Watson's.

Well, I saw boat after boat put off ; till I was left—the only one on board except Mrs. Cobb, awaiting her husband's return. Back he came, told me he had seen Dick—and that you were up in the hills. Thankfulness to hear of you, helped me to bear *that* grievous disappointment. I determined then to go ashore with the Cobbs, to the Hotel ; and when I got into a room alone—I did, for a time, utterly give way. But I remembered that, if *I took on*, people might blame *you* ; so after a hearty fit of crying, I washed my face, and returned with a composed mien.

Presently Dick came—rather a broken reed in an emergency ; but he did his best. And when Major Hutchinson appeared, I was quite relieved. I am delighted with the Hutchinsons ; and having, now, collected my thoughts, I am at rest in my mind, feeling—as I do—that we each did our best to arrange for this meeting, and that a higher Hand has over-ruled us for some wise purpose.

And so an end to the tale of her 'singularly rapid passage' ; a hundred and thirty-five pages of honest self-revealing : a portrait intended for one man only, yet destined to survive and to recreate, for countless others, her very individual character ; her Irish gaiety and courage, her impatience with the mean and trivial, her quick eye and alert brain, her deep-rooted religious faith, coupled with an ardour and constancy of heart fit to rank her with the great lovers of all time.

Over-taxed as she was, by the sharp reaction and the Bengal hot weather at its worst, her nerves were ill-fitted to stand the weeks of waiting still ahead of her. But happily

she found herself with congenial folk, in a wonderful unknown country, no longer cut off from news of Henry and of home. To England she wrote vivid and detailed accounts of the Indian 'scene : the spacious house at Cossipur on the Ganges, five miles above Calcutta ; the sacred river winding between spires and shipping on one hand ; and on the other, bungalows in wooded gardens that sloped to the water's edge ' like houses on the Thames at Twickenham '—the Twickenham of a lordlier day.

From her verandah she could watch the silver sweep of the Ganges and the passing of river craft. *Dinghis*, with long bowsprits, a boatman standing at the end with his bamboo pole, suggesting the odd fancy of a gnat half out of its chrysalis ; and, dwarfing these fairy skiffs, came blundering paddle-steamers with high thin funnels, ploughing their way, once a fortnight, between Calcutta and Allahabad, eight hundred miles up the endless river. These were harnessed to huge flat boats, consisting of twenty cabins, venetianed for coolness, their roofs forming a deck with awnings, where passengers took their ease, secure from ' all dangers of machinery,' and untroubled by the vibrations of the paddle. In just such a steamer-towed ' flat ' would Henry Lawrence come to her, once he had reached Allahabad. But that was—not yet.

With her kind new friend, Mrs. Hutchinson, she explored Calcutta city, in the comparative cool of evening, and sketched all that she saw with her fluent pen. Once more she was oppressed by the multitude of servants and the lack of privacy :

' men acting as chambermaids, making the beds, walking in and out like tame animals. No such thing as knocking or even waiting to be called. The whole system is very hurtful to one's mind. You have your servants at so much a month, and you have no further concern with them. If they do not suit, you dismiss them. They make their salaam ; and next day new ones appear to your bidding. It is all very free from care, but tends to make one inconsiderate.

' I asked Mrs. Hutchinson yesterday how many servants

they had. She replied, "I'm not sure ; but we are very moderate people." And the moderate number she reckoned amounted to nearly thirty : the *Sirdar* (head bearer) with six others under him, merely for light housework ; a *Khan-samah*, or house steward, with three *Khitmutgars* to wait at table ; a cook, gardener, *bhisti* (water carrier), a washerman and tailor ; her ayah and underwoman, with a sweeper, for work no others would do ; a coachman, two *syces* ; two grass-cutters, and a man to tend the goats ; two *chuprassees*, to sit all day in the verandah, announce callers and run messages. Lastly, a low-caste woman, to keep off the bodies that came floating down the stream.

'But all these servants will only wait on their own employers, every visitor brings his own. A lady, who came here for a week brought two women, two *khitmutgars*, two bearers and a *Durzi*. I still have my *Belaitee Ayah*, or English maid ; but I shall not be sorry to part with her, for it is difficult, in this country, to have a European servant without making a companion of her—'

And, while she wrote these many long letters, her journal habit lapsed altogether. Perhaps she had no heart to begin a fresh one, while expecting her lover almost daily ; and as a new arrival, she suffered acutely from familiar plagues of the hot weather—insects and all-pervading damp and prickly heat ; a tendency to shirk any effort of mind or body.

But at last, in mid-August, spurred by his express wish, by a reviving hope that his coming must, by now, be near at hand, she opened a fresh book to record the tale of her married life in India.

August 13th, 1837.

UNDER the feeling of disappointment attending my arrival here, I relinquished my journal ; and it seems rather late to resume it, when I expect to see you to-day or to-morrow ; but last evening brought me your dear, delightful letter, finished on the 4th ; and as you express a wish I should go on with one, I forthwith begin a fresh volume.

Your letters, my own dearest Harry, are always delightful, but somehow those I got last night were peculiarly so. Perhaps I specially stood in need of the comfort ; but the result I can answer for—a thrill of happiness that is almost too much. You fear I think you are long in coming—I do ; and would you have it otherwise ? Would you have me contented without you ? That were worse than all cares and disappointments ten times over. Yes, dearest ; every day does seem to contain as many hours as it has minutes ; and my passive state makes delay harder to bear. If I could go half-way to meet you, I should be easier ; but this will soon be over ; and let us not, my darling, forget that this trial is appointed to teach us some lesson. Perhaps you too much prided yourself on keeping your word ; and it has been good for you to endure an *involuntary* departure from it. I trust you have received at least some of the letters I have been dispatching to catch you at various points of your route. They must surely convince you that you have not been misunderstood. I should be wholly undeserving, if anything led me to doubt your love, after all you have done and suffered for me.

You tell me that '*pet* expressions and endearments' are not at all in your way. Well, be it so. I have seen how flimsy a texture mere billing and cooing is, in the daily wear and tear of married life. As to any show of affection before others, I think it perfectly intolerable and indelicate. So we are agreed on that point, as on the point

of dress. When I was getting my outfit, I used to bother Letitia to know what was your taste. And when I asked her, 'Would Harry like that?', she used to say, 'He'll like any thing you wear. He even admired that hideous red gown you wore in London.' So I followed my own taste; and I am delighted to find it agrees with yours. I meant what I said when I wrote begging you not to buy ornaments for me. It is not my ambition to 'walk in silk attire' or 'braid wi' gems my hair.' As for those barbarous things called ear-rings—when I was six years old my ears were pierced. Before I was twice that age, I took the rings out, and have always said that nothing should induce me to wear them, unless I were married—and my husband insisted on it. So I'm glad you are not disposed to make this a test of my obedience!

As I have walked in the verandah, these last exquisite moonlit nights, I have fancied you in the steamer, pacing the deck, looking at the same stars and moon. Mrs. Hutchinson says that, after all, you will arrive at some moment when I least expect it. I wonder when *that* moment will be? . . . I was up at gunfire this morning, gazing on the placid stream, and the approaching dawn. You say I have poetry in me, and I think I have; *not* from my own rude attempts at verse, but from the response of my mind to the words of poets, and all poetical objects. You thought that my Uncle and others would have advised my not leaving England till June. I am afraid you will find me less *advisable* than you expect. For all the advice in the three kingdoms would not have weighed to keep me from coming out at the earliest possible moment.

August 14th.

Just before dinner yesterday I heard a noise, and I ran to the window. How my heart leaped when I saw a steamer! But the next glance showed me it was not *the* steamer; and sick at heart I turned away, thinking of your breal-neck ride to meet those letters, which after all were not *the* letters. Well, after dinner, sitting in the verandah, I saw a gentleman stalk into the drawing-room; and as I thought only of *one* gentleman, my foolish heart began to beat. Don't be alarmed. I did not run up to greet the stranger—who was only Dr. Jackson.

I spent a restless night, starting at every sound ; and I rose at daylight to enjoy the brief coolness of morning. After a walk in the verandah, I lay down and got an hour's sleep. Now I am dressed, and sit scribbling to you till the bell rings for prayers. I am almost afraid to expect you to-day, but I think at least I shall hear from you, my own dearest one. It is strange but true, that harassed and worn as I am, yet I am very happy. Yes—*happier than I ever was*. . . .

It is now after breakfast, and I have just got your dear letter of the 5th. Surely you *will* be here to-day. When I read about our possible change of quarters, my first feeling was disappointment. Must we, then, give up camp life, and be all the year round *on our good behaviour*? I will not complain till I hear more. I want to go over with you the very ground that you trod alone ; to see the spot where you first wrote to me.

I have lately been tracing your way on the map, and *inking over* your pencil chits—dearer to me than I can express. 'Tis odd we should love to have proof of what we do not doubt, but so it is ; and your dear little *palki* billets have been (even more than the letters) read over and over, and laid next my heart.

6 p.m. This weary day is almost ended. . . . Truly, dearest, my eyes fail with looking for you ; and just now I feel very sad—very much inclined to cry ; but the days when tears were a relief are over. To shed them now makes me feel so really ill that I try to repress them.

There are such vexatious, tantalizing sounds outside. Sometimes a carriage over the wooden bridge ; sometimes the mills ; sometimes a tom-tom : so like the steamer that I am kept constantly on the alert. But I say to myself, this *must* soon be over ; then joy will be all the more joyful. Nor are you, my beloved, on a bed of roses, though your anxieties are lessened by the very fact of moving.

August 15th. 11 a.m.

Hope is certainly a persevering lady, beginning as she does every morning to build up the castle that was thrown down the night before. Once more am I in hourly expectation of you. After sunset yesterday, I gave up the steamer ; nor have I expected you this morning. For I

felt sure, if the vessel had stopped anywhere within twenty miles, last night, you would have taken a small boat and been here. And I have no certainty of your leaving Allahabad on Tuesday last.

At four this morning I went into the verandah and walked up and down. A little boat put in at the *ghāt*; ¹ and I could not *help* watching to see who came out of it. At 7 o'clock Miss Mackey and her brother came to see me. At first I felt annoyed; but she is really such a nice little body. I have asked her to be my bridesmaid. I hope you will approve.

9 p.m. This has certainly been a trying day, though all is compensated by your letter just received. First of all there was the hourly expectation. Then people spending the day; and really it is no *lounge* being agreeable to comparative strangers for 12 hours at a stretch. When they were gone, a drive was proposed. I thought—shall I go? I would have rather stayed, but I knew it would do me good; and as it was too late for the steamer, I agreed to go.

As we came back in the dusk, Mrs. Hutchinson exclaimed: 'There's Mr. Richard Lawrence.'

I looked, and sure enough, there was a man in a military frock-coat, a buggy standing near. I felt certain you and Dick had somehow come together, and that you were upstairs. Between fear and longing, all my blood seemed turned to lead; and I could not speak or stir.

As we drove past the stranger, Mrs. Hutchinson bid me get out of the carriage; and, thinking just as I did, they would not come with me.

I got upstairs; I paused; heard no sound; so I looked into the drawing-room. No lamps were lit. I ran into the verandah; and seeing no one, I concluded there was something amiss, that Dick was afraid to come and tell me. I was running downstairs again, when I heard a strange voice, and ran back.

Mrs. Hutchinson followed me to the verandah; and there she told me it was some Mr. Lamb who was to come to drink tea!

Then I *could* refrain no more from shedding the tears that had long been aching in my throat. But my beloved,

¹ Landing place.

they were not bitter tears, being unmingled with doubt or fear.

Soon after, came your letter : and I can hardly quarrel with the delay that brings me *such* letters. I *am* glad you had got mine ; and I hope you may pick up some more *en route*. Yes, dearest, we are on the eve of the greatest change, except death, that can befall mortals ; and as you say, ours is a peculiar union. One cause, I think, why so many fail of domestic happiness, is their not sufficiently relinquishing all previous connexions that may interfere with the claims of husband and wife. I am prepared for us both feeling rather foolish at first. No more than you am I given to express strong emotion by word of mouth ; I believe I am often, unintentionally, rather brusque. Letitia used to talk of my ' knock-me-down manner.' But, for people to be happy together, the great point is—not so much freedom from peculiarities, as the perfect understanding of one another.

August 16th.

I have begun with a new stock of patience to meet the next two days. Oh dearest Harry, when *will* they be over ! Sometimes I fancy I could fly to meet you, and pour out every thought and feeling. Again I feel as if I shall be paralysed.

August 17th.

My hand shakes so much I can hardly write. I cannot help thinking you *will* be here to-day. Yesterday evening as we sat after tea, I heard a sound. Major Hutchinson ran to the window. I followed—and there was a steamer. For a moment I thought it *must* be you ; but I soon saw, through the dusk that there was no flat : and, for the hundredth time I turned away in disappointment. When Mr. G. left, I was in the verandah ; and I watched his palanquin-bearers, torch-bearers and all, thinking that so had you come five or six hundred miles. I have been up since 5 o'clock. Now I hear a stir in the drawing-room. I will go in.

3 p.m. I am destined to be frightened and disappointed. About noon, a *chuprassie* came and told Major Hutchinson there was a sahib below who wanted him. My heart beat.

Mrs. Hutchinson, in a few moments, sent to know who it was. The man said, 'Lawrence sahib.'

Before I could realise exactly how I felt, Major Hutchinson came back to say it was *Dick*! Seeing the steamer last evening, he thought you had been in it, and expected to meet you here. Poor Dick was a very sad put off, when I really *did* think you were come at last.

However, dearest, I know now, I am not to expect you till to-morrow; yet I cannot *help* expecting you every hour. I do not think I could stand six more weeks of the state I have been in since we reached the sand heads. . . .

9 p.m. You arrived, my Henry. I need not say more to make us both remember *that* hour . . .

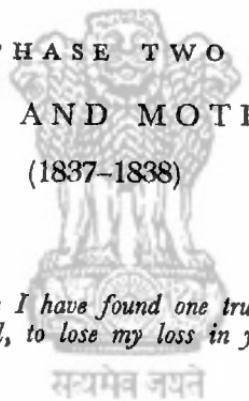
August 18th.

Will you think me crazy to go on writing now that I have yourself——?





सत्यमेव जयते



PHASE TWO
WIFE AND MOTHER
(1837-1838)

*Oh Love, since I have found one truth so true,
Let me lose all, to lose my loss in you.*

Laurence Binyon.

सत्यमेव जयते



सत्यमेव जयते

AND now, at last, they were together, after nine years of unrevealed loving ; and Henry Lawrence—having won the jewel he had done his best to lose—would let no more grass grow under his feet.

On the 17th he reached Calcutta, after a punishing hot-weather journey over a thousand miles of hill and jungle, river and swamp, mainly in stuffy slow-moving palanquins. Only from Allahabad he had travelled down the Ganges in comparative comfort, in the 'flat' attached to the fussy little paddle steamer that brought him to Cossipur.

On the 21st, they breakfasted together : ignoring the convention that bride and groom should meet first at the altar. They went out afterwards—and were quietly married. They came home—and prayed together. No feast, no finery, no chattering 'cloud of witnesses.'

Then could Honoria Lawrence say, in simple truth, 'My cup runneth over' : though still the incredible reality—seemed more like a waking dream ; and, to her fervent temperament joy came with an intensity that bordered on pain.

A true Anglo-Indian touch was added by their understanding friends, the Hutchinsons, who had planned to go off on a visit, leaving the enchanted pair in sole possession of their pleasant bungalow by the river : and during those first days—themselves to themselves—her journal remained in abeyance. But on the 26th, at his express wish, she began a fresh volume, as Honoria Lawrence. Journals were the fashion of the time. Trivial, important, or revealing, they have the merit of embalming a vanished day, of bringing the dead to life with a peculiar vividness that no retrospective writing can equal. So these slim brown exercise books, filled with a young wife's thoughts and hopes and

fears, with her lively account of their doings in camp and cantonment, vividly re-create—for a so-different generation—their delights and distractions, their abiding joy in each other. Still she kept up her individual way of writing, as though she were talking to him or to a friend, which gives the reader a sense of being present in the spirit, actually sharing their lives.

So on August 26th—left for the first time alone—she spoke to her absent husband as though he were at her side :

August 26th : Noon.

This is the first hour of your being away without me since we were married—my own precious husband. As I stood in the verandah watching the boat put off, my prayer was that we might never have a longer separation. When I used to be writing a journal for you, the thought would come—How shall I *bear* to look back on this, if I should find the reality of joy less than I expect? Now I *can* look back with thankful delight, feeling how far the reality exceeds all I could picture. Only when you are absent I feel as if your being here was but a dream. Out of my sight I fancy you lost to me. Oh Harry! *Do* we not know what happiness is?

It is the conviction of all new-married lovers, but not in many cases are the foundations of an enduring happiness so well and truly laid. Few of those, who will to be one, are favoured with the 'strong congeniality of spirit,' noted by James Abbot, in his impression of the young wife that so livingly brings her to the mind's eye: 'She was not beautiful in the ordinary sense of the term: but harmony, fervour and intelligence breathed in her expression, emanating from a loving heart and cultured mind.' Taken into fellowship with a man like Henry Lawrence she was doubly endowed with the will and capacity to share his high aims and rise to their exigent demands.

Together, in that first week alone, they prepared for the press one of his early attempts at authorship. For a love of writing was one of their many shared interests. Though his undeveloped gift exceeded hers, his incurable modesty

inclined him always to overrate her talent and underrate his own.

Too soon the world was with them again. Their kind hosts returned to find them both down with fever—the result of his terrible journey and her weeks of nervous tension. But Lawrence had only been granted short leave ; and early in September, well or ill, they must set out upon the slow-paced river journey that was to be their veritable honeymoon. Honoria, still prostrate, had to be carried on board the vessel they had chartered : a roughly built pinnacle, fifty-five feet long, rigged for sailing ; with sixteen oars, in case wind failed. More than half the deck was enclosed to form two cabins, fitted with punkahs and camp furniture, with venetians and outside purdahs to let down in the heat of the day—a trifle of 90° to 92° , aggravated by mosquitoes and prickly heat. Happily the nights were cool ; and India's brilliant moon, her veritable starshine, were a revelation to Honoria, when they wandered ashore by grove or stream, by wayside temples or villages, discovering the country and each other.

Behind the pinnacle trailed a covered country boat—first cousin to Noah's ark—packed with goats and fowls, a travelling kitchen and the perpetual crowd of servants with their families. All day long they chattered or screamed at each other ; and the *Manji* commanding their crew shouted his orders to the boatmen in a prolonged chant warranted to carry half a mile. When the wind was favourable, they hoisted canvas sails. But more often the vessel was towed by a score of half-naked boatmen, who trotted along the bank, wading and even swimming, if needs must ; rolling in the water like a shoal of porpoises, while the *Manji* cheered them on, addressing them as his children. If the going was good, they covered twenty miles a day—and were well content. In that vast and timeless land, mere speed was of no account. Things got done somehow. One arrived—some time : a state of mind and life almost inconceivable to clock-ridden modern man. To that enamoured pair it was wholly congenial : so profound was their joy in this brief spell of isolation from the common cares and pleasures of life.

Almost daily Honoria recorded their 'non-events,' with occasional interludes in her husband's queer illegible handwriting. To these she would respond as if he had spoken; and in this quaint fashion they kept up a kind of written conversation.

On the 16th, she was writing to a friend in England :

'Time passes, and the novelty of my impressions is wearing away too fast. Dusky forms and a foreign language no longer seem strange. Even my own new name has become quite natural. . . .

'You will like to hear something of our inland voyage. The heat, so far, has been oppressive; . . . and I am not yet reconciled to the great cockroaches that come creeping out of an evening; nor do I rejoice to see a scorpion walk deliberately across the floor; or to find a centipede making a bed in my slipper! After sunset I am often glad of my *pushmeena*, a soft warm shawl made in the Hills, as they call the Himalayas, which never seem to earn the title of mountains, being only some 27,000 feet high!

'Our way of life is very pleasant. We sail or tack along till sunset, when we lie close into the shore and *lagão*—a kind of mooring, by ropes tied to bamboo stakes, that are driven into the bank. At five we dine; and then go ashore for a ramble; while all hands on board are at work, preparing their one regular meal in the day; chopping wood, kindling the fire and squatting round it in groups like monkeys, the strong glare lighting up their swarthy faces. Under an awning, hung over the deck, they spread their blankets and sleep. . . .

'I should like this life to last for months; it is so unshackled and independent of any enjoyment beyond what we have in each other, in our books and writing and the face of Nature. This last week we have had glorious sunsets. One evening the sun rushed down like a red-hot ball through a hazy sky. North and south were piled with purple cloud. Lightning flashed incessantly, and thunder rolled. The Ganges lay tranquil as a mirror amid the strife overhead; and the evening star shone like a lamp in its rose-coloured tract of sky. The whole scene, to me, was beautiful and new. Our vessel moored. The men lighting their fires, preparing their meal.'

And now, at last, they entered the Ganges—the one incomparable waterway of India from the hills to the Bay of Bengal : in those days virtually her Grand Trunk Road. Two hundred miles they had travelled in ten days : a reasonable rate of speed in 1837 ; pleasanter and more profitable, given the right companion, than rushing through unrealised country at sixty miles an hour. Daily the river traffic increased : mainly flat-bottomed boats, with bamboo masts and strips of ragged canvas to catch any chance breeze. At sunrise as many as fifty or sixty sails would come stealing out of the dusk, like spectre ships against the bright sky of morning. At sunset they enjoyed their wanderings along strange shores under familiar skies.

‘ We *lagão*-ed early,’ Honoria was writing on the 21st, ‘ and rambled among the woods. . . . Exquisite evening, earth and sky ; very, *very* happy : “ a sober certainty of waking bliss,” hourly increasing. The time seems brief, but it has wrought wondrous changes. May God make us truly thankful, Amen.’

On Sunday, September 24th, they dined with a couple of stray bachelors, the first intruders on their blissful solitude.

‘ For *bachelors* ’ the new-made wife admitted, ‘ they seem comfortable enough. E. asked me if I meant to stay in camp as much as you have to do ! ! ! ! Came home before ten, and both rued our late dinner. Depend upon it, dearest, consumptive *moorghi* ¹ and Spartan biscuits, are what suit us best ! ’

A few days later Henry was contributing one of his own rare interludes, in his spidery script.

‘ Mrs. Lawrence,’ he wrote, ‘ is requested in future not to be so frisky ; to take all opportunities to spare herself undue fatigue, by lying down, shutting her eyes and opening her stays. Let her remember there are a hundred ways to make the best of a bad bargain. And the cleverest cook makes the best broth out of the fewest materials ! ’

Her skill in that respect was to be diversely tested and

¹ Chicken.

proven in the years ahead of them. This golden first year of marriage was her brief season of respite between the strain of long waiting and the greater strain destined to be put upon her by the climate, by the exigencies of his career, by the trials of wife- and motherhood in the India of that day. But as yet the future was far. Lifted above the tyranny of time, they could persuade themselves, as only lovers can, that the glory of the present was all.

Early in October, the bride of three weeks was writing to her friend of years, Mary Cameron :

'Twice during my solitary imprisonment on board ship did I despatch a letter to my own dearest Mary ; and now, shall I not share with you my happiness as I have so often shared my sorrows ? You have gained not lost, a friend, by my marriage, as Henry's own few lines will show. You know the inner chambers of my heart better than most ; so you will understand the force of my words when I tell you *I am happy*. In Henry I have found that on which my understanding heart can fully rest ; a union of tastes, feelings and even habits, sufficiently rare between those who have had similar training ; and all our circumstances have been so different. A brief sketch of that which might make volumes I shall unwind to you by degrees ; but hitherto I have had numerous letters to write, all telling much the same thing. This, as you know, is very benumbing to the mind, and indisposes one for a really long letter. But when Harry is engaged in his work, *then* I promise I will write fully to you and a few others.

'Farewell, my very dear friend--as much love as ever H. M. gave, is yours from

'HONORIA LAWRENCE.'

Already their time apart from the world was nearing an end. On the 5th of October, they reached Dinapore, where they found 'loads of letters' and hospitable strangers, ready to welcome any wandering traveller.

'Breakfasted with the H's. Very glad not to be shut up for a month in a pinnacle with *him*,' wrote ungrateful Honoria next morning. 'Spent the whole day there : and

rejoiced to think that our lot was not cast in a visiting, dressing, dancing *pleasant* station ! ’

Only three days’ journey now to Revelgunj, where they must quit their Ark of Content and trek across country by buggy and *palki*, to Gorakhpur—the station where Henry had lived and worked and stifled his vain longing.

‘ I shall not without pain,’ she wrote on October 7th, ‘ leave our little ship, where we have spent so many happy hours. . . . I know it would not do to dream away life, as we have done for these weeks ; but this voyage will always be a green spot in my memory. We have here learnt that we *can* be all in all to one another. We have enjoyed many lovely aspects of Nature—together in the fullest sense of the word. Shut out from cares and anxieties we have not lived “ without God in the world,” but have recognised the Giver of our precious gift.

‘ Can we, then, leave our peaceful ark without a sigh ? ’

Little of peace and much of discomfort was their portion in the first few stages of that primitive cross-country journey : by day, a hooded buggy with relays of fresh horses ; by night, the inevitable *palki*, or doolie—a coffin-shaped affair of wood and canvas, slung on a pole and carried at the trot by eight bearers, also arranged in relays. But the land journey, if uncomfortable, offered the welcome variants of novelty and adventure, seasoned with those minor catastrophes that are often major tests of character. Both husband and wife were naturally impatient ; she irritable, he explosive ; and Henry’s wrath boiled over when they came ashore, in blazing heat, only to find that his carefully laid plans for Honoria’s comfort had been defeated by the slackness of his native subordinates. Nor was his anger modified by her cheerful acceptance of no tents, no *palkis*, no shelter from the strong sun of early afternoon.

Local headmen, alarmed at the raging Sahib, produced one *palki* into which he settled Honoria, tired with her packing, and sad at leaving her pinnace. For himself, her sea hammock was slung on a bamboo pole with a red cotton quilt for covering. Thus they set out, and thus they travelled

from four o'clock till eight next morning, joggling along at the rate of five miles an hour over roads that were mere wheel-tracks, cut up or submerged by the last of the monsoon.

'Now truly our adventures began,' wrote irrepressible Honoria, taking 'with equal thanks' their dilemmas and delights. 'Every stage would, at home, prove "argument for a month and a good jest for ever." ! The recent storm had laid half the country under water ; but the night was clear and beautiful ; sunset, moon and stars, twilight and dawn, all of the loveliest. Only I could see too little of them from my coffin-like conveyance.'

She did not record the midnight interlude, when they were unceremoniously dumped down because the fresh set of bearers had miscalculated the stage ; nor would the others carry on, even for a mile, till coerced by the forcible language of the Sahib.

'At eight a.m. we halted in a bamboo *tope*,¹ having missed our doolie-bearers, left behind our *petarrahs*,² forgotten to put tea in the *palki*, and divers other moving accidents. But darling—' she reasoned with her troubled husband—'Why should these things ruffle us? See how comfortable we are at this moment ; the two *palkis* forming a sort of tent, with cloaks and rugs hung across from one to the other. When we can wash and get some breakfast we shall be as well off as heart could wish.'

But no *petarrahs* meant no breakfast : and the improvident pair had eaten nothing since they left the ship at teatime. A raid on the nearest village produced *chupattis*,³ eggs and milk. A brass basin and a vessel of cold water sufficed for their open-air toilet. And although they had forgotten to bring food, they had characteristically not forgotten books, paper and pens, which kept them happily occupied in their shady grove, till the sun had done his worst.

Then it was forward again, in the jolting stifling doolies, and a few miles on they overtook the missing *petarrahs*—that had been carried past the bamboo grove while they sat

¹ Grove.

² Boxes.

³ Unleavened cakes.

within it. Welcomed by a hospitable unknown planter and refreshed with tea and food, they pushed on till they met a buggy sent out for them ; and so came, at evening, to the comfortless comfort of a Government *dāk* bungalow : a roof for shelter, a string bed, a table and two hard chairs ; and best of all, a simple dinner awaiting them.

Honorina, tired but happy, found nothing to grumble at in that ramshackle rest house : ' Food and drink, *soap and water*, clean clothes, books and writing things, both body and mind provided for. Above all, we have each other . . . and I have never felt happier in my life than in that old desolate bungalow.'

But the man—still raging at the roughing she had so cheerfully endured—capped her entry in his own fashion :

' Our *dāk* trip was most disastrous ; the bearers at no single stage being ready ; most of them vile, jawing fellows. I feel that I was more like a maniac than aught else for twenty-four hours. But in you, my darling, I saw nothing except the utmost sweetness and gentleness. I have only to thank God that your starvation and sunning have not made you ill.'

Next day they were on trek again in their buggy, drawn by ' The Disparaged ' ; meeting fresh adventures by flood and field, more flood than field. Across one swollen stream they were ferried by a dozen swimmers who bore a *charpoy*¹ on their incredibly thick skulls. Each in turn was carried over thus ; and the buggy followed suit, its wheels projecting on either side of the *charpoy*. Through another tract of water they drove at the imminent risk of being overturned, Henry often obliged to wade and carry his Honorina shoulder high. Wet through, he retired behind a tree, stripped off all except his vest and flannel belt, girded his loins with her *pushmeena* shawl, and fastened her silk cloak round his shoulders. Thus attired, he drove on, without embarrassment, to the huge surprise of the natives, who had never before seen a Sahib so arrayed.

Wet, hungry and travel-weary, they came after dark to

¹ String bed.

the grove, where camp should have been ready awaiting them. Their servants round the bonfire were enjoying food and smoke. For themselves—nothing but ‘a single *charpoy* set out under the canopy of heaven.’ No sign of the tents that had been ordered from Gorakhpur; and an irate Henry must contrive some sort of resting-place for his tired but undaunted wife. An open shed under a tree was soon conjured into an impromptu shelter. Quilt and blankets did duty for curtains. The *charpoy* filled most of the space: and served as table for their belated evening meal.

‘We got a fine plump *moorghi*,’¹ wrote spirited Honoria, ‘and would have been quite comfortable in our wigwam, but for the swarms of insects that defied mosquito nets, and drove me nearly mad with their noise, their bites and their stings.

‘I was glad to be up before sunrise: and the first thing I met, on stepping out of bed, was a centipede eight inches long! It comes quite natural now to shake out my shoes before putting them on. After perfunctory ablutions, in a large brass basin under the shade of a mango tree, we took the road again—if road it could be called. . . . “Crackskull Common and Featherbed Lane” were nothing to it. . . . But on reaching our tents we forgot all our troubles. We have a *charpoy* and a table made of indigo vats. The thermometer is at 80° . . . and we are getting on delightfully. . . . Now all these vicissitudes ought to make us very uncomfortable. Yet, I have never felt happier or better than on these marches; rising before the sun, drinking our coffee and setting off in the early freshness; arriving at camp, whither the servants have gone on before; bathing accomplished in a brass basin with two *gurrahs*² of cold water; and then to breakfast with a *marrying appetite*. A rest in the heat of the day; and in the evening another march, to the shady *tope* where lights announce the camp. After all that, sleeping with such profoundness as I never remember at home. I consider this way of life is the best medicine for anyone not suffering from acute disease. Pretty little striped squirrels are scampering near the tent door; wood-pigeons are ceaselessly cooing. After dinner we sit out in brilliant

¹ Fowl.² Pitcher.

moonlight : all, within and around, making us happier than I had dreamed was possible.'

That night, after she had fallen asleep, Henry added to the day's record a few of his own characteristic remarks :

'At 11 p.m. while you are snoring like a young rhinoceros, I again take up the book to testify how good a traveller you are, how courageous by land and water, how gentle and forbearing to your cross husband. We are now in the very scenes of my labours and my solitary wanderings. To-day you saw the peepul tree under which my wee tent was pitched at Hatimpur. Yesterday you saw the site of my subterranean hut. We are now within three miles of Dhari, whence I wrote to you. So much—and indeed all around—has ever since been as familiar with your name as inanimate nature can possibly be.'

By now they were nearing the end of their cross-country journey ; her initiation into the life she had come out to share. Already she had given him a taste of her quality, her courage, resource and undaunted spirit, her flashes of irritable temper offset by her sparkling sense of humour. Of their last evening she has left an enchanting vignette of scene and atmosphere :

'Towards sunset we went out and came back through the *tope*, which lies between two tanks. The sun had just vanished ; the full moon was rising. The servants were moving among the trees, lighting their evening fires ; and our white tents gleamed among masses of dark-green foliage. Everything tranquil and beautiful.'

Next morning they were off in their buggy before six ; 'the kindling cast brighter every moment ; and in the west the silver moon hung like a lamp.' Their road lay through a belt of forest where the night air was still keen, where mimosa and *sāl*, hung with brilliant creepers, formed natural arches overhead ; the risen sun glinting through the leaves, now on a line of ambling coolies, now on a Moslem astride of his long-tailed *tat*, now on a peasant woman in dull red draperies, crowned with a pitcher or flat basket, moving like a queen. A halt for breakfast in the bungalow of a

fakir ; and by ten o'clock they had reached Gorakhpur, a fair-sized military station that was Lawrence's foothold, when office work debarred him from the more congenial life of active surveying. Hospitable strangers took them in, till their own first home should be ready for them ; and it pleased them not a little to hear everyone marvelling how they had managed to accomplish that difficult journey.



GORAKHPUR—a typical Indian station of square bungalows, square compounds and parade grounds—revealed another world to Honoria; and to Henry Lawrence another facet of his wife's personality. A lover of Nature, movement, adventure, rejoicing in books and solitude and the one chosen companion, she was confessedly out of her element in the conventional world of bungalows and club and incessant visiting, in a society mainly addicted to gossip and personalities. In most stations a few congenial spirits would emerge; but, taken all round, the ways of social Anglo-India were not her ways, nor its values her values; and of Lawrence himself much the same might be said. For they were not only of one heart but of one mind; and the very completeness of their mental unity intensified Honoria's love of camp, her distaste for the constraints of life in bungalows and cantonments.

'Worse than a country town at home,' was her justifiable verdict on Gorakhpur. One detects a touch of intolerance towards a life for which she had small aptitude; a shrewd and critical eye for character in her thumb-nail sketches of people newly met. In this quick fashion she etched her host and hostess, for Henry's eyes alone, the day after their arrival.

'You want my first impressions, dearest? Remember that I give them *subject to correction*, as people at first strike me. Dr. S. I know to be a worthy man, plain and unpretending; but he is *fidgittily* anxious to make his guests comfortable; and perpetually telling one to "feel at home," prevents one from ever doing so. Mrs. S. has the same failing, which defeats all their real kindness of its object. (Memo: When *we* have guests, let them sit on their heads or tails, eat or starve, fly or swim, without note or com-

ment ; only, as far as may be, help them in any lawful or innocent purpose.) *She* aims at something higher than the gude mon ; but keeps perpetually dropping little hints *to let on* how refined and delicate she is ; giving me to understand that she leaves everything to the servants. And if she really does so, I think her one big owl ! With the Hutchinsons I was at home in half an hour. Here I should be always a visitor. The day was not very comfortable. I felt like a prisoned bird—as if the world had laid its hand on me. I used to think while we were alone—shall I enjoy the mixed company of others again, though here I never wish for it ? And now I say, *No*. “ I’d rather be a kitten and cry, mew,” than pass my time in such superficial intercourse. I don’t mean there is no pleasure in society. No one delights more than I in meeting those who call forth the heart and the understanding, who speak what they truly feel and think. . . . But in one sense, certainly, I love not the world. The forms of society, its heavy exactions of time and attention, its barren return of ought to cherish the heart or enhance understanding, all make me feel a fish out of water. Little as a solitary life would suit me—living, as I do, on sympathy—I would rather be alone for a month than sit through a dinner-party, my head absent, where folks meet to feed like a herd of cattle.’

A woman so minded would scarcely achieve popularity with station *mem-sahibs* ; nor would the lack of it be likely to cause her any appreciable concern. But it is clear that she was always singularly attractive to men, and more often attracted by them, in no emotional sense. Possibly the ‘ firmer texture of their minds ’ was more akin to her own. Of the station itself and their changed way of life she wrote to friends at home without a trace of her natural enthusiasm.

‘ Being rather a large military station, it boasts what is called “ a good deal of society.” We underwent the usual civilities inflicted on new-comers. At each house we met the same people, heard the same things, with far more monotony than in one of our provincial towns. For here there are few public topics. English politics, four months

old, excite little interest ; the climate induces languor and makes a crowded room irksome ; so that I nearly fell asleep at several parties. The company at dinner looks English except for sallow complexions ; and the men's dress—entirely white—greatly pleases my eye. But beyond the guests one is struck by the complete circle of dark faces and white turbans ; each servant behind his master's chair. . . . After-dinner cigars are not taken in company ; but it is utterly barbarous to see the *hookah* brought in before the ladies retire. The stand, that is set on the floor, is like a candlestick, with an upper bowl for tobacco and balls of red-hot charcoal. From the lower part, filled with water, comes the snake-like tube ; the upper end wrapped in a napkin near the mouthpiece. It is strange and distasteful enough to see a young English gentleman, with the snake curled lovingly under his arm, the mouthpiece between his lips, while he breathes in the face of the lady next to him alternate puffs of smoke and compliments ! Cigars are bad enough, but the *hookah* is a public nuisance. . . .

'The station, when we were there, contained only two single ladies, spoken of as "the big spin" and the "little spin." When I heard their merits discussed, I rejoiced at not having entered the place as a "spin," and when I saw daily life in cantonments, I still more rejoiced that I was not obliged to live like the ladies there. Breakfast about ten. Soon after that, visitors begin, chiefly gentlemen, and long indeed are their visitations ! Any man who has nothing else to do bestows his tediousness upon the ladies, who seldom go out during the day. After tiffin at two or three o'clock, they retire—I suppose to sleep—till about sunset. Then they go out for their evening drive on the same dusty road, where they have driven a thousand times, meeting the same faces they have met a hundred times. When they come in there is dinner ; then coffee ; then bed. So passes day after day, till the corps, or the civilian, is removed ; and they settle down elsewhere to plod on the same eternal round.'

Of smaller civil stations—unable to boast 'a good deal of society'—a more doleful, if more amusing, vignette was then being written by that talented diarist, the Hon. Emily

Eden. At the very time when these humble Lawrences were enjoying their primitive journey by river and road, Miss Eden was travelling 'up the country' in state with her brother Lord Auckland, the new Governor-General; and the parallel journals of these two women, both new to India, are as sharply contrasted in style and matter as their mode of travelling. Miss Eden, a clever and cultivated woman of the London world, was surveying Anglo-India from the highest peak of its social pyramid. Her diaries and letters of high life in India are enlivened with sparks of wit, and her picture of an isolated civil station follows aptly on Honoria's unflattering portrait of social Gorakhpur.

'Mr. — brought up in Naples and Paris . . . is now stationed at B., and is considered very lucky to be in such a cheerful station. The whole concern consists of five bungalows—and there are three married residents. One lady has low spirits (small blame to her!) and is never seen. Another has weak eyes, and wears a shade about the size of a common verandah. The third owing to bad health, has had her head shaved: and as a *toupe* is not to be had for love or money, she wears a brown fringed cushion with a cap pinned on the top of it! The doctor and our friend complete the society. He goes every morning to hear cases between natives about strips of land or a few missing rupees. After five, he rides about an uninhabited jungle till seven; dines; reads a magazine, or a new book—if he can afford one. Then he goes to bed. A lively life, with the thermometer at several hundred!'

Far more trying was the complete isolation of many young civilians, forest or police officers: often three months on end without seeing a European or hearing an English word, and, if health gave way, haunted by fear of a lonely death, with none of their own kind to bury them. 'Never send a son to India,' was Miss Eden's conclusion of the matter. Yet England ceased not from sending her sons to India, endure what they might; nor would men of British breed ever be deterred, by threat of exile, hardship or danger, from that most difficult yet rewarding service.

But in October 'Thirty-Seven, Lawrence's whole mind was bent upon the task of surveying a district one-sixth as large as Scotland.

By the 18th, their bungalow was ready to receive them;

and three days later they entered into possession of their very first house—'For good—for good, I trust, my beloved,' was the cry of Honoria's heart. In view of their many homes-to-be, their frequent joltings from pillar to post, that confident hope had a lurking pathos of which she was happily unaware. Yet, in less than two weeks, with what delight she was once more burrowing in *kiltas* and *petarrahs*, eager to escape from 'the distasteful society of cantonments'; to prove her own fitness for the arduous rôle of a surveyor's wife. She had married a man whose work was his life; and, with all the natural delight of a bride, she fitted herself to understand and share it. If she could help it, she would; if not, she could sit by and sympathise. There would always be a chair beside him, and her own occupations—"the English enjoyment," as Rousseau calls it, "of sitting silent in the same room."

On the appointed morning, long before dawn, they were up, and away to the work and the wilds they loved; Honoria forsaking the new home without a pang. The ecstatic note, quenched by Gorakhpur, returned to her journal: 'Every mile we advanced into the jungle, I felt my spirits rise. All annoyances vanished; my mind regained that tranquil elasticity which "in the crowd and bustle of resort" is much impaired.' No longer a fish out of water, she mentally shook off the trammels of station life, as a dog, having swum ashore, shakes the water from his coat.

And her entry on November 2nd carried her back to those autumn weeks at Lynton—another life, another Honoria: 'Can this day pass un-noted, dearest? This day, on which I had the assurance of your unchanged love. For one year, from to-day, I have considered myself your wife. And since I knew that I might centre all my thoughts on you, I do not think you have been one hour absent from them.'

Being what she was, that simple statement probably came nearer the truth than most lovers' language in the same vein. Tried by the severest of all tests—the test of long waiting and not knowing—she had entered at last into

HONORIA LAWRENCE

her kingdom. Now she was about to enter his kingdom ; to bear her privileged part in his work, his roughings and dangers, with as much devotion, intelligence and courage as ever woman brought to that high and difficult calling.



THEY were now to traverse many hundred miles of the Gorakhpur district, a large tract of land stretching southward from the independent kingdoms of Oudh and Rohilkund towards the famous belt of tiger jungle known as the Terai. Here, from November to March, they were to enjoy the peculiar freedom of camp life, of companionship in work and leisure, untrammelled by the cares of parenthood, that came over soon, to tax her strength and to impose on both the pain of frequent separation. It was perhaps the most entirely happy time they were ever to know. For these two were happier in their marriage than in their lives. Here Honoria was to see for herself the magnitude of Henry's task ; to learn the meaning of work at high pressure for this fiery Ulsterman, whose lean frame seemed consumed by the spirit within, whose thick waved hair was already retreating from the fine forehead ; whose grey eyes, under projecting brows, looked *into* men rather than at them.

He had guaranteed, with his establishment, to assess and survey that vast region at the rate of three thousand miles in the year ; and what Henry Lawrence guaranteed, he would achieve, in the teeth of all hindrances. And over every step of his three thousand miles Honoria would ride or drive or foot it beside him ; in no spirit of wifely duty, but for sheer joy in his companionship and the open-air life, and health renewed.

Having achieved a clear grasp of his work, his aims and method, she could enter into it all ; more especially into his zeal for bettering the conditions of a people cruelly oppressed by petty rulers and landowners of their own kind. For the Indian Government—being, in effect, 'landlord' of the soil—drew the bulk of its revenue from a form of rental

on the land, mainly gathered by local landowners, and paid in gross to the Collector of each district : an arrangement that gave ample scope for oppression and swindling. Witness the official record of a certain small Rajah, who yearly sent in a list of twenty-six non-existent villages, and obtained for them a revenue settlement, sanctioned by a hoodwinked Government, lamentably ignorant of the country it had taken in hand. That ignorance it was the surveyor's business to dispel : and no more congenial task could have been laid upon Henry Lawrence than this valuable work of enlightening Government and easing the burdens of a tax-ridden people.

More : it offered a unique chance for making friends with the most stable element in the land—the so-called 'silent millions.' He measured their fields, assessed their crops and considered their best interests. The young men brought him their quarrels to settle, the old men told him of their grievances—the corruption of their own countrymen in office, the blindness of the white Sahib. From his own experience he proved the truth of Sir Charles Metcalfe's tribute to the permanence and value of the village system in a passage as applicable to-day as when it was written more than a hundred years ago. Those little self-supporting republics seem to last, where nothing else lasts. Dynasty after dynasty falls ; revolution succeeds revolution—but the village communities remain. In times of trouble they fortify themselves ; and let the enemy pass unprovoked. In times of devastation, they flee to friendly villages ; and afterwards return to their own soil. Though a generation may pass away, the next will come back.

'This union of their village communities has contributed more than any other cause to the preservation of the people of India through all changes. It is in a high degree conducive to their happiness . . . their independence. I wish therefore the village systems may never be disturbed. I dread everything that has a tendency to break them up.'¹

That wish and that dread have been since shared by

¹ Metcalfe.

every Englishman who has lived and worked close to the people ; by none more earnestly than by Henry Lawrence.

Those years in the Revenue Survey gave him the freedom his originality needed ; the command of a big establishment that must work as hard as he did, along his own lines. They went far to shape his future civil and political administration. And among his immediate seniors were some of his best friends ; few among them more intimate and congenial than Edward Reade of the Civil Service. It was a friendship dating from bachelor years, when Reade would rally him on his unmethodical ways, would supply dinner from his own kitchen, for guests whom Lawrence had invited and completely forgotten. The two had a fanciful belief in the linking of their destinies that brought them together—‘for a bump and a jaw-basting’—whenever any good change for Lawrence was in the air : a fancy curiously confirmed by events. Bump the First, in China, had led him to the Irish Survey and Honoria Marshall. Bump No. 2 led to the Interpretership and the Indian Survey. Bump No. 3 to Gorakhpur and a life-long association between them. Bumps Nos. 4 and 5, no less fateful, had yet to come about.

And Reade, like all his friends, found no barrier to old comradeship in the new wife, as often happens when marriage changes a man's orientation. Honoria, the critical and unsociable, was a born comrade of men. She accepted Henry's friends as part of himself ; and they accepted her in the same spirit, finding in her a helpmate worthy of her remarkable husband. It was Major James Abbott—one of his later Political Assistants—who wrote of her :

‘In her enthusiastic love for him she had come to bless, she found delight in the solitary tent, in half-furnished comfortless bungalows, in wandering through jungles or dreary tracts of cultivated land. Nothing was without interest in her eyes . . . and it was easy to see that Harry Lawrence had found the being best calculated to make him happy.’

The happiness she herself found in the process is revealed in every letter, every page of her journal. See her writing one November afternoon :

‘Here we sit, darling, beneath a spreading tree at our

tent door ; our flocks and herds around us, our people scattered through the *tope*,¹ the horses picketed near. And very happy are we in the knowledge of our blessings. . . Yesterday while you surveyed, I sat in the mango *tope*—and enjoyed my solitude. Next to having you, the best is—to be alone. After sunset we joined up, and cantered home by moonlight. I cannot imagine a more delightful or a happier life. My joy is that you take me with you whenever it is possible, allowing me to share all you do, all that you think of.’

And since they still kept up their quaint written conversation here is his tribute to her, after an arduous day’s outing :

‘ Our resting-place is on the banks of the Poyna Tul ; and here we are, perhaps the first pair of human beings, certainly of Europeans, who have ever trod these wilds ; but the sublimity of our day’s prospect will have been dearly earned if you are the worse for your trip. You are certainly a most excellent surveyor’s wife ; but had your husband been in the greengrocery line, I am sure you would have been equally good and sweet. You would have found sunshine in the bloom on raisins and Smyrna figs ! ’

Next day followed her reply :

‘ Yes, love, I think I could have adapted myself to any condition, with a loved and *loving* husband. But no way of life could fall in with my own taste better than this. . . . Among the hardly-defined fears I had, was one that I should not suffice to you. As far as I had seen, men always required something more than mere married companionship ; and when I knew we should be thrown wholly on one another, I doubted whether it was in man not to be hankering after some novelty. Therefore you may judge my happiness when I find you, day after day, contented with *but me*. ’

These were their private ecstasies—the reality of their union and of their simple religious faith. Of his work and her own increasing delight in the ever-changing scene, she wrote copiously to friends at home.

November was brilliant and rainless ; the Indian winter

¹ Grove.

at its unapproachable best : and on December 1st she was writing :

'What a first of December ! I can hardly believe this to be the very time when I was making my way, half benumbed, through the wet, cold and mists of England and Ireland !

'The cold weather is now set in, nor can there be a climate more delightful. There is seldom any wind, and for months no rain ; the mornings and evenings delightfully fresh and cool. I cannot expect people in general to feel as I do towards India, where I have found so much health and happiness ; but it is the land of lands for domestic enjoyment. A lady who shrinks from driving over rough and smooth, riding through a jungle, or crossing a piece of water on the back of an elephant has no business in Camp. One who cares much about visiting and parties, is out of place here in the Mofussil. One who minds living on mutton and fowls for six months in the year, had better not marry a surveyor. Our life in camp teaches us how many "indispensables" we can do without. This lesson once learned, a woman who is happily married and has tolerable health, may here find—as an old German friend used to say—"de hefen of de world. You shall 'stonish to see how happy it is." She and her husband are all and all to each other. There is an exclusive companionship between people so situated, such as the most affectionate couple in civilised life cannot enjoy. And here there is perfect freedom from all scandal and censure, all the deteriorating gossip, which one despises, yet is led to join in. There is perpetual change of air and scene, opportunity for self-improvement, and a general freedom from care, more like birds of the air than human beings. If we have a chance guest, "Pitch a small tent and grill another fowl," are the only directions needed.'

So vividly she brings the scenes to life—with her eye for detail, her apt metaphors and alert sense of humour—that one is there with them, in the dense jungle or under the 'spreading tree,' where Lawrence received his deputations from heads of villages or Rajahs of small states ; she sitting close by, hearing, observing all.

'Henry is head of a party,' she wrote to Mary Cameron,

'with three gentlemen assistants, a dozen clerks and hundreds of natives for measuring, writing, carrying chains, etc. The establishment is divided into several camps; and as the work is completed, we move on from point to point of the district. In this way we see more of the country and people than can ever be known to dwellers in bungalows; and I willingly accept the inconveniences of a wandering life for the sake of its pleasures. . . . I fancy our doings often astonish the people; none more so than that the *Bibi Sahib*¹ should accompany her master everywhere.

'You would be amused to see the troop of daily visitors to our tent: solemn elders of the village, turbaned and belted, conversing in set form; while Henry sits without coat or waistcoat, his legs over the arms of his "sleeve" chair and rattles away. . . . Then there is the *Munshi*, with a reed pen behind his ear, and the Babu coming to show what he has written—the drollest little creature; very old and thin, his skin shrivelled up, looking altogether like a burnt rag that you could blow away. He is a complete copying machine—and very irate if his work is found fault with. "Sir, you are my sucking father. One two things I do. No mistake *can* make."

'As a rule we rise early—sometimes he is up writing at three or four—have coffee and go out riding before we bathe and dress for breakfast. Then "shop" and work all day till four, when we drive or ride, or visit a station. Or we go to a village where Henry talks to the people and picks up all kinds of information. . . .

'To give you some idea of the way we travel in a country without roads or bridges, or inns, you shall have the "unvarnished tale" of our last trip to cantonments. It was only twelve or fourteen miles, but we travelled twice the distance. From our jungle camp we set out before daylight on an elephant; a very slow conveyance, but it carries us over ground that would puzzle a horse. On this huge creature we passed through the belt of forest; then mounted our *tats*² and cantered across country till we reached a wide piece of water. A canoe, scooped from a tree-trunk, conveyed us to the far side, where another elephant waited to joggle us through a second belt of forest. By that time the sun was well up; and at a branch camp we spent the

¹ Wife.² Ponies.

hot hours of the day. In the evening we again mounted an elephant, which carried us through the wilds to the edge of cantonments, where roads are good, and we could drive comfortably along to the station. If I dared to hope that this account would be extant fifty years hence, I might be amused at the contrast it would offer to the latest mode of travelling in India. Perhaps there may, then, be a mail coach across the very district we had such difficulty in traversing.'

More probably, in '87, there was a prosaic train, to Gorakhpur. But Honoria Lawrence, untroubled by coming events, journeyed on through pampas jungle and forest and river; often riding and driving as much as fifty or sixty miles a day; 'not over macadamised roads, but "over bush, over brier, through mud, through mire"; not in a cushioned carriage, but on horseback or in a dog-cart'; while Miss Eden, travelling north in her carriage-and-four, was elated at the discovery that she could actually 'walk a mile and a half without dropping down dead!'

Mid-December found them in the depths of the dreaded Terai: abode of tigers and elephants, bears, panthers, hogs and snakes—the veritable jungle of lurid Indian tales, bordering the foothills of Nepal. In that untrodden region, line-cutters must go before, opening up a single file track through the tall reedy grass, for their many-coloured train of native surveyors and servants; at one end the little red and white flag fluttering from a bamboo pole; at the other end Lawrence, working his theodolite, in shooting-coat and shorts, an attendant holding over him a large umbrella. With him rode Honoria in her cloth habit body, nankeen skirt and fur boots against the cold of the morning. All day they would see no trace of any other human creature. Probably none had ever penetrated these wilds, till the line-cutters carved a way for the Sahib who-must-be-obeyed, and his adventurous '*Mem.*'

To their camp that evening came a note from a junior surveyor, reporting the need for watch fires to keep off tigers. Honoria, herself, had noticed unmistakable pug-

marks near a nullah on the march ; yet she felt no fear of the dread intruder. ' It is very strange,' was her comment, ' how little formidable danger seems when you are close to it.'

Next morning Lawrence went off at sunrise, to finish some lines before joining his assistant, Saunders Abbott ; and Honoria, left alone in their dismantled camp, beguiled the time with a letter that brings the whole scene to life.

' I am sitting in our wee hill tent, our chattels all packed, except two chairs, and a gun case, the table where breakfast is laid, and the fireplace—a delightful bit of furniture ; the grate set on legs with a stove-like chimney. . . . Imagine us pitched at one side of a large pond, where men are standing up to the waist in water, splashing themselves and washing the clothes that they will soon gird round them—undried. In some marshy ground, close by, the elephant and his *mahout* are amusing themselves ; and under a straw mat, set on four sticks, our servants are preparing breakfast, smoking *hookahs*, packing up. . . .

' That evening we rode farther into the forest—a fit haunt for beasts of prey ; yet was its utter solitude unspeakably delightful. Lighted on our way by a brilliant moon, the only sounds we heard were the voices of our followers shouting to each other.'

The meeting with Abbott may best be told by himself, since his tribute to Honoria Lawrence completes the picture.

' We met,' he wrote, ' in a tract of dense jungle, with belts of forest trees, the dews heavy as rain. Tigers and wild elephants gave unmistakable signs of their presence. And, to my utter surprise, I found Mrs. Lawrence with him. She was seated on the bank of a nullah, her feet overhanging the den of some wild animal, a portfolio on her lap, writing overland letters ; her husband, at no great distance, laying his theodolite.

' In such roughings this admirable wife delighted to share ; and at other times she would lighten his labour by reading books he wished to consult, or making notes and extracts for his literary work. She was one in a thousand. A woman, highly gifted in mind, of a most cheerful disposition, she fell into his ways of unbounded hospitality with no attempt at luxury or refinement. She would share with him the wretched " Castles " (little better than cowsheds) in the highland districts, where she would be happiest of the happy. Or we would find

them sharing a tent, some twelve feet square ; a shawl hung up to separate their bed and dressing room from the hospitable breakfast-table : she and he both in their glory. No man ever devoted himself so entirely to what he considered his duty . . . and none ever had a better helpmate than he had in his wife—'

Henry Lawrence would unquestionably have said ' Amen ' to that.

And now the year's end—bringing Christmas, her own birthday—completed four months of married happiness beyond all that she could ask or think. It was a season at which her mind was apt to be turned inward ; and on the 28th she was writing to her ' own dear Mary ' the thoughts of her heart on a theme that deeply concerned them both—the life of the spirit, the helps and hindrances to its progress in a benighted ' heathen land ' :

' I certainly miss very much the outward observances of religion : but with these are left behind much of the wood, hay and stubble that deface piety where it is professed by the many. . . . Here there is nothing to be gained or lost by religion . . . No temptation to profess more than we feel. But, in these wilds, the Bible appears to me, more than ever before, *the Book*. Here our motives are tested. . . . Take the many at home who suspend all business on Sunday, attend public worship . . . and frequently talk of religion ; isolate each one, or each family, in a heathen land, where only the almanac reminds you of Sunday—and see how much of practical piety will remain. . . . Here, we draw strength directly from on high ; we are not beset by party spirit, religious gossip, and the thousand drawbacks which make one feel that the religious world is still a *world*. We can enjoy more of the simplicity of religion, the seeking of the soul for spiritual help ; and those who genuinely serve God here must find the truth of Christ's words—" the Kingdom of God is within you "—'

In a period of sectarian antagonism rampant there was much virtue in a life apart from the not entirely ' sweet influence ' of official religion.

' Nothing like a heathen land,' wrote Herbert Edwardes, ' for drawing Christians together. Differences about bishops

look very small under the shadow of an idol with twelve heads.'

More and more, life in India brought home that truth to Honoria Lawrence, though her own evangelical sect was as rigid and exclusive as any of its kind.

On the last days of that eventful year she wrote in her personal diary :

'I love to mark these stated times, "*les bouts des ans*," recurring like a voice from Heaven, calling on us to consider our ways. . . . I never felt so strongly the need for drawing near to God as I do now ; for truly unless the inner flame be fed from above, it must die. There is nothing in our fellow men here to nourish it. . . .

'Yesterday we set off at sunrise and drove to the edge of the forest. Thence you went on to Kugooria, and I turned back, being afraid to go any farther. 'Tis a new thing for me to feel thus afraid. How is it to end ? I said, "I have hardly a wish on the subject" ; but that is not the truth : rather, my wishes on both sides are so strong as to balance one another. Thanks be to God the decision rests not with us. You returned at sunset. Oh ! how pleasant was it to watch for your coming and feel brighter when you came.'

That first intimation of the inevitable third, could not but stir very mingled feelings in a wife whose ideal of marriage was expressed in her own earlier phrase : 'My joy is that you take me with you wherever it is possible,' who dreaded separation above all things, even for a day.

And here is her final entry :

December 31st, 1837.

The last day of a year that has brought us almost unmingled good. We have gone over each month together, tracing our several paths till they merged into one. But can we so easily retrace the responsibilities we have incurred ? . . . My heart fails me when I look back and see my own shortcomings. 'Faint yet pursuing,' is all I can venture to say of myself. How many times have I resolved to command my temper, to restrain my tongue ; and where is the improvement ? My husband, *my life*, we surely of all people are called on to manifest our thankfulness. Let us, this next

WIFE AND MOTHER

year, not content ourselves with vague purposes of amendment ; but set before ourselves certain definite habits to be either checked or acquired.

H.M.L. December 31st.

If we can, dearest, I have more difficulties to get over than perhaps you imagine ; but I will try ; and may our endeavours be blessed.

1st January, 1838.

Many happy New Years to my darling. *H.M.L.*
And to you, dearest, dearest Harry. *H.L.*



EARLY in January, they were packing up for no mere march, but for a major 'flitting' from the fully surveyed Gorakhpur district, to the more important region south of the river Jumna. Northward they trekked to Allahabad, on the river route from Calcutta to the Punjab ; passing from a land of luxuriant forests and abundant water into the sandy desert and sun-parched plains of the arid north-west. And now, more definitely the prospect of the coming child casting its mingled light and shadow on Honoria's heart.

'This year seems likely to bring an important change in our lives, and I rejoice with trembling at the prospect. . . . When I think of its being your child, the happiness seems too great. But then—there are many drawbacks ; the greatest of these, that I cannot continue your constant companion, nor go with you everywhere. Also the inconveniences of a child in camp life ; and above all my own inability for so awful a charge. If I had the choice, I could not venture to decide on possessing such a gift—but that is appointed by a Power beyond our own.'

During this journey, and for months after, she suffered her fill of drawbacks to the promise of motherhood that had come too soon for so companionable a pair. Almost every march, now, he must ride ahead alone, or with Saunders Abbott. She must follow after, like an item of baggage, in the stuffy 'jumbling doolie.' On the 18th they reached Barah, near Allahabad, where Jumna and Ganges flow together : a place of peculiar sanctity that drew streams of pilgrims from all over India.

'The zeal of these idolaters is a reproach to us,' was Honoria's characteristic comment. But the wonder of the scene checked her moralising tendency ; 'the flat sandy

beach crowded with men and boats ; the river winding out of sight. Opposite us the old Fort rose abruptly, facing both rivers, very impressive ; and away from it ranged a panorama of trees, temples and houses. Mussulmans, with long beards and showy dresses, galloped over the sand ; and there came a trail of reluctant camels, being led towards a great boat ; the driver holding a long string with a hook at one end fixed into the camel's nose. But in vain he pulled ; in vain people behind beat the poor creatures with sticks. They planted their long legs far apart ; curved their necks, pulled back their noses and yelled most pitifully. At last they had to yield with a very bad grace. Poor things !—But if I stopped to describe all that we saw, I should never get across the Ganges—which at last we did ; and entered the city of Allahabad.'

Here they were housed by Robert Montgomery, an old schoolfellow, now married. But after four days' rest they were off again—horse and doolie, elephant, buggy, and followers without number. Honoria asked nothing better, though her comradely spirit was hampered by the constraints laid on her during these last few months of independent jungle work. Henry wanted her with him : she was never happy away from him. So inevitably, being human, there were times when she overtaxed her tiresome body to the detriment of her own health and that of the coming child.

On February the 11th, she was cheered by a letter from Mary Cameron—only three months old. And she sat down to answer it, while the sense of contact was fresh upon her.

Camp near Allahabad. Feb. 11, 1838.

Our march of less than two hundred miles occupied nine days. You ask me if I travel much ? I may reply, we do nothing but travel, being very seldom a fortnight in one place. Hitherto I have accompanied Henry everywhere ; and it is a great happiness that his work does not take him from me. We sit usually in the same tent, following our own occupations. . . .

You bid me describe him. I will try. He is thirty-one, but looks older ; is rather tall, very thin and sallow. Brown hair, waxing scanty now ; high forehead, projecting eye-

brows and sunken eyes. Very active in his habits, but very unmethodical. As to dress and externals, perfectly careless. He would walk out with a piece of carpet round his shoulders instead of a coat ; and would invite people to dinner on a cold shoulder of mutton as readily as to a feast. There now, you have an impartial description of my lord and master. From his feelings towards those I love, you may infer his tenderness to me. But I never can feel—as you say—that I have earned these blessings. . . .

She had still much to tell of the pleasures and penalties and humours of their venturesome life. First she must describe their tent : a ‘double fly’ ; one tent within another, leaving a space between for coolness ; the inner fly lined with a gay chintz ; the straw-covered ground overlaid with a *dhurri*¹ and rugs ; doors with canvas curtains, to roll up or let down, and ‘chicks’ to keep out insects. The main room was divided by a screen ; half living-room, half bedroom with a ‘mouse hole’ for Honoria. . . . The detached bathroom was an airy enclosure, its canvas walls neither reaching the earth below, nor the roof above ; so that bathers had their fill of fresh air on windy or frosty mornings. The only admitted drawback was lack of light ; but in those rainless months they lived mainly under a tree ; and she took to camp life as a duck to water—unlike her foil and counterpart, Emily Eden, who humorously bewailed to her sister the cold weather infliction of tents without end.

‘You know I never could quite understand the Psalms ; but I do see now what David means when he says, “Woe is me that I am constrained to dwell with Mesheck and to have my habitation in the tents of Kedar.” Mesheck I should have no objection to dwell with in a good house of his own. But the tents of Kedar are decidedly objectionable and woe-is-me-ish !’

No hint of ‘woe-is-me’ in Honoria’s tale of her initiation into camp life.

‘If only I could draw,’ she wrote to a friend at home, ‘you should have a series of pictures illustrating buggy-*dāk* travelling in India. The roads, except near stations, are

¹ Indian rug.

often more like ditches ; and the best are mere wheel-tracks, needing a good light to discern them. One kind of a highway the natives call a "*bund*." Imagine a wide plain, well below land level ; and across it an unrailed causeway, two to eight feet high, barely wide enough for the buggy wheels. Such are the roads we travel ; and country horses are often very bad tempered.

' Now you must fancy us setting out from camp.

' There is the mango *tope*. There are our tents ; the *bunnias* sitting in a row, each with a basket of grain, a pair of scales, a sheaf of pice and *cowries*.¹ It is evening : and the surveying parties, as they come in, go to the *bunnias* for their supper. . . .

' In the foreground imagine Henry and me in the buggy, backs and feet adjusted, ready for any shock. Now we are to set off. But no—Bison Tail will not stir. Two or three men come behind and push, others try to turn the wheels. Another slings a rope and tries to pull the horse's leg forward. But even on three legs, he still holds his ground. Eight men cannot make him move an inch. At last he rears up erect—and finally ends by lying down !

' After half an hour of this behaviour he condescends to trot briskly along. . . . We come to a *bund*, where he takes advantage of the situation, and again will not stir. Lest he upset the cart we get out in self-defence : Henry and I walking across, followed by a man leading Bison Tail and four men pulling the buggy ; the magnates of the village coming out to meet us, gravely salaaming and doing the polite.

' Another picture might illustrate what happened lately at Gorakhpur to one of our party. It was getting dark, and he dismounted to hunt for the track, tying his horse to a tree. The animal managed to get loose and cantered off. Useless to try and find him. So Mr. P. climbed up the nearest tree for safety ; and there he spent a miserable night. Next morning, daylight revealed the vanished horse quietly grazing under that very tree !'

Of the droll little babu—'like a burnt rag'—she had an amusing tale to tell :

' Under our Government we have a double arrangement, quite beyond my understanding.

¹ Halfpennies.

'For almost every appointment there is not only the officer, but one who, at need, acts for him: the judge and the "acting judge, the Collector and "acting" Collector, etc. So our little babu naturally thought every one of our titles must possess an "acting" title. The other day, when I asked his age, he replied: "Fifty-six years I have lived. Four more years, I shall die."

' "But why so, Babu?"

'He held out his hand to show the line of life, which only reached sixty.

'Then Henry said: "Look at my hand—what do you read there?"

'Of course he read, "Long life and wealth. Very rich will be. Resident Sahib will be."

' "Only Resident? Not a Lord."

'The babu grinned. "Acting Lord will be, sir—acting Lord!"

And the little man's prophecy, though treated as a joke, chanced to contain two seeds of truth. Lawrence was destined to be Resident in three provinces; and although it was John who eventually returned to India as Viceroy, there fell to Henry's share, just before his death, a prospective honour of which he never knew: a unanimous resolution passed by the Directors of the East India Company, appointing 'Colonel Sir Henry Lawrence to succeed, provisionally, to the office of Governor-General, upon the death, resignation or coming away of Viscount Canning, pending the arrival of a successor from England.' Thus, had he lived through the siege of Lucknow, he might have been created in effect, 'acting Lord': so the little babu's nimble invention was not far out after all.

Then she must try to dispel the confused English ideas as to the Oriental luxury of life in India.

'It is difficult to describe in detail all that makes life here so different to life at home: the very early hours, the total confinement to the house, for most of the day in the hot weather. And oh, we have here no such thing as a delightful rambling walk, no visiting the poor, no going out alone unquestioned. Our Indian luxuries—so called—are mostly mere precautions against the climate, or the result of native

customs, which prevent a man doing any work but his own : hence the army of servants. You would be amused to hear me of an evening when we come in from our drive.

‘ I say, “ Syce, tell them to bring soda water.” ’

‘ He calls out to the bearer, “ Oh, Sirdar-ji, soda-water for the Mem-sahib.” ’

‘ “ Very well,” says the bearer, and shouts to the *khan-samah* : “ Oh, *Khansamah-ji*, soda water quickly for the lady.” The other answers : “ It is brought.” But not by him ! ’

‘ All this “ luxury ” is not half so comfortable as the ministrations of one good English servant.’

By mid-February, most of the jungle trees were in flower ; new beauties to atone for increasing heat ; and it cheered her spirit to be back in camp, for all her hampering disabilities. Never again quite the same ‘ bird of the air ’ freedom of body or mind. No longer now could Henry take her with him everywhere ; and February the 19th brought her the first experience of being left behind. .

‘ This first evening without you,’ she wrote, ‘ is very *very* lonesome, though I have busied myself all I can. It would be silly and wrong to make a grief of it, but it is a great discomfort, *I am happy* to say. Yes, darling—much happier to bemoan your absence than be indifferent to it. . . . Not until you *are* absent do I fully know how your presence is the very life-breath of my heart.’

But she was not yet wholly denied the thrill of adventurous journeys.

Their march to a *dāk* bungalow near the foothills was venturesome enough, though she travelled in the hated doolie.

At half-past three of the morning they set out—Lawrence and his assistant on horseback, the doolie joggling after.

‘ Before we had gone two miles,’ she wrote, ‘ my bearers managed to lose the rest of the party ; so I came quite alone through the mountain pass between our camp and Kurrāon. We kept, at first, close under a line of hills which, in parts, were on fire. Very beautiful was the rushing blaze, as it

seized on patch after patch of dry jungle, now like a fiery serpent twisting along the hillside ; now curving and breaking into masses of leaping flame. For days we had been hearing of tigers and leopards infesting this region ; and I knew very well that if any danger did appear, the bearers would set me down at once, and run away. But happily we escaped any such peril, and emerged from the pass about 8 a.m., nearly five hours after leaving camp. There I had the delight of seeing Henry, who had been looking out for me most anxiously ; and another hour brought us to this bungalow.'

In that stray rest-house Lawrence was obliged to leave her till next morning, while he pushed on with his Assistant ; and to her a bungalow never had the home-like charm of a tent. Again she wrote in her journal : ' Oh, my Henry, how *very* lonesome the poor bird is without its mate ! . . . Indeed, dearest, for anything less precious than we expect, I should be most discontented at these partings. I never felt *more* lone than here—far worse than in camp.'

But with his return next morning—' bringing sunshine and calm '—her barometer was once more at ' set fair.' . . .

With the advent of April came the threat of approaching hot weather : and she cheerfully accepted the strange device of burrowing underground to escape the worst : a device described in detail for those at home.

' Here we are in a new sort of dwelling. When the hot winds blew we had the thermometer in our tent at 95°. At Home we *talk* of 95° with no more idea of what it means than when we say the sun is 95 million miles away. So—in the thickest shade, a hole is dug, four feet deep by twenty feet square ; the earth thrown up to form walls six feet high, with four door-openings. East and South are glass doors ; North and West are thick mats of fragrant grass kept constantly wet ; and, the stronger the wind, the cooler our breezes. . . . How hot it looks outside ! The air darkened with dust. Dead mango leaves whirled by the blast. But inside you will seldom find the thermometer above 80°. You will even forget to look at it ; sure sign of a pleasant temperature. For whenever we feel uncomfortable we look

at the thermometer, just as we look at our watches when time hangs tedious.'

Ten happy days they spent in their underground hut ; and on the 12th he took her back to Allahabad, where she stayed two weeks alone with Mrs. Montgomery. 'A blank in the journal : a blank indeed ! But we would both rather feel uncomfortable when parted . . . and your "angel visits" have relieved the time.'

On the 1st of May he settled her into a house at Pampamão, on the edge of the station, where she must remain—cheered by his 'angel visits'—till their child was born. There was no thought, in those sterner times, of a flight to the hills ; no means of travel that she could have borne without risk, nor money to defray the cost. In his own words, 'We are poor, more than poor. Not one shilling beyond our income. But our wants are few ; and we receive three times more than we spend.' For her, in any case, the long separation would have been an ordeal far worse than the four blazing months ahead, with a first child arriving in August.

On the 3rd he left her, perforce, to settle in alone ; having promptly offered to house another pair in difficulties ; a generous impulse that might have irked many women in her condition, with her taste for solitude. Instead, she recorded her full approval : 'I feel very glad that the first use we have made of our house is to welcome one who needs friends. May God's blessing rest on us ; especially on you for your generous kindness to these poor people.'

She enlarged more fully on the theme in a long letter to the beloved Letitia, begun on her first day alone and kept up at intervals throughout the month.

Pampamão. Allahabad, May 3rd, 1838.

Here I am alone, though anything but '*in my glory*.' Having this day made my first essay in housekeeping, I am somewhat weary ; but it will refresh me to hold a little conversation with my dearest sister.

Last night Henry brought me here from the Montgomerys, with whom I have been staying. The weather is *hot* ! Oh, you cannot imagine the heat ! When one lies

down at night, the very sheets feel roasting. A stream of hot wind blows from the West between sunrise and sunset ; and at night the breathless stillness is even worse. During the day, by having wetted *tatties*, the air of the room is cooled ; but at night there is only the punkah. The perpetual call to the servants is—' Throw water,' ' Pull the punkah,' ' Bring iced water.'

' During the night I expect a guest ; a broken-down surveyor whom Henry is trying to re-establish—I fear with little prospect of success. But our darling has a spring of action, for the good of others, that defies disappointment. Mr. P. is a careless extravagant man ; but his wife is a nice little woman, in great distress, having just lost her only child. So we have asked them to spend six months with us ; Henry giving him work, and I hope to give her some little comfort.

Dearest Lettice, when I think of the being to whom I am joined, I wonder where such an one came from ; and I delight in analysing the heart laid open to me. I never saw one who had so right an estimate of the true use of money. He is literally but a steward of his own income, for the good of others. And he has an even higher generosity. He never blames others for faults he is himself not free from. You know his perfect transparency of character. I suppose since he was born it never entered his head to do anything for effect ; and his manner is the same to all ranks of people. . . . No one sees his imperfections more clearly than I do, so I don't judge blindly ; nor do I hesitate to tell him when I think he is wrong. But his faults may be summed up in very few words. He lacks method ; he is occasionally hasty ; and he is too careless of appearances. But if you were to see how his temper is tried by the nature of his work, you would not wonder at its giving way. And this fault is clearly mending. . . . His unprofessing simplicity of conduct often checks my wordy tendency ; and makes me weigh the value of my feelings before I utter them.

May 5th. Can you fancy me, dearest Lettice, seated in my own house, which being now put in order, is very comfortable. On the table before me Charlotte's blue work-basket ; and in it a dear wee cap, of which I have been sewing on the border. The only *but* is Henry's absence ; but I hope this divorcing will soon be over ; and when he comes what shall I want that heart could wish ?

May 19th. He is *come back*. And I am now as happy

as I was lonely without him ! Here we sit : I am in the drawing-room and he is in the next room ; but there are three large doors open between us, so that I wear and see him. He is seated at one side of a long table, and the skylight overhead shows that he is looking very well. At the same table sits the Deputy Collector ; a bandit-looking Mussulman, with a long nose, grey beard, gold tissue turban, and white apparel. Behind Henry stands his Persian writer, a tall, intelligent, saucy-looking man, with a pen behind his ear and an inkstand stuck in his girdle. The table is surrounded by Ameens—men who measure fields and bring in reports. A circle of white turbans, black faces and muslin garments !

(Parenthesis by Henry : ‘Dearest Lettice, I merely take up the pen to say we are very happy, and we thank you daily for having made us so.’)

‘*May 25th.* You will half quarrel with Harry’s marriage if he devolves all the writing on me, instead of sending you his own delightful, queer-shaped, illegible letters. But in truth his hands are full of work, brimming over just at this time.’

By the middle of May she had him home for good, his regular camp work being in abeyance during the worst hot-weather months. Her health had improved, she was busy learning her new lesson of housekeeping. But as usual, under the surface, lurked the intermittent fears of her imaginative mind.

‘My thoughts dwell much on our new hopes. The prospect mingles with every anticipation. The least illness frightens me, and makes me feel how far I fall short of dependence on God. Daily I ask myself—am I prepared to give up my hopes, if He so wills ? Nature shrinks from the answer.’

Such thoughts—keeping her wakeful one sultry, lone May night—drove her to seek the relief of expressing them in the form of an ‘unposted letter,’ as moving and revealing as any she ever wrote.

May 31st, 1838. 1 a.m.

I cannot sleep, and have risen to try if occupation will

quiet my mind. The close of the month brings to me most forcibly the thought that I may have but three months more to remain with my Henry. . . . Yes, I can calmly write these words ; for I believe our separation would be transient, and our union eternal.

A point on which I desire to leave my opinion, is that of your marrying again. That you should do so is my fervent hope ; and if an angel could at this moment tell me the hour of my death, and point out the one who was to succeed me, that one would now be loved only next to yourself ; *provided* I was assured of her will and power to make you happy. . . . And if the departed can observe what passes here, my object would be to minister to you both, to show her how she might best be your wife in deed and truth.

Oh, my husband, how can I *bear* to think of leaving you ! And while I feel that my time may be at hand, I cannot bear to embitter the present by telling you my feelings. This, however it may end, is an hour of darkness. But let me dwell rather on the love which, ever since we married, and especially for the last three months, has made life lovely. Let me charge you, if I am taken, not to repine ungratefully, but to seek for the lesson God means to convey. I do not say remember me—you cannot forget me ; but think of me as one lent, and withdrawn to be restored eternally. I dare not pray for my own life ; I know not whether it is best for me to live or die. But I would lay down my life for *you* ; and if I am not to survive, I shall feel it is for your good to be left without me. My prayer is for composure and resignation for us both, that we may comfort one another——

Whether—or when—her husband ever read that letter there is no record. And, having written it, she dismissed the burden from her mind. In a spirit of happiness renewed, she rounded off her record of those early married months, before the coming of the child—and all that came with it—changed the current of their lives.

‘We are now settled in our new quarters, very happy, outwardly and inwardly—happier even than when this journal was begun. . . . Your work is prospering in spite of difficulties. . . . Our chance of a living child has become more hopeful. Oh, my beloved husband, how great is the

sum of the blessings bestowed on us—"more than I am able to express." There is something so wonderful in rising every morning to fresh happiness, lying down at night without a heart's pang, that I feel more as if I were dreaming than awake.'

To that moving confession her husband added his own few lines :

'Long may you so dream, dearest. Long may we dwell together as now. Far from doing too little, you do too much, darling. Less bodily labour and a little more journal would be better. Otherwise how shall we recall, in future days, our present life?'

It was almost the last of his brief interludes in her early journals : living pictures of married happiness and camp life in the Eighteen-Thirties, as vivid and revealing as anything of their kind. Did Henry Lawrence ever look back to his own few lines, and recognise that it was he, himself, who shattered her dream with the intrusion of painful realities, mental and bodily strain, that she might well have been spared at a time so critical for herself and their child?



IN June the terrible Indian hot weather reaches its maximum of intensity ; ‘ the earth is iron and the skies are brass.’ Intermittent gales set the dust devils whirling, and shroud the land in a darkness that may be felt. For compensation, the air is left a few degrees cooler ; but small relief can be hoped for till the coming of the Great Monsoon.

On June the 19th Honoria reported : ‘ Still no mitigation in the weather. Can the poor languid being, who barely exists and is scarce capable of thought, be the same who, a few months ago, was all life and action ? ’

She was already discovering that India exacts a higher price for the privilege of parenthood than any other country on earth. Since January, she had suffered incessantly from faintness, dysentery, insomnia and depression. And now she wrote :

‘ Within the last month I have at times had a feeling of fear and misgiving such as words cannot describe. The pain, the danger, the possible disappointment awaiting me, actually weighed down my soul ; and even your affection failed to cheer me. I know how much of this depression is purely physical, but there is also much want of faith in it. . . . Only when I can sincerely say—*God knows best*—my heart is quieted.’

On the 28th, her husband’s birthday, she sat up late, alone, while he was dining with friends ; and solaced herself with the once familiar habit of talking to him in the pages of her journal.

‘ I feel as if this were my own birthday as well as yours. . . . What a night I passed twelve months ago, knowing that the risen sun would show me the land of my desire ! . . . Oh, my Henry, I stood adversity better than I do prosperity.

. . . When we first married, I feel I took on myself too much—pulling the mote out of your eye, while a beam was in my own. . . . Yet surely we were intended, in sympathy and faithful love, to speak to one another with perfect openness. In this spirit I will once more revert to our study of the Bible. We read a portion regularly ; for ten minutes morning and evening. Is this sufficient ? Is it (as dearest Lettice once said) the sort of attention you gave when the languages were your object ? If I take up the Bible alone, I cannot give it full attention, for longing that you should read it with me.

‘ And I do think you are not aware, darling, of the way in which you habitually speak to the natives around you. Their provokingness I fully feel ; and acknowledge how often I lose patience. But you, dearest, scarcely ever address a native without an abusive epithet—even when you are not angry. So I think it is very much habit.’

(It was a habit that prevailed even among the best Englishmen of the period ; one that has adversely affected the whole relation between the two races, even to this day.)

‘ When I began I had no intention of saying so much ; but I naturally pour out all to you. Oh, my treasure, light of my eyes, *my world*, how overflowing have been my feelings towards you all this day ! . . . I fancied I could imagine the pleasure of having one to take an interest in my every thought ; but no one could do so without experiencing it.’

They were still sheltering the broken-down Surveyor ; and on the 7th of July, in Henry’s absence, her entry was chiefly concerned with their troubles :

‘ All day I have been very ailing, but have been roused from my own despondency by poor Mrs. P.’s misery. At 4 p.m. she came to me, seeming almost beside herself ; told me she was afraid to stay with him, and afraid to leave him. He has certainly been drinking ; and I cannot express my dread lest there be some fearful end to all this. . . .

‘ She has just been in again to say that he is asleep ; that fresh duns and bills have been coming in ; that yesterday he sent for a bottle of gin ; to-day, for a bottle of brandy—Oh, *can* any anguish be like that of a wife, so married ? There he now lies asleep on the floor. She is afraid to bring in a

light ; and I fancy her sitting there in the dark, watching beside him. What must she feel ! Why should *I* have such boundless mercies heaped on me ? I never felt more humbled than by the contrast in our lot.'

And while she waited, with mingled feelings, for the coming event, Lawrence filled his quieter days with the mental activity most congenial to him—writing, endless writing, in his singularly unreadable hand : essays and memoranda on the ill-disciplined state of the Army, the problems and responsibilities of England's increasing dominion over India ; genuine first-hand thinking, however roughly expressed. In passing from the Army to the Survey his brain had taken a big stride—from books to things ; personal touch with the people had tempered early prejudices and enlarged his point of view. His creative mind had a natural tendency to 'think imperially,' though the phrase had not then been coined. Month after month he had been exploring the by-ways of native character, the merits and defects of British rule ; his frank recognition of the last quickened always by his observant eye and truth-desiring mind. Detached from the Army, he more readily discerned the crying need for reforms in all its branches ; wrote caustically of senior officers, 'excellent in their own department, but most of them not knowing a perambulator from a Herschel's telescope' ; of Political appointments, which must presumably 'always be given to the Governor-of-the-time-being's grandmother !'

It was at this time that he boldly approached the Q.M.G.¹ with his practical scheme for forming a special corps of Guides—a picked body of irregulars, trained to scout work in forest and jungle, capable of guiding a regiment through difficult country and discovering enemy positions. Like most original ideas, it was turned down at the time by a routine-ridden department ; but, being a live seed, it came aboveground many years later. By that time he himself was in a position to create—through Lieutenant Harry Lumsden—the Queen's Corp of Guides, one of the most famous units in the Indian Army.

¹ Quartermaster-General.

But not yet was he dreaming of political eminence. Not yet did he even know that his good days in the Survey were nearly at an end. Distant thunder rolls of local Afghan disturbances seemed wholly unrelated to a Brevet-Captain in Allahabad. Absorbed in work and in each other, they foresaw no immediate interruption to the home life so aptly pictured by Herbert Edwardes :

' In the midst of his maps and measurements, his long morning rides from camp to camp, his hot and noisy days visiting crowds of villages, his outbursts of indignation at the "fudged" angles of lazy subordinates, his contentions with all and sundry to do impossible quantities of work ; and the dear home so paper-littered and book-strewn—so uncomfortable as it appeared to well-regulated visitors from the cantonments and civil station—so happy as it was to the master workman and his young wife ; into the midst of it all, the dāk one morning brought a large official letter from the Adjutant of the 2nd Battalion R. H. Artillery, communicating to Brevet-Captain H. M. Lawrence—first Lieutenant in the 3rd Troop of that Brigade—that orders had been received to prepare the 2nd and 3rd Troops immediately for active service in the field, to reach Kurnāl, or its vicinity, on the 31st October.'

Here was news to shake the heart of Honoria, who was expecting her child by the middle of August ; news that was only not the worst because that official intimation was in *no way* an order for Lawrence to rejoin his troop. No longer in military employ, he could not return to soldiering unless the Governor-General chose to replace him 'at the disposal of the Commander-in-Chief'—a very usual proceeding in time of war. But Lawrence had no idea of waiting on formalities. He did not even stay to consider the effect on Honoria of his zeal to hasten the desired transfer. His awakened soldierly instincts dwarfed all personal considerations ; and he promptly wrote to Government, asking leave to rejoin the Army, on the Staff or with his troop. With more zeal than discretion—he again submitted to the Q.M.G.'s Department his admirable scheme for raising a corps of Guides, sent a copy also to Lord Auckland's Private Secretary ; entreating that he might not be prevented from rejoining his troop.

And Honoria—who had half forgotten he was a soldier—must contrive to hide her own agitation, while she copied,

without protest, letters begging for the fatal transfer ; must school herself to share his disappointment when his Guides scheme was merely acknowledged ; his desire to be of use officially ' noted ' in case his services were called for.

Not waiting to be ' called for,' he wrote to his Brigadier at Meerut ; only to be informed that he was not yet under the Commander-in-Chief. If required to join, his name would appear in General Orders ; an answer that merely spurred him to attack the Adjutant-General, begging that the necessary order for his transfer might be promptly issued. But posts were too slow for his impatient spirit ; and next morning he wrote to his own Adjutant, announcing that he did not deem it necessary to wait for the formality. He would set out to join his troop on the 1st of October.

Luckily for him, if not for her, soldierly zeal could be counted on to cover the minor sin of unauthorised action. A sanction from his Colonel settled the matter ; and their wedding day found Honoria still awaiting her child, haunted by the thought of indefinite separation from her husband.

On the 19th she was writing in her journal :

' I am astonished to see how long it is since my last entry. Two or three weeks after the last date—July 11th—were passed in suspense and illness—yet with much happiness too. . . . I am thankful now for a more tranquil state of mind ; but, oh, my beloved, I *dare* not dwell on the future. I should not deserve your confidence were I not to make an effort ; and my prevailing desire is, that the time before our separation be as unclouded as possible. For how *long* will be the days when we shall only have *the thought* of each other. I used to shrink from the pain of my coming trial ; but the dread of parting is worse than all fear of bodily suffering. There are trials we cannot imagine the possibility of enduring ; yet they *are endured*. And we can more easily anticipate the anguish, than the strength that comes with it. Still have we life's best blessing—a union that defies time and place to change it. How much more withering would be one feeling of coldness—one thought that our yoke was a burden, than all the misery, acute as it is, of bodily separation.'

By the 21st he had received his orders ; and it only

remained for her to pray that her child might be born in time for her to face the journey with him to Kurnāl.

Not until the 6th of September, at three in the morning, was she blessed by the belated arrival of a son—to be called Alexander Hutchinson, after his grandfather and their kind Calcutta friend. The entry for that day is in Henry's handwriting :

'I stayed with you, my darling, at your wish. But the sight of your suffering is scarcely repaid, even by our Boy. . . . You were frightened and in pain for three or four hours after the event ; but now I trust you are well over your troubles. I thank God for preserving you to your husband.'

Yet that very husband, who had witnessed her suffering, was now to deal her even a harder blow than the dread of parting, since it involved a clash of principle, such as she had not believed possible between them. It arose from a mere pen-and-ink squabble, which had been vexing him unduly for more than a year. Officers of the day, if they possessed brains and opinions, were overmuch addicted to journalism ; the scarcity of books setting a higher value on journals and newspapers ; and Lawrence, a ready writer, was bitten with the prevailing craze.

A misleading and over-fulsome memoir of a certain distinguished General—written by one Captain McNaughten, of the Indian Army—had spurred Lawrence to launch a counter-blast in very plain terms—using the pen-name '*Hamil*,' based on his initials. That retort had evoked violent recrimination. McNaughten brushing aside the pen-name, had referred scornfully to 'one Lieutenant Lawrence,' flatly accused him of 'calumny' and 'untruth.' At that, Henry's violent temper had flared up. His honour was impugned. Nothing would satisfy him but a challenge.

Duelling—though not yet extinct in the Army—was only resorted to for very serious reasons ; and Lawrence's two best friends urged the common sense and dignity of closing the affair with a brief public statement that, owing to Captain McNaughten's language, Lawrence must decline

any further discussion of the matter. Only a man overcome by sheer temper could seriously propose to make so trivial an affair a matter of life and death. 'The sight of his wife, still ailing, his first-born son not three weeks old, should alone have sufficed to make him hear reason. She herself knew of the quarrel, but not yet of the impending duel ; and on the 23rd, she wrote in her neglected journal :

' I have been obliged to leave off writing from the agitation that I feel when touching on any subject of deep interest. And oh, let me not embitter the days that remain to us ; let me not injure our child. I will only note the occurrences of the past three weeks. On the 15th I got up, feeling dreadfully exhausted ; but, ever since, I have gained strength daily. On the 17th I began to see after our preparations.— We are getting on ; but you have been bothered almost to death, about MacN., who goes far to keep me the feeble being I am. Of this I dare not now speak.'

And, only a few days later, she discovered the worst. That the man she half idolised should dream of fighting a duel—a deliberate sin in her eyes—was bad enough, apart from the senseless and terrible risk involved. Her attempt to speak of it had only wrought her up to agitation harmful for herself and her child—without result. Yet she could not stand aside and let him so wrongfully imperil his life—his soul—without one more attempt to exert her influence, for what it might be worth.

So that night she sat up alone, resolved to write him a letter, since that was easier than speaking, on the subject ; a letter compact of sane and just reasoning, nobility and courage and heartfelt unhappiness.

' MY HUSBAND,—You did to-day what you never did before. When I came behind you, you snatched up what you were writing, that I might not see it. All I *did* see was, " My dear Campbell." Dearest, though your entire confidence in me has been a treasure beyond price, I do not forget that you have a right to withhold your correspon-

dence ; and if you do so you will never find me complain or tease you. But, my own love, I cannot help surmising the subject of to-day's letter ; for it has not been one hour absent from my mind for nearly three weeks. Ever since the few *unforgettable* words that passed between us, I have been struggling to decide what I ought to do. The words have often been on my lips, the pen in my hand, to address you ; and as often my heart has failed me ; but I cannot rest until I speak openly to you, and it is better to do so thus, than in talking.

'On the question of duelling—I will not dwell on the *reason* of it ; nor on the *heart-scald* I feel, and the injury this does to your wife. These are *woman's* feelings—men must act from a *different view* . . . I only put it on the ground of fearing God, or fearing man. . . . Do not imagine that I cannot enter into your feelings. Is your honour, your peace, your well-being, less dear to me than to yourself ? But when I see you do, not only what I think wrong, but what *your own* mind condemns, can I help speaking ? To any other fault you may be hurried ; but there is deliberate sin, in giving or accepting a challenge. Oh ! Consider these things ; and before you decide, pray earnestly that God may direct you. If I have exceeded what a wife ought to say, you will forgive me. . . . But do not think that I shall torment you by referring to the subject. I will not even refer to this letter unless you do so. I have no *right*, still less any *wish*, to make you uncomfortable. You were perfectly right in saying, "I *ought* to have known beforehand." Yes, I *ought*. I do not recollect the question of duelling ever coming to my mind, in connection with you, before we married. Had it, I am sure I should have confidently appealed to your moral courage ; for you had always shown that you could act as you thought right, without minding what others said.

'I am not very sanguine as to the result of this letter ; yet God may bless the feeblest instrument. And I cannot help writing. My heart is full, wellnigh to distraction ; and if I could only convey to you the liveliness of my own feelings, it *would* influence you, I think. More than ever

do I desire to be your soother, your friend ; to look myself to your example, and hold it up to our child.

‘ Your fond and faithful Wife.’

That she—of all wives—should have doubted the result of that letter reveals her profound understanding of the man she loved with mind and spirit, no less than with her woman’s heart. If he were sincerely convinced that his honour was involved, that he was acting on principle, no reasoning, no plea would turn him from his resolve.

And so it proved.

But the quiet dignity of her appeal, the justice of her reasoning may have acted as solvents to his anger and hurt pride ; since he did finally yield to the dissuasion of his friends ; and the challenge, that would have tarnished his name, was never sent. What passed afterwards between husband and wife, neither has revealed. Her journal broke off on September 23rd, with a brief record of her boy’s christening ; a dedication, that meant so much to her, clouded by agitation and the pain of imminent parting.

‘ Last evening we took our child to be christened by Mr. Hammond, who was passing through. Nothing could have been more hurried, more uncomfortable, and unsatisfactory than the whole proceeding. How often have the days which I have anticipated with peculiar pleasure, turned out painful : the day of my landing in Calcutta—of your taking me into your own house—of first coming out after my confinement—of the infant’s baptism—and many another. But I am falling into a querulous strain. Rather let me be thankful for returning health, and for the prospering of our child.’

Too soon after that comfortless christening she was called upon to face the risks and trials of a *palki* journey that no man in his senses should have imposed on her at so critical a time. But again it was a principle—his soldierly sense of duty—that blinded him to personal considerations. He was young and inexperienced in marriage, and she only too ready not to hamper him ; though that journey might well have killed both her and the child. Now in a doolie, now in the buggy, they were jolted and rattled along for

a full week. And on the last night, her miseries reached their climax, Henry, as usual, was riding on ahead ; she in the doolie, ayah in the buggy ; Alick crying incessantly, and incessantly sick—upset by the effect on her milk from all she had gone through.

In despair she got out and walked up and down with the suffering mite ; having sent on the bearer to call Henry, who seemed too bent on reaching his destination to discover her plight.

‘ Oh the anguish of that hour,’ she wrote afterwards—‘ as I carried my babe about till I almost fainted. At last I laid him on my cloak by the roadside ; but he cried so fearfully that I at once took him up again. I thought he would die there and then ; and I was so worn and weak that I had no self-control to sustain me. Just as I got back into the doolie, Henry rode up. The bearer had never gone near him. He had only turned back from surprise at my not appearing.

‘ When we reached the *dāk* bungalow he got some goat’s milk and water for baby and a cup of tea for me. Then I went on in the doolie, and my Henry took Alick with him in the buggy. . . .’

By evening they reached Cawnpore : and the friends, to whom he had written in advance, recorded that both mother and child arrived so seriously ill that Lawrence was forced to wait a whole week before either were fit to move on. A drastic sample of ‘ more haste, less speed !’

Three months later, when the worst was over, she wrote of it all to Mary Cameron :

Delhi. December 11th, 1838.

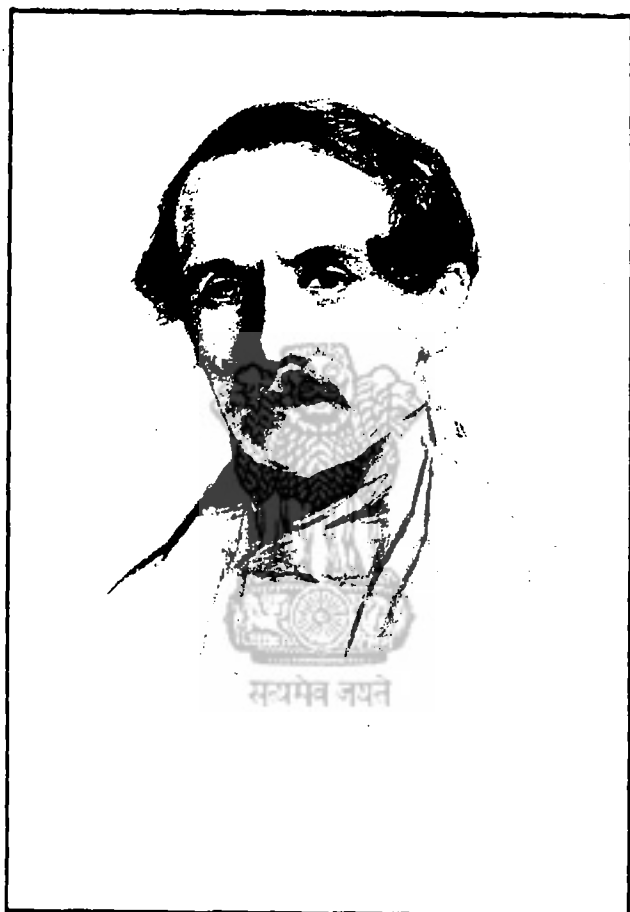
. . . When I broke off my last letter to you, I remember ending with a hope that my will was subdued. Alas, I little knew how it was soon to be tested ! The public prints have doubtless shown you the unsettled state of our North-West Frontier, and that Government had resolved on despatching a force to the Indus. I comforted myself with the belief that surveyors would not be called from their work. . . . However, when Henry’s troop was ordered to march, he volunteered to join ; nor could I object to his doing what

was obviously his duty. . . . I dared not give way . . . and I kept up, by God's help. For I knew, unless I was able to move by the 1st October I could not go with Henry even as far as Meerut.

On that day we set out, and the whole journey seemed to me like a funeral procession ; and that the place of parting was to be the grave of my happiness. It would be long to tell you the pains and troubles of that week ; baby very ill, myself apparently sinking fast, yet obliged to push on, that we might get a nurse for baby and advice for me. From Cawnpore another week brought us to Meerut, and the house of Henry's brother George, who was likewise ordered off, leaving his wife Charlotte with four children. . . . She is now gone down the river to Calcutta, and thence home. At Meerut we had ten days *on the full stretch*—days that I cannot yet look back on without agony. Then both Henry and George went. I immediately came here to Charlotte's sister, Mrs. Metcalfe, a kind, domestic woman ; and in perfect repose, with my baby to occupy me—hearing almost daily from Henry—I regained composure, if not cheerfulness.

And now, beloved friend, my sorrow is turned to joy. Our troops reached Ferōzpur on the 30th November ; and orders were then issued for half to remain there, as an Army of Observation, while the other half go forward, eventually to Kabul. My Henry is among those that remain ; and I am setting off to join him. The journey is long and formidable. There will be abundance of discomforts, living in a tent fourteen feet square, on a sandy plain ; but the prospect of being once more together counterbalances all grievances. The misery of the time we have been asunder, and the unspeakable pain of looking to protracted separation, make me truly feel that all burdens are light which may be borne together.

On the 18th, please God, I set out. Imagine the train, dear Mary. We shall have two palanquins. In one will be your friend ; in the other, nurse and baby. Think that you see us about sunset getting into these, with sixteen black men, eight for each palanquin. Four take it up at a time, and run along at a trot of three miles an hour, changing bearers about every five or ten minutes. Further, we have two *messâlchis*, men carrying a roll of flax and rags made into a torch which they feed from a skin bottle of oil as they



CAPTAIN GEORGE ST. P. LAWRENCE.
11th Light Cavalry.
Secretary to Sir William Macnaghten.

run. Then there are 3 or 4 *banghy* men to carry the baggage, packed in small tin or leather boxes called *petarrahs*. . . .

'Now imagine the torches lighted, the *banghis* slung on the men's shoulders ; Nora coming out in a wadded chintz dressing-gown and silk cap, to see that all is right. The nurse clothed after her fashion ; in chintz *pyjammahs*, wide petticoat, muslin shift and a wadded pelisse. To her care I give our little treasure, wrapped in a *pushmeena* like yours. An armed horseman rides alongside, keeping the people together ; the *chuprassi*, a sort of policeman, runs by the palanquin to see that nothing goes wrong. And off we go !

'These bearers will carry us ten or twelve miles, when another set takes us up, and so we shall cover forty or fifty miles before sunrise. Then we stop for the day, probably at the house of an utter stranger, to whom we have got a letter of introduction, or in a Government *dāk* bungalow.

'At sunset, off we go again, sometimes over execrable roads, sometimes through fields of Indian corn waving higher than our heads. Now we come to a wide sheet of water. Never mind. The bearers will put the palanquin on their heads, and swim over. Now we pass through close and filthy streets of a native town ; and through all, strange to say, travelling on the whole more safely than by mail coach in civilised England.

'I hope to make the journey in five nights to Loodiana, where Henry is to meet me. Thence we march to Ferōzpur.'

For one year of marriage this peace-loving pair had enjoyed a way of life after their own hearts, in the freedom of camp, apart from the constraints of 'society.' But from now on, they were swept into the vortex of India's troubled history. And, as their lives changed, so the whole pictorial presentment must inevitably change from the delicate tones of a Victorian water-colour, to the broader brushwork of the crowded canvas into which they were merged, during two of the most eventful decades in the history of British India.

Happier they might have been, could they have remained awhile longer side-tracked in comparative obscurity ; but the wife of a Henry Lawrence must pay the price of that high privilege. Their country has need of such men ; and

HONORIA LAWRENCE

such men have need of wives who can write as Honoria Lawrence wrote in a pencil scrawl, on a stray leaf of her journal : ' The wife who praises and blames, persuades and resists, warns or exhorts—upon occasion given—who carries her love through all with a strong heart, not a mere weak fondness—she is the true helpmate.'



PHASE THREE
IN PEACE

(1839-1841)

Temptation to decadence and corruption broke on the men, separation and every terror on the women, and all their lives passed in responsibility and danger. But these hard pressures seemed only to concentrate their spirits, which preserved a thing of great price—the character of the ‘Sahib.’

Keith Feiling.





सत्यमेव जयते

THE rumour of war, that sent Henry Lawrence post haste from Allahabad, at the risk of losing wife and child, heralded a new and stormy phase in the history of British India ; a new and varied phase, also, in the life of that valiant pair, who were never left for long in the same surroundings. But if they suffered from too frequent changes, they were spared the worse infliction of living and working in a rutted groove.

'On the 1st of January, 1839,' wrote Honoria, many months later, 'I entered the camp of the Army of the Indus at Ferōzpur. Fancy an endlessly level plain ; no trees of any size . . . only a wilderness of cactus . . . and prickly scrub ; hillocks of sand and the bleaching bones of camels and bullocks that died in thousands on the march of our army. It was a misery to see the poor camels—slender-legged awkward creatures loaded to the utmost ; each with a string passed through his nose, fastened to the tail of the one before ; a wild shaggy Afghan leading them all. If one gave way, nothing for it but cut it loose and leave it there to die.'

On that vast and desolate plain, by the river Sutlej—frontier of the Sikh-ruled Punjab—a double city of tents had sprung into being : the camp of the Governor-General where Lord Auckland would receive his ally Ranjit Singh, and the military camp of his unwieldy 'Army of the Indus' ; the bulk of it already marching northward on an expedition as ill-advised and ill-fated as any in British history.

Behind the march of that fated army lay months of feverish political activity, a tangle of personal ambitions, false reasoning and exaggerated fear of Russian designs—via Persia and Afghanistan—on India. True, there was Persia

—encouraged and supported by Russia—besieging Herāt. There was a Russian agent intriguing with the Afghan Amir, Dōst Mahomed Khan. But the Amir had made no secret of his desire for friendship with England, as being the soundest policy for both countries. A man of remarkable talent and character, he had won his kingdom fairly in the field, defeating the former Amir, Shah Shujah, who had fled to India. There he still stayed, superfluously pensioned by the Indian Government, while his faction-ridden kingdom had been united, as never before, under the strong and able rule of Dōst Mahomed Khan.

The threat of Russia—not wholly imaginary—could best have been countered by the very alliance he desired. But at that time all things seemed in league against him : in England, a Whig Ministry, with Lord Palmerston in a pugnacious mood ; in India, a new Viceroy, overruled by Simla secretaries, all eager for the ‘ Great Game ’ in Central Asia, and magnifying the Russian menace accordingly. Between them, they had induced Lord Auckland to denounce the Dōst as a ‘ hostile Chief, harbouring schemes of aggrandisement, dangerous to the safety of India.’ Hostile he was not, at the time of that notorious Simla manifesto, in which his views and conduct ‘ were misrepresented with a hardihood that a Russian statesman might have envied ’ ; but his treatment at the hands of the British Government soon changed him from would-be friend to unwilling foe. For denunciation was followed by decision to support, with money and arms, the return of Shah Shujah, now well over seventy years old : a palpable act of injustice, converted by political *abracadabra* into a righteous crusade for restoring Shah Shujah ‘ to the throne of his ancestors.’

To the support of that false project the Sikhs were bound, by treaty, though no doubt they suspected—not unreasonably—that this singular zeal to reinstate an ineffectual Amir might cloak designs on the Punjab. But Ranjit Singh favoured the British alliance ; and, in spite of mortal illness, his will was law. His visit of ceremony to Lord Auckland’s camp at Ferōzpur coincided with the gathering of troops for Afghan Service : a force of less than ten thousand men,

hampered by forty thousand camp followers and thirty thousand camels, not to mention hundreds of mules, bullocks, elephants for regimental and personal baggage. Sir Henry Fane's order, 'light equipment,' had been variously construed by comfort-loving British officers new to active service. Young bloods could not make war without dressing-cases, hair-wash and scented soap. One of them travelled 'light' with four horses and twenty servants. A Colonel took three elephants for his personal baggage, including a double pole tent with glass doors; and the Mess baggage of a crack regiment faced the Spartan life with two camel-loads of Manila cigars.

In that great camp, the Lawrence brothers, George and Henry, enjoyed a short meeting. Singularly unlike in looks, mind and temperament, they shared the Lawrence qualities of abounding energy, integrity and courage. George, a short slim man, had earned the nickname 'Cocky' Lawrence, from his lively humour and inexhaustible good spirits; froth and spray from a nature as fundamentally fine as his brother's. Chivalrous and considerate to a degree, he would scarcely have laid upon his Charlotte the ordeal which Henry had laid upon Honoria. He had, as told, wisely sent her and his four children to England, before leaving Meerut.

It was news from Herât, soon after Henry's arrival, that had modified the whole plan of campaign. For that city—though nearly ten months besieged—had not fallen, as anticipated. An exploring Gunner subaltern, who chanced to be on the spot, had offered his services to the harassed Shah Kamrân, had taken charge of the defence—and changed the course of history. But for the weakness of Lord Auckland and the obsession of his Simla Secretaries, young Pottinger might have averted, by his prowess, the whole disastrous Afghan War. Russia's policy had been checked. Pottinger had been appointed British Political Agent at Herât. The much-advertised danger to India could scarcely now be said to exist. But here was Auckland's 'Army of the Indus,' mobilised at great expense; and there were the forward-minded secretaries not to be defrauded of their 'Great Game' by a tiresome, if heroic, subaltern. Between them,

they again persuaded Lord Auckland that a buffer state, under their chosen Amir, was still necessary to India's salvation. So the army was ordered to proceed—on a smaller scale—not through the Punjab, but through Sindh, Quetta and Kandahar. For the sagacious old Lion of Lahore did not relish the idea of British troops marching through his kingdom, allies or no.

Hence the unlooked-for news that had gladdened Honoria and aptly punished Henry, for throwing up valuable Survey work too soon, only to become once more a junior officer in the round of irksome battery routine ; no scope for initiative, no food for his hungry mind, in the 'infinite littlenesses' of mess and marches and parades. Long before Honoria joined him he had begun looking again towards civil employ ; had even considered a possible return to the deserted Survey. But ambition, and the strategic importance of the Punjab frontier, pointed to the 'Political' as the finest opening for so keen a student of Indian affairs. In this case, luck favoured him, as it had already done—though he could not know it—in keeping him out of the 'Grand Promenade.'

At Ferōzpur he was again in touch with his Gorakhpur Commissioner, Frederic Currie, now a Government secretary on tour with Lord Auckland, who, on Currie's commendation, gave him the civil charge of Ferōzpur—the first step along the line of his true career. With a probable war in Afghanistan, with the Lion of Lahore paralysed, and rival chiefs waiting to start their scramble for power, the small outpost was likely to become an important link between British India and the Punjab. George Clerk, Political Agent at Ludhiana, needed an assistant. And so it came about that, two weeks after Honoria joined him, Henry found himself taking over his first civil charge.

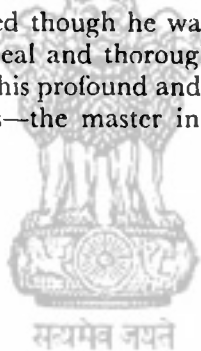
'Now I have helped to put your foot in the stirrup,' wrote Currie, 'it rests with *you* to put yourself in the saddle.' And John wrote also, from his civil district in Etāwah : 'I am delighted to hear of your success. . . . The Political is the best line. One can get on in it, if he has mettle. . . . What pay are you to get? You don't think much about that ; however, I think it is a question of much consequence. . . .'

For John, first and last, was the financier of the family ; and he must, long since, have blessed the unpractical Henry for insisting on that Civil writership. Here was he, after nine years' service, settling the revenue of Etāwah district on two thousand a year ; while Henry, sixteen years a soldier, was offered less than half that sum for civil work fully as arduous and responsible. He discovered, in fact, with something of a shock, that he was to lose, not gain, on his new appointment. An approximate nine hundred a year in the Survey was to be exchanged for seven hundred in Political employ, which Lord Auckland inaptly described as ' sitting with one's heels on the table, playing at civilian.' So Henry must choose between Ferōzpur, with a loss of two hundred a year, or a return to the Survey, and the constant camping so congenial to both. But, at Ferōzpur he would be on the main road to future advancements ; and instinctively he now turned in the right direction for a great career.

The new district consigned to him was, in his own words, a mere ' speck of one hundred and ten square miles ' ;—the town itself a collection of huts and *bunnias*' shops ' overhung by a crumbling fortress, crammed to the throat with dogs, filth and old women.' On him was laid the Herculean task of converting town and desert into an adequate frontier station ; with a good service of steamers and boats on the Sutlej, a good supply of carriage and stores for troops constantly passing to and fro : not to mention half a dozen oddly-assorted duties. As ' acting ' Political Assistant and ' Lord High Everything Else,' he fulfilled, at need, the duties of magistrate, collector, civil and military engineer, paymaster—and finally postmaster, for lack of a Government clerk to take over charge. In a surprisingly short time he virtually rebuilt the town, repaired the defenceless fort, opened shops, and invited an astonished people to come and settle in his new city.

But his larger concern was with the ever-widening interest of Punjab and frontier affairs. In June, '39, the whole Sikh kingdom was dismembered by the death of Ranjit Singh—the bold adventurer, who had ' begun life with a horse and a spear ' ; had risen, through daring border robberies, to

become chief of his fellow chiefs, and finally monarch of them all : first and last Sikh ruler of the Punjab. For he left no fit successor, founded no dynasty. His many marriages—regular and otherwise—had resulted in eight so-called sons, only one of them actually his own. The mother of his successor, young Dhulip Singh, had never been his wife. Yet she brazenly assumed the title of Maharáni, and secured the throne for her low-born son—the chance result of an intrigue with a water-carrier. Once the strong hand of the old Lion had lost its grip, the whole Punjab, rent with quarrels and factions, became an active danger to the British borderland. Thoughtful Englishmen were already forecasting history ; speculating as to whether—and when—the British or the Sikhs would be forced into a war of invasion. Henry Lawrence, overworked though he was, found time to study Sikh history with a zeal and thoroughness that went far to lay the foundation of his profound and sagacious understanding of Punjab affairs—the master interest of his life.



AND in the midst of all this engrossing, yet exasperating work, what of Honoria and the very small son, who survived—as by a miracle—the routlings of his first year? When at last she joined her headlong husband, on New Year's Day, '39, there was neither house nor decent quarters for them in the embryo station. For many months they were literally pigeon-holed in the fort ; an abode she cheerfully accepted and described to a friend in her own spirited fashion :

' You *would* be amused, could you see the two little pigeon-holes we lived in. There is a large fort of mud and bricks, the lower part of which is a network of filthy narrow lanes ; going up a flight of steps in the wall, we come to the *State apartments*—one on each side of a little court ; they have neither window nor fireplace, and doors that close very badly ; so we were obliged either to keep out the light or let in the wind, which was always blowing and bringing either rain or dust. We suffered much at first from cold ; then the heat was excessive. By next year I hope we shall have a house, and the pleasure of seeing some verdure near our doors.'

How she would have enjoyed Sir Herbert Edwardes' delightful comment on her modest hope :

' Poor souls, it never was in their lot to build very snug nests under very safe caves. Their destiny was on upper boughs, that rocked in the wind. A few soft thorns and hard scraps of wool were all they ever wove into a home. But they got the first of the sun up there, and were thankful.'

' Only let us be *together*,' was now and always the cry of her heart. But the gods, it seemed, were envious of their too complete joy in each other. Increasingly the curse of separation was their portion. In less than two months

another flitting was decreed by her doctor. She did not soon recover from the effects of her first trying hot weather, or from all she had suffered before and after the birth of her son. So, in March, both were sent to Simla, where Honoria would avoid sociabilities and devote herself to the task of rearing her boy in a land full of hindrances to a young child's welfare. Already dust and glare had given him ophthalmia. Two rough journeys had brought on dysentery and a tiresome cough. Dirt and flies defiled his food, unless she supervised every detail: since native servants cared for none of these things. And, later on, how would his plastic nature be affected by their obsequious attitude to any man-child?

'They call him *Bahādur*,¹ *Gareeb Purwar*.² *Generailly*, Sahib. They say, "Certainly, when you are a man you will flog the black people and please yourself."'

It was their idea of paying reverence to the creature; and happily these incitements to tyranny conveyed nothing to the unconcerned infant—a true Lawrence, with his silky reddish hair, blue eyes and a promising chin.

By early March, he obviously needed hill air; and with him Honoria took two children of parents who would follow later:

'fine children'—in her own words—'made perfectly revolting by their mother's want of firmness. Pursued by a running bass of threats from morning to night, seldom followed by punishment, they have the odious whine of all spoilt children; and they learn nothing but Hindustani. . . . Till I brought little Susy up here—aged two—I did not know what helpless things Anglo-Indian children are; fed, dressed, lifted up and down as if they were dolls. Jemmie at three and a half is a healthy intelligent boy—simply *animalised*. . . . No ideas except to eat and drink and tell lies, to fight and tyrannise. . . . Will my pet become like them?'

A dismaying question for a mother who already began to perceive that only unceasing vigilance could save her boy from the fatal effect of India's climate and the Indian nursery atmosphere.

¹ Lord.

² Protector of the Poor.

During these months alone in the Hills, she remained singularly detached from the small society that foregathered in Simla, at a period when wives rarely came alone to the Hills ; and bachelors on leave were mainly overworked men driven by ill-health to take a short rest.

In mid-April she was writing to Henry :

‘ Beloved, I sent off a letter yesterday, and must have another ready for to-morrow. . . . It gives fresh wings to my pen to know that my letters can cheer you, as writing to you is one of my chief pleasures.—Yes, darling, “deficient order”---as the phrenologists say---has caused us both much trouble. Are we too old to mend . . . for our child’s good? . . . ’Tis brilliant moonlight ; and I have been outside, gazing at the motionless outline of the pines, at the moon, and the dim hills around, till my heart is too full. Dear, dear Harry, in these quiet and *penetrating* hours the thought of you comes over me like balm. I pray God to bless you for all you have been to me ; and to use me *in any way* as an instrument for your good. With that prayer I left my own land and all I hold dear. With that prayer have I walked with you, through joy and sorrow ; and with that prayer do I expect to close my course. Can I believe it unheard? . . . Bless you, my own precious love—Good-night.’

For her Australian friend, Mrs. Irwin, she drew a fresh, eye-stimulating picture of Simla in spring-time.

‘ Here I am in what would be a perfect paradise were it not a place of exile from my home. The climate and scenery exceed all I could have dreamed of. The air is absolute balm—no cold, no heat. Violets, buttercups, wild strawberries and raspberries and many other old friends abound ; every species of fir and oak, laurestina, and rhododendron—not a shrub with a sickly lilac blossom like ours, but a tree as large as a walnut, with clusters of crimson flowers. . . . Then there are lovely deep glens, rushing streams, swelling wooded hills and views of the snowy range looking indeed like “steps to heaven” ; one is absolutely bewildered in loveliness. The principal conveyance used by ladies is a jampan, or chair on poles, carried by four men, who run up and down places that make my head giddy. But I have

got a hill pony, a little shaggy creature, that creeps like a spider up and down these hills.'

And here is Miss Eden's companion-picture of Simla's social atmosphere ; a party of the elect dining in the lovely open valley of Annandale : ' Twenty years ago no Europeans had ever been here ; and there were we, with the band playing " Piontani " and " Massaniello " ; eating salmon from Scotland and sardines from the Mediterranean, observing that some of the ladies' sleeves were too tight, according to the overland fashions for March, etc.—all this in face of those high hills, many of them untrodden since creation.' Of a small *fête-champêtre*, given by four young Government aides, she wrote that ' it began at ten in the morning, and lasted till half-past nine at night ! They had bows and arrows and a swing, battledore and shuttlecock and a fiddle. They danced and ate all day ; and seemed to have liked it wonderfully.' Yet she bewailed her difficulty in ' making out any dinners. Most of the ladies send their regular excuse—they do not dine out while Captain So-and-So is with the army. Very devoted wives ; but if the war lasts three years they will become very dull women ! '

It did not, then, look like lasting three years. In May, Lord Auckland was prematurely congratulating himself on having restored Shah Shujah, without bloodshed, to the throne of his very few ancestors. A glowing account from Sir Alexander Burnes told how the returned monarch had been received at Kandahar with every demonstration of joy. And Miss Eden was writing in her journal : ' The public news is very satisfying. The effect on the people here is wonderful ; and the happiness of the wives. They see, with the mind's eye, their husbands eating apricots and drinking acid sherbet, and they are content.'

Next evening, the decorations at Annandale for the ' young Queen's birthday ball, included an immense *Kandahar*, the letters twelve feet high ' ; none foreseeing that Kabul was the word that would be scrawled on the page of history, in letters of blood and fire.

Whether or no Honoria graced the Queen's ball, she

was distinctly one of Miss Eden's 'very dull women,' planning special studies for her 'golden time of quiet and leisure,' making pie-crust rules for more methodical ways of life. But little Tim, with his beguiling ways, was a constant distraction; and her 'chums,' with their spoilt nursery full, a constant source of irritability—her besetting sin. Mr. Baird had come up with his wife: and Honoria wrote of them very frankly to her husband:

'They are to me most distasteful chums, he particularly so; but perhaps I should dislike anyone, now I am away from you. You ask what he does with himself. Well—he goes out of a morning "seeking what he may devour"; returns with a lot of pickles, preserves and dried fish; breakfasts heartily on these and other savoury messes. Says he is suffering a great deal from Dyspepsia, and goes out again. Comes in about two, eats a tiffin that would lay you or me up for a month; then lies down on the sofa and groans that his old complaint is very troublesome. At sunset, he goes out with Mrs. Baird; dines at eight, on every variety of mess, then asks me for rhubarb and soda, and inquires after my inside. Eating and grumbling are his chief employments. I am vexed at being so annoyed with them; and no doubt they find a great deal that is disagreeable in me. I have now taken much more to my own room; since I never passed half an hour with them without feeling out of tune.'

The journal habit, by which she set great store, encouraged overmuch her tendency to introspection—cloaked under the religious duty of 'self-examination': probing her own motives—good or ill—with an inherent honesty that saved her from any taint of egotism or conceit.

'I have been fretful, proud, passionate,' she frankly indicted her own shortcomings. 'Living like this with others calls forth many evil feelings; but they would not be called forth unless *they were there*.' Equally honest was her list of special needs: 'Command of my tongue. Forbearance with others, particularly servants. Regularity, and not to procrastinate. Habits of accuracy in observing what I hear, see and read.'

But her journal, in these early days of motherhood, was more often concerned with the unfolding bud of her child's nature, with looming problems of character and education. Observing the children around her, she wrote an article for the *Friend of India*, hoping that it might arouse women who read it from their seeming ignorance or indifference to the fact that careless mothers and Indian servants, between them, were doing irreparable harm to creatures who had never asked to be born.

'How many mothers,' she lamented, 'seem to think that continual scolding and occasional whippings constitute education; and then say proudly, "I'm sure I don't spoil my children"; not considering that the grand problem is to unite obedience with love.—How shall I achieve this? . . . Yesterday I spent a whole day with the Codringtons; doting parents and fine children—but *oh*, how spoilt! We dined at eight; and two little night-capped creatures—who ought to have been asleep—ran in.

"Papa—*soor-wa mangtā*." ¹

"No, my darling. Soup is bad for children."

"*Soor-wa--soor-wa*" (in a louder key).

"No, my pet. If I gave you soup at night, you will be thirsty."

"*Soo-r-r-wa! soo-r-r-wa!*"—and a roar.

"Oh, yes, Robert,"—from Mama—"give her a little soup. She is crying."

"My dear, she has had her supper. It will make her sick."

"Just a spoonful out of your plate—poor darling. I can't bear to see her cry."

But Miss Alice was by now too much affronted to take it, in spite of persuasions from two *kitmutgars* and an ayah.

"*Kao, Baba, kao*." ² Good Baba, *mère jāni*."

Still the young lady was inexorable. Then it was Mama's turn. "Here, my darling. Come to Mama. You shall have some sweets."

Alice raised her eyes, without condescending to move her head.

"Poor lamb, she's sleepy. It makes her cross. Such a good child generally," Mama excused her.

¹ Want soup.

² Eat, baby, eat, my darling.

But next morning the sceptical guest recorded the tale in her diary ; not blaming the tiresome children, but the unthinking parents who had made them so.

Another day it was Jemmie and Susy—now nearly four and three—receiving a farcical form of Sunday lesson : creatures, who hardly knew a sentence of English, set to learn and repeat in sing-song—with much whipping and scolding and roaring—the verse of a doggerel hymn that could convey nothing whatever to their minds. ‘ And this,’ quoth Honoria, ‘ is teaching them *religion* ; while their appetites are pampered, their passions excited, their consciences blunted by the *education* they are hourly receiving. Now comes the question—shall I do better ? ’

Already she detected in her boy—not yet a year old—signs of the red-headed temper, inherited from both parents. How to combat his rages as he grew older amounted to a very real problem. Whipping was the barbarously simple fashion of the day ; and, within limits, it took effect. When screams were promptly followed by slaps, they soon subsided. But repetition would harden sensibility, and no amount of whipping could ‘ renew a right spirit ’ in man or boy.

‘ Oh, it is hard,’ she lamented, ‘ for flesh and blood thus to punish an innocent, helpless creature. But the habit of crying passionately is so ruinous to the character that it ought to be checked at almost any cost. May I have as much *understanding* as love to guide me in training him.’

But most days the child filled her heart with thanksgiving. Her delight in him was new every morning, for her poetic temper never ceased to marvel at the familiar ; not least at the eternal freshness of a mother’s love and joy in her child. ‘ One might think that what has been, as it were, in circulation for six thousand years would by now be more or less stale. Few, before they were mothers, could have looked at children with more interest than I did. Yet, now, I might never have seen or heard of an infant, so fresh, so wonderful are the feelings hourly called forth.’

Happy in her child and returning health, she wrote to Henry on his birthday from Annandale, where she had picnicked with a party of women ; had escaped for an

hour alone, and returned, with her mind full of peace and beauty, to find them—so she told him—‘all sitting with their *backs* to the view, discussing the price of Mrs. M.’s new bonnet!’

By that time the day of picnics was almost over. The great monsoon came rolling up from Bombay. Thunder crashed. Lightning sizzled. Rain tumbled out of the clouds, as if a celestial tank had burst. Dense white mists, creeping up from the valleys, blotted out their world. Hill houses leaked generously—water and liquid mud from *kuchcha* roofs. The more unfortunate dined daily with umbrellas held over themselves; afterwards to be hung up over their beds. Worse, even than the leakings, were the fleas—hatched out in thousands. This was *their* season—and they made the most of it. The more the rooms were cleaned and worried, the livelier became the fleas!

After a drowned July, August brought a welcome break. Dissolving mists revealed the mountains in their surpassing beauty—green woods, purple distance and gleaming snows against a sky of porcelain blue. Better than all, it brought to Honoria ‘one week of cloudless delight’ with Henry, who had travelled six days each way for that short spell of wife and child and Simla’s intoxicating air. He must leave her before the anniversary of their wedding day—a happier one than the first, though spent apart. ‘Each month’—she wrote—‘has seen us more *one* in heart and soul. I generally look at married folks and wonder how they exist. Had I not been very happy in that state, I must have been absolutely wretched: and how little I had to do with bringing the happiness about!’

He returned, refreshed, only to fall seriously ill with fever and ague, his old enemy. And Honoria, on her hill-top, must needs follow suit. Prostrate for weeks, she recovered only just in time to prepare for the downward trek. And on the last Sunday of October she reviewed, in her neglected journal, those seven months of separation that, for her, could never be full life. Yet they had not been altogether profitless, even from her exigent standard. She had thought and read and observed much on the all-

important subject of rearing English children in a 'heathen' land. She had filled her eyes and mind with Nature's loveliness and imbibed the strength of the hills; had made many acquaintances, but hardly a friend. Among the scores of people she had met, there were but four women whom she had any wish to know better. On the whole she found English women in India mentally inferior to women of the same class in England. Admittedly their intellectual chances were fewer. They were starved of books and drained of energy by the climate; but the fact remained that for seven months she had mixed chiefly with women—after much companionship with men: 'And I cannot recall,' she confessed with her devastating frankness, 'having heard a syllable from any (save the four above mentioned) beyond prices, personalities and—at a stretch—children; but only the *bodies* of children.' In fact, Simla conversation—taken as a whole—suggested to her lively fancy, 'a confused bundle of tinsel, rags and dirt—the contents of a dust-pan; a many-sided buzz of scandal and vanity, hasty censure, mutilated praise and insincere professions; eating and amusement the real business of life; people estimated by worldly success . . . children talked of as so many additional misfortunes.'

Frank in all things, she blamed herself as over-irritable with the Bairds, 'a sad mismanager of time. Always waiting to begin this or that till I am more settled. Do I wait for being more settled to grow older? . . . Does my child remain stationary, in mind and body, till I am settled enough for attending to him?' At that rate, she might go on waiting indefinitely for a time that, in India, would probably never arrive.

At the moment it was much that the time had arrived to prepare for her downward journey. Without a pang she left all the impersonal beauty of the Hills—though Simla in October rivalled the exhilaration of May—for a return to Ferōzpur fort. Better a pigeon-hole with Henry, than a palace without him: and in the spring they might hope for a real house, where she would spend the next hot weather, baby and all, sooner than leave him again.

IN this autumn of 'Thirty-Nine, the threat of Afghan service—which had nearly parted them a year ago—loomed up again. For now there came news of Kabul occupied ; Dōst Mahomed, after a resolute stand, forced to retreat across the Hindu Khush ; Shah Shujah's escort of ten thousand troops tending to become an Army of Occupation. There seemed no question of leaving the 'adored' Monarch to rule his own people. Distance lent enchantment to a view seen mainly through the rosy imagination of Sir William Macnaghten. Yet in this very autumn of his triumph, two awkward facts confronted him ; Dōst Mahomed escaped out of the net, instead of journeying under escort to India : the Shah himself, a disillusioned old man, none too happy on the uneasiest throne in Asia ; none too grateful for British supporters, without whom he could not have remained six months in Kabul.

For men on the spot, who could 'see a church by daylight,' it was a time of secret misgivings, secret distrust and uncertainty ; while, on the surface, all was gaiety and congratulation. At Home the Iron Duke made dark allusions to Moscow, and warned them that their troubles were probably about to begin ; but, in Kabul, it was heresy to talk of troubles. There were races, reviews and a grand durbar. British officers and men were buying mementoes, making friends with the sport-loving Afghans over football, quoits and cock-fighting. Macnaghten and Burnes would have scouted the suggestion that both were enthusiastically digging their own graves—and the graves of many thousand better men.

Henry Lawrence—wearing himself out at Ferōzpur—was tantalised by his brother's account of Kabul doings, by his own unsleeping desire for Afghan service. Honoria—

dreading it—demurred for practical reasons : and great was her relief when she received a backing from George.

‘I agree with your objections to Henry’s transfer. If his coming would necessarily bring you, the sooner he gives up all idea of it the better. . . . This country is no place for European women, nor likely to become so . . . for years.’

And Henry, dissuaded by both, gave up the cherished hope—biding his next opportunity. It would take more than sound advice to turn from his hidden purpose that most undeflectable of men.

In externals, true, he was still crude, almost eccentric ; absorbed in his work to the exclusion of all else, so that mind and body were in a constant state of tension. Hot-tempered and impatient with subordinates, he was curiously lacking in the courtesy that so distinguished him in later life. Yet, for all his odd appearance, brusque manner and shrewd, piercing gaze, he impressed even the least observant as no ordinary man.

Throughout the autumn, troops incessantly passing to and fro, kept him ‘fretfully busy.’ No end to the steamers, boats and camels ; the building of regimental lines ; the flood of correspondence involving much loss of temper, and—strangest item of all—the running of an impromptu post office : no extra pay, not even the necessary clerks. Yet to Ferōzpur came letters from all over India ; important despatches, mails from Home, thin folded sheets of paper, crossed and re-crossed from wives longing for news of husbands on service : all these left to be mishandled by a few irresponsible babus. Time or no time for extra work, Lawrence took them over, with Honoria for head clerk. There they would sit, in the comfortless, extemporary office—that devoted pair—sorting, redirecting and posting hundreds of letters, from six to ten hours on end ; most often at night, since his days were over full. No wonder he complained of his anomalous position. Surrounded by dependents of the jealous Sikh State, he proceeded to settle their fierce boundary disputes in his own inimitable fashion. Dispensing with naners and official formalities. ‘he flung

himself into the middle of the quarrelling agents, rode all over the ground, displayed a common sense and independent judgment which reconciled even those against whom he was deciding, and guaranteed that the settlement—would be peacefully maintained.’¹ The fact that he nearly slew himself in the process was a minor detail to all concerned, except to his anxious wife.

In the midst of it all, he found time and energy to write constantly for the Press, to collaborate with Honoria in *The Adventures of an Officer in the Punjab*, based on his own knowledge of the country under Ranjit Singh. The sections, as written, were sent to the Editor of the *Delhi Gazette*, who published them anonymously in serial form. Into that semblance of fiction Lawrence packed a remarkable amount of history and personal experience, that might have had greater value undiluted by the intrusion of a conventional romance—Honoria’s share of the work. But probably its chief merit, in their eyes, was their own keen pleasure in working at it together.

During the autumn, Lawrence was distressed by bad news of his brother John—still at Etāwah. For weeks a sharp attack of jungle fever had been burning him up. Recovery seemed hopeless; and, when collapse ensued, the doctor—as doctors will—had told him he could not hope to live till morning. But John Lawrence, in the pride of youth and strength, believed that a man need never die, if he made up his mind to live. There was urgent work to be done. He would get well and do it. Remembering a bottle of burgundy under the bed, he ordered the bearer to open it, drank all the contents—and fell sound asleep. When the doctor came next morning to certify the death of his patient, he found the expected corpse fully dressed, seated at his table casting up settlement accounts.

That story—typical of the Lawrence attitude to life—must have delighted Henry and Honoria, who were in camp again; touring the district, and returning at intervals to Ferōzpur. There the unpractical pair made valiant efforts to combat the chief of their lesser failings—lack of method

¹ Professor Morrison: *Lawrence of Lucknow*.



SIR JOHN LAIRD MAIR LAWRENCE, BART.

1811-79.

Created Baron Lawrence of the Punjab, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., P.C.
Viceroy of India 1864-8.

in work and life. Perseveringly they mapped out a schedule of rules for every hour of their day. Honoria's was headed, 'Rise at four. Reading and prayer; arrange Henry's papers' (in chronic chaos), 'copy his letters, go out with him or read at home.' All that, before nine o'clock breakfast; 'with a review, or some such book on the table.' Two hours for household affairs—the multitude of servants making extra work; their dishonesty and casual ways irritating her to distraction. Two more hours for 'study'—French, Italian or Hindustani; Greek reserved for her Sunday reading of the New Testament. Henry had his own schedule, with fixed times allotted to work, exercise and meals. And on the opposite page, his Sunday entry honestly confessed, 'Nothing much to-day, except break all our rules.'

Honoria—in spite of New Year resolutions—had much the same tale to tell:

'I am like a man who spends all his time sharpening his tools; lets them lie about till they are blunted, and sharpens them again. "Faint yet pursuing" must still be my motto. Our life does present great difficulties. No sooner have I put things in their place, than we are off somewhere—and all must be changed. Then I forget where things are, and lose time and temper in searching. But here Providence has placed us; and where there's a will, there's a way. . . .'

The New Year opened with the first batch of troops returning from Afghanistan. Half a dozen officers to breakfast and dinner. Keane's camp close to their tents; a sense of contact with Kabul, whetting Henry's eagerness afresh. Honoria's days passed 'in a bustling dream'; little recorded and little done, partly due to harassing headaches and mental confusion that renewed her old haunting fear of madness. Nor were matters improved by anxiety on account of her over-taxed husband. 'God knows,' she wrote, 'how it pains me to see you overwrought as you are. Ever since you took this office, I have been looking for the time when it should become less laborious, and leave you free for *some* enjoyment of life. . . . I still hope that some other chance may be opened to us—'

And between whiles there was mingled joy and concern over her blossoming Alick, whom they now called 'Tim.' At seventeen months old he was full of life and intelligence and loving ways ; his reddish hair, fine as silk, curling all over his head ; grey blue eyes set in long thick lashes, a broad nose and lower jaw thrust out. His passionate rages still distressed and taxed her. 'He kicks and screams and bites in anger when the least thwarted ; and I feel quite at a loss to know whether punishment exasperates or represses him. It is like an arrow through me when I think of the evil he inherits from us. . . .'

The difficult question—to whip or not to whip—was constantly renewed by the impossibility of reasoning otherwise with that morsel of concentrated fury ; so loving one moment, so impervious the next to reproof or command.

'I have a great dislike of whipping,' she confessed after a battle royal. 'But what other argument can we use with a child of eighteen months? Put him in the corner—he begins to play ; refusing what he wants keeps up prolonged irritation. But two or three smart slaps are instantly felt ; and—if not angrily inflicted—seem to me the best remedy. Last night, when he cried very much, I said, "I must whip you, if you are naughty." And at once he crept close, kissing me, and went fast to sleep in my bosom.'

The end of March found them once more moving into a real house of their own.

'Pleasant as camping is,' wrote the devotee of tents—'I was beginning to long very much for rest. . . . Though all the knocking about has somewhat hardened me, these little domestic events still have something solemn and touching. . . . I am strongly reminded of our first home at Pampamão two years ago. How pleased I was ! What trouble I took to make it all snug. And in the five months we were in it, I did not five times feel well enough to enjoy externals. After that, our one object was to dispose of everything we got together. The memory tempers my pleasure in our new abode.'

Her pleasure was further tempered by the need to share their sanctuary with a stray bachelor ; bungalows being

scarce, and Henry incurably hospitable. More welcome was his decision to open their house on Sunday for a simple morning service, conducted by himself. But the many bachelors were constantly shifting : the few women careful and troubled over households and babies. After the first few Sundays, their worshippers dwindled to themselves and any passing sharer. So the plan, hopefully begun, died a natural death ; and they were sole mourners at its funeral.

In April she recorded the expectation of a second child before the end of November, a prospect that stirred mingled hopes and fears. And with the coming of May she must brace herself to endure the fiery furnace of the Punjab ; 'heat, real *heat*, scarcely a breath of air. *Tatties* useless. The sun grinning at us through a hot haze ; only the punkah to keep us alive.'

Yet through it all they were still working at the 'Adventures of an Officer'—Bellasis they named him ; much hindered, not only by heat and Henry's work, but by passing travellers. Whether for a few days or a few weeks, any spare bed was at their disposal : and Honoria, no less hospitable, found herself increasingly irked by their perpetual presence : men to breakfast, men to dinner, men sprawling in her rooms or verandah, smoking at all hours. After two months of it—aggravated by her own physical discomfort—her patience gave out.

'I am thoroughly sick of hospitality,' she confessed.—'In little more than two months we have had twelve guests—staying two, three and four weeks each ; besides many times having folks to dinner. The expense is great : but I would gladly pay the money to avoid the trouble. It is so annoying to pass day after day without once sitting down *tête-à-tête* ; never able to leave my own room without finding men lounging in the sitting-room or verandah . . . our nice evenings quite cut up. What pleasant ones, darling, we often had alone, sitting close together at the table, reading, writing, talking, eating—as it might be ; all with that *exclusive* feeling of companionship that is the very sunshine of life. . . . Well, now I have vented my spleen on our guests, I will make some notes about this Mr. Harlan, a guest from whom there is much to be gleaned.'

Harlan, a clever, unscrupulous American, was one of the many adventurers who flourished in that day of adventures. Originally a doctor, he had spent four years in the Punjab, as physician to Ranjit Singh ; had quarrelled with the Lion, and travelled north to Kabul, where he found favour with Dōst Mahomed, who had made him a General and a local Governor. Now that the Dōst had been unhorsed, he was seeking fresh means to put money in his pocket ; and his many tales, that lost little in the telling, provided a mental change of air, a passing distraction from hot-weather miseries at their worst.

On the 9th, a sudden and terrible dust-storm plunged them in total darkness. The very air was dust ; a dry burning wind blew ceaselessly for thirty hours. Thunder rolled and crashed. Lightning flickered malignly through the dusk ; and, on the wings of a south-east gale, came torrents of rain. Down went the soaring thermometer to a merciful 87° ; and at last it was possible to sleep. But, if the rains brought physical relief, they brought renewed anxiety over Henry's insistent desire for Afghan service. George—as Personal Assistant to Macnaghten—was now writing more hopefully of the Kabul situation : wondering if the vacant post of auditor might suit Henry. The Shah's position, it seemed, was no stronger ; and Kabul looked like becoming a healthy cantonment, with a Royal Figurehead to keep up appearances. Macnaghten was asking for more soldiers. Married officers were getting up their wives ; and the wives talked of taking up their pianos. An infectious optimism prevailed among all but a few 'croakers,' who croaked unheeded ; and the Envoy himself sent word that he would be happy to have Henry Lawrence on his staff.

At once the note was forwarded to Lord Auckland's Private Secretary : and only after a full month of postal and official delays came Mr. Colvin's 'No,' clothed in polite officialese. Honoria was frankly 'more than satisfied' ; Henry, exasperated by seeing himself permanently shelved. And neither dreamed what a merciful escape lay hid in that refusal.

The date—almost coinciding with the first threat of war—sent her thoughts backward to that fatal hour.

'I was sitting on the couch, ayah brushing my hair, when you entered with those letters. I fancied I was prepared ; but we are never really prepared for any sorrow. That began the four most afflictive months I ever passed through. They seemed to wipe away all earlier sufferings, as the anguish of childbirth made me forget all former pain. I believe those troubles have much to do with making me dread my confinement. For even the joy of Alick's coming hardly cheered me, when I thought that, but for him, I might be going with you. . . . Yet how the remembrance upbraids my distrust. For, in a few months, all that heavy cloud was dispersed.'

By September the worst of the pitiless hot weather was over. By October she had begun to feel a different being, fitter to face her November ordeal ; and they were cheered by the news of additional pay, that would give them a thousand a year. But the political barometer everywhere showed signs of falling rapidly from Fair to Storm. Trouble was brewing in Nepal. The Amirs of Sindh were restive. The Punjab—virtually ruled by the Sikh army—had grown increasingly suspicious that the British now had designs on their kingdom. But up in Kabul, where storm-clouds were darkest, it was impermissible to suggest any likelihood of a 'crash.' Likelihood or no, by September General Nott, at Kandahar, had an outbreak on his hands : and Macnaghten had become thoroughly alarmed by news of a widespread rising in favour of Dōst Mahomed Khan.

Once more the Great Amir was on the war-path, making yet another bid for his rightful throne. Kabul itself was in a feverish state ; the city full of Sikh emissaries, openly hostile. The Commandant was writing frankly to the Envoy : 'I really think the time has come for us to tell Lord Auckland that there is no Afghan army. Unless Bengal troops are strengthened, we cannot hold the country.'

But Dōst Mahomed—checked in the Bamiān highlands—suddenly decided that it was useless to continue the fight against Kismet. Galloping off to Kabul, with a few chosen followers, he met the astonished Macnaghten—and gave up his sword.

'It is yours,' he said simply, 'I have no further use for it. . . . No man can control destiny.'

So intense was the relief of his surrender, that he was treated as an honoured guest, winning the friendship and admiration of all the officers who came to know him.

On November the 12th he and his 'family'—a mixed crowd, some five hundred strong—were escorted to India, where Lord Auckland bestowed a kingly pension on one sovereign, while supporting the other on his unrightful throne.

And before November was out—before Dōst Mahomed had reached Ludhiana—Honorina Lawrence had come safely through her second ordeal. This time it was a daughter, to be called Letitia Catherine—Joy and Purity; christened by Lawrence himself at the mother's bedside. For though all had gone well with both, Honorina suffered a reaction that left her in a strange state of semi-paralysis. In that depressing condition she remained for weeks, there being no one to discover the probable slight dislocation that could have been adjusted by skilled handling.

Whilst she still lay helpless, came her soldier brother James Marshall, commanding a batch of levies for Kabul, hoping to remain there in the Shah's very uncertain service; and rejoicing in his good luck—the future mercifully unrevealed. In that same cold weather, a young officer of quite another quality was also being drawn into the Afghan imbroglio: a tall, grave-featured Ensign, fresh from England—by name, John Nicholson. He had joined the 27th Native Infantry in June: and had been broiling in a make-shift stable, till he could afford to build a bungalow. His regiment joined the garrison at Ghazni, a strong fort between Kandahar and Kabul, where he was to suffer terrible things before he achieved fame as one of 'Lawrence's young men.' James, up in Kabul, remained in the Shah's service, to his great satisfaction—and his sister never saw him again.

THE new year found Honoria still helpless, the small daughter flourishing, Henry prostrate with constant fever, partly from the climate, partly from incessant overwork. Nothing for it but a summer in the hills ; she to leave late in February ; he to follow in March or April. This time it was to be Sabáthu, a small station below Simla with a few people and no 'society.' So in February she started on the snail-paced journey by river and road ; alone with two children and her small army of servants, her dead and live stock ; two boat-loads, as on that idyllic honeymoon trip that now seemed very far away.

On the 24th she began her record of a fortnight on the river Sutlej, that then marked the boundary of the Punjab.

'Here I am, once more alone, once more upon the waters. . . . I have righted my cabin and sat me down to consider what I am to do. . . . If I and the children are well, I hope to be busy. I have need to be so, to cheat away the weary hours without you. But through long illness, I have become, insensibly, what we used to call "do-less" : so that I find myself contented to be idle, a state I have never reached before. Every exertion is pain. My back and shoulders ache incessantly ; every dip of the pen into the ink is a separate pain. . . . I want to begin Bellasis' trip ; but spent most of yesterday putting up purdahs to keep out rain and cold. . . .'

Constantly zigzagging across the stream for a channel, they crawled on, at the rate of five or six miles a day : one white woman alone with her native servants and boatmen. Yet was there no fear of molestation—even when she wandered ashore in the evening—though parties of Sikh horsemen were scouring and plundering the country : so

instinctive was the Eastern respect for a white woman ; so potent the prestige of the British name.

As they left the desert and burning midday sun, the Himalayas filled the north-eastern horizon, blues and purples, with a silver frieze of snow. And now they *lagão*-ed among groves and green wheat fields and villages.

' Nearly three weeks,' she wrote, ' without a white face or an English word. But it is marvellous how well I get on, how civil they all are——'

And here is a vivid glimpse of evening on the Sutlej :

' The river wide as a lake, glowing like a topaz ; the level sun illuminating the hills, reminding me of Lough Swilly, and the Gollan ; the night calm and beauteous, the water like glass reflecting every star. To the south-east, where a belt of mist hid the horizon, hung piles of solid cloud ; and incessant flashes of lightning gleamed in the river. Then all was lost in darkness. I thought of the lightning on Mount Sinai. . . . A happy day. I already feel the better for this incomparable climate.'

On the 16th her river trip ended, near Nalaghar, a small state, where the petty Chief turned out his ' ragamuffin army ' to receive her : fifty soldiers, of sorts, with two drums and a fife.

' I felt amused to think,' she wrote, ' how the wheel of life runs round. If some of the Ashby folks could have seen the governess, who used to take her staid walk in the back garden, changed into an Oriental princess, whom Rajahs delight to honour——'

Next morning they began the hillward march ; a motley procession trailing along narrow roads : the doolie, jampan and eighty-one baggage coolies—paid at the rate of three-pence for a ten-mile march. By way of personal escort she had four ' lion-like *chuprassis*,' a Sikh horseman, a Gurkha sepoy and a naked grizzled old torch-bearer. Thus they journeyed through a smiling land, till they came to a bungalow set upon a hill, the Rajah's country seat—a ramshackle place ; long low rooms opening on a verandah without doors, ' chicks ' or purdahs ; squirrels running along the roof-beams, pigeons cooing ceaselessly—the under-song of

northern India. Wooded hills rose round it, opening to a far view of the plains, and her verandah looked down on a garden of roses, mulberries and orange trees. Only inescapable flies and mosquitoes marred the peace and beauty of it all.

Very lovely were the final marches to Sabáthu, up and up by unrailed paths, falling away so steeply that she might have felt nervous, carried shoulder high, but for the enchantment of the unfolding scene—forest and rocky gorge, with here and there a gleam of far-off snows. Towards evening they came suddenly in sight of Sabáthu ; its wooded hills, backed by the Simla heights, still half clothed in snow, crimson rhododendron blossoms lighting up the gloom of ilex and pine.

Friends came out to meet the travellers : and Honoria that evening was writing of it all to the solitary man in Ferôzpur :

‘ Enjoying my own nice bungalow, but *so* lonely without you, darling. Make haste, Henry, *make haste*. ’

Industriously she filled her days with writing and serious reading. Entries in the journal became fitful : and the latest had a strange, prophetic significance, in view of the brief life granted to the little daughter she had so desired.

‘ Last night the *jampannis* took me along a road I did not know. In a turn of it, I saw white domes beyond, and concluded that it led to a *Musjid*.¹ But, on approaching, I saw it was a burial-ground ; a solemn, appropriate spot, away from human habitations, bosomed among the hills. I cannot describe the awful feeling that came over me. Except for a glimpse at Gorakhpur, and one tomb at Ferôzpur, I had not seen the mark of a burial since I left England. I looked down at the babe in my lap, so full of life ; and I asked myself—Could death touch one like her ? Then—“ Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment ! ” rang in my ears ; and the *Dhai*, sitting down, soliloquised in her wild, chanting voice : “ There they are—young and old. No question—no answer. All—all silent—”

‘ I was glad the darling boy had lingered behind. His

¹ Mosque.

prattle would have been out of tune. How do children acquire an idea of death?'

No hint of foreboding disturbed her mind during that peaceful summer, before the storm broke over Kabul and plunged northern India in gloom. It was Henry's health that gave cause for concern when he joined her, on April 19th. Yet within ten days he was sufficiently himself again, to be absorbed in Punjab affairs and threat of serious trouble with the Sikh army. He was actually writing to George Clerk, begging to be 'employed in any capacity,' should there be need for operations on the frontier. 'Although the state of my health,' he admitted, 'forbids unnecessary exposure, I am able and willing to proceed to the plains to-morrow, should my services be required.'

Imagine the dismay of a wife who had but just rescued him from an overdose of work; her corresponding relief when the wise George Clerk merely bade him 'keep quiet and get well.'

How happy she was in that brief lull, the four of them together, enjoying 'the very great luxury of perfect quiet, after the whirl of Ferōzpur.' To Mary Cameron she was writing in May. 'Here we hope to remain for some months, then to return . . . recruited for whatever may be before us. . . . Wars and rumours of wars are on every side; and Henry will be called upon to take a part in whatever goes on. . . .'

For the present they were absorbed in their favourite hobby of joint writing: either articles for the *Delhi Gazette*, or a fresh number of the *Adventurer*. On the vital subject of England's problems and responsibilities the mind of Henry Lawrence was constantly at work. For the time had arrived when thoughtful men were beginning to ask themselves—What of British rule in India? What of the system and its final aim? These were questions on which Lawrence held very definite opinions, not all of them acceptable to the men of his day. For his honest and penetrating mind, though alive to Indian disabilities, was no less keenly alive to the failings of his own people: and, during those peaceful

weeks, he filled many blank pages of Honoria's journal with his singularly illegible script.

'Looking back on fifty years of English dominion,' he wrote with lamentable truth, 'although it were calumny to say that nothing has been done, it may be safely said that much has been left undone, that our principle of Government enervates the executive for good, and does not restrain it for evil. . . . Would it not be well, while time offers, to ask ourselves what it is that makes our rule seem founded on expedients? Why it is that with every little outbreak the cry is renewed of our Raj being over? May it not be for want of *unity and connectedness*?'

There he put his finger on the main stumbling-block to progress; the sea-saw of party politics and the five-yearly change—for better or worse—of the man at the helm. In the case of civil and political officers handling new districts he feelingly advocated greater responsibility and less red tape. Let them be 'active men, depending on their own exertions, keeping the *spirit* of regulations rather than the letter.' On those lines he had worked at Ferōzpur. On those lines he was to create—in due time—the British Punjab and the North-West Frontier.

Thus deeply pondering on the future of both countries, he began, half in joke, his 'Anticipatory Chapters of Indian History' for the *Delhi Gazette*. Under the name of Colonel Darby O'Connor, he pictured himself in retirement, recalling the days of his Indian career. And inevitably he began with Afghanistan, where the people now seemed settling down into a state of spurious calm; an optimistic Envoy reporting all 'perfectly quiet from Dan to Beersheba . . . Europeans everywhere received with respect, attention and welcome.' As a matter of ungilded fact, the British occupation was becoming month by month more intolerable to all parties; and one can only suppose that some sensitive antennæ of the spirit warned Lawrence of the coming storm.

Let his prophecy precede the tragic tale that confirmed it sooner than even he had thought possible.

Not realising the full horror of the imminent tragedy, he struck a satirical note at the start.

'In the year 1845, Shah Shoojah having died of horror—at the Envoy, in a moment of forgetfulness, seating himself in the Royal Presence—Timur Shah was murdered by his brother, who put out the eyes of Sir A. Burnes and impaled Captain Rawlinson, drove the British troops before him, and proclaimed himself sovereign of Kabul, Kandahar Herât and Peshawur. . . . Never having looked for defeat, and being in no way prepared for it, the British troops suffered most severely; few officers, indeed, recrossed the Attock. The skeleton battalions that did return to Hindustan told frightful tales of misery, and talked in a strain long unknown in British India, of the superior prowess of the Afghans, again striking for independence. . . . All Hindustan was in a blaze, the cry of "The Feringhi Raj is over!" resounded from one coast to the other; the very foundations of British rule were shaken; and the bark of our fortunes might have been entirely swamped had we not then had a brave, wise helmsman. . . .'

And Honoria renewed her earlier joy in copying all he wrote: dotting his i's and crossing his t's: filling up the gaps he left when his brain moved too fast to let him pause for the right word. Then there was the active interest of building themselves a cottage on the higher hill-top of Kasauli; a retreat where they could enjoy the luxury of being alone together in the wild.

That summer was one of the rare interludes of peace and quiet that came to them, most often before some new turn of the wheel: Henry's mind at rest from active demands, Honoria untroubled by overmuch hospitality. The only visitor recorded was the family 'bad penny' her younger brother, Hill Marshall, a tiresome and unsatisfactory boy of three-and-twenty. Early bitten with the seafaring craze, he had reached India after many adventures that had failed to make a man of him. Recommended by Lawrence for the Survey, he had soon wearied of regular work, had cavalierly thrown up his appointment and gone off to sea again. After that, Lawrence lost patience with him; but, for Honoria's sake, offered to do what he could, short of recommending him to Government. By April, Forty-One, Hill was back in Calcutta, greeted by a letter from Honoria,

bidding him come north to Sabāthu. Arrived at Allahabad, he bought himself a cheap pony, a bullock cart for his traps, and started in mid-May for his long hot trek to the Hills, at the snail's pace of fifteen miles a day.

'I had now a precious journey before me,' he wrote to his folk at Home. 'It was all right while there were *dāk* bungalows at every stage; but when it came to native *serais*, it was perfectly beastly; the hot winds blowing like a furnace, hardly the necessities of life with me. Lawrence is the kind of person that does not care how he travels himself and expects every other person to do the same; but I do not altogether agree with that plan.'

The incoherent protest would have amused Henry Lawrence, coming from 'the kind of person' who clearly expected the comforts of life to fall on him like manna from heaven. The two were frankly incompatible. Hill—reaching Sabāthu early in July—saw his remarkable brother-in-law merely as 'a thin man with a long beard, rather odd in his mode of dress. I have had very little conversation with him . . . in fact he speaks very little at any time; and I know he is not pleased with me for having thrown up the Survey; so that I am not altogether as happy as I should wish . . . And there is no society up in these mountains.'

The sulky, idle young man had small affinity with that industrious pair, whose peaceful interlude was broken in August by the illness of both children: and at that anxious moment Henry must needs be called away on duty. He would only be gone ten days; but, within a week, the worst befell. He never saw his little daughter again.

On Sunday Dr. Steel came to see how his patients fared: and was told that Letitia seemed better, but Alick very ill.

'Yes,' he said, 'Alick is ill; but it is for *her* you must be most anxious.'

The unexpected blow stunned Honoria; but the need for prompt action banished fear. There were leeches and warm baths for both: Alick's entreaties, begging her not to leave him for a moment; Moonia's arms stretched out, mutely imploring. By four o'clock both seemed easier; but a fearful change had crept over Moonia's face; and Honoria cried in anguish, 'Must my child die?'

The doctor, a personal friend, could give her no hope. 'Alick,' he said, 'may live till morning.'

She received the double blow in silence. With a strange sense of calm she sat down beside her boy and laid little Moonia on her knees.

Let her own words—written a month after—tell the rest :

'In that holy calm, I felt the Saviour saying, "Suffer your little one to come to me." I felt myself carrying her through the dark valley. I saw the glory she was entering. Had God offered to restore her to me then, I would not have taken her back. . . . The evening wore away. She lay perfectly tranquil breathing away her spirit. I dreaded to call for candles. When they came, I saw the terrible change. At half-past eight she ceased to breathe ; and I laid her down to take up my still-living child. All night he continued apparently dying. But next day he rallied a little ; and in the morning I laid my beauteous babe in her coffin. Oh, Mary—dearest Mary, how do I live to tell it all ?

'For five days Alick continued so ill that my utmost hope was he might live till his father returned. Our doctor scarcely left me for an hour. Often I thought my precious boy was actually dead. . . . On Sunday night he slept—and so did I, not thinking that Henry could possibly be back before Wednesday. But when I opened my eyes on Monday morning, there he was, sitting beside me—my own husband, safe and well.

'We had another week of dreadful anxiety ; but—no relapse. . . . It was not till the suspense was over that I fully felt my own bereavement. But, oh, Mary—this is sorrow without a sting : and I can say with joy and praise, that on our fourth wedding day, we were happier—yes, happier—in each other and in our hopes for eternity, than we had ever been before. We could never so have loved, had we not so sorrowed together. . . .'

They buried their 'beauteous babe' in no ghostly company of tombstones and crosses, but alone on a hill-top above Sabāthu ; sustained in their grievous loss by the confident belief that she had only gone on a little before them into the World of Light. Yet the bereaved mother, for all her

courage and conviction, sorrowed so bitterly, when the full sense of loss overwhelmed her, that Henry felt impelled to reason with her in a short letter as humanly wise and moving as any he ever wrote :

‘ You weep, darling, and I cannot blame you, nor would I needlessly trespass on your thoughts. But you say you would not have her back. How reconcile such negative desire with such constant lamentation ? You look at me as though I mourn not ; believe me I have strong feelings on the subject. I *would* recall her, but as I cannot, I see no use in continued repining. Suppose that I too was to go about the house as a shadow, would that bring back our child ? Would it help or console you ?

‘ Remember what David did, my own wife, he wept and he prayed for his child while there was hope ; but he washed his face when the child was taken away. The memory of our child will remain with us. We have no cares, no fears, for her, and we should not injure ourselves by undue lamentation.

‘ Your own
‘ H. L.’

So soon as their cottage up at Kasauli was ready, Lawrence was glad to move her from the bungalow where they had been so ‘ unspeakably happy,’ so tragically bereft. It was a sorrowful entry to the first little home they had built for themselves ; but the quiet of their last peaceful month together, wrought in them a deeper union of the spirit than ever yet. And for Honoria that was the crown of their marriage.

Early in October, he must return to Ferōzpur, leaving her alone with Alick and her morose, unfeeling brother, of whom she wrote home at that time :

‘ I do wish I could tell you anything satisfactory about Hill, but a less promising subject I could not wish to see. He is like a watch without a spring . . . no wish for independence—at least, none for *obtaining it* ; no desire to gratify those who befriended him ; no vulnerable point to work on. . . . Henry can do nothing for him, till he is qualified—as he might be if he chose—for the Post Office at Fero

pur. We have done all we could to rouse him, but have signally failed.'

In November—Alick being well again—she set out, with her unfriendly brother for company, on the road and river journey which she had undertaken in March, with a pair of healthy babes to gladden her heart. And while she wended her unhurried way down through the smiling hills, northern India was shocked and shaken by terrible news from Afghanistan : Alexander Burnes and his brother cut to pieces in Kabul city by an Afghan mob ; five thousand British troops in cantonments making no move, either to prevent or to avenge an outrage that was the prelude to disaster piled on disaster.

The Kabul insurrection had begun.



THE crash, that seemed so sudden and startling, to peaceful dwellers in British India, was the climax of a widespread disturbance that had been long a-brewing. On the surrender of Dōst Mahomed Khan, the Afghan chiefs had reasonably expected that the intruders would depart and leave the adored Shah Shujah to manage his unmanageable subjects. Almost at once the Durānis of the Dōst's clan had begun a local revolt round Kandahar ; and all along the Khyber route to India, the powerful Ghilzai clan had to be bribed by generous stipends to keep the passes open from Kabul to Peshawar. There was restlessness also among the chiefs of the Kohistān (or hill country) beyond Kabul, where Eldred Pottinger—now a Major—had been stationed as Political Officer since June. His awkward capacity for clear seeing and plain speaking had, from the first, made him unpopular with Macnaghten, who was now being further harassed by questions from London as to the 'Why' of this continued and costly occupation of an independent country? The Directors, who had proudly fathered the Grand Promenade of Thirty-Nine, were less eager to acknowledge their offspring in the summer of Forty-One : were in fact pressing Lord Auckland to choose between a prompt retreat from his false position or an increase of the Kabul garrison. No middle course, they insisted, could be pursued with safety and honour. But a weak man in a false position may be trusted to take the middle course. Hence Lord Auckland's fatal compromise : no retreat, no increase of troops ; but a move to reduce the alarming cost of continued occupation. So the word went forth—'Retrench' ; and, as usual, the axe was applied in the wrong quarter. Ghilzai stipends and subsidies were to be reduced without warning by one-third,

which involved the loss of their yearly £3,000, paid for keeping the passes open.

Macnaghten knew well enough that such an order would anger the chiefs, and be rightly regarded as a breach of faith. But he had grown weary of vain remonstrance ; and his own time at Kabul was almost over. In the autumn he was to be promoted Governor of Bombay ; and all he now desired was to get safe out of the country, leaving it to be pacified by Sir Alexander Burnes. So reluctantly he carried out the unwise order, hoping that the Ghilzai chiefs would swallow their pill—and make the best of it.

Being Afghans, full of rage and hate, they inevitably made the worst of it.

That very night several Chiefs left Kabul : and Macnaghten was soon cheered by information that the Ghilzai tribes had plundered a caravan ; checked General Sale's force on its way to Peshawar ; blocked the main passes, and cut off communication with India. Yet Macnaghten—who knew the cause—incredibly made light of that ominous prelude ; and even Burnes, living in Kabul city, dismissed the outbreak as 'a tempest in a teapot.'

On November the 1st he rode into cantonments for a last dinner with the Envoy, and a last dinner it proved, in a sense other than he deemed. For while he slept, unaware, inimical Afghan chiefs were plotting to 'open the ball' with a crash that would startle the over-confident Feringhi, and make an end of the best-hated white man in Afghanistan.

Before dawn Burnes was awakened by a word of warning from a friendly chief, which he—the over-credulous—refused to believe. But he did send out at once to Macnaghten, asking urgently for a handful of troops. The cantonment was only three miles off across the river. Yet the risen sun revealed no sign of coming soldiers. It revealed, instead, the whole street thronged with Afghans and more Afghans, surging and shouting, under his very balcony—a pack of wolves hot on their prey.

Useless to speak them fair, or offer money to men lusting for blood. While his inadequate guard fired on them from

the balcony, he and his brother tried to escape in disguise through the garden behind his house. There they were betrayed and cut to pieces by exulting savages. And the excited crowd swept on : sacked the Treasury—a trifle of £17,000—burned Government records, and put all inmates, even women and children, to the sword.

On again, to the two small forts outside the city ; one held by Captain Colin Mackenzie with a sepoy guard ; the other, by Captain Trevor, with a wife and seven children. Both had sent messengers begging for troops to check the rising before bad became worse ; and three miles off, five thousand soldiers were ready to hand : yet not even a company was sent out to Kabul City. Circumstances may extenuate, they cannot condone the unsoldierly paralysis of that fatal day.

True, both Macnaghten and poor old General Elphinstone—a very sick man—were on the verge of departure : trunks and *kiltas* stacked ready for the road.

‘ All was confusion and indecision,’ wrote Lady Sale—a strong-minded woman, as courageous in action as she was critical in judgment. ‘ Eternal blatherings of doing—and nothing done. The Envoy mounted his horse, rode to the gateway and then rode back again—the best thing he could do ! . . . It seems very strange that troops were not immediately sent into the city.’ (She did not know then that Brigadier Shelton had flatly refused to let his men face the horrors of street fighting.) ‘ But the fancied security of those in power comes from deference to the opinion of Lord Auckland, whose sovereign will and pleasure it is that tranquillity do reign in Afghanistan, that the lawless Afghans are peaceable as London citizens ; and . . . most dutifully we appear to shut our eyes to our possible fate ! ’

For two days the gallant Mackenzie held out in his crazy old fort : ‘ then cut his way to the force, who seemed unable to cut their way to him, bringing in all his crowd. . . . ’ As for Trevor, he and his family escaped from a back gate just as a party of rebels entered the fort. Guarded by a handful of Afghan irregulars, they all walked quietly back into cantonments ; the children carried by Afghans, Mrs. Trevor wading through the river on foot, because, forsooth, British troops must not be exposed to street firing, even for

so laudable an end. Let Trevor's indictment suffice :
' *Never was so disgraceful a business.*'

It took a full fortnight for news of those incredible events to filter down through the blocked passes to peaceful British India. By then Honoria Lawrence was near the end of her inland voyage. Henry Lawrence was out in the district, after a party of *dacoits*, when a belated *dāk* brought him news of the catastrophe he had so strangely foreseen. Stranger still that he should be the first man in India to hear of it. Shocked and angered, he wrote at once to George Clerk, who could be trusted to act without waiting for orders. Then he hurried back to Ferōzpur, pressed Colonel Wild—commanding cantonments—to push on two regiments through the Punjab, and warn others that they might be needed for trans-frontier service. Bold moves for an Assistant Political, and a refreshing contrast to Kabul paralysis. But Lawrence knew that time was everything : and it was fortunate for England that the Afghan crisis found a Clerk at Lahore, a Lawrence at Ferōzpur, a James Outram in Sindh. For Lord Auckland seemed paralysed by the sombre end to his inglorious reign. He also was on the eve of departure, anxious only to leave India before worse befell. A General Election at Home had put the Tories in power. His successor, Lord Ellenborough—now on the way to Calcutta—would not thank a Whig Governor-General for quocring his pitch. By good fortune, the three frontier Politicals—unmindful of party changes—were simply and actively concerned to uphold British dominion in India.

Lawrence had already written of the ill news to Honoria : and her first question—when he met her on November 12th—was of Kabul.

'How do matters go on up there?'

'As badly as possible,' he told her.

And further news, as it came in, exceeded the worst of their fears. The immediate need was a prompt counter-stroke to relieve General Sale, held up at Jalālabad, and show the Sikhs that British power could not be flouted with impunity.

For that urgent purpose the risk must be taken of marching an army through a not too friendly Punjab ; and luckily Clerk had ready at hand the very man to carry out so hazardous an enterprise. True, Lawrence had the hottest temper of any Assistant on the border ; and not many British Agents would have chosen him for so difficult and delicate a task. But Clerk knew the man ; his integrity, his influence, his dæmonic energy ; and ' he judged well '—wrote Herbert Edwardes—' when he passed his finger over his arrow-heads and drew the sharpest from his quiver.'

On December 18th he apprised Lawrence of his decision in terms amounting to a high tribute.

' I shall send you a few brief official instructions . . . but I do not think it necessary to say much to you, who will anticipate all I could wish you to do, as occasions . . . arise. It is because I feel much confidence in your knowledge of Sikh authorities—in their reliance on your fair dealing . . . that I have selected you to proceed, for the present, to Peshawar.'

That letter was the first real acknowledgment of his quality and capacity, the first tangible reward for his Survey achievement and the making of Ferōzpur. To Lawrence, no appointment could have been more welcome ; for Honoria it was a cup of mingled sweet and bitter. But pride in the tribute to her man braced her to bear the personal pang.

A week later, she was writing to Letitia Hayes :

' One happy, most happy, month we have had . . . with a load to do and think of, yet with a *home-felt* happiness . . . that makes all calm and peace, once we get rid of the "outside barbarians" and are in the quiet of our own chamber.

' It is not easy, darling Lettice, to give up this entire enjoyment of being together ; to have Henry where I cannot get at him, and myself left to count the lonely days and hours. Yet I would not, if I could, hold him back. . . . I only wish I was a man that I might go too. . . .'

Of their few and strenuous weeks together she left a vivid picture written months later in the lonely quiet of Kasauli.

' We found ourselves at once in the vortex of the tumult

that was going on. And the month that followed seemed like a year, the happiness of being together again—the anguish of anticipated parting—making us try to crowd into that brief space all the love and confidence of a life. The external stir seldom left us an hour to ourselves. Scarcely a night that we were not wakened by expresss, bringing news of fresh disasters. The winding up of office accounts, the continual arrival of despatches, that must be copied and sent on, all the while keeping open house, or tent, for the crowds of officers and others whom the commotion brought to Ferōzpur : the heart-breaking cases of distress and anxiety that called for all our sympathy : these are *some* of the elements of that time. Nor was the least trying part the necessity of seeming always to know nothing, think nothing, fear nothing. In the absolute whirlwind of reports and alarms, everyone came to us for tidings ; and any grave look or inadvertent expression gave rise to some strange story.

‘ We were sitting at table with Captains Grey and Keping of the 44th—who had just had a hairbreadth escape on their journey from Kabul—with a great many others, when the packet arrived announcing the murder of Sir A. Burnes, and the fearful extent of the insurrection. Henry was called away ; but returned immediately, and gave me a look to go into the next room.

‘ Alick’s crying soon provided an excuse ; and there I found the letters just come, with his directions to copy them. . . .

‘ Strange feeling at first it was, to copy out the lists of killed and wounded—people we had seen, as if it were yesterday. But I did my work, and returned quietly to my seat at the table ; there to play the agreeable, while Henry left the room, and sent off the letters. Then we sat with our guests till they left us at liberty to speak to each other. This was the 16th November : the anniversary of our darling Letitia’s birth : and I give it as just one scene of the drama. . . .’

Too soon came the end of that unforgettable month. On the 15th he left her : and next day she was writing to him—cheating her loneliness with the comfort of the written word.

'MY OWN DARLING PRECIOUS HUSBAND,—

'I have kept up bravely till I begin writing to you, and that uproots all my resolutions. Darling, I have never half enough valued you, or done half enough to . . . show how I felt your love. But, oh, if it please God to re-unite us, may I be more of what your wife ought to be. May the presence of the Most High be with you, my beloved. . . .

'Here I am sitting alone at the table where we sat together last evening. *Where* is my Henry? How is he? . . .

'After daylight this morning I slept for an hour; and awoke to feel my loneliness. But I can pray for you, my husband, and thank God that he gave us to each other. . . . It was strange and sad to hear the *Kutcherry* work going on below, and to know that my Henry was not there. . . . I mean to go to the Thomsons on Monday or Tuesday, to get rid of Mr. Bale, whom I feel very much in the way. Everybody *is* in the way when you are out of it. I trust you are resting after your day's ride. The old *Khit* came back and said you had had breakfast at 7 . . . I could have hugged him when I thought he had seen you since I had. When I have put everything here straight, I hope to be very busy. . . .

'Yes, darling, "As the day is, so shall thy strength be" . . . I feel your presence was too absorbing to me, that I worship you, when you are by; and this is doubtless why I am left without you for a time. . . . I have a persuasion, stronger than I can express, that death will not withdraw either of us while we are parted. And with these thoughts, I say good-night. It is a relief to write to you: though I never feel I have said a hundredth part of what I have to say.—It is the poor bird left in the lonely nest, who feels most fully the bitterness of parting. . . .'

Alone, she must bear the pain and disgrace of Afghan news, that went from bad to worse.

In mid-November, Pottinger and young Lieut. Haughton had escaped from the Kohistān, as by a miracle, after holding out for weeks against overwhelming numbers. The story of that brief and terrible siege—in itself an epic—has been told elsewhere;¹ and the only two survivors—

¹ *The Judgment of the Sword.*

Haughton desperately wounded—were welcomed in cantonments ‘as men risen from the dead.’

Ghazni, the great fortress between Kabul and Kandahar—had also been surrounded. Unrepaired, ill-provisioned, manned by a weak sepoy regiment, its chances were slender of holding out for long against Afghan hordes.

By now Honoria was regularly receiving the absent one’s ‘dear, delightful, illegible scrawls,’ in which alone he flung down his unvarnished opinion of men and things.

‘Our Government are regularly crying craven,’ he wrote from Peshawar. ‘They have made up their minds to abandon Ghazni and seem inclined to knuckle under to the Sikhs—as if *this* were the time for being polite.’

And here we have her last two letters to him, in that year of many events, good and ill.

December 26.

‘MY OWN LOVE,—

‘You are now, I hope, close to Peshawar; and I can fancy how your heart is lifting at the prospect of something to do. You will never sink under difficulties, but will always grapple with them. All I can do is to pray the Father of spirits that he will be to you “a spirit of counsel and might, a spirit of wisdom and understanding and the fear of the Lord.” . . . When—*when* shall I be by your side?’

December 31st.

‘The last day of this year, darling. What *will* the next bring forth? The news Captain T. has received is that General Pollock is ordered here, and a large army is to assemble. . . . Mr. Hailes is sitting here now. He has not *yet* told his wife he is going; and they are to march on Monday. When I heard him say this, I felt the value of *your* confidence—my own husband, on whom I can rely and who relies on me. Yes, darling, that is the way to make your wife try to do her part.’

And in far-off Kabul Cantonments, on that last black day of 1841, it must have seemed to the unhappy garrison

that they had reached the zero hour of disaster and dishonour ; paralysed as they were by divided counsels, by military leaders who would do anything but lead. If the Envoy lacked judgment, he had never lacked courage ; but he was notoriously ill served in the hour of peril by his two senior officers : General Elphinstone—ill and indecisive ; Brigadier Shelton—perverse, prejudiced and dogmatic. Each made the other worse. It was as if a malign fate had sent them there together, to ensure the ruin of Lord Auckland's false policy. Even their dispirited troops could not be fully relied on ; and Macnaghten, unable to order them out, was driven to the deadliest of all expedients, trying to buy off an insatiable foe. In vain they looked for any sign of help from Jalālabad, from Kandahar. All things, animate and inanimate, worked sedulously together for evil. And early in December a new and fateful actor appeared on the scene.

Mahomed Akbar Khan, avenger-in-chief, was a man of fine physique and many fine qualities ; but, like all Afghans, ruthless in the day of vengeance, he had vowed to wash out the wrong done to his father in rivers of infidel blood. For the present, it suited him to make a show of treating with the Envoy, who was honest, credulous and in dire straits.

Weeks of bargaining and humiliation, of plotting and counter-plotting, resulted in an ignominious treaty to be ratified at an agreed conference, proposed by Akbar, outside cantonments ; he and his chiefs to meet Macnaghten, with Lawrence, Mackenzie, Trevor and a small escort. It looked like a trap ; but all else had been tried ; and a last appeal for troops, to tackle the chiefs in open fight, was met by the old excuse—they could not be relied on.

So Macnaghten went out to placate the implacable—dauntless to the end.

And the end came swiftly. Argument over details rose to altercation, while Akbar's armed followers stealthily closed in on the British group. Suddenly, in a loud voice, he gave the word : and himself shot Macnaghten through the body, with a pistol presented by his victim only the day

before. Trevor was also killed ; Lawrence and Mackenzie saved by friendly captors and hurried away, uncertain of Macnaghten's fate.

Even that treacherous murder of their Envoy in open daylight scarcely struck a spark of soldierly resentment from the military chiefs. 'Not a gun was fired, not even a company of troops sallied out to rescue or avenge.' It was said, afterwards, that they thought Macnaghten had gone on into the City for further conversation ; and those who remained had no authority to order active measures. The whole Afghan tragedy is a tale of those who would, and could not, pressing brave counsels on seniors who could, and would not, give the orders necessary to salvation.

On Major Eldred Pottinger—still suffering from his Charekar wound—fell the mantle of murdered Macnaghten ; an honour he had neither dreamed of nor desired. He who had vainly warned Macnaghten, who had suffered seriously from the dead Envoy's refusal to face facts, must now suffer the final indignity of carrying on the other's desperate bargaining for the virtual surrender of a British army. But, as Senior Political Officer, he had no choice in the matter ; no better chance of overruling the weakness of Elphinstone, the deadly obstinacy of Shelton. He could only lay his own vigorous views before the General-in-Council ; and his undaunted spirit almost persuaded that gloomy and depressed group of men they must at least die like soldiers. Shelton, alone, remained sullenly immovable. Rigidly he set his face against the 'mad proposal of a fighting retreat' ; effectually quenched the faint response evoked by Pottinger's appeal : and, to his eternal shame—he carried the day.

Pottinger, baffled and out-voted, was not bound to obey these men. But from Shelton he could hope for no real co-operation. His plan of action would be foredoomed. Angered and bitterly mortified, he could do no more than protest, in scathing terms, against dishonourable capitulation. 'The General and five other officers were against him,' wrote Colin Mackenzie long after ; 'and the Hero of Herat was obliged to do the thing that he abhorred.'

IN P E A C E

That black 26th of December was the bitterest day in Pottinger's life. After it—for the few and sad years that remained—he was a changed man.

From the 27th onward, it snowed and snowed and snowed. All things in earth and heaven seemed in league against them. Dark with foreboding ended the year of disgrace, 1841: 'the year that had seen British Generals, in the name of their Government, deliberately lay down their bodies "as the ground and as the street to them that went over" . . . Yet this was but the beginning of sorrows.'¹

¹ *The Judgment of the Sword.*





सत्यमेव जयते

PHASE FOUR
IN WAR
(1842)

*The rock remains after the billows are gone. These are the only
invincible people in the world—this race.*

Walter Page.





सत्यमेव जयते

ON New Year's Day, 1842, Honoria Lawrence was writing to her husband :

' Blessings on my Beloved, this first day of the New Year. May the peace of God which passeth understanding rest upon him ; and, if we live to see it close, may we be together . . . I got yours of the 20th yesterday. The account of Kabul is fearful. Ch, my Henry, our lot was chosen well for us when we did not go to that country. But my thoughts dwell on George and James . . . What *has* become of them ? '

While she wrote of them, they still lived, though they were on the eve of terrible things.

' New Year's Day ! ' wrote Captain Johnson of the Shah's service. ' God grant we may never see such another ! '

For 1842 opened as ominously as 1841 had closed : a leaden sky, a thermometer many degrees below zero, a world shrouded in deep snow, a swirl of ragged flakes, still falling—falling ; Pottinger still vainly repeating, ' Hold Cantonments, or the Bala Hissar. Put no faith in Akbar Khan.' A friendly Afghan brought overtures from Kohistanis, offering to send in provisions, to reach Jalālabad and return with reinforcements, leaving hostages for their good faith ; insisting always, ' The Chiefs will attack you on the march.' Even Shah Shujah sent Lawrence to Elphinstone with the same refrain : ' Once outside, you are dead men.'

The British chiefs, it seemed, were anxious to be dead men : a subject on which they neglected to consult their prospective fellow-corpses. Plucky Lady Sale, who often raged but seldom lamented, chanced to open a copy of Campbell's poems at ' Hohenlinden ' ; and her mind was

haunted by the lines, as prophetic as tragic, that caught her eye :

‘ Few, few shall part where many meet,
The snow shall be their winding sheet
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier’s sepulchre.’

And so it befell—in Mahomed Akbar’s good time.

On the 2nd, Honoria was writing again to her man :

‘ I can manage for a day or two pretty well ; but at other times this separation from you comes over me in all its bitterness—week after week without hearing your voice, without seeing your dear face. My own Henry, when *shall* we meet again—— ? ’

The same cry echoed in her letter to the sister, whose love for Henry almost equalled her own :

‘ Oh, darling Lettice—This is a sore, sore discipline that God sees we require—this terrible separation. I suppose, when we are together, we are too happy for mortals ; each year more and more so. Yet . . . indeed, I could not have wished to hold my Henry back. . . . ’

And Henry, a no less faithful correspondent, was writing to her from Peshawar :

‘ It is true that the Envoy has been murdered. We have little hope that our own brothers are safe. . . . I have not been able to get from Mackeson whether I am to go on or not. . . . Be of good heart, my own noble wife. . . . Your chits are a great comfort, darling. Clerk writes nothing, and we know only from you what is doing at Ferōzpur. You are quite right in all you say, political and military, and all else. I wish the authorities had you at their elbow ! Your own H. M. L.’

Janry. 10th.

‘ MY OWN DARLING WIFE,—

‘ The day has not yet dawned, but I am with you in thought and heart. Your accounts of Alick alarm me

much, but I trust for the best. You will perceive that I anticipated your thought of Sabāthu, or rather we thought it much together. Take him up the hill, if not recovered. Bless you in all you do, or think or say. . . . You will, I know, act for the best, my own beloved. . . . Clearly no help is to be had from the Sikhs so long as we *want it*. . . . They say they are lions (Singh), and so long as we feed them, they'll do wonders !'

His sensitive heart and fiery temper would have burned within him could his mind's eye have seen how it fared, on that very 10th of January, with the starved, frost-bitten rabble that only five days earlier had been the Kabul army. For, inevitably, the force had been attacked within ten miles of its deserted cantonments ; and the awful realities of that nightmare retreat had exceeded the worst that the gloomiest prophet could foretell. The grim story of wholesale massacre has been graphically told in Kaye's *Afghan War*, in journals of the few who lived to record its horrors, and in my own earlier book, *The Judgment of the Sword*. But even a bare record is terrible enough to haunt the mind and stagger belief.

Not until the 6th of January did the humiliated Kabul force receive from Akbar the provisions and escort that enabled them to set out on their doomed march. Those days of waiting had already demoralised the troops. Even officers were left without a stick of firewood : Lady Sale's last few meals were cooked with the wood of her own dinner-table. On the night of the 5th, her son-in-law—John Sturt, R.E.—wrote a few significant lines to Sir Robert Sale : 'Dissensions run high among the rebels. The Shah's party gains ground . . . and yet—we march to-morrow ! . . . Man will not help us—God only can.'

But, during that awful week, God himself seemed to have turned his face from them.

Throughout they were hampered by two fatal obstacles, the curse of delay and the curse of camp followers—three times their number. And the frozen snow lay four feet deep. With them went thirty English women and children ;

two expectant mothers, two carrying infants three weeks old. Even the normally cheerful heart of George Lawrence sank under certainty that they were a doomed force.

Five miles they had covered in eight hours. No hope of reaching by nightfall the first and most formidable of the four defiles that lay between them and Jalālabad. In the snow, under a freezing sky, they bivouacked anyhow, anywhere. No food, no shelter, no baggage : one tangled mass of misery : the ladies and children remaining in their doolies wretchedly enough.

On again at dawn : the enemy steadily increasing on both flanks : charging playfully into the baggage column ; adding to mere confusion the cries and groans of the wounded. Not till sunset did they reach the mouth of the Khurd Kabul Pass ; its pedestals of jagged rock looming black against a blood-red sky. Here the snow was deeper, the frost keener— 12° below zero—the misery and confusion heightened tenfold. And now, to rejoice in their plight, came Mahomed Akbar Khan, with smooth words and reproaches to the General that they had started without waiting for the full escort detailed to save them from the fury of the Ghilzais : as though they had not waited hours and days too long already.

And while they slept—or lay sleepless, frozen to the bone—more Ghilzais were massed along the heights of the Pass ready to receive them on the morrow, to enjoy such an orgie of slaughter as Allah had not sent them for many a long day. From crests and crags, they watched that unwieldy mass of men and animals surging and stumbling through the narrow defile, over broken stones and boulders, crossing and re-crossing the ice-cold river, that had carved its way through those basalt ranges—as it were to guard Kabul from the outer world.

The cold within the Pass seemed to freeze the blood in their veins. Men's beards and ponies' manes were soon shaggy with icicles, the legs of all coated in ice. All attempts at keeping order among the troops was baffled by their wretched camp followers—terrified, frost-bitten, snow-blind ; entangling themselves with skeleton regiments to the fury of their officers and the distraction of their men.

Stealthily the cliffs closed in on them ; and the Ghilzais above were ready. From crags and crevices bullets rained. From lateral gorges more Ghilzais, and yet more, rushed out with naked knives into that Glen of Slaughter. English women and children—shrinking with fear, hiding their eyes from inescapable horrors—passed on through the rain of bullets, as if shielded by some unseen hand. Lady Sale alone—riding pluckily with the advance guard and a few friendly Afghan chiefs—was favoured with three bullets through her *poshteen*, one slightly wounding her arm.

In the narrow centre of the Pass, baggage, treasure and followers were crammed together in one congested mass. British soldiers, frost-bitten and half starved, suffered Afghans to snatch the muskets from their hands. Only the Gunners—a famous troop—surpassed their own fine record in defence of their two remaining guns. Before the first had to be spiked, the whole crew lay dead around it. The second one they managed to drag on. Fighting was vain. Retreat had become a rout. To escape—to escape from the horror of those death-dealing cliffs was the one instinctive aim of all. . . .

Behind them they left three thousand dead and wounded, tumbled stacks of baggage and ammunition. And again they bivouacked in the open : a night of paralysing cold on Khurd Kabul plateau, twelve hundred feet above the mouth of the Pass. Into three small tents were packed thirty men and women, lying in thick snow, since none had energy to clear it away. In one of the tents John Sturt lay mortally wounded. Beside him, through the night, sat his young wife, who was expecting her first child, with plucky Lady Sale, buttoned up in her *poshteen*. And in the first gleam of daylight—he died.

It was a marvel that any survived that fearsome night. And those who awoke, half frozen, to face fresh horrors, must have looked enviously at the dead. Not till then was it clearly seen how that betrayed and battered force had dwindled, in three days—by slaughter, frost and desertion—from four thousand five hundred to barely a thousand men ; at least one-third of them unfit for action. Mahomed Akbar—

apologising for uncontrollable Ghilzais—had done his work well. And on this miserable Sunday morning of the 9th, he assumed, for his own purpose, a new rôle of chivalrous concern for the women and children, 'those dogs of Ghilzais' being completely out of hand.

To Pottinger, Lawrence and Mackenzie—the three Politicals—he now suggested that the married families and wounded should be placed in his care. He would be responsible for their safety, and would send them under escort to Jalālabad. To men firmly convinced of his perfidy, it was a startling proposition : yet the women's plight was pitiful beyond words. They had scarcely tasted a meal since leaving Kabul ; and with that incalculable man there was always an off-chance of sincerity ; the more so that his own wife and family were in British hands. In the desperate circumstances, Lawrence and Pottinger reluctantly decided to accept his offer : and the women themselves were too utterly exhausted to do otherwise than comply. With them went their husbands and two wounded bachelors, by way of protection for the widowed ; Pottinger, Lawrence and Mackenzie being retained as hostages for Sale's compliance with Akbar's order to evacuate Jalālabad.

So, for a time, Henry's beloved elder brother was out of danger. But James Marshall went on with the broken remnant of Elphinstone's army, to be killed—as were most of the officers—in the fearsome Jagdalak Pass. For there, in the narrowest part, the Ghilzais had set up a strong barrier, stiffened with holly oak, and there they planned to complete the feast of slaughter. Against that barrier men and horses hurled themselves in vain, while the cliffs above rained death. Before a corner of the barrier gave way, ten officers were killed, and those that remained flung themselves pell-mell through the gap, down towards the river.

In Jagdalak Pass, the Kabul army practically ceased to be. The few who struggled on up to the Gandammak plateau defended themselves in the open with desperate valour, till all were dead or wounded : sixteen thousand slaughtered in one week. A record, even for Afghanistan. Yet there still remained a very few who had broken away to try another

route, if so be they might reach Jalālabad with their incredible tale. Even these were finally reduced to one wounded horse and man—Dr. Brydon, whose name lives for ever by the mere accident of that survival.

Half dazed, he struggled on, till he was seen from the walls of Jalālabad, where a party of officers were anxiously watching for Elphinstone's ghostly army. Only the day before they had heard of the fatal retreat, of Akbar's murderous incitement to their own local investing chiefs, his insolent demand for surrender : and although some of them still refused to believe the worst, one—Colonel Dennie—had strangely prophesied the truth. None, he said, would reach Jalālabad except a solitary horseman to tell the tale of destruction.

And now, as they levelled their glasses on that one tragical figure, Dennie's words were like the echo of an oracle, 'Didn't I say so? Here comes the messenger.'



THAT was on January the 13th : and on the 14th, Honoria was writing in grief to Henry, having only just heard of Macnaghten's murder, of George Lawrence and Mackenzie captured— not knowing what might have followed after.

'I think of our brothers, perhaps now murdered, or kept alive for torture ; and all the women and children. What the husbands and fathers must feel, maybe meeting their own fate, leaving their wives and little ones in the hands of those ruffians. Yet, darling, though I know not how to bear sorrow without you, I would not have you back. If you were still here with these tidings coming in, I know how you would champ the bit. I never remember a feeling like vengeance before ; but now I *do* feel it rising in me against such traitors——'

And again on the 16th, looking vainly for better news : comforted only by a line from Henry :

'Yours of the 8th came in yesterday, dearest. You are very good to write so often ; and such letters from *such* a husband do comfort me more than anything else on earth. I still have hopes for those at Kabul. Had a massacre taken place, after Major Pottinger wrote, the news must surely have come. . . . But again, when I read your desponding letter, and know how little you are given to look on the worst side, my heart sinks within me. . . . Yes, darling, the psalms last Sunday (9th) were very apt ; those for to-day even more so. How little our friends, reading them at home, can guess the sad reality of those words to our hearts.

'I could not help smiling yesterday, in the midst of my distress, when I said indignantly, "I do *not* think there would be any harm in smothering the C.-C.¹" And Mrs.

¹ Commander-in-Chief.

Thomson, rather shocked, said—"If it would only please God to send him an apoplectic fit"! . . .

'Since beginning this letter we have had service; and the psalms did indeed seem written for us, especially the 12th verse of the 79th.

More uncannily apt than even she could realise was the whole of that psalm to the plight of those unhappy prisoners, of whom, as yet, she knew nothing. . . .

Promised safe conduct to Jalālabad, they had found themselves instead hurried off, through ever wilder, fiercer country, towards the valley of Lughman; treated with rough courtesy it is true, but fearful for the future. Permitted to halt on Sunday—by Moslems, who set religious observance above humanity—they were assembled that morning in the courtyard of a primitive fort, where George Lawrence conducted a simple service; two prayer books and a Bible being found among them. For homily, he chose the first psalm of the day, that might have been spoken straight from his heart. Women who had borne themselves bravely through the worst, broke into stifled sobs as Lawrence read those tragically appropriate words:

'The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat to the fowls of the air. . . .

'Their blood have they shed like water on every side: and there was no man to bury them. . . .

'We are become an open shame to our enemies: an open scorn and derision to them that are round about us.

'O remember not our old sins, but have mercy on us and that soon; for we are come in great misery. . . .

'O let the sorrowful sighing of the prisoners come before thee: according to the greatness of thy power, preserve thou them that are appointed to die.'

The Afghans, hearing fresh sobs, must have wondered in what fashion those infidels prayed to their God.

And while the elder Lawrence was solacing his fellow-prisoners in the day of disaster, Henry was, as usual, making

his personality tell on everyone with whom he had dealings. Very soon he had been recognised as the leading man in Wild's camp ; always hopeful and resourceful, eager for any decisive move to retrieve the honour of England's arms. Clerk, in choosing him, had given him a large discretion : and, in the words of his biographer, 'it was difficult to keep Henry Lawrence, armed with discretionary powers, from securing the lion's share of all activities within his reach.'

The chief of these, linking up his Sikhs with Wild's impromptu brigade, proved both distracting and dangerous : the Sikhs flouting their own officers ; the sepoys openly funkng the Khyber Pass. An unpleasant incident with one of the regiments—the men refusing their pay, demanding increased allowances for Afghan service—would have flared into open mutiny, had not Lawrence dissuaded Wild from using the 'whiff of grape shot' argument. And next morning he himself—in his own inimitable fashion—persuaded the men to accept their pay.

He had arrived full of zeal to make things move ; but at every turn his zeal was checked, his temper tried by the many elements of a maddening situation : an ill-organised force, disaffected troops, disheartened officers, and Sikhs frankly out of hand : Sale from beyond the Pass calling, 'Come on' ; Wild hampered for lack of camels and reliable guns. To crown all, came the terrible news of Elphinstone's army destroyed by Akbar : of Jalālabad hard pressed by local investing chiefs.

The news spurred Wild into a premature attempt at forcing the Khyber, that ended in lamentable failure. The Sikhs, at the last moment, turned tail and marched straight back to Peshawar. The sepoys, ignominiously defeated, retired 'with unseemly haste' to Jamrud ; Wild himself was badly wounded. All hope of reaching Jalālabad without fresh troops was at an end. Lawrence—raging at the sense of failure, of inability to help—wrote of it all, in frank disgust, to his wife : 'I was General, Gunner, pioneer and Cavalry, at different times ; and no doubt will be well abused by all. . . . With a few exceptions, there is not a

man with head or heart in the force. Pollock will bring some, I trust.'

With the coming of General George Pollock a new actor was to appear on the scene ; an actor possessing just the right calmness of mind and temper for the part he was called upon to play in the last act of the Afghan tragedy. For unhappy Lord Auckland had been pressed by George Clerk into the assembling of yet another army : a force that was to enter Afghanistan by the Khyber, to retrieve British honour and British prisoners—Akbar permitting. On the right generalship of that army hung the whole final issue : and probably none was more surprised at the appointment than the quiet General of Bengal Artillery commanding at Agra—seeing that he was neither the oldest man available, nor in the Queen's Army, nor connected with the oldest English families : ' his descent '—in Edwardes' phrase—' being merely from Adam.' But for once the square peg was placed in the right hole. A man of no shining qualities, Pollock was dowered with a kindly heart, a just mind and a serene equanimity, essential at a time of nervous tension, when all India—British and Asiatic—was looking either for complete catastrophe, or for the peculiarly English triumph of victory plucked from defeat.

For weeks he was marching up through the Punjab with inadequate reinforcements, and a purpose in his heart that was not to be shaken by any attack of nerves, whether in Jamrud or in Government House.

Never—even before the Mutiny—was the whole fabric of British India in graver danger than in that critical spring of 1842.

AND now the pendulum swings from history-making in Jamrud Camp to daily life in a bungalow at Ferōzpur—swings from Henry to Honoria and back again, as it needs must during that year of reluctant separation. Honoria, left to play her solitary part, had only the comfort of his constant chits, scribbled on any odd scrap of paper, and her one unfailing resource—pen or pencil.

‘Your regular letters, dearest,’ she wrote on the 17th, ‘are such a comfort. Separation would be far worse if the *dāk* failed us. I promise you not to be frightened if I do not hear regularly ; but while I *do*, I feel as if nothing could make me quite unhappy. Oh, if I were only a man, or could multiply myself into a hundred men. . . . Probably the Sikhs and Afghans will come to blows about possessions the former have seized. We shall side with the Sikhs, lick the Afghans, and become paramount in the Punjab. With this in view, we ought now to do *anything* to rescue those that are in the lion’s jaws. . . . Alick is, I hope, going on well, but is dreadfully peevish. Though so much recovered, I still feel how very precarious his state is. But while you remain, my own beloved, no blow could altogether crush me. . . .’

And again on the 20th, having heard that he would probably not go on :

‘My own love, yours of the 13th and 14th both in to-day. Indeed—though you may hardly believe it of your wife !—I am as much disappointed as yourself that you are to remain at Peshawar ; though I still think and hope you will go on. You would have been in your glory ; and I feel as if you bore a charmed life. . . .’

‘My own beloved, I write all this bravery with tears in my eyes. . . . Will our peaceful happy hours *ever* return ?’

She was living now with a Captain and Mrs. Thomson,

in Cantonments, while her apathetic young brother stayed on alone in the empty bungalow, spending a few hours daily at the Post Office, to fit him for an opening, that would at least give him £200 a year. Not till the 23rd did she hear, through George Clerk, of that grim retreat and massacre ; the death of James, and the capture of George, by Akbar Khan.

‘ My husband,’ she wrote on that sad Sunday—‘ what tidings are these that have just reached us. . . . This is *indeed* fearful. Oh, the wives and children, returning into the very jaws of the lion. . . . No human deliverance seems possible for them. . . . My Henry, what are *you* doing in the midst of it all? Your duty, I know ; and you have the courage to do it in a secondary place, in a different sphere from the one you would have selected. With what unalloyed delight I dwell on that certainty. . . . There can be no complete misery, while a wife can feel thus about her husband. . . .’

And with that incredible news fresh upon her, she wrote also to her dearest Mary Cameron :

‘ . . . The papers must have shown you the fearful reverses our arms have experienced in Afghanistan, how the whole country rose against us, and the scenes of blood that have been enacted. Oh ! Mary, if you could see the woe that prevails : the widows and fatherless, the sickening suspense, the anguish when a brief despatch arrives, enumerating the victims. . . . You cannot, in your land of peace, conceive the horrors of war. . . . I am unfit for writing : and have a load of letters to answer, most of them enquiries about husbands, brothers and sons, of whom it is supposed that Henry may know something ; all to be answered with the same heart-withering intelligence. I feel as if I were shooting arrows in every direction. . . .’

On the 27th Henry was writing to her of the disaster, that filled all minds in northern India, during those early months of 1842.

‘ I look upon George as no more of this world ; and I cannot but think the same of all except Brydon. . . . May

they have found mercy in heaven, if not on earth. . . . If we try to recover our influence and a sufficient force is sent, I am quite willing to take my share. If not (and such I suspect is the case) I will be glad to get back to Ferōzpur . . . to leave this focus of imbecility, where . . . every man is against one for trying to make him do his duty.'

On the 30th there was news of the prisoners, but little hope. 'All are counting on Pollock. Don't fear for me, or think I expose myself unnecessarily. I do not. I am mindful of you, of my boy and of myself.'

And she, on the 30th, was answering his assurances in characteristic fashion :

'No, my own husband, I do *not* think you forget wife and child when you fly about. I need not tell of my prayers for your safety ; but I never wish you safe by keeping out of the way. I rejoice you are there with your energy and sense ; if I could but be a button on your sleeve, I never would wish you to come away. I saw a letter from Mr. Mayne to Captain Thomson giving fearful details—which first brought home to me the actual horrors. . . .

'Who talked of *your* force turning back ? God forbid that such counsel should prevail. . . . I would not see you back to-morrow on such terms. Believe me, dearest, that this is my real feeling, however my heart may fail with looking for my love.—Why have we not one like Moses, to sound in every ear, "Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward." "Be strong, quit you like men." Yet however we may blame individuals, I fear our cause in that country did not deserve to prosper. It was *not just*. . . .

'My days pass in busy idleness. I am too sick at heart for reading or writing much ; so I follow my old trade of taking things out of one box and putting them into another, and fancying I am occupied. Tim is as good and sweet as he can be.'

On the 3rd she was writing to Letitia Hayes, then travelling in Italy with John Lawrence and his new-made wife.

'Your letter from Florence, dearest sister, was more than usually a cordial in this fearful time: and you are the only person to whom I *can* write without constraint of our Henry, who now, in absence, fills my heart, if possible, more than when we have the happiness of being together. . . . Each year I feel but beginning to estimate him. There is such simplicity in his goodness . . . that no one but ourselves (and perhaps Mamma) understands the full beauty of his character. His mind is like a house, in which the commonest vessels are of gold; and their value is hardly known, till we look at the stuff others are made of. Darling creature, I may take this one advantage of his absence to say what I would not say if he were here.'

To Henry on the 6th, she was apologising for

'the shabby wee bits of letters I have sent you in the last two days. But writing to you in a hurry is like talking to you before strangers. I cannot go deep; or say the thousand things my heart is saying to you all day long. . . .

'So now I have taken this quiet evening hour, and try to fancy I see you in your tent, that we are talking over all events and feelings. When shall we again have our nightly consultations, when I think we always came to the best decisions? You are well and safe; you are my own faithful love; and this ought to satisfy me . . . but it *won't*. I can only be but a poor less-than-half while my love is away.

'Do you know anything—does *anyone* know anything—about what is to be done in Afghanistan? I have been thinking—if we are to have any Indian Empire, we must have the Punjab as tributary, and make the Indus our frontier. Wisest to let the Afghans fight out their own case, while we strengthen our position. Another reverse would leave us very little to fight for. . . .

'It is so hard to realise a calamity like that of Kabul, which has not come before one's eyes. I often think of it all as something that happened hundreds of years ago—not to people whom we saw so short a time since, healthy and happy.—And, for the hundredth time, I ask—what is my darling doing to-day? . . . I am but now *beginning* to feel your absence. The first few weeks, it was but what I often had before; and, in spite of myself, I kept expect-

ing you. But when I count by months, and see the time for my going to the hills draw near, without any prospect of your return, I am sad indeed. Dearest, I ought not to say a word to do anything but cheer you ; and I do not often shirk, nor do I ever wish you had not gone.

‘Whatever be the end, you are right in being where you are. . . . Do not imagine, darling, that I think your wish to go on any sign that you do not want to be back with your wife. . . . No, my husband, it would be my pride and delight to think that you were even a better soldier since you had a wife and son. God forbid I should throw any obstacle in your road.’

Unfailingly those gallant letters heartened her absent husband, impatient for some vigorous move : hotly resenting the apparent indifference of Calcutta to the fate of far-off prisoners, who might all be massacred any day, should it happen to suit Akbar’s policy. Yet Calcutta was not indifferent. It was merely in a state of transition. Lord Auckland himself—an honest man, misled—had been prostrated by the disaster and failure that clouded the end of his inglorious reign ; but until Lord Ellenborough landed in February, no definite Afghan policy could emerge. And Lawrence, the impatient, wrote frankly to his wife : ‘It is difficult to know what our Government—if we *have* a Government !—will do. They now magnanimously blame Mackeson and me for Wild’s failure. Beautiful, isn’t it? . . . I have told Clerk that—if I could do it with credit—I would resign.’

How seriously he considered that fatal impulse may be judged by her reply :

‘As to your quitting the Political, my own husband, I know not what to say. Often I have wished you had not entered it ; but at this time of day I should be reluctant for you to desert it. I do not put up very patiently with your being snubbed ; but is there any position under Government in which you would not be liable to the same ? Or is there any active servant of Government who has not met with his share of misunderstanding and injustice ?’

Lawrence—destined to suffer a fair share of both—was temperamentally unfitted to endure either with any approach to equanimity. In this case, her sane words, or his own ambition, saved him from a false step on the threshold of greater things. But apart from the frets of practising patience, he longed for the free hand, the initiative he had used so effectively at Ferōzpur.

‘You ask of my work,’ he wrote, ‘I have *none*. No charge. Not any thing : yet always busy at something . . . I do not feel as if I was to go on ; and if it is only to bring off Sale, there is little inducement.’ For his mind was haunted by the plight of the prisoners, by the ill-effects of a war that had ‘destroyed our reputation for good faith and the prestige of our invincibility !’ He had met Pollock at the Indus ; had offered his help as ‘clerk, aide-de-camp, artillery man, Q.M.G. or pioneer.’ But the main difficulty always was the half-hearted support of the Sikhs. Neither their Army nor their Court had any real wish to help the English out of a calamity that might break their power in India. ‘The lion was in the toils at last. If the mice only held aloof, he might die.’

Seldom has an English force been placed in a more critical dilemma, seldom has a General encountered conditions more disheartening than those which greeted Pollock at Peshawar. A thousand to eighteen hundred men and officers on the sick list. Day by day worse details filtering down from Kabul, increasing the sepoy’s holy terror of the Khyber Pass : a situation to daunt the boldest. But Pollock, if inwardly dismayed, grappled with it in his own wise, unspectacular fashion. Seeing that half the trouble in hospital was a sickness of the spirit, he spent more time there than on the denuded parade grounds ; and his kindly encouragement, his concern for the men’s comfort, cured more cases than the casual doctoring of the day ; speedily revived the natural courage of men who were no cowards. More serious than sickness was the prevailing disaffection fostered by the Sikhs ; and Pollock, innately cautious, would not be hustled by impatient Politicals into another premature advance with unreliable troops.

Throughout those dangerous weeks no officer helped him more zealously than Henry Lawrence, whose tireless energy drew an apt tribute from one of the General's staff: 'He seems to mount the first flash of lightning that happens to be going his way: and when you fancy him forty miles off—behold him at your side.' Yet, do what he would, the Sikhs remained hostile; and as spokesman of Clerk, he had his work cut out, his temper roused, his Irish pride galled by constantly 'eating dirt.' 'Such scoundrels'—he wrote to Honoria—'can only be dealt with by one who is ready to cut off noses first, and ask why afterwards—'

Yet he continued to deal with them, in his own fashion: and months afterwards he reaped his reward.

So much for one side of the Khyber.

On the other side, Sale's garrison still stoutly held its own; while rations dwindled and the enemy increased and no cloud of dust appeared on the Peshawar road. Broadfoot and his Sappers worked ceaselessly at the defences, till the place was reported 'secure against any army lacking guns.'

But Afghanistan had other weapons at command. On the 19th, when all was ready, a deep, unmistakable rumbling shook the ground under their feet. The earth trembled and heaved. Loud explosions rent the hills. Ramparts tottered and crumpled up as if a giant had kicked them down in passing. Terrified natives and animals bolted from one danger to another. Half the town was in ruins; yet, strangely, none of the garrison was killed and few injured.

Broadfoot's only comment on the wreck of his achievement was typical of the man. 'Now,' he remarked, 'is the time for Akbar.'

But Akbar—possibly appalled by the worst upheaval in living memory—made no move for more than a week. The Sappers, undeterred by lesser rumblings and explosions, were at work again next day; and when Akbar did advance on the 26th, Abbott's guns were able to keep him at a respectful distance. There, however, he held his ground, and occupied all commanding heights. The investment of Jalālabad was complete. Letters to Pollock became more

urgent than ever ; but not all his distress at their plight could induce him to attempt a forward move till the arrival of reinforcements—now marching up through the Punjab—should supply him with ‘ more white faces,’ more reliable troops.

And early in March, Henry was writing to Honoria :

‘ The orders of Government are to bring off the Jalālabad force. Not a word of the prisoners. We shall see the result. . . . The General says I am not to go on. . . . ’

By return *dāk*—a matter of nearly three weeks—she replied :

‘ My own dearest husband, I was wakened last night by the arrival of yours of the 5th. You may judge, darling, of my hopes and fears. It would be very hot for you returning in May and June. But the transporting thought of our being once more together swallows up every other. Dearest, I have tried hard to be a soldier’s wife and set aside my own feelings where your profession is concerned. So you must forgive me if I am only a wife when I think of your possible return . . . of our being together at Kasauli.’

But Lawrence, dearly though he loved her, would have preferred to spend that summer in Afghanistan. Disappointed of his ambitions, he begged one favour of the General : ‘ I hope you will allow me to see the other side of the Pass (rather an Irish way of “ not going on ” !), or at any rate to show the way down to the entrance ’ ; a plea that the elder Gunner could not resist. And Lawrence knew that, once through the Khyber, any chance of special service might enable him to go on by instalments. He might even reach Kabul, if Pollock’s quieter form of persistence equalled his own.

In the interval he committed the rare extravagance of buying a valuable shawl for Honoria : and confessed his sin to her like a boy caught stealing apples.

‘ What do you think I have done, dearest, to-day ? I’ve made you a present ; the only one perhaps—except of myself and the little red handkerchief in Calcutta. It is

a shawl for which I have paid six hundred and sixty-three Rupees, said to be worth a thousand. It is green with a deep border on it, and will make my old wife look respectable. Don't be angry ; I don't often do such things. . . .

'Your own
'H. M. L.'

And still Jalālabad held out, while Akbar tightened his hold, yet strangely failed to strike again. The middle of March brought disquieting news that the city and fortress of Ghazni had gone the way of Kabul : a minor tragedy terrible enough for those who lived through it. The surrender did not improve matters, either at Jalālabad or Peshawar, where Pollock still patiently waited for 'more white faces.' Not until the 30th of March did Gunners and Dragoons at last enter his camp : and, at sight of them, a glow of hope and courage pervaded all ranks.

On the 31st the army marched from Peshawar to Jamrud, Mackeson having bargained with the Afridis for an unopposed passage through the Pass. But at Jamrud, rain fell in torrents : Afridis haggled over their price : camel-drivers deserted wholesale : and at sight of that awesome defile, many miserable scpoys followed suit.

By way of a finishing touch, the wily Akbar Khan—still keeping a finger on Sale's throat—chose that moment to appear on the far side of Ali Musjid with eight hundred men and two guns. At once the Afridis threw up their bargain ; and Pollock coolly decided to force the Pass.

On the 4th, Lawrence was scribbling a line to Honoria :

'To-morrow *certainly* Pollock advances : and the Sikhs really look as if they would help.

'Your own
'H. M. L.'

ON that night of April 4th, 1842, great issues were at stake. All hung on the initial success of capturing Ali Musjid, the key of the Khyber. The Afridis, quit of their bargain, had built a mighty barrier of stones and felled trees just within the mouth of the Pass ; hoping thus to throw Pollock's force into confusion, while they fired on it safely from above. But his timely discovery of their practical joke had enabled him to plan a counter-move of his own. And that night his orders were stringent. 'No fires, no bugle, no beat of drums.' Only the clang, clang of camp bells, telling the hour, could not be hushed—

By half-past two the whole camp was astir, and Pollock went to seek out Lawrence—who had won leave to work his guns at the mouth of the Pass. Entering the small tent, he found his invaluable Gunner sitting up in bed, vomiting and deathly pale, apparently in the first stages of cholera. Grieved and dismayed, he could only speak a few encouraging words, and depart, with small hope of seeing Lawrence alive again.

The opening move must be carried through without its leading spirit. But he had his 'white faces' ; and the sepoys were repaying him now for all his patient encouragement in their dark hour. While his army clanked and rumbled over two miles of stony hillocks, the Afridis, up aloft, slept at their posts, confiding in British stupidity that was to give them the surprise of their lives.

In the grey of earliest morning, Pollock halted his main column, and pushed forward two flanking parties to scale the commanding heights. The Afridis, caught unawares, were driven from their pickets, after a fierce struggle ; their impassable barrier taken in reverse. Terrible wild-cat yells and flying figures told those below that they were

rushing to crown further points of vantage for musket and knife.

Now was the moment for artillery ; and Pollock, regretting the stricken Lawrence, suddenly saw with amazement, a long, lean, unmistakable figure cantering to and fro, helping the guns into position—as arranged. Before he could believe his eyes, up cantered the man he had left at death's door, pale and gaunt still, and obviously ill, but—in his own opinion—fit for duty. Like his resolute brother, a few years earlier, he had no time for dying when there was urgent work to be done. For several hours he served with the guns that swept the hills, while the Sappers tore a passage through the broken barrier ; and Pollock's ponderous centre column passed unhindered between towering rock-walls, 'moving inch by inch to certain victory.'

But it was Mackeson, the senior Political, who would be 'there to see.' Always some invisible hand seemed to pull Lawrence back from Afghanistan. But he would reach it yet : and, even from afar, he would do all he could for the avenging force.

By noon on the 5th, he was back in dismal, deserted Jamrud ; not prostrated, as he might have been, but writing of it all to George Clerk. Next day he was again at the Pass, hustling the cumbersome baggage column, arranging for a Sikh regiment to hold the entrance, to send water on for the troops. Riding forward himself, with a few horsemen, he actually reached Pollock's camp, within sight of Ali Musjid, now empty of the enemy. Staggered by their swift defeat, balked of plunder and blackmail, the Afridis had at last been moved by avarice to descend and screw the best terms they could out of Mackeson, for the important service of keeping the Khyber open, and keeping Pollock in touch with Peshawar.

Back went Lawrence, without seeing an Afridi on the road, and scribbled a half-sheet to his wife, that crossed hers from Ludhiāna, where she was halting on her way to Kasauli.

'I never think,' she wrote, 'that my sheets have half as much *sus* in them as your scraps, my precious Henry.

But it is my nature to be diffuse ; and you like me as I am. . . . I can, in some measure, fancy the bustle you are in ; and when I spend my still quiet hours, I long to shed some of the same stillness on you. Can I ever hope we shall again enjoy such a tranquil time together as we did at Kasauli. . . . Imagine the anxiety with which I look for news. . . . Dearest, remember that now I have no intelligence except from yourself ; no particulars, except what you give—'

And Henry, next day, was writing from the Sikh camp, 'on two very uncomfortable waifs of foolscap' :

'I am with General Court, who—with all his Sikhs—behaved like a hero. We are all very affectionate ! I came out here twice yesterday. I look on it that we may now go on to Jalālabad, if not to Kabul, unmolested. God grant it may be the means to liberate our captive friends. . . .'

He did not think it necessary to tell her that the second time he rode out to Ali Musjid the Afridis had sufficiently recovered from their defeat to waylay him and kill two horses of his small escort. If he ran a few extra risks, during his time at Jamrud, it was in no spirit of rashness, but from sheer zeal to promote the success of so great an operation by 'a hundred intelligent, thoughtful acts,' which others might not have time to carry out. It is precisely in such seemingly trivial ways that great character is often revealed : 'the spontaneous, over-and-above solitudes, the services which no authority asks you to do, and none will ever thank you for doing . . . which the true man sees he can do, and does accordingly "with singleness of heart."'

And Lawrence, having done all these and more also, suffered a perverse tweak of disappointment because Pollock's victorious despatch thanked him only for 'very great assistance' as a Political. Had he not almost risen from the dead in order once more to 'serve with the Blues' ? Writing to Pollock's Military Secretary about certain officers not named in the despatch, he ventured to add, 'When the General addresses the Commander-in-Chief, I shall be glad if he says : "Captain Lawrence served with the guns."'

On the 14th he was writing with frank, if humorous, relish to Honoria of another tribute from Clêrk, on whose high opinion he rightly set great store :

'The *dāk* here is a vast nullah, indeed a *sink*. I'm surprised you get so many letters. I'll number them from to-day. This is No. 1, an extract from Clerk : "Don't be disheartened that Government has been cross and stingy. All along this frontier praises are loud of your exertions, alacrity and spirit. The whole of this I reckoned on when I sent you, as Government knew. But it is gratifying to me to observe that you are praised everywhere, in the way which I well know is so much deserved." Very fine, is it not? Wonderful what soft snobs we are ; and how we like butter even better than bread ! . . .'

By the 16th he was at Peshawar, as sole British representative, watching the effect on the Sikhs of every fresh move in the north—and acting accordingly. More welcome than all was news from Jalālabad that the hard-pressed garrison had wrought its own deliverance in spirited fashion.

Late on the 5th, it seemed, word of Pollock's victory had reached Akbar, who had promptly issued a circumstantial rumour of defeat with heavy slaughter, and another revolution at Kabul ; had confirmed it by firing a royal salute, hoping the double event would depress a garrison, five months besieged, into prompt surrender or flight. But he had reckoned without the invincible spirit of Sale's commanding officers, who had resolved to deliver themselves, or die in the attempt. General Sale, though a very brave soldier, had actually raised objections and even lost his temper—to no purpose. They had laid all their plans for a bold surprise attack at dawn : and at dawn they had marched out—eighteen hundred of all arms—to face Akbar's six thousand. The Sirdar could scarcely believe his own pickets, when they reported that British troops were streaming out of the two main gates—not in flight, but in battle array.

That unexpected turning of the worm had caught him unawares and flung his whole vast camp into confusion. By seven of the morning, his thousands were in full flight,

his camp in flames, his standards, horses and four British guns brought in triumph to Jalālabad, by the handful of troops who had proved, for more than the hundredth time, 'the inestimable effect of vigour and boldness, however dark the outlook.' They regretted only the personal escape of Akbar Khan, fearing that the prisoners might pay for his defeat with their lives.

So it came to pass that when Pollock, ten days later, camped within seven miles of them, they marched out, bands playing, colours flying, to greet no deliverer but a fellow-victor, who had fought his way, with small loss, through the Castle gate of Afghanistan.

On that very 15th, Akbar's hapless prisoners—hurriedly removed from Budiabad—were encamped in a field of spring flowers: the same field where once they had bivouacked in blood-stained snow. And the great news, when it reached them, awakened a crazy hope that a victorious army might be marching to their rescue, while they tramped through drenching rain to a small fort at Tazīn. But in place of a rescuing force, came rumours so alarming that, a week later, they were hustled off again to another fort higher up the valley; Mrs. Waller, with a baby of two days old, bundled into a camel pannier slung on a pole; poor dying General Elphinstone, hoisted on to a saddle and supported by two soldier servants.

But if Akbar, for his own ends, hustled them here and there, they were still treated with rough courtesy; and it was known that he had angered his chiefs by refusing to kill them all outright—from no humane scruples. Dead, they would be carrion. Alive, they might be worth money. More: he had a father and a wife or two in British hands at Calcutta. In exchange for these he would gladly have rendered up every tiresome prisoner of them all, could he only come to reasonable terms with these pestilential intruders, whose dead pause, on the heels of victory, bewildered him utterly. But, without Olympian sanction, Pollock could make no decisive move; and the sanction, impatiently awaited, had not yet been received.

True, Lord Ellenborough had started well, with an

Afghan proclamation insisting on the need for some signal 'decisive blow' to restore the supremacy of British arms ; but too soon he had cut loose from his Calcutta council and its seasoned advice. Too soon his military ardour had been quenched by news of a sharp reverse to Brigadier England, marching up with reinforcements for Kandahar. Hence, immediate orders to Nott and Pollock, bidding them withdraw, as soon as might be, from Afghanistan. No word of Kabul or the prisoners, or the 'decisive blow' that was to couple departure with victory.

The sensations of both Generals may be imagined. Nott—a resolute and peppery soldier—had confidently counted on going forward in the spring. Pollock—far from peppery, yet no less resolute—went on collecting carriage and provisions, with quiet resolve in his heart. Clerk, the bold and statesmanlike Political, had already offered his uncalled-for opinion that 'to produce the proper signal effect on India, the city of Kabul should be laid in ruins by a British force.'

But Lord Ellenborough was little disposed, now or ever, to heed the unasked opinion of a Political Officer. His mind, at once able and unstable, was warped by a peculiar prejudice against the Political service—one of the finest in the land : but he drew more discredit on himself than on a fine body of officers, when he dismissed Clerk as a 'meddlesome amateur,' or wrote airily of Lawrence and Mackeson as 'foolish, hare-brained young men'; both being over thirty-five with twenty years' service behind them. Inevitably they tended to see the thorny Afghan question as paramount ; while Ellenborough was beset by half a dozen other problems of equal urgency. Those April victories, however welcome, could not disguise the fact that his Afghan military position was an utterly false one. Nor did he, yet, even trust his Generals. From the time of Brigadier England's defeat, he became a man of one idea—to withdraw every soldier at the first possible moment, from that ill-fated country, Afghanistan.

FOR three months Pollock remained unwillingly rooted at Jalālabad ; Henry Lawrence, no less unwillingly, tied at Peshawar, consumed with anxiety for the prisoners, for his brother, for the fate of his country ; sufficiently behind the scenes, to realise the half-veiled satisfaction of many Native States, as they watched the supposedly ' falling star ' of British prestige in India.

Still hoping for a vigorous policy to emerge, he devoted all his brains and energy to strengthening Pollock's hands in respect of cattle, food and money, to coping with local incompetence and political distrust. Disheartened yet persistent, he wrote to George Clerk on the 27th : ' I almost tremble as to our position on account of food and carriage. No one seems to care for anything. . . . God alone knows how hard a task any man has in this quarter who cares for the general welfare.'

The tendency of the time was to fling every burden or problem on to the Political Officer, jack-of-all-trades to the army. Though many might be jealous of his superior status, few could long get on without him. ' In time of need everyone would turn to him, were it for a map, a guide . . . a wet-nurse or a camel. In disaster, everyone would turn on him, whether for a defeat, or a deficiency in flour.'

Lawrence himself, that summer, had his work cut out in all directions ; his chief anxiety centred in the holding of the Khyber Pass by disgruntled Sikhs. For the Khyber—nominally in British hands—was held from end to end by grasping Afridis and truculent Sikhs. Mackeson, at the one end, must bribe the Afridis : Lawrence, at the other, must manipulate the Sikhs : a harder task than any but themselves could ever know. Yet between them those ' foolish

hare-brained young men' carried it through for months without one serious interruption.

Before the end of April, Lawrence had news of George through a fellow-prisoner, Captain Colin Mackenzie, who had been sent on a mission to Pollock. For changed affairs at Kabul had made Akbar virtually paramount. The captives were his long suit : and he now intended to play them for all they were worth ; using them as a basis to bargain for his own demands—the restoration of Dōst Mahomed and his family, the departure of British intruders from Afghanistan. But Pollock, fully intending to advance on Kabul, could not make terms with the arch enemy ; nor reveal his soldierly intention, while Simla pulled the other way. Even at the risk of angering Akbar—who might retaliate by killing all the captives—he must temporise till he could win leave to act. So brave Colin Mackenzie, having dared the worst, could only carry back a guarded letter to Pottinger, impressing on Akbar the advantage of treating his captives well, and offering the immediate payment of two lakhs—*when* all had been safely escorted to Jalālabad. Akbar's sporting offer to help him reconquer Afghanistan, in exchange for a free pardon and his father's return, was ignored—with the inevitable result that in two weeks' time Mackenzie was back again on a second fruitless mission. The cool tone of Pollock's letter had enraged Akbar, who was probably sincere in his offer of friendship—at a price—and incapable of seeing his own conduct through Western eyes.

'If the English will not grant me peace, they must not blame me if I fight,' was his reasonable conclusion of the matter. And Pollock himself was in no mood to placate Afghans, having just received—with surprise and dismay—the withdrawal order inspired by Brigadier England's failure ; an order that rankled none the less because prompt obedience was out of the question. His resolute attitude was approved by Colin Mackenzie, though he himself must face Akbar's wrath at receiving no more than the repetition of a ransom offer already spurned. As regards action, Pollock's hands were tied ; but a fuller knowledge of

Afghans and their code might have induced him to treat less cavalierly the man he regarded as a dastardly criminal rather than a powerful Chief, who had avenged a wronged father according to his lights, had offered friendly dealing, and concluded with seeming sincerity—‘Please God, my services shall exceed the injuries I have done you. . . .’

In response to that overture Pollock sent only a verbal message: ‘Tell him from me that in three weeks my guns shall be heard in the Khurd Kabul Pass.’

But camels and a Simla secretary would have their say in the matter; and the bold words he could not act upon only inflamed Akbar’s wrath. He would not send the prisoners, nor would Pollock leave Afghanistan. The deadlock was complete. Yet Pottinger, whose spirit never quailed, quietly made up his mind to wait on events—and try again.

While he waited, Pollock went on collecting camels, hoping for reprieve. And reprieve—of a sort—was already on its way; a letter couched in terms of diplomatic audacity that can never have been surpassed. On the heels of a peremptory withdrawal order, Lord Ellenborough now permitted himself to suppose that General Pollock might already have seen fit to advance and occupy Kabul city, in view of Afghan dissensions, and his own soldierly desire to ‘unfurl the British flag once again over the scene of disaster.’ In that event, his lordship would merely wish it to be understood that his order still held for withdrawal ‘at the earliest practicable period.’

Much virtue in that ‘practicable’; and still more virtue in the surprising supposition that Pollock might already have felt justified in disobeying orders. The implication of discretionary powers brought out all the good that was in Pollock, and stiffened his resolve to seize the first plausible pretext for an advance. But for his chronic lack of camels, he would have moved on at once.

As it was, he promptly despatched an invisible letter to Nott, curled in a hollow stick—bidding him halt wherever he might be, till he heard again. Nott—the stout-hearted and rebellious—had never stirred from Kandahar, laying

hold of an 'if,' in the Government letter, as his excuse. So the resolute pair awaited the result of Pollock's official protest against withdrawal—as bold a document as any General ever penned.

Taking discretionary powers for granted, he frankly regretted that lack of carriage alone had prevented a forward move. Withdrawal at such a moment—he ventured to add—would be construed as defeat, and British reputation would be entirely lost. 'The relief of Jalālabad,' he pointed out, 'is only one object gained. There still remains another, which we cannot disregard—I allude to the release of the prisoners.' Boldly he proposed that he and General Nott might be allowed to hold their present positions till they received sanction for a united move on Kabul.

Having secured a breathing space, his chief concern was to keep strictly secret the retreat order, that would have the very worst effect, if it leaked out, on his troops and his unreliable Sikh allies. Inevitably it did leak out—the common fate of official secrets—through an officer on the staff of Sir Jasper Nicoll. The news, told and retold in confidence, spread fast and far. It drew letters of protest from 'every man of worth and courage on the frontier.' It supplied food for station gossip. Mrs. This and Mrs. That wrote of it to their husbands in Jalālabad. The husbands wrote it back to Peshawar.

The Sikh Court knew all about it. The Sikh soldiers got hold of it. Marking time in the Khyber was not their idea of active service; and early in May a whole regiment had marched out of the Pass, without notice to the British officer in charge. Another party plundered British granaries in Peshawar. Outrages were reported almost daily. Nor did Sikh authorities attempt to punish the offenders.

And suddenly the gloom was lifted by an unexpected offer from Lord Ellenborough to bestow the province of Jalālabad on the Sikh Government, in return for services rendered: an offer that at once dazzled and alarmed the Maharajah. But a gift was a gift; and, in view of it, Sikh leaders once more changed their tone. Let them only

be given a chance to share the General's triumph, and five thousand of them would march at once.

It may have been a boastful gesture : but Pollock promptly took them at their word ; and Lawrence—though heartily weary of camels and Sikhs—hoped to go forward in charge of them. Instead he must be content with another tribute from Clerk, for the ' exertions, patience and care ' he had exercised in speeding the contingent from Ali Musjid ; proving to friends and enemies that the Sikhs could be relied on at need. There was balm in Clerk's genuine appreciation ; and it amounted to a triumph that he—the irritable and explosive—should have lived to be called ' patient ' ! For he alone knew the constraint he had put on himself under insults peculiarly galling to a man of his temperament. ' I have eaten more dirt at Peshawar '—he had vigorously phrased it—' than I shall get out of my mouth in the next seven years.'

But the transfer he craved was nearer than he knew. Almost the last of his letters from Peshawar was written to Honoria at Kasauli :

' DARLING,—

' Just returned from the Khyber and received yours of 27th, but not the 28th ; so I have not the complete account of poor little Tim's perverseness. . . . Poor little fellow ! How like myself—to wound where he would heal. Am I not a diplomat to have got the Sikhs through the Pass ? Now I am getting the rest to stay in it beyond their time, which is up to-day. I have pitched into them pretty well since I have been here, but all with a smiling face and smooth words. . . . Who would have thought it in the quiet days when I used to examine the *Kusbahs*, etc. ?

' No word of the prisoners. They are at Kabul now ; and I fancy too valuable to be in danger ; but their situation is painful to think of. Would that this terrible war was honourably ended.'

June 8 : '42.

' No wonder Tim's showers are sunny, for how do we not both pass from grave to gay, from scenes and thoughts of death and misery to the thoughts of the world and its frivolity. Mrs. Lock is an odd woman, but I am glad she

is with you, as she pleases by tickling your vanity ! Pleasing you and making you happy, she will benefit your health ; and finding yourself pleased at being flattered, will afford a good lesson to your honest heart, my dear old wife. We are, I think, very like each other in disposition, very ; naturally so, as well as by association.'

June 11 : '42.

'MY DARLING OLD WIFE,—

'I cannot hear you grumbling for a *chit* and not write, though I have a deal to do and you ought to consider all the letters to Clerk as to you. Ben't you the inspiring angel, the *Whatd'yucall'em* to which I look ? Must I therefore not consider before I lay my thoughts at your feet—you, my public, my critic ? So you see I require one day to consider what to say and how to fill my paper for the next.

'In a letter to-day the Governor-General tells Pollock that he ought to have come back at once when he had relieved Jalālabad, but now acquiesces in his staying till October ; so we may consider it settled. Very easy for Lord Ellenborough to talk thus : but General Pollock had no such orders ; and if he had, where would General Nott and the garrison of Khelat and Ghazni have been had Pollock then returned ? But of such small matters as garrisons and prisoners our Governors seem not to think. . . .

'It is sunset now, my sunbeam, my love—so good-night.

'Your H. M. L.'

But he had not heard or seen the last of his Sikhs by any means. Very soon another queer-shaped wisp of paper prepared Honoria for a move more welcome to him than to her.

'The General—having received Government sanction—seems stirred to act. Another victory at Kandahar : 1,200 of ours beat 10,000, and dispersed the enemy. I shall go on to Jalālabad for a few days. So don't be anxious if you don't hear regularly.'

His plan of 'going on by instalments' was making headway, as the plans of the persistent are apt to do. His five thousand Sikhs had already given Pollock a taste of their

quality. A Moslem battalion, whose pay was in arrears, had mutinied against their General; driven him out of camp and burnt his tents. Clearly 'some patient Political was wanted to control them'; and Lawrence inadvertently arrived at the very moment when his presence was most acceptable to a harassed General. Here was the man who had handled these firebrands for seven months: and amazedly he found himself being invited to take them on again, till Pollock should return in October. He asked nothing better. It was a turn of the tide, not only for himself, but for the Army of Retribution. A grandiloquent title, that had begun to sound ironical, seemed now in a fair way to be justified at last.



AND while Lawrence contended with refractory Sikhs, Honoria—in her Himalayan cottage—was fighting her own lesser battles with a headstrong, four-year-old son. If the others were ‘making history’ she was making human character—the living material of history. Any mother contending with any son may be fighting the world’s battles in the nursery ; and her handling of the fragile yet fiery son of Henry Lawrence was as often complicated by her own lack of method, as by his childish fits of passion and perversity. Sound in theory, irregular in practice, she had been hampered by ill-health and by the pressure of great events. Now, she pledged herself to start a fresh record of Alick’s progress : a record that began and ended with an account of the battle royal referred to by Lawrence, as ‘poor little Tim’s perverseness.’ Both perversity and peevishness sprang mainly from physical causes : and her own irritable temper did not make matters easier for herself or her boy.

The skirmish arose from an arithmetic lesson on the old-fashioned counting frame : passing coloured balls along a taut wire, adding and subtracting to order. On that particular morning, for some reason, he would have none of those tiresome balls. In vain she christened them Noah and his family ; inviting him to reckon their number. Nothing would induce him to ‘reckon.’ So the frame was put away. No counting : no new knife.

Next day he began asking for the knife. But at mention of the frame, he shook his head and ran away, leaving his mother puzzled and distressed. Let her relate the conflict that ensued.

‘After dinner Alick came to me, wanting water for his garden.

"Why, my boy," I said, "you've had a great deal. How many times have you come for it?"

"His back was up instantly.

"Tell me," I repeated quietly, "how often do you think?"

"No—I won't say."

"Thinking he might really have forgotten, I repeated the numbers for him, bidding him say them after me.

"No—I won't, Mamma."

"I whipped him with a little slip of whalebone; and, while smarting, he called out, "Yes, Mamma, I will be good, I will reckon." But the moment I ceased, came his resolute look. "No, I won't."

"I now felt I had got into a contest in which I must win; and as he stood there resolutely, he saw me rest my head on my hand.

"Mamma, are you praying to God?"

"Yes, my boy. I am asking Him to make you good."

"He immediately knelt at my knee and said very earnestly, "Oh God, make me good. Take away this naughty and make me good."

"I was in hopes that the evil was subdued; but next moment the case seemed hopeless as ever. I tied his hands behind him, and left him for a little while in the bath-room. But I returned too soon—I had not patience. Half an hour might have done the work. I found him as firm as ever; whipped him again and tied him to the bed-post. I was glad to see such resolution in his character, and afraid to break his spirit; yet I could not give in. I think if I had had more patience, all would have been well;—but the moments seemed as long to me as to him.

"Several times I left the room for a few minutes; and returned to find him the same.

"Will you reckon now?"

"No, I will not."

"Then I must whip you again."

"Yes—do."

"And with a sore heart I whipped him again.

"When he said, "Mamma, I'm afraid of the rod," I feared I had gone too far, and immediately laid it down.

"My boy, I don't wish to touch it again. Only count as I bid you."

"I will not."

“Then say it after me.”

“No, I won’t.”

‘Sometimes he took the stripes like a Spartan—sometimes cried out, “Don’t, dear Mamma—you hurt me. Kiss and make well.”

‘Several times he pleaded, “Just pray to God once more.”

‘But I said, “No, my boy. You must try to be good, or He will not help you.”

‘“Just give me one more whipping. *Then* I will say it.”

‘This went on from four till seven; and I was deeply grieved. He seemed to have made up his mind to pass the night tied to the bed-post—and I could do no more.

‘At last, when the servant announced tea, and I was going away, he said in quite a different tone, “Mamma, I *will* be good—I will make you glad.”

‘“Then, my boy, reckon as I bid you.”

‘And he reckoned to eight several times without hesitation.

‘Gladly I released him; and I longed to take him in my lap, to make up with caresses for all the punishment I had inflicted. But this would have been only self-indulgence. I was rather disappointed at seeing him, in one moment, as merry as ever; but I avoided saying anything that might lead him to affect feeling.

‘When he went to bed I spoke seriously to him; and through the night he was restless—starting from his sleep. “Yes, yes, Mamma, I *will* be good, I will reckon.”

‘Darling child—with what cost to myself I punished him; but I am by no means sure I took the right method. Had I left him for a longer time in the first instance, I might have avoided the conflict. For one thing I am most thankful; he was not the least estranged from me; clung more than ever to his “own, own dear Mamma.” I hope we shall never again have such a conflict.’

The modern mother will entirely disapprove of a direct battle that need never have arisen; yet Honoria, judged by prevailing standards, was ahead of most young wives, in her theory and practice of motherhood.

On that lone hill-top—the child was her chief companion, though she was sharing her ‘wigwam’ with a young widow,

Mrs. Lock, whose husband had been killed in Colonel Wild's Khyber failure. For all her industry, her mind was constantly away in Kabul, with Henry or the prisoners.

'It was a relief,' she told Mary Cameron—'to leave Ferōzpur, and return to the perfect stillness of this lovely spot. Here I came, in April: and here I shall remain till my Henry returns. As to the horrors of Kabul, the papers must have given you more than enough of them. The earthquake that was mentioned threw down the house in which Henry was living at Peshawar. Just as he got out, the ceiling fell on the table where he had been writing. . . . The prisoners have been so far preserved by a Providence little less wonderful than that which preserved Daniel among the lions. . . . Any advance . . . to their rescue would probably bring about their instant murder. . . . Dearest Mary, my letters are still like the roll of Ezekiel, "written, within and without, lamentation and mourning and woe——"'

To Henry she was writing almost daily—letters reflecting not only her heart but her mind. And in defiance of separation, they were still carrying on their 'togetherness' of thought and work. Henry, writing of their serial, gave her themes for incidental verses, which reveal the poet hidden in his own soul.

'I have commenced a sketch of Afghan history for the "Adventurer," but don't take very kindly to it. I want you to whistle to me while I write. I am glad you are getting some poetry ready for the book. . . . Here are some subjects . . . Afghan war song: Sikh ditto; the Muleteer or Camelman's cry, travelling with a Kafila through the Khyber; all around as still as death and his voice coming back in echoes; recollection of Mahtab¹ on a still moonlit night; contrast of the Afghan as a ferocious soldier and a good cultivator, likened to the contrast between his lovely rich valleys and the sterile bleak hills overhanging them. . . . More bleak and desolate hills I've never seen, or more rich and smiling dales. Here are some themes for you, old songstress. . . .'

¹ Their heroine.

25 July, '42.

'Yes, dearest, we are both getting precious old, and there is little help for it; but as yet we have not been apart with our own goodwill; and I trust a better time is in store for us. If I ever had any ambition, it has all oozed out. I would now prefer being with you at Kasauli to ruling Kashmere. Would I were with my own Nora—my lovely and loving wife. . . .'

His mind, like hers, was constantly running on the prisoners and their probable fate; anxiety increasing his impatience with Generals and Governors in Council. Since he could only let off steam in one direction, he favoured Honoria with his caustic comments on the subject.

'We return, most likely, in October. Lord Ellenborough seems to be vindictively violent against all who think or urge otherwise. He has the oddest notions . . . as regards Politicals especially. Yesterday the General, who is easily frightened, got a tart letter asking him who informed Mackeson that the Bala Hissar had fallen. . . . Fancy the implication that Mackeson and I should not be told such intelligence! It makes me open my eyes and ask what I am here for. . . . Ask any of our Directors to read the Indian papers—and then judge of our ruler. He is a most dangerous man.'

And there was General Pollock—essentially a 'safe' man—wedged between two dangerous ones, uncomfortably enough: Akbar pressing him to retire, Ellenborough talking retirement, implying possible advance. Yet Pollock feared for the prisoners, if he made a sudden move.

And now came a third embassy from Kabul, where Akbar found himself in a strong position for bargaining with all prisoners—including survivors from Ghazni—gathered into his unmerciful hands. From their gipsy life in tents and arbours, they had been transferred to Shewāki Fort, an easy ride from Kabul, and a Paradise by contrast to their earlier quarters. Here the men and women had two airy, upstairs sleeping-rooms; and for the daytime an octagonal latticed tower above the roof. Here were far-spreading views and large walled gardens full of fruit, roses and oleanders. But

the sedentary life, poor food, and swamped rice fields undermined their health and bred fever. Mackenzie was now lying dangerously ill with typhus—brought on by the hardships and exposures of his double journey—devotedly nursed by two soldiers and Mrs. Eyre.

But chiefly they suffered from nagging uncertainty as to their future ; and their hearts were lifted by news that Akbar had countenanced a third embassy to General Pollock—still waiting hopefully for clear instructions from Ellenborough, who aimed at inducing his Generals to advance without actually ordering them to do so.

Captain Troup—Akbar's messenger—was graciously received ; and Pollock, deeply concerned for the captives, looked like coming to terms. But a push from the other side wrought a sudden change in his bearing. No explanation offered : only fresh tantalising delays.

'Troup is still here,' wrote Henry to Honoria on the 21st, 'and was with me to-day for a good while, giving anecdotes of their prison-house. It seems that the prisoners, especially Pottinger, say what they like to the Afghans ; Pottinger being as rude as he can.

'The General has tried for three days to keep a secret ; but this morning he came to my bedside to tell me. He's a funny old fellow ; can't stand being told he's in the hands of the Politicals, or he would take me further into his confidence. We are a rum set. . . . You shall partly hear the secret, but you must prepare yourself to keep it. Though in my mind there is no reason for secrecy, I am told to tell no one—'

On the strength of that unrevealed secret, Pollock flatly refused to treat with Akbar ; so Troup was dismissed with a message that would anger the proud chief and dishearten his prisoners : 'Send in all English guns and captives to my camp, and your father and family will at once be set free. As for leaving Afghanistan, I shall do so at my own convenience.'

He was also given a harmless-looking letter to General Nott with a request that Akbar would have it forwarded to Kandahar. But between those few lines of local news,

other words of urgent import were invisibly written in rice water—words that would spring to life when brushed with iodine : an ironic touch whereby Akbar was made liaison officer in their plans to compass his defeat. For those invisible words concerned the secret already communicated to Nott : Lord Ellenborough's unique solution of his twofold problem. To preserve his own consistency, yet protect himself against public feeling in England and India, he had penned the famous despatch authorising Nott to 'retire' from Kandahar to India, *via* Ghazni, Kabul and the Khyber : an order that has been neatly interpreted as 'a man retiring from Reigate to London, taking Dover and Canterbury on his way.' Pollock was to 'assist the retreat' by a forward move towards Kabul. That inspired order virtually laid on both Generals the onus of failure, should they fail, and the minor share of honour, should they succeed. But Ellenborough knew his men : and they confirmed his belief in them.

'I assure you,' wrote Pollock to a friend, 'I feel the full benefit of being unshackled . . . Nott will find some difficulty in resisting the glorious temptation.'

No thought of resistance had occurred to the valiant Nott. Without hesitation he chose the more dangerous and glorious line of march that was, incidentally, some seventy miles shorter than the other. As for Pollock, his 'forward move to assist retreat' would not stop a mile short of Kabul, where he proposed to join Nott and his fifteen thousand, to strike the final blow. But until Nott's mind was revealed he could make no move. And Jalālabad¹ in high summer was no abode of Splendour. It was an abode of earthquakes, flies and hurricanes, of fierce heat, that drove officers and men to burrow underground ; and those who shared the secret were kept on daily tiptoe of expectation.

Lawrence, impatient as any—while disapproving of Ellenborough's tactics—wrote his mind on the subject only to his trusted wife :

'I've told you so much of the secret, that you may not

¹ Abode of Splendour.

be uneasy if it gets out in the Provinces. Clerk has not even been informed ; and it strikes me Lord Ellenborough has only written a letter that he may show in London . . . I would impeach him on it, if I had the power. *Bus*¹—and hold your tongue, darling. I'll soon be able to tell you more. . . .'

July 25th.

'I look anxiously to hear if Nott will advance, but cannot think he will do so, as proposed. . . . Though ambition may lead him, it will require great moral courage ; and, I hardly know why, but I doubt the man much. Pollock is a very rum one ; but he is quiet, gives no trouble, and thus escapes censure.

'I rather suspect he will be bullied by newspaper writers before he returns, which will hurt him much, for he is most susceptible. . . . We play a bold game : God grant we may win. . . .

'Don't read and write too much, but go out a great deal. "Eat the air" and save your eyes to look at me !'

While impatience increased, and Nott's answer tarried, Pollock was harassed by yet another embassy from Akbar Khan, now more than ever enraged by the tactics of a General, who kept him in play, while collecting carriage and provisions—nominally for departure ; probably for a war-like advance. He had bidden Troup return at once and insist on a 'written agreement, as between chief and chief.' Vainly Pottinger had urged him to send all the prisoners—or at least the women and children—as the only basis on which the General would treat. The Afghan naturally believed the Englishman capable of first securing the prisoners, then advancing on Kabul.

'Without a written word from your haughty General Sahib,' was his ultimatum, 'I will send no captives to his camp.'

But, to strengthen Troup's hand, he proposed also to send George Lawrence, whose brother was serving with the General ; his Asiatic brain taking backstairs influence for granted. George—just recovered from a bout of fever—was

¹ Enough.

barely fit for the rough double journey : but to get a sight of Henry and to taste even a week of freedom, he would run any risk. His resolution had been stiffened by the threat of Akbar's parting words : ' None of you shall your General Sahibs recover by force. . . . Before my people I swear it. The first day I know that they have started, I despatch all of you, sick and well, to Turkestan, where you shall be scattered by twos and threes among different chiefs—and not one of you shall see England again. Tell *that* at Jalālabad—and they will give you a signed agreement.'

But his ambassadors knew that Pollock's hands were tied ; and the prisoners heard, in that awful threat, their knell of doom. In Vincent Eyre's journal it is recorded : ' They one and all faced the fact that death or slavery must be their portion, unless Providence specially intervened.'



TOWARDS the end of July, Lawrence shifted his tent from Jalālabad to a green valley across the Kabul river, where his Sikhs were encamped, in the shade of mulberries and willows : hardly a mile from Pollock's quarters, yet almost in another country.

'I was received with a salute of cannon,' he told Honoria. 'My Sikh guard are fifty men from the battalion who behaved so ill in January . . . and a month ago drove their General out of camp. But they are very civil to me. So are all the Sikh troops. . . . Their sentries turn out and present arms. When I meet their men, they salute. They are a rum set ; and so are we !'

In that casual fashion he implied that at last he was being repaid for months of 'eating dirt' and having 'lived to be called patient.' Through fair yet resolute treatment, through unflinching courage, he had gained over those born fighters a moral ascendancy so complete that he could rely on them to follow him anywhere—as the sequel proved. But no move yet, no whisper of a move, till Kandahar gave the word.

In the interval, he was to experience the mingled pain and pleasure of a brief meeting with George.

There came a day in August when three saddle-weary horsemen rode into camp : Troup, George Lawrence and their Afghan comrade, Hāji Bhuktīar, who exclaimed in surprise at the unemotional greeting between the brothers—after two years. He had supposed that at least 'they would fall into each other's arms.' But glad as they were to meet, the near prospect of parting tempered their joy. And there was little Dr. Brydon in camp, telling them of poor James Marshall, and of his own incredible escape ; both briefly retailed by Henry in his Kasauli letter.

'Darling, Here is George speaking for himself. But his not being here for good, makes his appearance bring as much sorrow as gladness.

'Brydon has just been with us. He incidentally told us that, at Jagdalak, James and himself and two others grilled and ate some horse flesh with good appetite—poor James's last meal. Brydon's own escape was a miracle of miracles. With his sword broken, he defended himself; and eventually threw the handle at a fellow. He had no pistols, but, as he dropped his left hand, the horseman attacking him thought it was to draw out a pistol from the holster—and rode off. Brydon's horse was shot through the spine, and died the day after his arrival.'

As for Pollock, though the plight of the prisoners distressed him, he did not for a moment credit the Sirdar's fantastic threat. By secret means he had already informed the friendly Kazzilbāsh chiefs at Kabul that any who helped the captives, or prevented their removal, would be well rewarded. More he could not do. So back the ambassadors must fare, after three days' rest, with no more than a verbal message from the haughty General Sahib that, as regards his movements, he would not be dictated to. Henry rode back one march with them; and the Hāji would have been beyond measure surprised had he overheard the last talk between those brothers, who did not 'fall into each other's arms.'

For Henry had conceived the happy notion of an exchange with George, on the score that, as the father of four children, his was the more valuable life. George, obtusely, failed to see the point: and retorted with the home-thrust, 'What would Honoria say?'

'That I was perfectly right,' Henry answered with conviction. But George—unconvinced—still stoutly refused to disappoint his good friend, Akbar Khan.

So they parted with cheerful words, scarcely expecting to meet again. For George knew his Akbar, if Pollock did not.

To Honoria, Henry wrote of that parting: 'There is much to hope for; but, in such hands, there is also much

to fear. I almost wished that George had been taken ill, that I might have gone back in his place.'

It was George who told her that the wish had prompted an actual offer of exchange. 'But that,' he added, 'I could not allow. What would the illustrious Tim do without his Papa, who has no right to study others' convenience at his own personal risk?'

Whatever may have been Honoria's feelings on the subject, her answering letters proved her capacity for rising greatly to a high demand.

'And you offered to go instead of George, darling? I am glad you did; and I am glad there was no time to ask me, lest my heart should have failed. Had you been taken at your word, my soul would have been rent; yet I should never have . . . wished you had done otherwise. George is as much to Charlotte as you are to me. . . . Is this release never to be effected?'

August 18th.

'Yes—you see I *did* say you were right in offering to go. Furthermore, I shall say you are right if you *do* go. I count my cost—and so do you. We are of one mind, thank God, in this as in other things.'

Being apparently uncertain of the issue, she wrote yet again :

'Now, my husband, listen to what I say; for it is the steadfast purpose of my heart. You have more than my acquiescence in your changing places with George. I should be doing my duty; and God would strengthen me in soul and body.'

He himself wrote frequently to her in that last week, before the actual advance and uncertain dates should add to her burden of anxiety.

August 19th.

'Returned from Osman Khan's fort, all the better for the trip . . . George having been here makes my thoughts about him more melancholy than ever; but he has health and courage; and, under God's blessing, will escape.'

Hers of the 30th and 31st of July did not reach him till 13th of August, when he wrote :

‘ Yes : Lord Ellenborough hopes that every man will be across the Sutlej by January the 1st ; and does not even make the reservation of its depending on our securing the prisoners. . . . It is wretched work, having wasted four good months ; and now being worse than ever prepared for an advance. . . . I trust Lord Ellenborough will be recalled before he ruins the Empire.’

24th August.

‘ The other side was written yesterday, too late for the *dāk*. Another sweet day, and Sunday to myself. . . . It seems strange to me how much more I like this place alone than the camp and company. Are we not thus, darling, almost together ? You alone, thinking of your husband ; while he has ever in his thoughts his incomparable wife, his own sweetest Nora.

‘ Your H. M. L.’

By the 15th Pollock had news that the ‘ glorious temptation ’ had not been resisted. The Kandahar force would march as soon as cattle and supplies came to hand ; and it would probably reach Kabul by September 15th. Now Pollock knew that his own supplies were deficient, his cattle in a wretched state. He knew that ten thousand mules and camels had been collected for him, at great cost, from all parts of the Punjab ; that he could not even begin to receive these till the middle of September. But to be a month behind Nott at Kabul was more than even his equanimity could accept. Lawrence ‘ much doubted ’ if he could manage the advance, with his insufficient carriage, unless he left half his force behind. But Pollock would neither leave half his force, nor wait for more camels, nor reach Kabul a day later than Nott. And a calm man, in the mood for heroic measures, has the heavens on his side.

From brigade to brigade, from unit to unit, sped the magic word, ‘ Advance.’ And on the 17th, Henry was writing to Honoria :

‘ Darling, I am to go on, taking three hundred Sikh horse

and four hundred foot, leaving the rest at Gandammak. I like the idea much. As for the prisoners, we *may* get them; and I don't think we shall injure their case by going. . . . There is a hope that the chiefs and people may prevent Mahomed Akbar from taking them away. . . . So I don't despair. . . .'

And again on the 20th :

'General Pollock went on to-day in a helter-skelter fashion. . . . The camels are in a wretched state and hundreds will die before he leaves Gandammak. . . . At sunrise I walked round the rampart; the gate of the town was crammed with guns, camels and stores, so was the main street. We are a wonderful race; and Providence deals wonderfully with us. When you go up to Simla, go comfortably with plenty of *jampannies*; see all you can see. . . .'

And he could not let their wedding day pass without a line of greeting :

August 21st.

'Darling, All well on this my second birthday—the day that doubled me and quadrupled my worth in giving you to me, my precious Nora. Would that it had been ten years sooner; and I might have been a different man. But as it has been my lot, I thank God—and I thank you, my wife.

'General Pollock made his first march yesterday . . . May God prosper his undertaking. If it be His will, we shall be here again in two months, with the prisoners. . . . They are too valuable to be made away with. All this suspense however is most trying—

'Your own H. M. L.'

Two weeks earlier, Nott—at the head of his 'beautiful regiments'—had left Kandahar. To his daughters he wrote in high confidence, well founded: 'I have a march before me, truly! But never mind. Whatever may happen, I shall be with my little army. They *shall* be victorious wherever they go—or *I* will perish.'

Thus eight months after that fatal exodus from Kabul, the long-delayed work of retribution had begun.

TO Honoria, on her quiet hill-top, came only rare fragments from Henry ; lightning flashes, as it were, on Pollock's victorious march from Gandammak to Kabul. In those two weeks of stubborn fighting, Lawrence and his Sikhs played as active a part as even he could wish. Though his men were infantry and cavalry, they contrived to be constantly with or near the guns ; helping to lay them or dragging them over ugly places. Whenever he was under fire, he must ' serve with the Blues.'

By the end of August, he had joined Pollock's main army : and on the 1st of September he was telling Honoria how Futteh Jung—son of the recently murdered Shah Shujah—had ridden unannounced into the British camp, a fugitive from the tyranny of Akbar Khan. ' He reports,' added Henry, ' that the prisoners are safe and will not be allowed to be taken away. But I have my fears . . .'

On the 6th another fragment : ' The General is going on with twice the troops that he has carriage for, in spite of all that is said to him. He has divided his force into two columns : I am with the second. The air is heavenly, and I am all the better for knocking about.'

On the 7th : ' Pollock moved off this morning. . . . If he had halted a couple of days and rested his cattle, he would, I think, have reached Kabul sooner. But no ; he must, at all risks, try and get there before Nott. He may do so, but will hardly deserve reward.'

That very human rivalry could scarce have been resisted by any man of flesh and blood. Though the triumph of first entry into the capital was Nott's by right of a definite order, on went Pollock—leaving a long trail of dead camels : and on came Nott from Kandahar ; making Akbar, in his camp outside Kabul, feel like the corn of wheat between

two grindstones. Remained his one trump card—the captives ; and the result of his final embassy had hardened Pharaoh's heart.

'Now go to your friends at Shewāki,' was his last word on the subject, 'and tell them to make ready for a rough march across the mountains. Your General shall not find you *here*.'

Even so, George Lawrence ventured to plead for Mrs. Anderson and Mrs. Trevor, both dangerously ill, with nine children between them. And Akbar, the incalculable, had granted his request. He would even allow Captain Troup and Bygrave to remain with them and Dr. Campbell to attend them. But when Pottinger and Lawrence were emboldened to ask if they also might remain, Akbar would not hear of it—happily for their fellows, as the sequel proved.

'At least you will give us two days' notice?' Lawrence persisted.

'Two days ! You will not get two hours' notice,' came the brutal answer. 'I have done all I can for friendship ; and your General treats me as an enemy. You have only him to blame.' Which was true enough on a surface view ; and Akbar could know nothing of the machinery behind the General Sahib, who spurned his overtures.

On August the 24th, Sultan Jān left Kabul, with a body of horsemen, in order to oppose Nott ; and by midday on the 25th the sorrowful captives had their marching orders.

At moonrise that same night they had set out—sick and well—on their last miserable journey : a week of rough marching to the high and distant valley of Bamiān : a prelude to their threatened dispersion among the chiefs of Turkestan. Their escort was commanded by one Saleh Mahomed, sometime deserter from a native regiment, lording it now over those whom he had formerly served. That a turn-coat might be bribed, or otherwise induced, to turn his coat again was the one faint gleam of hope in their darkest hour.

On and on they stumbled through the summer night ; their ears assailed by a crazy discord of bugles, fifes and

drums, murdering old regimental tunes—ghosts of happier days, that put the finishing touch to their despair.

Farther and farther they trailed from Kabul : nearer and nearer came Pollock's army, hopeful of effecting a rescue and punishing the arch offender. On the 7th of September that army was approaching the four grim defiles full of dead men's bones ; and Nott, encamped near Ghazni, struck the first punitive blow at the Ghilzais, reducing their famous fort to a shapeless mass, dimly seen through a funereal pall of dust. Here he was detained, against his will, by Lord Ellenborough's fantastic order that he should bring back to India a pair of ancient gates filched from a Hindu temple by an Afghan conqueror eight centuries ago—an insult long forgotten by the Hindus themselves.

While he stayed to secure those worthless trophies, Pollock was nearing Jagdalak Pass, the terrible defile where Elphinstone's broken army had ceased to be. Here, as before, Ghilzais were swarming on summits deemed unscalable. But here was now no broken army. Here were men, fired by the sight of their frozen unburied dead ; men in a mood to scale the heavens at command.

When guns failed to silence the Afghan fire, it was to Sale Pollock gave the welcome order, ' Storm those heights with your own brigade.' Men and officers cheered, and cheered again, as they swarmed up the rocks—a moving forest of steel, undaunted by bullets and stones hurled from above. Though many fell, more pressed on ; till the Afghans—in amazement—wavered, broke and fled to higher peaks, where no vociferous Anglo-Saxons could get a foothold. Yet on and up they came, still cheering lustily, clambering over impossible rocks, they knew not how. Once more the astonished Afghans lowered their standards, sooner than face cold steel—and the day was won.

A pause to rest their cattle ; then forward again, unwearied, marched the avengers, eager to try conclusions with Akbar's little army—sixteen thousand against their ten—awaiting them in the Khurd Kabul Pass, where resistance would be more stubborn, the cliffs more formidable.

In that strong natural position everything favoured the Sirdar ; but Pollock's pause, after victory—suggesting some obstacle or indecision—lured him out into the more open country round Tazin. So Pollock's force awoke one morning to find itself everywhere commanded by an enemy, secure in the triple advantage of numbers, position and choice of ground. Chiefs of all the leading tribes were out to make their last stand against the invader, excepting only Sultan Jān, who had gone off to oppose Nott. But these also were to discover the mettle of men who seemed bullet-proof in their disregard of danger, their determination to reach Kabul at all hazards.

Up the sheer cliffs, through a rain of bullets, clambered those three British battalions, with Broadfoot's Gurkhas—'the finest sight of the day'—giving no quarter and asking none. The Afghans faced them gallantly, fighting as none had seen them fight before ; but their courage was not proof against cold steel. Stubbornly, foot by foot, they retreated—broke up and fled ; their ranks demoralised utterly ; Akbar himself seeking safety, with his personal followers, in the distant valley of Ghorband.

By that victory the door into Kabul was flung open ; but there remained, for the victors, an ordeal worse than any fight : the seven-mile march, next day, through Khurd Kabul Pass, where the dead lay in heaps of fifties and hundreds, where gun-wheels of the avengers crashed over the skulls of those they had come to avenge—an experience that none would forget while they lived.

It was on the morning of the 15th that they formed up for the last twelve miles to Kabul. No sign—as they drew near—of the rival encampment. And Pollock knew that he had won.

Nott's hampered army was still twenty-five miles short of Kabul. Illness and distracting delays had galled his excitable temper ; and his failure to arrive before Pollock was in the nature of a last straw. For three years he had borne the burden and heat of the day ; yet his rightful triumph had, in a sense, been filched from him by a labourer who entered the field at the eleventh hour. Not until the

17th did he reach Kabul, after sharp fighting ; an entry so different from the one he had pictured that his ungracious behaviour on that occasion could, in a measure, be condoned. And of Pollock it must be said that he might at least have delayed the ceremony of occupying Kabul till his fellow General appeared on the scene.

But while Generals triumphed—what of the prisoners ?

By now they had been dragged—in camel panniers or on rough ponies—over three high passes to Bamiān, where they were lodged in flimsy tents and a dark, unclean fort, awaiting news of their fate. Few doubted that the defeat of Akbar would condemn them, either to massacre or slavery for life. But they were cheered, in a measure, by discovering that the whole valley favoured the English ; also they had found, in their scratch escort, an old servant of Pottinger's and the remnant of his disbanded Herati horsemen, who hailed him with joy—when Saleh Mahomed was looking the other way. The hope of bribing him to turn his coat had, so far, failed ; and soon after Pollock's entry into Kabul came certain men from that city who desired speech with Pottinger Sahib—which seemed to confirm their worst fears.

Pottinger, putting a bold face on the encounter, found no messenger from Akbar, but the brother of Saleh Mahomed and a noble of the friendly Kazzilbāsh tribe, who had come with proposals curiously akin to those already suggested in vain by Johnson and himself. Spurred by Pollock's offers of reward, they had been putting the screw on Saleh Mahomed, whose family was in their hands. A certain Kazzilbāsh chief had guaranteed a large reward to the now-wavering Commandant, if he would at once march the prisoners back to Kabul, instead of carrying them off to beyond the Hindu Khush. Pottinger offered him the further bait of a Government pension and a large sum from the prisoners themselves. Since it was 'neck or nothing,' four of them would put their names to the bond—and chance the issue.

A few mornings later Saleh Mahomed hoisted the Afghan flag of rebellion, proclaiming that he and his British allies

had openly risen against Akbar Khan : Pottinger was their chosen leader, Lawrence, Mackenzie and Johnson his deputies. Faint hearts were lifted up, frail bodies braced to meet any demand—now that, at last, freedom was their goal.

How they all rose to their joyful occasion—excepting only Shelton, the jealous and intractable ; how they marvelled at the change wrought in Pottinger from the ‘grim and grumpy hero’ to the vigorous resourceful leader ; has all been fully told in an earlier book.¹ Here an epitome must suffice, written by Henry Lawrence himself to George Clerk.

‘Pottinger assumed the powers of his old office as Political, displaced the Governor, appointed a new one, got in some of the Hazara chiefs, frightened away the old Governor and Mahomed Akbar’s Master of Horse, with his Ghilzai matchlock men. They then made two marches to Kalso, on this side of the Hindoo Khush, where they met Richmond Shakespeare with 610 Kazzilbāsh cavalry. Again, at Killa Ashur, thirty miles on, they met General Sale’s cavalry : we having left our infantry to hold the top of the Pass. . . . Providence and their own courage saved the prisoners ; though they are also indebted to Shakespeare. Pottinger managed admirably, and surprised his comrades by the excellence of his arrangements.

‘We are all well, and in great glee. The ladies and children look lovely : even Ladies Macnaghten and Sale quite charming. . . . Our army is badly off for carriage ; and General Nott, though well provided, is averse to doing anything. . . . He is very ill ; angry at General Pollock being here first, and as *yaghi*² as any Afghan. . . .’

Of Eldred Pottinger—who had once again wrested victory from defeat—he afterwards wrote :

‘India, fertile in heroes, has shown, since the days of Clive, no man of greater and earlier promise than Eldred Pottinger. At Bamiān his genius appeared to rise. . . . One of the youngest of the British officers, he seems to have been unanimously elected leader, and to have effected what thousands of troops could not have done.’

¹ *The Judgment of the Sword.*

² Rebellious.

By the end of September, the capital of Kohistán was in ruins and Akbar still at large in the Hindu Khush. Pottinger would fain have pursued him, but could not persuade a troop of Kazzilbāsh horse to face the venture. On Kabul itself some mark of vengeance must be left: a difficult decision to make in cold blood. The chiefs pleaded for the city and Bala Hissar; and after much debate it was decided to destroy instead Kabul's famous Char Chuttar,¹ where the mutilated remains of the Envoy had been exposed to public gaze. None seem to have considered that this form of punishment would fall more heavily on harmless Hindu merchants than on murderous Afghan chiefs, whose genius for eating their cake and having it could hardly be excelled.

So the war, that had opened with one injustice, closed fitly with another.

And early in October there was George, in his normal spirits, writing to Honoria:

'MY DEAR HONORIA,—

'Best thanks to Tim for his zeal and affection in proposing to come to my rescue and kill all the Afghans! I hope soon to thank the little fellow in person. Reports are strong that we move in three divisions—the first on the 11th. So you may look forward to seeing us early in December; and a very joyful meeting it will be—won't it, Mrs. Crump? . . . What do you think of making a tale out of the adventures of the Captives? . . . I have received a complimentary letter from all, thanking me for my attentions during the last eight months. Pottinger has been voted a bit of plate for his services in effecting our release. . . .'

And Henry's last few words from that city of tragedy told her all that her heart could wish to know:

'October the 11th.

'We march to-morrow for India.'

¹ Grand Bazaar.

THE closing days of 1842 made amends to at least three insignificant human beings—George, Henry and Honoria Lawrence : together, at last, in the old Ferōzpur bungalow, telling their good news to Letitia Hayes.

First Honoria : ‘ It was George who mended the pen I have taken in hand to begin this, beloved sister—Just fancy us all together here—Henry, George and me . . . ! ’

Then Henry himself :

‘ DARLING LETTICE,—

‘ Here is my own beautiful handwriting, to certify that I am now in the presence ! Like a bright particular star, I shot past the army at Peshawar, and reached the river Ravi—fifty miles off—twenty days ago. Having sent my traps to Lahore, I was in the act of riding there myself, when I heard that my dear wife had reached Ferōzpur. So, turning my horse’s head this way, I rode straight in, and happily found her at the ferry, all well. . . . She was a good, most good wife before, but I am innocently told that she will try and be a better one now—— ! ’

There was glad news, also, for the future, from George Clerk, whose tributes to Henry’s energy, zeal and courage had moved Lord Ellenborough to appoint him Superintendent, at a thousand a year, of Dehra Dhoon—the most favoured valley along the Himalayan foothills. Lying between the Jumna and the Ganges, it combined beauty of scene with an equable climate—a very real need for both. There would be plenty of pioneer work such as Lawrence loved ; and it was gratifying to know that Clerk did not despair of getting him back to the frontier some time. But first they must join all their assembled world in doing honour to the battered yet victorious armies tramping back through the Punjab, amid muttered threats of the Khalsa

soldiery that the English should soon be driven from India, as they had been driven from Afghanistan.

News from thence gave a last ironic emphasis to the futility of all that had been lost—lives, money and prestige. Akbar—wisely waiting till the chiefs were at each other's throats—had swooped down on Kabul, carrying all before him. And 'up the country' came his dispossessed father, a sadder man, yet singularly unhostile towards these bewildering British, who snatched with one hand and gave generously with the other, who were now, prepared to hand him back his ravaged kingdom and half-destroyed capital. To that end, Lord Ellenborough had unthinkingly decreed that he and his son should present themselves at the victory Durbar outside Ferōzpur; an insult only averted by a storm of public protest against the gratuitous humiliation of one who had already suffered enough at England's hands.

So the returning Amir was graciously permitted to pay a private call on Lord Ellenborough, who is said to have asked him at parting what opinion he had formed of the English in India: a curious question at such a time. If there was a hint of reproach, there was justice also, in the Amir's famous answer: 'I have been struck with the magnitude of your power and your resources, your ships, your arsenals and your armies. But I cannot understand why the rulers of so great an Empire should have crossed the Indus to deprive me of my poor and barren Kingdom.'

There were many among the English themselves—then and afterward—who shared his inability to understand either the common sense or the common justice of that first deplorable Afghan War. Designed to counter a magnified Russian menace, it had converted a more or less friendly Afghanistan into a land bristling with enemies. From Kandahar to Kabul, from Kabul to Peshawar, charred forts and ruined villages were likelier to keep hatred alive than to prove a supremacy fatally lost in Eastern eyes. No belated victories—not even the stout defence of Jalālabad—could wipe out Akbar Khan's annihilation of an army hitherto believed invincible.

But the intrusion of awkward facts was not permitted to

dim the glory of Lord Ellenborough's grand finale. Seldom, in any great historical drama, have the famous unities been so notably preserved. The Kabul tragedy ended where it had begun. On the very plain where Lord Auckland had arrayed his Army of the Indus, Lord Ellenborough now arrayed his Army of Reserve : an army drawn from denuded stations, to welcome the returning hosts and impress hostile Sikhs by a display of England's undefeated power.

And in mid-December back came Pollock's Army of Retribution, with Nott's 'beautiful regiments' and Sale's 'illustrious garrison,' whose Jalālabad defence had captured Ellenborough's imagination. Hence the decree that his favoured ones must cross the Sutlej three days before the rest. Two hundred and fifty elephants, in gold trappings, had been trained by order, to bow the knee, lift their trunks and trumpet a welcome. The Army of Reserve would present arms, the Artillery fire a salute of nineteen guns. Nor could Sir Jasper Nicoll persuade him to honour the other two armies in like manner.

So Sir Robert Sale's battered and dwindled battalions crossed the Sutlej three days ahead of their fellows, unwillingly enough. With unseemly shouts of laughter they passed under Lord Ellenborough's triumphal arch, like a tawdry gallows, gay with tinsel and bunting. As they set foot on British Indian soil, guns roared, troops cheered, ladies fluttered handkerchiefs and a dozen bands struck up 'The Conquering Hero.' Only the two hundred and fifty elephants refused to kneel and squeal in chorus. They, it seemed, disapproved of distinctions. Unmoved amid the uproar, they stood blinking their small, wicked-looking eyes, as if in scorn of those shabby-looking regiments, the shabbier by contrast with their own caparisoned magnificence.

Three days later, came Nott and Pollock, bringing their sheaves with them. More cheers, more brazen music ; but for them no caparisoned elephants, no roar of guns or presenting of arms. Over against the spotlessly arrayed Army of Reserve they pitched their weather-beaten tents, 'locked up' like soldiers in a column ; half their men and officers clad in Afghan sheepskins, their standards blackened

and torn ; nothing bright about them but their musket barrels and swords. In that camp also were the Bamiān captives, with few clothes and little money, in no mood for jubilation. Nor were these cheered by any special welcome. Only Lady Sale and Mrs. Sturt—by reason of their link with the ‘ illustrious garrison ’—were singled out for attention, even to dining at Lord Ellenborough’s table. Banquets and honours alike were tainted with prejudice and invidious distinctions that, for many generous minds, went far to spoil an occasion of thanksgiving and good cheer. The soldiers were everywhere—the ‘ Politicals ’ nowhere. Yet if there were any three men in Ferōzpur peculiarly entitled to honours and recognition they were Pottinger, Lawrence and Mackenzie—heroes of the siege, the retreat and the captivity. Damned by their chance connection with Lord Auckland’s policy, their individual courage and prowess went for nothing. Only the prisoners honoured Eldred Pottinger by subscribing for a piece of plate, in token of gratitude for the skill and courage that enabled them, when all help failed, to release themselves ; and that spontaneous tribute went more straightly to his heart than any golden opinion from Supreme Authority.

But of what account were individuals in that wholesale orgy of parades, reviews and banquets without end ? There on the great plain, where Alexander had acknowledged the limit of his conquests, the combined armies of Nott and Pollock and Nicoll—45,000 troops and a hundred guns—passed in review before the chiefs of two great states, an embassy of nobles from the Sikh court and a vast crowd of both races rarely assembled in the India of those days. Above them all towered the new Governor-General on his monster elephant of state. Guns and again more guns tore and clattered past ; swords flashing up to the salute. After them thundered the cavalry to the strains of ‘ Bonnie Dundee,’ gay little pennons fluttering from lance-heads and more flashing of swords. The infantry, Queen of Battles, went past at the double ; a never-ending river of men. Then the final words of command swept that ordered magnificence off the sunlit plain ; and so far as the

Army was concerned, the War came triumphantly to an end.

The voice of guns and drums, the voice of the Governor-General and the Press proclaimed British disaster vindicated, tarnished honour regilt. Yet beneath those gaudy trappings lurked the still small reminder that no re-gilding could unmake history or change the hearts of men ; the still small fear that those who had best forget would remember and those who had best remember would too soon forget the awful price paid in blood and money and prestige for the initial injustice of the first Afghan War.





सत्यमेव जयते

PHASE FIVE
ABOVE THE BATTLE
(1843-1845)

*Man's most positive achievements are born of dreams and visions
followed loyally to an unknown destination.*

Joseph Conrad.





सत्यमेव जयते

IT was over at last, that whirl of parades, festivities and lamentations—for those who were never to return. And with the dawn of 1843 one unsociable pair of human beings gladly turned their backs on it all to set out for the favoured valley, where they promised themselves a long spell of happy isolation, pioneering and much camp life in an almost English climate. Also the Dhoon was blessed with the only existing hill station, besides Simla, and there they spent a quiet time before starting on a tour of Henry's new kingdom : a time rich in after results.

For at Mussoori Lawrence found a flourishing school where the boys of English parents, who lived in India, were receiving a sound education in a healthy climate ; and the discovery quickened a seed idea that had been germinating in his mind since bachelor years at Gorakhpur. Earlier still, in the Army, going round barracks, he had been troubled—as young men of the day were rarely troubled—by the prevailing squalor and discomfort, ' the hot, ill-lit places of rest, the drink, the dissipation, and onset of epidemics,' affecting the children even more fatally than their elders, so that few among them lived to grow up. Ever since then he had hoped—some time, somehow—to give those barrack-reared children the chance of a fairer start in life ; and here was an ideal place for a hill military school, with himself at hand to father his cherished project.

In high hope, they traversed the Dhoon from Hope Town to Hurdwar ; and they were preparing to settle down comfortably for several years, when their peaceful prospects were shattered by an official order bidding Lawrence remove to Ambála. The Governor-General—still new to India—had discovered that the Dhoon appointment could not legitimately be given to any but a *pukka* civilian. This

involved a transfer of Lawrence, the Political, to Ambála ; while the civilian—settled and content—must be shifted to the Dhoon. For Lawrence and Honoria it was an acute disappointment, that could not be minimised by Ellenborough's regret or the sympathy of George Clerk, who had protested in vain against an exchange that would be unwelcome to both men.

'I need not say how sorry I am,' he wrote, 'for the derangement of all your plans. But as Ambála combines a hill climate within six hours *dāk* . . . while keeping you handy to the Punjab frontier, you may hereafter find little cause to regret the change.' But Lawrence was acutely regretting it, here and now. Nor were his hurt feelings soothed by the absence of his name from the list of C.B.'s given for the Afghan War. He knew himself entitled to the award ; and it galled him to be overlooked simply because he had commanded irregular troops.

At Ambála, they must 'sojourn in tabernacles' till the threat of March sent Honoria, with her delicate boy, back to a changed Kasauli. For, by now, a

'European regiment was stationed there. Houses with glass windows, officers in red coats, morning visits and evening dresses had taken the place of our Robinson-Crusoe-like doings. . . . People in England talk of liberty, but I doubt if there be any place in the three kingdoms with freedom like ours when we were the sole inhabitants of Kasauli.'

There Henry joined her in May, having marched all through his new district, only to be shifted yet again to the small adjoining state of Kythal, where the Rajah had died without issue, and his country had conveniently lapsed to the British Government. But relations and retainers had incited the native troops to attack the small force sent to take over the state.

On Lawrence had been laid the unwelcome task of quelling a resistance with which he sympathised in essence, if not in fact ; since he was opposed on principle to the arbitrary annexation of Native States. Reinforcements

from Kurnál met with trifling opposition ; but even the British troops caught the contagion of 'plunder,' a part of them going so far as to loot some of the treasure they had been sent to guard. It was the kind of thing that roused Lawrence to fury ; and an officer who was present in the palace, when he heard the news, has left a quaintly vivid picture of outraged authority, seated on a marble throne in the royal loggia.

'He was sitting on the throne in great excitement, wearing an Afghan *choga*, like a dressing-gown. This and his thin locks and thin goat's beard streamed in the wind—suggesting some sort of pythiness on her tripod under the afflatus !' But soldiers and officers, convicted of actual theft, found that queer-looking figure an ill man to deal with. He finally acquitted the officer, quelled the disturbance and found himself, for reward, appointed 'sole Malik' ¹ of Kythal—his third district in four months. To him it seemed that Lord Ellenborough must set small value on an officer with whom he 'played chess' in this arbitrary fashion ; and his vexed spirit had need of the wise letter on the subject from Thomason, who knew and loved him well enough to deal him the faithful wounds of a friend.

'I trust,' he wrote, 'that you will cheerfully and zealously perform your duty in this post, and bide your time. I can only say that you now stand well at Headquarters : I entreat you put a bridle on your words as well as your actions. Tell your grievances to your wife, but to no one else. Do not call yourself, or appear to consider yourself an aggrieved man. Do I ask too much ? I hope not. By neglecting my advice you can gain nothing. By following it, you may gain everything—'

He followed it to the best of his ability ; but professional vexations and frequent fever so damaged his health and spirits, that his thoughts turned for the first time to long leave in England, though he could scarcely afford the passage money for three. Already, in Kasauli, they were building a larger cottage, with respite from Kythal in view ; and during his brief leave, in May, he wrote to Letitia :

¹ Headman.

‘DARLING LETITIA,—

‘Here I am again with my old wife in our pleasant cottage. . . . My thoughts are often with you, making me long to go home. Often we determine to do so ; then comes some objection not to be got over ;—but wherever we are, we shall ever be . . . one in heart with you, our darling sister. We have got two rooms in our house, and have four children here, as well as ourselves ; and to-morrow or next day we are to have a little Napier. We are building another cottage close by, and shall then be very comfortable. Clerk, we hear, is now Governor of Agra. I *ought* to succeed him at Lahore, if knowing about the work has anything to do with the matter. . . .

‘I don’t think you would see much difference in me, further than the wrinkles time has drawn upon my face. In all else, I am much as I was—perhaps a little tamed and quieted by the years, but still with impulse enough for half a dozen such frames as my own.’

No taint of conceit lurked in his natural hope of succeeding Clerk. Nor was it an easy matter to replace the most accomplished Indian diplomatist of his day. But the Governor-General astounded his world by saddling the intrigue-riddled Sikh Court with a simple, gallant soldier, who knew nothing of Sikhs or of the Punjab. Lawrence could only gird inwardly and return to Kythāl, where an accidental vexation revived his stifled sense of grievance.

A few weeks later, the *dāk* brought him a heavy sealed packet franked by Lord Ellenborough, addressed to ‘Major Lawrence, C.B.’ Pollock *had* done him justice then, after all. Eagerly he tore off many wrappers ; and out of the last fell a big Kabul medal—no more. The C.B. must have been a cruel, inadvertent slip of the pen ; and after some brooding Lawrence ventured to submit a modest statement of his services to confess that he had felt himself overlooked. His letter, on its way to Simla, was crossed by an ‘official’ from his friend Thomason—now Foreign Secretary—informing him that he had been appointed Resident at the Court of Nepal on a salary of £3,500 a year. To that surprising statement Thomason added—unofficially—a word of gentle reproof :

'I hope you will like your appointment. I happen to know that Lord Ellenborough selected you, in a great measure, because he hoped the climate would agree with you and enable you to stay in the country. If all the speeches you and he have made about each other, during the last year, were noted down—whose would read best?'

Soon after, came a graciously worded apology for that unlucky slip of the pen. In the giving of honours, Lord Ellenborough explained, he had no voice; and Lawrence must take his new appointment as a practical tribute to his ability and zeal. Of its practical value there could be no question: yet the grateful man would have exchanged all its advantages for a year of the Punjab and the North-West—more work, less pay, fierce hot weathers and all. Well for him and his that he had no choice in the matter; and on the surface he was well content. Better still, here was Honoria's good letter, written on their sixth wedding day.

'Do you remember what day this is, my husband? And now the lapse of six years has brought us back to the very same day of the week. . . . Next week, I earnestly hope, will bring you here. But you are so slippery, I fear you will put me off again. Do not, I beseech you, darling, remain below after this month.

'And now I am writing at the very hour when we were, six years ago, standing by the altar. Dearest, my prayers can be with you, though not my bodily presence. And this is not so bad as last year, when such mountains of difficulty divided us. Two years ago, it was a calm, though mournful day, three weeks after our Moonia's departure. Three years ago it was the commencement of a tranquil happy month we spent together at Ferōzpur, having got rid of all our guests. Four years ago, I spent the day alone in Annandale. And now I look at our boy, half a man already, and wonder to think of the babe I then carried in my arms—'

Early in September, she had his astounding news, with a request from his oracle for the casting vote. And, being Honoria, she voted for acceptance, though it might involve the thing she dreaded most—another prolonged separation.

'*Katmandu!* I hardly know whether to laugh or cry. First I am enchanted at the *izzat*¹ to my husband; and think that as Resident you have a good chance of winning a C.B. Then, three thousand five hundred rupees a month is not bad; and I say, darling, *take it*. By all means take it.

'The climate is inestimable for you—the work should suit you well. You will do good, and gain honour. If we live till you are a *pukka* Major, you would have saved enough for us to go home finally and leave Tim independent. Do I forget that I am not to go with you? God knoweth whether I do. But then, sweetest, we may not be much more separated than now. I suppose Mussoori would be my abode; and you could come to me occasionally. The law may be relaxed, and I might join you. At any rate, if we found it intolerable, it would then be time enough to give it up. . . .

'Did you, I wonder, observe the death of "the Rev. Mr. Briggs" at Hyderabad? I think it very probable that it is the man for whom I suffered so much misery, though I escaped the life-long misery, of the ill-assorted marriage I would have made. But how little of my present happiness is my own work!'

So the appointment—that marked another turning-point in his life—must be accepted, on the chance of arranging matters with that unknown quantity, the Gurkha Maharajah of Nepal, whose beautiful, highland kingdom, rising above the valley of the Ganges, had been captured by the Gurkhas in the time of Clive. Their aggressive policy of conquest and expansion had led to a war with England in 1815; to a treaty safeguarding Gurkha independence by the admission of a permanent British Resident—with Assistant and a doctor—at the Court of Katmandu. But the Nepalese—fearful of insidious designs on their country—hedged in those solitary white men with rigid rules and precautions. Only by a prescribed route they were allowed to enter, under escort: and, once lodged in the Residency, they might not go more than twenty miles in any direction. Till now no married officer had been appointed Resident:

¹ Prestige.

and there were rumours of a long-standing prophecy that the admission of a white-faced woman would lead to the downfall of their Empire.

But there could be no peace for this particular 'white-faced woman'—innocent of designs on their independence—till she knew for certain that she would be allowed to join her husband in unknown Nepal. Ever since Gorakhpur days when its mountain barrier had bounded their horizon, her imagination had been captured by that far, forbidden country: and now the key of it had been given—with reservations—into Henry's hands.



BEFORE September was out, Honoria received her marching orders. 'I'm in the *Gazette*. Stop all building. You may come down, if you like, any time after the first week of October.'

If she liked——! All she asked was leave to join him ; since this might be their last month together for an indefinite time. Not till mid-December would she know her fate : and reluctantly she had decided that, failing Nepal, she must face the lone voyage back to England, for the sake of her delicate boy.

By October the 10th, all was packed ready for her flight to Ambála, where Lawrence was winding up Kythal affairs ; and it was not without sadness that she journeyed down that beautiful hill road—possibly for the last time ; down and down, a winding descent of six thousand feet. On her left, rose the rocky mountain wall ; on her right, spurs and ridges fell away to velvet crumplings of the foothills and a boundless view of the Punjab plains, dimly seen through a bluish veil of mist, that gave the whole distance an ocean-like aspect. Far off, the silver Sutlej 'wound a glittering track, holding up successive mirrors to the sinking sun.'

'By the time we reached Pinjor'—she wrote in her journal record—'a glorious full moon had risen behind a bare, brown hill. Here stands a garden-house—belonging to the Patiala Rajah. The garden, divided into terraces, is traversed by a stream, and at every terrace, the stream rushes down in a miniature cascade, between flights of steps, to a square pond, studded with fountains, that were set playing in my honour. I chose the largest summer house for sleeping ; three archways on each side and the stream running through it. Wadded curtains filled up one set of archways, and the wall of a tent across the other

completed my tiny bed-chamber. The low couch had a silk mattress stuffed with soft cotton ; and, to my surprise, a clean muslin sheet tied round the corners with gold and silken cord. A bright quilt and plenty of silk pillows made a very tempting couch, but I carefully spread a pair of my own sheets over the Rajah's *un-washable* bed furniture ! . . .

'We passed four weeks in Ambála : a month of hurry-scurry, hustle bustle. *This* we must take, *that* we must leave—but nobody will buy. What shall we do with these ? In spite of many up-rootings, we were absurd enough to believe that we were about to have a permanent abode at Katmandu. Accordingly we got rid of all our worldly goods, except our wearing apparel.

'People at Home can scarcely picture the small vexations of this roving life ; buying things dear, because we must have them : selling them cheap, because we must get rid of them. Trying to carry about some few household gods ; the vexation of their arriving smashed, cracked, drenched, after jolting in crazy carts, over unutterably bad roads ; being dragged through streams—and occasionally lodged for a day or two at the bottom. At first I could have cried over the demolition of goods that I thought it impossible to do without ; but every year in India, my list of necessities decreased. We took up our quarters in the *Badshah-i-bagh*,¹ the remains of a halting-place, built by the Moghul Emperors, for their marches from Delhi to Kashmir ; now Europeanised into a spacious house. Under one of the old trees, Henry held his court : and our disfurnished abode was crowded by a succession of travellers ; some absolute strangers ; some old friends ; all coming, as a matter of course, to rest with us on their way to headquarters. In October and November, all India is on the move ; and most of our guests had servants of their own. All had the bedding of their palanquins. We had good store of sheep, poultry, and Allsopp's Pale Ale ; and these things suffice, coming under the delightfully convenient phrase "*Camp fashion*." I abhor set parties but greatly enjoy an assemblage, guaranteed by that dear little phrase, which sets everybody at ease, the hostess included.'

¹ King's garden.

Business wound up and everything sold—more or less—they moved on by *palki* to Kurnál, there to spend a few days with John and his young wife: an Irish girl, like Honoria, from Donegal. He had gone home fully intending to marry, if luck favoured him; had perseveringly sampled the ‘ball-going beauties of Bath’ in search of his ideal young woman—always spoken of as the calamity. Rough and unconventional, with his vitality, originality and fine physique, he was no ‘cakey-man,’ in his own scornful phrase. He needed a real woman, who could face up to the demands of Indian life; and he had found her in Harriette Hamilton,—as Honoria was quick to recognise. The two girls who had played together in far-off Derry, now met again, as wives of two remarkable brothers—diverse, as they were devoted. After their brief halt, Henry must push on; leaving Honoria to follow and join him—or otherwise, as fate decreed.

Looking back years after, she made a lively tale of her lone adventure.

‘I often think how pleasant it would be to go Home, and only have to step into a coach, to be whirled to one’s destination. Now you shall learn how to prepare for a “*dāk* trip.” First you must know that *Dāk* means post; and every ten miles, or so, there is a *chowkee*, or station, where fresh relays of bearers are to be found. On a civilised road there are rest-houses (*dāk bungalows*), at intervals of forty or fifty miles. To begin with, you must write to the postmaster “to lay bearers,” along the line you are going. Then you see that your *palki* is well provided for the road; in the flat tin box on the roof, a change of clothes, a tiny box of tea, a canister of sugar and of sago; a loaf of bread, a cold fowl, two bottles of beer, a corkscrew and metal cap; a candle-stick and wax candles. Have your medicine chest inside; oh, and don’t forget to tie on the pole a small tin kettle, your *chilumchi*¹ and water-pot. Add this little *mora* (a light bamboo stool), useful to sit on when cooking your breakfast. And have you written to the Civilian of each district to give you a mounted guard? Have you got coppers in case you want to buy milk?

¹ Brass basin.

Then just tie that roll of string to the *palki* ; something will be sure to give way before long. Put your writing-case under your pillow. And now you are ready to start.

'After preparations much like these, I sent my *palki* on, as far as Panipat, and left Kurnál in the Nawab's carriage, at 1 p.m. on the 23rd November, with Alick, my five-year-old boy, who is now very companionable. My whole turn-out was a good specimen of the comfortless luxuries in which India abounds. Two gaily clad armed horsemen rode by the carriage, a groom ran along by each horse, and on the coach box sat the driver, with a Jemadar ; a sort of major-domo, who makes himself indispensable. "In fact, he is your *sanctum sanctorum*," I once heard the wife of a General officer say : possibly she meant *Factotum* !

'The carriage was a rickety, uneasy, old barouche ; and, as we started at midday, the sun blazed into every corner. Fancy yourself sitting inside a spoon, held opposite the fire ; with a piercing cold wind blowing about your ears, raising clouds of dust in your face, as you go, bump, jolt, grind, grate over the vilest road imaginable. I was really glad to reach Panipat, and change into my *palki*, much as I dislike that overgrown coffin.

'At eight in the evening, I bade the bearers set me down, and sent a horseman with my *lota*¹ to the nearest village, for milk to make a cup of tea. Part of our turn-out, on a *dák* trip, is a torch-bearer, who at night runs alongside, holding his *flambeau*, and a flask of oil to feed it. So a fire was easily lit ; and there we all squatted sociably, while it boiled our kettle, and the *massalchi* held his flaming torch to light us. Over all, the lofty sky, and around us the balmy evening air.

'Up came the old man from whom the milk had been bought ; and I paid him the full value, much to his surprise. But still he lingered ; and pointing to Alick, he said, "I have a grandson that size, dying of fever."

'The medicine chest was immediately produced ; some calomel and rhubarb powder, with a dose of castor oil. He took the medicine thankfully ; and in a few minutes I was surrounded by patients. One man brought a boy with enlarged spleen ; and I thought a dose of rhubarb and magnesia could do no harm. Another wanted a

¹Brass vessel.

similar dose for his little brother ; and I was glad to set off again, before my skill and bottles were exhausted.

'It seems strange to think of a lady, travelling with twenty men or so, at night, often through an absolute desert ; she sometimes unable to speak or understand a sentence of Hindostani ; her baggage including shawls and jewels, carried on these men's shoulders ; she and her possessions entirely in their power : and that on the very ground where Thugs are strangling a man for half a crown's worth of silver ornaments, or merely to keep themselves in practice. Yet an unprotected woman can travel safely, thus, from one end of India to the other, thanks to the spell of the English name. I myself have never felt a moment's fear ; and I set small store by my mounted guard, who is generally a mile behind or before my party.

'On we jogged again—the livelong night. And at dawn the bearers put down the *palki*, saying there were no fresh men to take it up. I got out and looked round. We were in an utterly bare and desolate place ; but I could see, about a mile off, a clump of trees. If there be trees, there must be water ; probably a well and some human habitation. So I promised the bearers a present, if they would carry me on to the trees ; and there, sure enough, I found a straw-built hut : with a *bunnia* seated at the door, ready to sell grain and small stores to travellers.

'Now I felt quite at home, gave the men some money to buy their meal, and they cooked *chupattis*, while I prepared my own breakfast, sitting in the shade, till the bearers were ready to take me on to Delhi. But I soon saw a carriage driving up, kindly sent out to bring me in the last stage : and by eleven we were safe with our friends in Delhi—the old Mogul capital.'

The wonders of Delhi—new and impressive to Honoria's eyes—have been so often described that they are almost familiar, by now, even to those who have never seen their stately splendour of fort, palace and tombs. But here is a glimpse into India's grim underworld :

'We wandered with a guide, among the catacombs beneath the palace : and as we threaded one of the passages, our torch-bearer turned suddenly up a very narrow alley,

with no outlet. But his lifted torch showed a chasm in the wall. Through it he crept cautiously, and we followed. Then he knelt down ; and we saw a deep pit, crossed by a beam from which hung rusty, mouldering chains. It made a good picture : the swarthy Mahomedan with his long beard kneeling on the verge of the pit ; lifting his torch and disturbing swarms of bats that clung to the roof ; then flaring it down, to show us the gaping depth beneath. This was the *Phansigahr*, or place of hanging. Only a few years ago the wall was broken open, and this pit discovered, skeletons of women suspended from the beam. So this was evidently where obnoxious ladies of the harem were disposed of—a “cleanlier riddance” than sewing them up in a sack, and throwing them into the river.

‘While dwelling among tombs, I must not omit the very beautiful Mahomedan custom of lighting lamps on their friends’ graves at nightfall. Rarely is the humblest grave without this tribute to the dead. I know not who keeps the light, after the relatives are gone. Strangers must often do the charitable work. At dusk, the glimmering lights kindle, one after another, as if the fairies were busy ; each grave with its little *chirāg*--a saucer of red, baked earth, to hold oil, with a lip for the cotton wick.’

AGRA, 4th December.

‘Still detained here, for lack of conveyance ; the Army, assembled for war with Gwalior, having absorbed all available carriage. The weather is delightful—clear, calm and bracing. But personally I chafe at wasting, in a house, the season for being in tents. Not a military camp, but our own delightful camp, pitched in some chosen spot, where we enjoy an elastic feeling of liberty, such as I know nothing to equal. In the great palace of a house, where I am staying, three rooms are given to me. My bedroom has no less than six pairs of lofty folding doors, not one of which fits closely. Some will only stay shut by means of a table or a box ; others refuse to open beyond a certain angle. It is a serious undertaking to stretch up to the great stiff bolt that fastens another door ; and when, after infinite pulling, twisting and shaking, you have opened it—open it must remain, till you choose to get up and

close it. If you wish for privacy, you must be prepared to remove the barricades every time you call "*Kohi hai.*" Why bells have never been introduced into Indian houses, I know not. Perhaps because they are swarming with servants, content to sit all day, perfectly idle, ready to jump up and answer when called. These black forms, gliding about with noiseless feet, and standing unexpectedly before one, are still a grievous worry to me. Then the noises of an Indian house! The echo of every sound, through the gaping, staring rooms. The reverberations of "*Kohi hai!*" "*Hazur!*" Two or three men, rushing in at different doors, hastily adjusting turbans.

'I hope patent stoves will not have arrived before we go home. One of the luxuries I look forward to is sitting by a blazing coal fire, my feet on the fender, a polished poker to wield. Here the fireplaces are such comfortless, incomplete things! And the smouldering wood sulks into a sort of charcoal; the mere look of it enough to chill any body.'

On December the 5th she went out with a large party to Fathepur Sikri, some twenty miles from Agra, where Akbar built the beautiful desolate palace in which he was never to live.

'Tents, servants and provisions had been sent on ahead; and a carriage was placed at my disposal: a most outlandish-looking affair, that seemed once to have been an English-built barouche. To it four mules were harnessed by a wonderful complication of broken straps, tongue-less buckles, and knotted rope. On the stump of a coach-box, sat a wild Punjabi, with long black hair and beard: a wisp of a turban round his head; sundry pieces of blue checked cloth, fluttering about his body. How these people manage to keep on their floating drapery, is always a mystery to me! While our driver held the reins, another man ran alongside encouraging the mules by incessantly talking to them. Once, when he fell behind, they promptly stood still in deep sand. The coachman, not attempting to urge them on, stood up on the seat and sang out in a prolonged chant, "*Ho! toom bolni walla! Aō!*" ("You whose work it is to speak—Come!") Up came the *bolni walla*, and expostulated so effectively with the

mules, that off they scampered once more, over rough and smooth.

'By ten o'clock we reached our camp, close to the ruins of Fatehpur Sikri—only a few portions perfect, the rest looking like an army of men cut down in their prime. But one thing I must mention, as eminently characteristic of the period! a large open-air platform paved in squares of black and white marble, forming a gigantic chess-board, in the centre of which stood the King's throne. Here a right royal game of chess was played in his presence; thirty-two ladies, picked from the Zenana, to represent the pieces. Two favourite nobles were chosen to play the game; and the victor carried off the whole thirty-two damsels. No wonder there were victims for the *Phansigahr*.'

At Agra she was staying with their old friends the Thomasons, in Government House, where one of the party praised her as a model good wife, following her husband into the wilds of Nepal, though the whole country was so unsettled. And she—never at a loss—answered aptly: 'It's no hard matter being a good wife to a good husband. It is being a good wife to a *bad* one that needs an angel!'

But she was not yet certain whether Nepal would have her. Not till she reached Lucknow could she hope to receive letters telling of his arrival, and deciding her destination.

सत्यमेव जयते

LUCKNOW at last—and letters from Henry ; one for herself and one for her host, Dr. Login, a man of remarkable mind and character, who had done fine work at Herāt with Eldred Pottinger, after the siege.

To her, Henry wrote hopefully :

‘ Darling—got yours from Alighar, and two from Delhi. Don’t fear. I see nothing to prevent your coming. I’m only not asking, lest they should think it a favour. As yet they are canvassing my character ; and they made such a fool of Mr. Hodgson, that they are puzzled about me. Mr. Hodgson mixed up with their intrigues ; and with outstretched hands, *in my presence*, called himself the Rajah’s servant. So you can imagine the system, that has prevailed. I’m clearing the rooms and cleaning them for you. Your dreams of the filth hardly touched the reality. Oh, the cookroom ! Its condition beat Ferōzpur by chalks.’

To Dr. Login, a few days later, he wrote of the Court and his new Rajah—‘ Mr. Nepal ’—of his own plans for coming down to meet Honoria :

‘ I have just returned from reading Mr. Nepal a lecture, comforting him with a history of myself, my past goodness and my future good intentions. I’ve also given in a declaration of my non-interference creed, with hints that as *Elchee* of a great Government, I must be treated as such. Mr. H. was one day master, the next slave.

‘ Tell Mrs. L. that I have told the King I would go down for her at the end of December ; and gave it as proof of my friendly intentions that I was bringing my family here. Show this to Mrs. L ; but consider it all “in the secret department.” ’

Doubt dispelled at last, Honoria could enjoy and record

with a free mind, her first impressions of Lucknow—the great capital of Oudh, destined to be linked for ever with her husband's name.

'Here I have a fresh view of Indian life,' she wrote, 'a town and court still kept up in native style. Its gilded stucco and white paint has an upstart air after the marble and desolation of Agra. Yet it is a curious, even a splendid city. It stands on the river Gumti; and it has been likened by travellers to Moscow or Constantinople, with its gilded domes, its slender pillars and colonnades, its Grecian-looking houses several storeys high.

'From the palace and the Residency quarter, a fine street leads through the Gate of Constantinople. A horseman, spurring full speed, entreats that we lower our umbrellas as the King is approaching. Next comes a train of elephants, going out for their morning bath in the river. Anon, a gay English carriage, with outriders, conveying some of the Residency party—ladies dressed in the latest fashion, officers in gay uniforms riding alongside. The crowd itself is indescribably picturesque: shawls of every variety, gaily embroidered shoes, and a profusion of trinkets. Here we meet a camel-rider, on a high-peaked saddle, bells jingling round the camel's neck, while the sowar guides him by a string, fastened to a hook in his nose; turning the animal's long neck from side to side, like a rudder. Close to him a huge elephant waddles along, his face painted, his tusks tipped and circled with silver. You do not realise how fast he is moving, till you see how his keeper is running alongside, carrying a ladder for the riders to mount and dismount.'

Above the flat roofs towards evening, the sky would be full of many coloured kites: a serious sport in Lucknow.

Bearded men sit on the house-tops launching rival kites alongsteering them adroitly. Some sharpers attach pounded them to their strings and entangle them with their neighbours', which are soon cut by the friction.'

On Christmas Eve she wrote:

'I have come in for a gay sight: the arrival of the new Resident, General Sir George Pollock, at this Court: and I joined a party going to see the procession that went

out to meet him : drums beating, guns firing, troops mustering. We took up our station in a gateway leading to the park. There, from a lofty arch, with small rooms above it, we could see the procession approach ; and peeping through the windows, I thought of Jezebel at Jezreel. Through the morning mist, up the long, slightly curved street, I watched the living mass move forward. One large carriage, covered with gold, was drawn by eight richly caparisoned elephants : another, by twelve fine horses. There were light bamboo carts, filled with pigeons, that were let loose in flocks, and flew about in the morning sun.

A discharge of artillery announced that the King had left his palace ; and soon we heard the deep tones of the kettledrums. Then there was a stir among the crowd : camel-riders jingling along ; running footmen in loose scarlet robes, with silver staves ; cavalry men in complete armour, bands and a gaily dressed elephant bearing the kettledrums. Another carried a man with peacock's feather *chouri* ; and a third bore the golden *chattha*—the royal umbrella. Behind these came the King's own elephant, smothered in trappings, bearing a *howdah* of gold and silver. Within, squatted his cross-legged Majesty of Oudh so turbaned and shawled and jewelled, that it was difficult to discern the speck of *man*, in the mass of finery. Looking straight before him, with vasty dignity, he seemed perfectly unconscious of the surrounding multitude.

'After him followed scores of other elephants bearing the royal family, nobles of the Court, English officers in staff uniforms. And from the far distance approached a shining cavalcade, as the Resident came to meet the King. A discharge of guns announced that they had embraced, and Sir George had climbed into the royal *howdah*. Then the two cavalcades proceeded to the palace, where a grand breakfast was prepared for the whole party.

'The principal palace, called *Farreed Baksh*, stands upon the river ; but I could not, in strong sunshine, walk through the open courts without my parasol ; and the remotest relation to the royal umbrella was not to be heard of within the royal precincts. Only the Resident is allowed such a privilege ; but after sundry delicate negotiations, it was decided that, Henry being Resident at one Native Court,

I might be allowed to carry a parasol at another. So the case was ruled.'

On Christmas Day, her birthday, it was peculiarly hard to be apart from the man who was her world. Letters, almost daily, were her sole consolation: and on the last day of December she wrote from a full heart:

'My own beloved, it is sad to close the year without you. I cannot always still the fears that come with separation; but how happy I feel at thought of the *aram*¹ you are getting—the leisure for your own pursuits. It will require at least a year in one place to give me any sense of permanence. And how my imagination runs on the new country, all the strange things we shall see and describe. . . . Soon, soon, we shall cease to care about the *dāk*. Blessings on you, my own beloved, . . . and all happiness this last day of the old year. . . .'

On the 2nd all was ready for the final stages that would take her through the Gorakhpur—region of blissful early days, when she was new to India and to marriage. Beyond Gorakhpur lay the journey with Henry through unknown Nepal. A last letter, despatched at starting, would reach him sooner than she could hope to do.

'My own—this will be sent to the *dāk* after I am gone, so you will know that, at length, I am off. Yesterday looked like rain, but to-day is clear and calm. All prospers with me when I am travelling towards you. . . . What an age it seems since we parted on November 10th. In that time, I have seen so many people and things that I feel as if it were at least a year! A very pleasant winding up of my intercourse with civilised life.

'And now, when I think of our two selves—how delightfully snug we shall be! How much we shall read and write and talk and think and *pyar-kurro*² one another. How strong we shall become! May these visions be realised; and when they are, may we in our new wealth of life have the "blessing of God that maketh rich". . . .

'Good-bye, beloved, for this time. Your own

'H. L.'

¹ Ease.

² Make love.

By midday she was 'on trek' again, with her small army of coolies and bearers, and a new ayah—with difficulty persuaded to face service outside Hindustan. Crossing the Gumti by a bridge of boats, she had her last view of Lucknow throned on the shining river; palaces and temples, slender turrets, swelling domes and gleaming white walls repeated line for line in the water. And over on the far side, a troop of royal elephants were enjoying a bath: some lying down, others filling their trunks with water, and squirting out the contents over their own backs; each great beast attended by several keepers, rubbing and scrubbing, squeezing and kneading their charges; jumping on and off them, as though they were islands. Suddenly a skittish young monster, cleaned and dried, darted off, like a frisky child, and rolled joyfully in the dust; its keepers calling out in dismay, 'My child, my brother, why are you so careless? Get along into the water again, you son of a good-for-nothing mother! Is it thus you pour out my liver and sit upon my breast? Faithless to salt! Get along!'

All through Oudh she was in a Native State, yet travelling as safely as in British India. At Nawabgunj—an easy run of eighteen miles—she found a tent pitched for her by a Mahomedan gentleman; and she welcomed it as a friend.

'How can I convey to those in England the exquisite luxury of a good tent, pitched in a good position, any time between the first of November and the first of March? The fresh, cheerful freedom of such a dwelling! But natives do not study comfort; they care more for brilliant colours. My tent was striped scarlet and white outside, with gilt pinnacles to the poles: very picturesque in bright moonlight, relieved by masses of shadow from the mango trees above; and I was too tired to worry about the many gaps between roof and walls, letting in glimpses of diamond stars.

Not until she had crossed the river Gogra, in flat punts, did she find herself back again in that district of happy memories—Gorakhpur:

'Once more I see huts made of matting and leaves,

shrouded with cucumber vine ; so much more *eyesome* than the clay walls and tilted roofs around Ferōzpur. . . . But let me not be ungrateful to that troubled frontier, where we lived at high-pressure rate, both of care and joy.

‘Comparing old and new impressions, telling stories to my boy, I jogged along, halting at noon under a clump of tamarind trees to cook some sago. All my substantial provisions being now consumed, I was well pleased, about three in the afternoon, to see a nice-looking house, surrounded by garden and farmyard and cultivated fields.

‘It is a rare thing to find a European house anywhere outside a cantonment : and I rejoiced at having already been bidden to turn in there and rest. A servant met me at the door, to say his master and mistress were absent.

‘“But you expect me?” I inquired.

‘“Certainly. All is ready for the Cherisher of the Poor.”

‘“Is there any dinner?”

‘“Even now it is ready.”

‘“What is there?”

‘“Everything.”

‘“I want only one dish. Let it be brought quickly.”

‘“Your Excellency, it is brought.”

‘While he spoke came the gardener, with a flat basket of vegetables and a nosegay in the centre. He salaamed and presented this *dalli*,¹ with a murmur of “*Baksheesh!*”

‘“Let these vegetables,” said I, “be dressed for dinner.”

‘“What use?” replied the other. “Has not the cook got everything?”

‘So I made over the *dalli* to the ayah, who was going to prepare her own food. “Bring dinner quickly,” I said, and lay down on a sofa, while Alick played around.

‘Several times he wailed to me : “Mamma, I’m so hungry.” And I bade him be patient. But after an hour had passed, I again called the servant.

‘“When will dinner be ready?”

‘“It is ready. It is brought.”

‘“Bring it directly. We are hungry.”

‘“The order is already obeyed.”

‘Another hour, much longer than the first, lagged on : and now my “*Kohi hai?*” echoed louder through the empty house.

¹ Offering.

‘The servant reappeared, looking extremely blank.

“‘When *will* dinner be ready?’ I demanded ‘My child is starving. It is eight o’clock. Is *this* the way you treat me?’”

‘The man folded his hands and bent forward. “Will the slave’s fault be forgiven? To tell the truth, there is nothing for dinner.”

“‘Why did you not say so at first, when I could have got it elsewhere?’”

“‘This slave dreaded your high displeasure.’”

“‘I am angry now, at all your lies. Bring me some eggs.’”

“‘Forgive the hens at this place, madam. They never lay.’”

“‘Make ready quickly, then, some *chupattis*.’”

“‘Woe is me. What can I do? There is no flour left. Your highness’s servants have eaten it all up.’”

“‘Then get some fresh milk. I have tea of my own.’”

“‘Alas, alas, who ever heard of fresh milk at this time of day? It was all boiled an hour ago.’”

‘Luckily the annoyance had now risen to laughing-point, so I sent away “the son of vexation,” and called *Ayah-jee* to my help. We ended in getting some unleavened cakes and un-milked tea, on which we went to sleep; and before daylight next morning quitted the inhospitable dwelling. I had no doubt that the master had left, for the expected travellers, provisions which the servant had made away with. The after-play was, I suppose, a manifestation of the obstinate childishness, so often seen in native character.

‘About sunset, we reached the river Rapti; exactly six years since Henry and I had crossed that stream, and I hailed it as an old friend: the canoes, formed from one hollowed stem, a bamboo for oar and rudder; the clear and placid stream—

‘I rejoice to find myself no whit disappointed in Gorakhpur after six years of wandering among the hills and plains of Upper India, I return to find it more beautiful than ever. The snowy range stands out as of old, touched with the rosy tints of evening. The huge tamarind trees cast their shadow, absolute towers of verdure; the foliage of moss-like delicacy, but the whole tree so massive as to present

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an impenetrable shade. The clear, placid tanks still reflect the dark old mango trees where the monkeys skip merrily about. All the characteristics of this most beautiful district come upon me now, with the freshness of novelty, the delight of recollection.'



LAWRENCE meanwhile, in his Gurkha capital, was mastering—for the fourth time that year—an entirely new set of circumstances, duties and people. For he was dealing now with a Mongol race, almost Chinese in its jealousy of foreign encroachments; and his duties, as a whole, were negative rather than positive. ‘Let people alone and keep aloof, but aloof with all courtesy,’ was the safe advice of George Clerk, who knew better than most men how to deal successfully with that tangle of *tabus*, jealousies and intrigues—the court of an independent Native State.

There are few positions at once less arduous and more difficult for an Englishman than the position of Resident in one of these States; to look on unprotesting at a foreign, and often corrupt, way of life; to uphold the dignity and honour of his country, chiefly by refraining from action; to avoid all connection whatever with Court intrigue. No duty could have been more alien to the temperament of a Lawrence than the ‘useful discipline’ of learning to watch and judge—and do precisely nothing, to ride his impulsive nature perpetually on the curb. So little, in fact, had he relished the prospect of highly-paid idleness; that the appointment—on his own confession—was ‘not so welcome as it ought to have been.’ Gladly he would have exchanged with Colonel Richmond at Lahore; but Lord Ellenborough’s concern for his health, his own concern for wife and child, backed by Honoria’s advice, had carried the day.

And here he found himself, a stranger in a strange land, overlooked by India’s mightiest mountains, very grateful for a long friendly letter of advice from Thomason, chiefly advocating caution in act and word, while keeping everything open and above-board: since no Englishman could

match an Asiatic in subterranean ways. By some means, he must skilfully contrive to unite 'frank abhorrence of cruelty, perfidy and injustice, with courtesy, an even temper and complete absence of dictation.' He was further hampered by orders to reverse the general and personal policy of his forerunner Brian Hodgson, who had handled with more skill than discretion, the dangerous situation that arose all over India after the fatal Afghan War ; had mixed himself up with Court intrigues, sided with the peace party and possibly averted hostilities. But, in the process, he had disastrously lowered English prestige, which Lawrence must, above all things, contrive to restore.

For detailed advice, he turned naturally to his political pastor and master, George Clerk, who combined a thorough knowledge of Asiatics with a thoroughly English spirit.

'But I do not think,' he wrote, 'that you need hints from me. I know few men who are so just in their views of what conduct should be—man to man. . . . Of course you cannot submit to what you say has been : and you know native Courts well enough to understand that such a change will not be practicable by degrees. It must be done at once.'

That prompt reversal of policy was perhaps the most difficult item in the new Resident's programme ; and he soon perceived the need of walking delicately, in the unreal atmosphere of an isolated Native Court, 'a whirlpool of intrigue and counter-intrigue, of conflicting ambitions and political massacres.' The tale of its rulers—with local variations—followed the classic lines of Eastern tradition, culminating in the murderous drama to be played out under the eyes of Henry and Honoria Lawrence.

The opening scenes of that drama reached back to the early eighteenth century ; to the rise and fall of the great Prime Minister, Bhim Sen. A brave man and a patriot, on barbaric lines, he had created in Nepal the form of government most congenial to his kind ; a royal family permitted to enjoy the empty glories of kingship ; the substance of power being securely vested in a strong Prime Minister or Chief. But supreme power in Asia is a slippery pinnacle : and so it proved for Bhim Sen. A jealous and

unscrupulous queen—not content with her shadow of power—resolved to ruin him. First she accused him of impossible crimes ; then she manœuvred him into prison ; and there had him murdered in his cell. Hard on his death had followed the inevitable scramble for power. His relations, including a favourite nephew, had fled from Nepal ; and at this present time the semblance of authority was unevenly divided between three inimical members of the reigning family : the incapable Maharajah, a mental and moral imbecile ; his second Queen, a woman of ungoverned passions, hates and ambitions ; and his true heir apparent—by the elder Queen, now dead—a boy of sixteen—brutal, vicious, half insane ; plotting incessantly to oust his father, murder his opponents and dictate to everyone else, including the Resident—if permitted. The three were christened by Lawrence, Mr., Mrs. and Master Nepal ; a true Nepalese happy family, ceaselessly, engaged in the royal pastime of virulent and unnatural intrigues against each other ; each manœuvring for support from this new and perplexing British Resident, whom neither bribes nor cunning would divert from the narrow way of giving advice to one or other, yet siding with none.

And now, once again, Nepal was dominated by a more notable personality than any member of that hate-ridden royal family. Eight months before the coming of Lawrence, Bhim Sen's favourite nephew, Matábar Sing, had appeared on the scene ; had, in fact, been lured back by Mrs. and Master Nepal to serve their joint aim of ousting the Maharajah, who had his own reasons for agreeing to the recall of a potential enemy. For Matábar Sing, a man of talent and courage like his uncle, must either be conciliated or destroyed. It was no impulse of atonement, but the instinct of a savage, that had prompted the Maharajah's offer of the Ministry with return of all confiscated lands. It was the same instinct that had moved the other to accept ; for he had his uncle's murder to avenge. Move and counter-move were like the creeping of two wild animals nearer to each other. Matábar was the stronger man ; but the King had more underhand resources at command. Matábar

was a Gurkha, so his suspicious nature must be lulled, his ambition fooled with power. Brave as a lion, he must be killed by cowards ; not outright, in coarse Western fashion, but with a tortuous cunning that would need much coolness and a tedious amount of insincerity ; the sort of crime that can only be committed artistically in Asia, and nowhere more artistically than in Nepal.

So Matábar Sing—predestined victim—had been received with all honour—and thenceforward fooled to the top of his bent. But, instead of siding with the Queen, he had secretly transferred his favour to Master Nepal, hoping thus to regain his uncle's position, and to secure the new Resident as an ally ; being naturally sceptical as to a changed policy. In appearance, and personality, the Minister easily eclipsed his fellow-chiefs : ' a fine-looking man under fifty, very tall and stout ; his strongly marked features more like an Afghan than a Gurkha, his chin shaven, his bushy whiskers and moustache twisting ferociously upwards.' Long intercourse with the English had given him easy manners ; and he used the Western handshake in addition to the orthodox Eastern ' hug '—right and left shoulders pressed alternately against each other.

Nepal politics—during the Lawrence *régime*—resolved themselves, with singular unity, into the rise and fall of this remarkable Gurkha, the one man fit to take the lead in that crazy court. Better for him—and for Nepal—could Lawrence have boldly ranged himself with the Minister, who stood head and shoulders above his inimical flatterers. But Lord Ellenborough's orders as to non-interference were stringent ; so Matábar Sing must pay the price of an earlier Resident's unwisdom.

But in January, 1844, the process of fooling him with flattery was still in full swing ; and Lawrence was looking forward to meeting his wife and child just within the Nepal frontier. But the longed-for event could not be a purely personal affair, such as both would have preferred. Honoria must submit to an official welcome befitting a Resident's wife and Nepal's first white woman : two native gentlemen and Dr. Christie, their medical attendant, with a body of

Gurkha troops to do her honour, when she wanted only Henry, a couple of tents and a 'dinner of sorts.' But the joy of being together again eclipsed all minor drawbacks; and Henry at least secured for her a peaceful Sunday between her ten days on the road and another week of marching up to Katmandu, the capital of Nepal.

On Monday they set out in picturesque array—soldiers and elephants and a hundred baggage coolies: the men and young Alick on shaggy little Nepal ponies; Honoria in a dandy, a mere hammock, slung on a pole with cushions and *resai*, made her feel at first as if she had 'been sewn up in a sack to be flung into the Bosphorus.' But increasing confidence in her bearers soon enabled her to enjoy the changing scene from foothills to Himalayan heights—crag and ilex and pine.

Higher and higher they climbed each day; the air keener, the view wider and lovelier; and within a week they surmounted the highest point on their upward journey—the crest of the Chand-na-giri range. Below them lay the valley of Nepal—an emerald set in the ring of the hills. Then it was down and down

'by a winding ravine so steep and rocky'—wrote Honoria—'that I am afraid of seeming to exaggerate if I describe it. . . . Lofty walls of rock rise on either side carpeted with moss, fringed with ferns, creepers and flowering shrubs. Sometimes you get a glimpse into a chasm so beautifully green as to have nothing terrible in its depth. Now we were enclosed, as if at the bottom of a well; then, doubling the shoulder of a crag, the valley lay at our feet, the lofty screen of cliff behind us.

'At length we reached the level: and found a good road leading to Katmandu. The town is nearly in the centre of the valley, and about half a mile farther on stands the British Residency. A large, substantial house, peeping out from plantations around, it looked more like a gentleman's place at Home than anything I have seen out here. In the plains, a house—however spacious and comfortable—must have a glaring aspect; must stand clear of trees to catch every wind for the *tatties*. But here we have fine toon trees, like chestnuts, close to the house; and it was

quite refreshing to see the wintry aspect of nature. Except for evergreens, the trees were bare ; the fields fallow ; and in the morning our gravel walks had a delightful crackling frost in them. Gravel walks ! How homelike to pace them again, after the raised earthen banks that intersect the gardens in the plains of India. . . . And let me not forget the special delight of a turf lawn, such as I have never seen in Northern India. In Simla the vegetation may be as beautiful, but there almost every level as big as a curl-paper is seized for building.

‘And we see pinnacles of snow above the dark hills, north and east. I would that all who could enjoy it, had a view of these sublime peaks, at dawn and sunset—like a glimpse into some other planet. . . .’

Two weeks after their arrival she began a fresh volume, with renewed resolve as to a regularity it was not in her to achieve.

‘Here we have been for a fortnight . . . and I still feel but in a waking dream ; a place like this is so far beyond what I ever imagined. God has indeed given us our hearts’ desire. . . . Increased income I never craved, except that it might enable us the sooner to go Home, the better to educate our boy and to help those in need. . . . But oh, I *did* yearn in my most inmost soul for *quiet*. When you were overwhelmed with work, and hourly appeals that you could not satisfy, when every year brought partial separation . . . our time and temper, strength and spirit and income all consumed with so little satisfaction, then indeed I did pray that God would lead us where we might be together, with health sufficient for enjoyment and use ; where we might smooth our feathers and live as intelligent immortal beings. And now this prayer is more than answered. We are enjoying for the first time, tranquillity and each other. . . . Though, before we have had some most happy quiet intervals, there were always dregs of old work, or prospects of new to mar full enjoyment. . . . Now the materials for great happiness are placed abundantly at our disposal. God grant us wisdom to use them aright.’

NOT often is it given to a man destined for great things, 'to find a smooth stone half-way up the hill, whereon to rest and look round and think.' For Lawrence, this time of so-called idleness at Nepal, provided a pause, such as came to him, curiously, before each period of strenuous action, as if to prepare him, body and soul, for the coming demand ; a pause that might have been even more profitable than it proved, could he have detached his restless mind from the north-west region that dominated it first and last. So deep-rooted was his interest in the Punjab and its borderland, that 'the love of it never left him ; on it he lavished the best of himself . . . and his final separation from it was the most real tragedy of his life.'

Yet a man so blessed in his marriage, in his taste for books and writing, could not be other than content with his present lot. On the very Sunday, in February, when Honoria was lifting up her soul in thanksgiving, Henry was writing to a friend :

'A lovelier spot than this, heart of man could scarce desire. . . . And we have another house, at Koulia, one thousand eight hundred feet higher, where we can go in hot weather, and be as cool as at Simla. . . . Indeed I would not now change, even for the berth I so much wished for—head of the Punjab Agency. . . . It is, however, not unpleasant to think that some people fancy I ought to have got charge of the Sikh duties. But my friend Clerk was right ; in my present health they would have quite knocked me up. . . . We were preparing for England, without means of paying our passage Home, when we were sent here . . . to quiet, ease, health and competence, in lieu of toil, discomfort and sickness. . . .'

Even so, the news that Colonel Richmond had gone home,

that Broadfoot was to have the Punjab, stirred the old ache of longing. This time at least it had been given to the right man; yet a natural hint of envy tinged his sincere congratulations: 'I am very glad you have got the Punjab, as I am sure you will do it full justice; and a noble field it is for an energetic man. This is a delightful place, as far as climate, idleness, salary, etc., go. Indeed, if I could be content to do nothing, it would be preferable to any place in India.'

But Henry Lawrence never could be content to do nothing. He was by nature 'locomotive.' Shaping a new district, choosing the right fellow-workers, riding fifty miles in a day, stamping on all he did the imprint of his personality; that was his idea of life, for a man in his prime. Here, in beautiful, corrupt Nepal, he must practise the uninspiring art of letting well—and even ill—alone. He must watch Matábar Sing—the finest Gurkha of them all—becoming inflated with false flattery, hastening his own end by wholesale execution of his political enemies: must content himself with an occasional warning, as futile as Canute's command to the rising tide.

And Matábar—bewildered by British benevolence—probably said in his heart, 'These Feringhis don't understand chess. It is only a question of the first move. I kill my enemies—or they kill me.' नयन

He could not know how the Feringhi—who did understand chess—was hampered by restrictions incomprehensible to a Matábar Sing.

'I should be, with such an one, very guarded,' wrote George Clerk, from England, 'straightforward and courteous, unyielding in grave matters, accommodating in minor ones'—the complete British Resident in a nutshell.

Not less pointed and pithy was his comment on Lord Auckland's temporising policy: a failing so eminently British that the words might almost have been written to-day: 'Thus we lose character, bit by bit; till at length it requires a pitched battle, two or three Generals and a thousand men killed and wounded to redeem it.'

And Thomason was writing from Agra about this time, with a dash of friendly irony :

‘I am glad to find that you have what your favourite author—I. Taylor—calls the characteristic of a great mind : “that tendency to repose, that calm residence of the soul upon its centre, which impels it sometimes to recede from the noise and confusion of the world.”’

For himself, he was thankful to give up his post as Foreign Secretary to the restless Ellenborough, whose latest achievement—‘the glory or the shame’ of annexing Sindh—drew from the high-minded Thomason a satirical recipe for the gentle art of annexation that might almost have come from the anti-imperialist pen of a Bernard Shaw :

‘I am beginning to be an adept in the Machiavellian arts of Indian diplomacy. . . . For instance : you want, plausibly, to lay hands on the Punjab. Speak them fair. Have only words of peace and friendship on your tongue ; while you seize every possible pretext for filling frontier towns with troops and munitions of war. . . . Now and then bully and threaten a little ; but talk of humanity, civilisation, good Government—and see if, in time, some fair ground of quarrel is not found. There are orders and ribbons and medals to be won on the other side of the Sutlej, I fully expect, if our present bellicose G.G. remains here . . . I apprehend that Lord E. is essentially deficient in Taylor’s characteristic of greatness.’

Fortunately for England’s good name in India, the conquering hero was recalled—as Lawrence had hoped—‘before he ruined the Empire.’

Week by week, tidings and rumours came to Henry Lawrence on his mountain-top, like the echo of distant drums, renewing his persistent, irrational ache to be down there again, in the stress of active employment and demands.

As for Honoria, if she heeded them at all, they did but increase her gratitude to Providence, who had placed her overworked man, for a time, above the battle. Revived journal activity—sign of revived health and content—revealed her happy absorption in home and husband and child and the incredible beauty of their surroundings. For young Alick, now five and a half, they had borrowed a companion, Lawrence Pemberton, the son of friends in

India ; a sturdy boy of four, the very antithesis of Alick, who was overgrown and far from strong, almost girlish in his clinging caressing ways. Humorously christened by his mother 'the little volatile grasshopper,' he had inherited from both parents a desultory, restless mind. He could learn quickly, but could persevere with nothing—a disability partly physical. Not much longer would she be able to keep him with her. But the climate of Nepal, the leisure and health to give both boys regular teaching, deferred the evil day ; and left her mind free to enjoy 'the budding of leafless branches once again ; more like a Home spring than aught I have seen in my wanderings.' From below came 'flights of swallows and the dear Cuckoo.' Wild roses bloomed in their hedgerows, and silver rod—a sheet of dazzling white. In the lake-like valley below them, rice fields sprouted and orchards bloomed. Honoria's entry in mid-April strikes a note of idyllic content very rare in her singularly unsettled life.

'Most happily our days glide by among these "*Delectable Hills*." I am sitting in the verandah this lovely morning, which recalls a spring day at Home. A soft rain stealing down through the breathless air ; the sky pale grey ; the hills a darker grey with drifts of white cloud. But here we miss what makes spring at Home so lovely—music of birds and scent of flowers. . . .

'It is difficult to give an idea to those at Home, of our position here. We can see about twenty miles in every direction ; yet we are completely secluded, not only by the jealous policy of the Nepal Government, but by the miasma afloat in the belt of Terai forest that surrounds the lower hills. From March till November this pestilential tract can only be traversed by people of a tribe called Aolias ; a strange-looking race, hardly human, who seem to suffer from the miasma as little as the monkeys and bears. These men carry our post daily, thus keeping a link between us and the civilised world.

'Here the odd feeling arises not so much from what is, as from what is not. We know that we never *can* meet a white face outside our own grounds : never can have a call from a passer-by of our own colour ; never can have

a beefsteak, or hear a word of English. I should be as much astonished at the sight of a lady as at seeing a New Zealander walk in. . . . If a small party were out on the wide sea with carrier pigeons for post bags, it would be much like our position. After the varied excitements and troubles of a somewhat rough life, I do feel that here God is leading us beside the still waters of comfort.'

But if their surroundings were beautiful, they were less fortunate in the doctor and Assistant, who shared their isolation. Of them Honoria wrote in a more critical vein :

'*Certes*, our small society here is not of the best. Captain Smith is ready and plucky enough : but by nature bullying and overbearing, with a zigzag notion of truth that makes it hard to believe a word he says. Dr. Christie, inoffensive but ignorant and puzzle-headed. I see no glimmer of principle in either, no motive higher than "my own advantage," or "what the world expects."'

And very irksome was the sense of being jealously watched, lest they try to explore the country, or gain information about its people :

'There is no interference with our doings ; but on every side men are loitering about to see who enters or leaves our gate. It is quite amusing, sometimes, the politeness with which these people maintain their policy of seclusion. You propose to visit Tibet. The Court says, "We shall be delighted. You shall have all assistance." But, after the first march, half your coolies would run off. The next march, all that remained would fall sick. Back you would have to come ; the Court protesting their sorrow for your disappointment. When we came up in January, Henry wanted to make a *détour* ; and our Nepal cavalier was delighted. But at the turning-point, he came to our tent in dire distress. He had just received news of a dreadful sickness on that road. He could not possibly suffer his friends to run the risk.'

And here, in Katmandu, the same polite obstruction prevailed. So that all the fascinating country beyond was—according to Honoria—'as inaccessible as the planet Venus.'

To the higher house, at Koulia, they migrated at the end of May. A rise of nearly two thousand feet, in twelve miles, lifted them to Simla heights and a more magnificent Himalayan view, than any hill station could boast, except Darjeeling. As for the 'house,' it proved to be a log cabin; its few tiny rooms suggesting the lower deck of an Indian man; the upper rooms only reached by a step-ladder, through a trap-door; quaint summer quarters for a British Resident on £3,500 a year. Filth and dilapidation pervaded everything. Nothing seemed ever to have been mended. But, for all roughings, the vast mountain world around them made royal amends.

'Surely earth contains nothing so lovely,'—Honorina was writing just a week after their migration—'as the view before us—only excepting the wide sea, which always rises to my mind when I think of beauty. We are on an insulated hill, nearly 7,000 feet high. North and west we look down into a steep valley, through which flows the river Rapti. On every side, the hills rise one above another, brown and purple and blue, to the snows: a much nearer view than I have ever seen and a more fantastic outline. . . . Towards the North, the last snowy battlements disappear behind a frowning mountain. South and East the hills recede so far away as to look transparent—as if all were made of pearl, topaz and sapphire. Is it thus that the heavenly city appeared to the beloved disciple?'

No paradise without its serpent—in this case, serpents. Let Honorina introduce them:

'I have written about the beauties of Koulia—but, but, *but*—it has one great drawback, the *leeches*. Every bush, every branch bristles with these odious creatures. I grasp a beautiful fern and find I have grasped a mass of leeches. We descend into a green dell—and presently we are crawling with leeches. The bitten ponies kick and plunge. Cow and sheep grow lean, for the leeches devour them. When we come in we must search carefully all over our clothes and bodies. . . . The upstairs rooms are comparatively safe; but our servants on the ground floor are cruelly bitten; the stout legs of our *jampannies* absolutely fringed

with leeches. They are smaller than the medical variety, but far more vicious and vivacious.—Well, every place has its pet evils. At Simla it was—"Have you many fleas in your house?" "No, I am devoured by bugs"—'

But, for all the vivacity of leeches, paradise was not lost. The transformation scenes, wrought by mists and mountains, inspired one of Honoria's happiest similes: 'the snowy summits rising above a *tourbillon* of mist and clouds, like some immovable truth from an ocean of bewildering speculation.' And again:

'Towards evening the mists dispersed; and we went out by a road that runs above a winding wooded glen. There, above over-lapping heights, I saw the whole background filled up with sparkling glaciers and the snowy range. It was a picture to put in the portfolio of memory: yet I would give even the Himalayas for a sight of the ocean. I dream of the sea. For the sake of it, I would put up with all the discomforts of a voyage. Shall I ever cross it again?'

A slight tremor of earthquake one morning recalled an earlier one at Ferōzpur, 'immortalised' by a certain Mrs. W. at Lord Auckland's dinner-table.

"Did you feel the earthquake this morning, Mrs. W.?" he had asked.

"Well, no, I can't say I did."

"Indeed? About daylight there was quite a strong shock."

"Daylight, was it? Well, I did feel the bed shake about then. But I thought it was just Mr. W.—giving himself a good *scratch*."

'I fancy,' was Honoria's comment, 'Mrs. W. was more prized, for the mirth she caused, than Mr. W. for his professional functions.'

The opening storms of the great monsoon found out all the chinks in their log cabin; and July drove them back to their weather-proof Residency, having enjoyed 'rain, fog, thunder, *quantum suf.*'

Rain or shine, their days were turned to good account by both: teaching two small boys, reading omnivorously

and writing—incessantly writing—mainly articles on subjects of serious interest for the *Calcutta Review*, a venture lately started by Mr. J. W. Kaye, future historian of the Afghan War. To it Lawrence contributed admirable essays, mainly on Indian subjects and England's responsibilities in India—the dominant chord in his thoughts and his work. Always he had the one end in view—to illuminate Indian problems: the right government of subject races, the relations with Native States and the military defence of the country. He was also, at that time, revising his unpublished defence of Sir William Macnaghten, a treatise that involved searching criticism of the whole Indian system, and culminated in a prophetic warning that only drastic reforms—military and civil—could save England from the threat of a disaster more terrible than that of Kabul.

'Our chief danger,' he concluded—in words as true to-day as when he wrote them—is from *within*, not from without. The enemy who cannot reach us with bayonets, can touch us more fatally, if he lead us to distrust ourselves, or rouse our subjects to distrust us. . . . At Kabul we lost an army, and we lost some character with the surrounding states. But by far our worst loss was in the confidence of the native soldiers. Better if our harassed troops had rushed on the enemy and perished to a man, than that surviving sepoys should be able to tell . . . of what they saw at Kabul.'

Of this whole admirable paper Herbert Edwardes wrote in later days:

'The rare comprehension of past experience and things present; rarest of all, the sure swoop on the future, are touches of true genius. . . . It is not well written. He never did write well. He thought vigorously and impetuously . . . rushed onwards from one broken sentence to another; sometimes depositing a single word, in the middle of a blank page that he might fix a new idea at the bottom. But it was as much by his persistent writing as by his personal character that he leavened the country with high principles';

and gained the remarkable influence he exercised—not in his lifetime alone.

Honoria also added her own anonymous share to the thriving *Review* ; articles on Indian education, on English women and children in India, and the larger part of an essay on Romance and Reality. Ceaselessly she urged her fellow-women to a keener interest in the country and its people ; to higher aims and larger activities, in spite of hindrances peculiar to the climate—indolence and restlessness and self-indulgence.

Hardly a week passed without the despatch to Calcutta of a bulky packet from one or both : and Honoria—absorbed in her congenial activities—could write from her heart :

‘ I do not think we could have as much happiness anywhere in India as we have here. If I sometimes wish for a little more variety, I far oftener dread leaving this tranquil happy home. What a contrast—our life two years ago ; or one year ago, when I was in Kasauli watching the last days of poor wee Letty. . . . Now we are together, I dread any change that may separate us.’

Strange that she left no further record of a child, still-born in ’43, than that chance allusion, and certain verses in this year’s journal, written for her husband’s birthday ; simple poignant lines, worth quoting as the only sign she gave of a second loss—again a daughter—endured alone.

‘ Oh how many a hope and fear
Has lived and died within the year ;
Since, in heart-sickening agony
I listened for my infant’s cry :
And gave my silent offspring birth,
Only to lay it in the earth.

‘ God’s will be done, but none can tell,
No other heart can guess how well,
A mother loves her blighted child
That never stirred and never smiled—’

Now in this month of August—time of her saddest and happiest memories—she was able to record, ‘ Once more I have the hopes and fears of expecting another child. So

far my health has been better than in any former time, for which I am most thankful. God alone knows how my heart yearns for an infant——'

Her last entry, in that '44 journal, told of a friendly visit paid to the house of General Matábar Sing : a large mass of buildings round a paved court, with a semi-European air, like some old French chateau.

'Tag-rag and bob-tail, we went : Henry and I in our own little carriage, Dr. Christie and the children in a rattle-trap barouche ; a lot of ragamuffin followers clinging to the horses and carriage or running alongside' : a unique picture of a British Resident calling on the power behind the throne.

For these were still Matábar's great days. Though he had resigned the Ministry, he was secretly pulling all the strings at Court ; still trying to secure Lawrence as his declared partisan. But although the Resident's blood was not curdled by threats of danger to himself ; nor his heart melted by tales of danger to Matábar—because he favoured the English—it must have been a hard matter for a sensitive, high-minded Englishman to remain inactive, while he watched the toils closing in upon the one man fit for rule, in that world of crazily confused motives and events ; to see him over-dosed with flattery, titles and dresses of honour, puffed up with the pride of place that, in Eastern courts, infallibly 'goeth before a fall.'

NEW YEAR, 1845 : ' a year of wonders for Nepal '—
wrote Honoria to Mary Cameron.

' The first Christian infant born ; the first nurse ever heard of : a second English lady across their frontier (for Henry's new Assistant now is married) and the first European travellers who ever found their way here. It will give you some idea of our impracticable position when I tell you that for months we had been trying for a nurse at almost every station between Allahabad and Calcutta ; and when she did come, for less than three months, she cost us more than a hundred pounds.'

The year 1844, that opened so happily, had closed in the gloom of twofold illness—herself and Alick at the mercy of a doctor as dangerous to life and limb as any in early Victorian India. The break in her August journal had been caused by one of her curious collapses, mental and physical ; a time of helplessness and depression, feelingly described by herself :

' Many times I have been unable to walk. But never before did I feel such continued *mental* prostration. Trying to think was like writing on blotting-paper. . . . I felt that, even if I lived, it would only be as a sorrow to him who loves me best.'

In September it was Henry who wrote to Letitia :

' Honoria is by no means in the state she was last year. Having suffered so much, she naturally now fears much ; and our foolish Doctor, instead of keeping up her spirits, talks nonsense to her. . . .

' Tim will be six to-morrow ; and he cannot, or rather will not, read correctly. He is a bad hand at numbers ; but he has a deal of mixed information. He could puzzle the Doctor in many things ; and is a much more rational companion.'

The same month brought him news of Punjab affairs, that again set him hankering for the stern realities of the North-West.

'Richmond succeeds Pollock at Lucknow,' wrote Currie, 'Broadfoot goes to the Frontier. You should keep quiet in Nepal, for the present, save your money and recruit your health. If anything has to be done in the Punjab . . . you will be certainly called to some post of responsibility or distinction. So . . . bide your time.'

In June, 1844, Lord Ellenborough had been recalled by exasperated Directors whom he had treated throughout as his servants rather than his masters; and Sir Henry Hardinge now reigned in his stead; the warlike civilian followed by the placable soldier, pledged to keep the peace—if that were possible, with the whole Punjab bubbling like a cauldron, the Sikh army an increasing danger.

And Henry Lawrence, 'above the battle,' was fitting himself, unawares, for the great achievement of his life, dreaming of his Hill School and rejoicing with Honoria over the safe arrival of their son—to be christened Henry Waldemar, after the German Prince who had found his way to Nepal and had offered himself as godfather to the new arrival.

But their joy was short-lived—thanks to the incompetence of Dr. Christie. An easy delivery, and every sign of a quick recovery had given Henry confidence to leave Honoria with nurse and doctor while he went out to meet the Prince and his party. But he had only been gone a few days when Honoria was taken alarmingly ill, with violent pains in her head and body; caused—it seems—by mismanagement and wrong medicines; 'large doses of iron, that got into her head.'

For a whole terrible fortnight she hung between life and death; strangely resigned to the possibility of leaving all she loved best on earth; and her ultimate recovery was mainly due to a clever German doctor with the Prince—an apt reward for Lawrence, who had sacrificed his own convenience to claims of hospitality.

But recovery proved incomplete. For three months she seldom left her bed. Constant cramp and headaches

disabled her from bodily or mental effort. Poignantly she wrote of those days :—‘ In the morning I said—“ Would to God it were evening ” ; and in the evening—“ Would to God it were morning ” ’ ; a state of mind difficult to associate with the vivid, thinking Honoria of Kasauli and Ferōzpur. Yet another serious illness, in May, convinced her that she and Alick ought to leave India as soon as might be ; a thought she had scarcely the courage to face. It was enough, for the moment, to feel life creeping back into her limbs and brain ; to take delight in her healthy blossoming babe, who never cried and never ailed ; to be tended with unfailing devotion by the husband who read her to sleep, in wakeful moods, who wrote her letters and did all that a man might do to lighten the burden of her invalid days.

For himself, neither his own affairs nor those of the crazy Court were going any too well. His new Assistant, Captain Ottley, had proved a disappointment ; and pretty, insipid Mrs. Ottley ‘ not much of a companion for Honoria.’

At Court, Master Nepal was in the ascendant, having usurped his father’s power while leaving him on the throne ; and Matábar was clearly heading for a fall. In vain Lawrence warned him that the Rajah, whom he flouted, was not altogether dethroned. He put the last nail in his own coffin by pulling down certain barracks, in order to rebuild them near his own place ; and the flouted Rajah promptly hit back, after his kind.

At midnight, on the 17th of May, he called Matábar Sing to the Palace on urgent business ; and Matábar, unsuspecting, obeyed the summons. He was led to a top room, four storeys up—and there brutally murdered in the royal presence ; his body tied in a blanket and thrown down into the courtyard, where four men were waiting to carry it off and burn it. Instantly his two sons fled to British territory ; several of his family were seized. And twelve hours after the murder none had a good word for the man who, in life, had stood head and shoulders above them all.

But the Rajah himself gained nothing by this brutal *coup*

d'etat. It was the Queen's lover who stepped into the dead man's shoes ; till he, in turn, was ousted, after much bloodshed by Matábar's nephew, Jung Bahadar—the maker of modern Nepal.

While these bloodcurdling upheavals enlivened the Court, the peasants continued, undisturbed, their tilling of the soil, and life within the Residency went on as if in another world : Honoria slowly regaining strength ; Henry devouring a formidable number of books ; making valiant efforts to start his Hill schools, and reserving one-third of his lordly income for certain favoured charities, apart from private help given in all directions. Like many generous natures, he pushed an admirable virtue beyond the limits of prudence. Careless of the future, he would scarcely have saved enough for his wife's needs and his children's education, had not John—the Financial Member—taken his money affairs in hand, with excellent results.

Henry himself, during Honoria's lapse from 'journalising,' made fitful attempts to fill the blank, hampered though he was by the same desultory make of mind. Here is his birthday entry :

'On the 28th of June I was 39 years of age ; more aged than that in constitution and experience. Yet I often feel very young ; ignorant of much I ought to know, frivolous, unsettled and uncertain. I have seldom been idle, but always desultory ; . . . I should like to make rules, but having so often broken them, I will simply try to look after myself as to Anger, Tidiness, Procrastination, Regularity. I pray God's blessing on my weak endeavours as to the above. Desultory habits and thoughts, with violent passions, are my bane.'

And later came a tribute to Honoria's constant help that gladdened her when she read it later in the year.

'Wrote three articles on the Punjab, for *Calcutta Review* . . . and we, between us, wrote *Romance and Reality*, the best portions being my dear wife's. To please me, she often wrote in pain and suffering, the extent of which I little guessed at the time. Now I more understand it, a light seems to have broken in on me ; a film to have

been removed from my eyes. She examined and corrected all my papers, besides voluminous sheets in defence of Sir William Macnaghten. I read her to sleep at night, as she is often whole nights without sleeping. Last night, I sat up afterwards and glanced through the whole of Gibbon's miscellaneous works. . . .

Not till the 10th of August did Honoria once more open her discarded journal untouched for a year.

'It is with a feeling as if I had been buried for twelve months,' she wrote, 'that I now resume my wonted employments; and open one after another, channels of thoughts that have long been closed. . . . Sometimes I feel very *full*, as if new thoughts had germinated in me and I could be very eloquent; but when I try to express them, 'tis like trying to catch soap bubbles. The least interruption dislocates my day; and I find myself sitting idle, waiting for—I know not what. Am I too old to mend? Thirty years of hoping, wishing, trying—and failing, as to active and regular habits, almost discourage me.'

As health returned, she spent a great deal of time simply looking at those incomparable mountains; saturating mind and spirit with their unearthly beauty. And she was now sufficiently herself again to be sending Mary Cameron a long account of her troubled eighteen months in paradise; her illness, and the coming of her babe—her 'Moggy'—who had triumphed over all malign pre-natal influences.

'By the time I had partly recovered,' she concluded, 'the season was too far advanced for my going home with Alick; and I could not help rejoicing. . . . Not that Home is less dear to me. No, indeed! But it would not be home without Henry. I will not venture to say more on the subject now. In May I was again very ill, and felt as if all my vital powers were exhausted, like a lamp with no oil in it. Now I have recruited, and am in fair health; relieved from the load of pain and depression which have often made me feel it more difficult to be resigned to life than to death. So now we pursue our usual quiet, yet busy, life. . . . Reading and writing are truly a resource here, where we have no society. The lack of intercourse with our kind is very benumbing,

especially as we see so much in the Native Court that is hateful and degrading.'

On the 12th of August, Lawrence planned a week up at Koulia with both boys, chiefly for the benefit of Alick—too tall and thin and always ailing; and for Honoria, that first separation from her boy was a major event in their eventless life.

'I cannot describe the strange feeling it is to send away my Tim—though only twelve miles off. Never, since his birth, has he been one night away from me. . . . I have been wishing him to take this little trip to become more acquainted with Papa . . . more the *man*. Yet even this small separation marks one of life's turning-points—'

Alone with her Moggy—her 'wee prince'—with letters and books and the mountains, she could have been content. But she was burdened, at meal-times, with the company of tiresome Dr. Christie, whose interests were frankly centred on himself and money and food, his mind furnished with ready-made *clichés*. His talk was of the kind that 'be-numbed' Honoria and exasperated Henry. Neither of them were disposed to suffer fools gladly. Neither possessed the flexibility of mind and morals that oils the wheels of average human intercourse. But, admittedly, they were unlucky in the few specimens with whom they were boxed up in Nepal.

'It is very bad for us,' Honoria rightly concluded, 'to be in constant touch with a mind we cannot help despising; and I do try to check unjust feelings. But some gross insincerity, or unblushing selfishness, sweeps away all my resolves. . . .'

As a sample of the man's mentality she recorded a talk with him, after sleepless nights of raging toothache.

To his hopeful suggestion—'a large dose of laudanum'—she demurred, because opium always kept her awake.

'Well, that's funny,' said he.

'I believe it has the same effect on many people,' said she.

'Why, so it does,' he promptly agreed. 'It's the commonest thing in the world.'

When she asked for hyoscyamus and tincture of camphor to rinse her mouth, he dismissed both as useless. Camphor was a 'poor sort of thing.' In its place he proffered the bright idea—'Why not wait till the pain goes away of itself?'

'But it has kept me awake for two nights.'

'Pooh, that's nothing.' For proof, he embarked on a rambling tale of a man in such terrible pain that he had not slept for a month. 'And what does he do—but mounts his horse one very cold morning, lights a cheroot and gallops off like the very mischief, right across country till he was dead-beat. Then takes a mutton chop and a bottle of beer for breakfast and falls fast asleep—Why, the man himself told me that he slept twenty-four hours on end!'

'A very good remedy,' his patient demurely murmured, 'but unfortunately not within my power.'

And the cheerful doctor admitted as much.

'Well, let me see, if you can't take opium, I tell you what, I'll send you some hyoscyamus. Did you ever try that?'

'It's what I asked you for just now,' Honoria gravely reminded him.

'By the powers! So it was! Well, I'll send you some. And I'll tell you what'—it was offered as an inspiration—'Camphor—though it's a simple thing—has a wonderful effect on the nerves.'

'So I've heard.'

'Well, I'll send that too. When the pain comes, take a little. You'll feel all right in no time.'

Honoria meekly 'hoped so,' and capped her tale of a medical interview with the satirical comment: 'This was one of our more satisfactory conferences, as the complaint was not serious, and he at least ended in giving me what I asked for.'

After six days without husband and son, she confessed herself 'terribly *ennuyée*'; and on the 20th—the very day of their return—she was writing happily in her journal:

'My own Henry—what was the fluttering, troubled

ABOVE THE BATTLE

delight of this day eight years ago, to the calm, well-trying love with which I look for your return to-day. We never passed twelve months with so little external variety as the last ; and I cannot help smiling to myself, when I find how very important a place in the year's events I assign to Alick's week of absence—but to me it is an event.'

Thursday, 21 August.

Oh, day of days ! I am almost too happy to write. After nine days' absence you returned yesterday, bringing with you an atmosphere of light and joy. Our Alick came rushing in, bright and loving, looking much better, gladdening my inmost soul. Now that I am stronger and better, I can more fully value all there is to make us happy. 'What shall I render unto the Lord for His mercies ?' I dare not say what I *will* do, for I have an evil heart of unbelief ; but the happiness of to-day is, I think, *real and right*, because I do not feel it indisposes me from looking either backward or forward ; though we anticipate changes that, if they come, must wring our hearts. We now think that next cold weather, my health permitting, I ought to take the children Home—at any rate Alick. And public events seem at hand, in which we shall probably be involved. To-day's Delhi paper says that Mr. Clerk is on his way out, overland, to meet the G.G. at Agra. Major Broadfoot is ill, and may be obliged to leave India. John, Dick, all our correspondents in the Upper Provinces, wrote of the positive assembly of an Army on the frontier, next cold weather—and, as Major Smith and everybody else winds up—'How *can* they do without Lawrence ?'

My own opinion is that, if anything is done this year, and Mr. Clerk comes out, that would clinch your being summoned. I will not dare to say what I wish on this matter. Never, by God's help, shall your wife be a clog on the duty you owe to your Government, and to your Maker. You love peace as dearly as I do—more perhaps, because you can better estimate the evils of war ; therefore you would not hold off where prompt action is required for public safety. Yet when I think of the possibilities of war—I could not, dare not, say that I wish you to be in it. But we have not, I hope, had eight years' experience quite in vain.

Sunday, 24th August.

We pass our time here very happily, yet we sorely feel the want of some society—to hear the clash of opinions, to learn that there are other aspects, other objects, besides those belonging to our own minds. It is most deteriorating to the mental powers, never meeting people to whom we can look up, in any way. But I do confess that in the trio who form our sole society, I find no such point. Inanity, prejudice, apathy, selfishness and falsehood are all I discern—yet this is the stuff that ‘respectable, excellent people are made of!’

Yesterday there was a fresher feeling in the air ; and at four p.m. we set out for Paspattnatti ; you on foot, Tim on the mule, I in the jampan ; once more able to sit up, to look around and above, without the constant pain and depression, which for more than a year has weighed me down. What enjoyment there is in the mere sense of *being well* !



BY the end of August she was well enough for the family exodus to Koulia ; well enough to describe it all with her old vivid touches :

‘ We were up at four a.m. ; took a cup of tea, and food for the road ; then we set off, a long array : jampan, doolie, horses, altogether twenty-two carriers, three syces, two bearers, and two of the Maharajah’s soldiers running alongside. A party of thirty-five attendants and three quadrupeds to transport us, and three children, a distance of fourteen miles, which we accomplished in ten hours. Besides fully as many more people despatched the day before—coolies carrying clothes, food, bedding—everything except earth, air, fire and water ; three *kitmutgars*, two cows and a cow-keeper, a *bhisti*, a tailor, a sweeper. This patriarchal caravan makes one feel very strongly our entire separation from civilised life. . . .

‘ The river below the Residency had flooded the road ; and we looked as primitive as the Pilgrim Fathers, splashing and paddling through the stream. The day was fair ; and I felt a strange joy in once more watching the morning lights and shadows on the hills. Soon after eight, we spread our table-cloth under a peepul tree and enjoyed our cold breakfast ; making couches from the cushion of our litters. On again at half-past ten, taking “ the grand military road ”—as Mr. Hodgson called it—that traverses Nepal ; much more like the steep bed of a torrent, that had brought down stones large enough for Plymouth break-water ! . . . But the views were beyond description. Rich and varied cultivation spread like a mantle over the valley. Tiny cascades dashing down the bank that walled us in. Foaming streams that tumbled along the ravines below. Thousands of brilliant butterflies flitting about. Ferns of every size ; some not larger than moss, others five or six feet high ; some delicate as an ostrich feather, others broad

and fat, like huge web-feet. Flowers beyond count—all shades of yellow, lilac and blue, mostly faint. A lilac iris, springing fresh out of a cloud of pale moss; deep blue, starry blossoms; scarlet berries on a shrub.

'The last hour of our journey was foggy with occasional showers; and when we got to Koulia, there was a thick white mist hiding everything; entering the house unceremoniously whenever a window was left open.

'After careful picking off of leeches, lighting a fire and changing clothes we were all very merry and hungry for dinner.'

September 1st.

I feel in a strange new world up here, almost as if I had risen from the tomb to take part once more in the cares and occupations of life. The cloudy canopy has hardly opened since we arrived; rain and fog—fog and rain; drip, drip, drip, from most parts of the roof, but not over our beds. What would folk at home say to these same beds, I wonder! The old couple have a comparatively grand shake down. One corner, about ten feet square, is fenced off by a *kanát*: and here we have our *four-rupee 'charpoy'*. But we also have our delightful English blankets, worth a hundred *puttoos* and *resais*. Beside us, Tim is littered down with sheet, *resais* and pillow; Moggy cuddled in a basket, Ayah and Dhai, on the floor each side of him. 'Tis a vast emancipation to require no mosquito curtains.

Towards morning, there rose a strong E. wind, whistling and moaning like a winter night at home. Even the smoke that followed every attempt to make the fire burn, and the clouds of ashes that came over the floor, brought an *Innishowen November* feeling with them. I was particularly delighted to see rain-drops blister the window-panes. In India there are always verandahs or *jilmils*¹ that prevent the rain from dashing right against the glass.

Wednesday, 3rd September. 8 a.m.

Yesterday, about 7 a.m. there was a break in the clouds. For an hour all was beautiful. The valley, 4,000 feet below, was filled with a mass of white vapour; and out

¹ Shutters.

of it the hill-tops rose like islands. Beyond them, shone out the highest snow peaks—of an intense and silvery whiteness.

September 7th.

We have not had a bit of bread for a week. The flour for the *chupattis* is not very good ; and the biscuits we got from Calcutta last cold weather, were sent off before Christmas. So they are a good deal older than Moggy ; and have not improved so much as he has by keeping ! A baker would be a greater treasure than civilised people can possibly imagine.

Tuesday, 9th September.

No public news, and a most lamentable turn out of bread from Segauli, having been rained on for ten days ! —Still rain and mist, and small hope of help from the Durbar. The day after we arrived, you wrote for tiles and workmen, and your renewed demands have been answered by good quires of writing paper from Captain Ottley, explaining how the Subadar had explained to him the explanation that *he* had made to the King, of our forlorn condition ! On Saturday you sent a messenger to tell of the roof having fallen in ; on Monday arrived a train of coolies bringing forty timbers, *because* we wanted tiles. Yesterday came a Subadar to express the royal grief that we were eating such *taklif*¹ here, but not a single workman has come to our aid. Last evening you were catching the rain with four umbrellas and seventeen basins of sorts. Yet we get on wonderfully well ; and are determined not to be bullied into returning sooner than we intended.

And cheerfulness under clouds, with a leaking roof, reaped its measure of reward. On the 17th she was writing :

‘ You prophesied the weather would change on the 15th ; and on that very day the sun rose unclouded. The roof was complete over our heads ; and now the cottage is delightful—clean and weather-fast. We have put up hooks and shelves and screens, making it quite snug. The door and stairs from the outside are a great improvement. Mr. Hodgson would scarcely recognise his old haunt. . . .

¹ Trouble.

'Last night was full moon, and I have only two or three times in my life witnessed anything that gave me so much the idea of *another world*. I had sat in the little west balcony, gazing at the sunset until the stars, to West and North, shone out. Then I turned East, and saw the deep yellow moon rising above the hills, lighting up the valley of Nepal. The western sky deepened from amethyst to sapphire: the snows glittering and sparkling where moonlight fell; the rest gleaming with a subdued, unlike aspect, that I simply cannot describe.'

And here is a lonely outing one unforgettable day:

'I think I never saw so lovely an afternoon—a scene so perfect in its *unmolestedness*—the only word I can think of. All is open, spacious, boundless, but so strangely uninhabited, that our bungalow might have dropped from the clouds. . . . While I live I shall always be thankful that I have seen such beauties; though I still think Lough Swilly, or Malin Head, more satisfying. And the blue Atlantic—I would rather see it than all the Himalayas! But I do feel that each week of our stay here enlarges my capacity for admiring and understanding what was at first a dazzling confusion of magnificence.'

On the 26th, they must descend from their enchanted heights to the Residency and the platitudinous doctor and the tiresome young Ottleys, who had failed to improve on acquaintance.

News that Mrs. Ottley had achieved a daughter stirred Honoria's interest and fellow-feeling. For she was already expecting another child in the coming spring; so little chance she gave herself to revive her shattered health. But her visit to the young mother left her puzzled rather than sympathetic.

'Saw Mrs. Ottley and her sweet, *very* small daughter. How little way externals go to create interest; here was a pretty young mother "fresh from the perilous birth," with every accessory for pictorial effect. Yet I confess that except the unconscious infant—whose helplessness went to my heart—I saw nothing to interest me. The new-made mother seemed to look with precisely the same gaze on

the baby and on the pillow. Apathy is the very most hopeless material to deal with !'

Sunday, 28th September.

This last week appears a very long time. We have now not only decided about my taking Alick Home, but have resolved to leave Nepal in November. Since I must go, I desire to lose no time ; for it will be less trying to leave my darling Moggy now, than if he were a year older. But I never have been separated from one of our children ; and I hardly know how to realise it.

They had come down from their sanctuary into the thick of petty vexations, and anxieties far from petty. Lawrence—who had never liked his subordinates—was goaded into open friction with both ; and his clash with Christie had evoked some very plain speaking. It was never easy for second- or third-rate men and women to hit it off with either of the Lawrences. As Captain Ottley insisted that his health required a change, Henry must give up going to Calcutta ; and Honoria again hoped for reprieve.

'If only Alick can keep well,' she argued, 'he has as much to lose as to gain by going this year : closer acquaintance with you I place much higher in the scale of education, than acquaintance with Horace and Livy. Next year he would be old enough to remember this country ; intelligent enough to wonder : and how few people wonder at anything, beyond bright colours, savoury meats or what seems like sleight of hand. . . . I am making all preparations as if for going ; but I still hope for a respite. . . .'

No respite was granted to her hopeful heart. Henry managed to get leave from November the 15th to see her and Alick as far as Dinapore. A month later they left Nepal—never to return ; an end, for Honoria, of the two secluded years that she counted, in spite of much suffering, the happiest of her life. For these were the only years—till the very end—when she had Henry all to herself, with leisure to enjoy home life and make friends with his son.

By the 23rd, they were once more in British territory. At Segauli they were to halt and spend Christmas with

Henry's life-long friend, Edward Reade, now married ; and as usual the meeting between them was prelude to an important change for Lawrence. Bump No. 4 strangely coincided with startling news from the Punjab ; news that, on the 11th, a large Sikh army had crossed the Sutlej, and invaded British India. That spelt—war. For Lawrence it might spell recall. Both men believed the time was at hand.

And soon more serious news followed the first. Sixty thousand Sikhs, with a hundred and fifty guns, were across the river ; challenging, at Mudki, Sir Hugh Gough's tired and thirsty army, that had been marching twenty-five miles a day for a week. And at Mudki was fought the first of many battles that caused the British to respect their Sikh foes. Though the odds were fourteen thousand against forty thousand, discipline favoured the minority. A brilliant cavalry charge decided the day, leaving the British victorious with nineteen Sikh guns to their credit.

But the Sikhs, though repulsed, were not yet beaten. Only three days later they gave fresh proof of their quality in the terrible battle of Ferōzshah—' the long fierce change-ful struggle ' on which the fate of India hung undecided for forty-eight hours. Never, except in the Mutiny, was British India in greater danger than during those two days and that night of terror. The Sikhs fought desperately and with judgment ; and ultimate British victory was won at a fearful price in valuable lives.

It was on the 6th of January, 1845, the very day before husband and wife were to separate—that a letter arrived from Sir Frederic Currie, with news of Ferōzshah ; a letter that recalled Lawrence, and revolutionised his career.

' We have had some *very* hard fighting, as you will hear ; but our troops were victorious in every engagement. Our loss is heavy—Broad-foot is killed ; and you are required forthwith. Your position will be in all respects satisfactory to you. The Punjab is before us. Come quickly. We have lost many valuable officers, the Governor-General's staff much cut up. Lose no time in coming. You are a long way off.'

It was clearly a case for mounting the first flash of lightning. Gone was their hope of one more week together.

ABOVE THE BATTLE

Lawrence could not even wait for his Nepal papers. A desolate Honoria must be left to deal with them.

That letter arrived at seven in the evening. By three o'clock next day, he was off ; bearers laid, palanquin sent forward, and he in the saddle, speeding like an arrow to its mark. For all the pangs of a hurried parting, the future beckoned, as it had not done since he left the Dhoon ; and the rhythm of his horse's hoofs beat over and over—' Back to the Punjab, back to the Punjab,' to the position of all others that he most coveted on earth.





सत्यमेव जयते

PHASE SIX
ITHURIEL'S HOUR

(1846-1848)

*Sooner or late . . . Ithuriel's hour
Will spring on us . . . the test
Of our sole unbacked competence and power,
Up to the limit of our years and dower
Of judgment- -or beyond.*

Rudyard Kipling.

*Men will yield themselves . . . to the man whose soul is born single,
able to be alone, to choose, to command.*

D. H. Lawrence.





सत्यमेव जयते

THE Sikh War, that carried Lawrence back to the Punjab, had loomed up with all the swiftness of a tropical storm ; though trouble had clearly been brewing ever since the death of Ranjit Singh. One leader after another had tried—and failed—to dominate the powerful army of the Khālṣa—or ‘ Chosen ’ ; an army that combined the religious fervour of Cromwell’s Ironsides with the pride and restlessness of Roman prætorians. Fully aware of its own strength, it had become a terror to the chiefs, who made a poor show of governing the Punjab on behalf of young Dhulip Singh. Early in December it had encamped round Lahore, clamouring for pay, long overdue ; had been prompted, by a bankrupt Court, to cross the Sutlej and catch the English unawares. In place of pay the troops had been offered the tempting bait of a chance to plunder the richest cities of Hindostan ; and—to military leaders spoiling for a fight—the bait had proved irresistible. Hence the sudden invasion, not wholly unforeseen, thanks to a warning word from Rajah Gulāb Singh, who had resolved to join no hostile move against the English.

That they themselves had been unprepared, as usual, was largely owing to a political recoil from Lord Ellenborough’s aggressive activities. But Sir Henry Hardinge, though vowed to peace, had unobtrusively strengthened all the frontier stations ; had brought up from Bombay a fleet of boats to be ready at need on the Sutlej ; precautions that probably averted a great military disaster. His policy, however, did not admit of massing regiments on the actual frontier ; hence the strain put upon Gough’s army.

‘ But the sudden crossing of the Sikhs,’ wrote Herbert Edwardes, ‘ affected Hardinge like the magic word that woke the seven sleepers. . . . The accomplished statesman

passed away, and left a leader in his place.' Availing himself of the Governor-General's right to join the army, he generously waived his claim to the chief command, while he swiftly marshalled all the resources of the country to meet the gravest danger that had ever threatened British India ; a danger not yet over by any means. Ferōzshah had proved so costly a victory that Gough could not strike again without more troops, more guns.

Throughout January, John Lawrence, at Delhi, was actively collecting transport ; the Sikhs, across the Sutlej, were preparing for a fresh attack ; and Henry Lawrence was crossing seven hundred miles of India—a ' headlong rush ' that took over a fortnight to achieve. His brief halt at Agra was memorable for one of his many prophetic flash-lights on the future. Too clearly he saw that the whole Indian system—the lack of foresight, discipline, and knowledge of the people—was positively inviting, at Delhi, an upheaval far more dangerous than the Afghan rising. To comfort-loving Englishmen his fears seemed pessimistic and exaggerated. But there were those who remembered, long after, his strange words at parting : ' Don't be surprised, gentlemen, if you find yourselves one day imprisoned in this very fort by your own army.'

And even as he prophesied, so it befell.

Leaving them to digest his incredible forecast, he cantered off on his camel—a comfortless mount, but the quickest available ; and the tale of his arrival was told afterwards by Broadfoot's assistant. ' He had not much personal luggage, as he had ridden on a camel from Kurnál. He wore leather breeches that did not fit him ; having stayed with his brother John, who had insisted on leather garments for the long ride.'

His arrival coincided with news of a British victory at Aliwál. But the Sikhs—in spite of defeat—had entrenched a great army on both sides of the river, near Sobráon. There, on the 4th of February, they fought the fiercest conflict of that brief but decisive campaign.

Screened by a thick morning mist, Gough moved up his divisions and posted his guns. Not until they opened fire,

did the mist roll off like a curtain, revealing the whole embattled British army.

Sikh drums beat to arms. Guns thundered from entrenchments fully manned. The resolute struggle, that was to decide the fate of India, had begun.

Just before eight o'clock Gough let loose his infantry. Covered by the guns they charged home, and carried the outworks with bayonets only; the finest attack, the most stubborn hand-to-hand fighting, in the whole war.

Herbert Edwardes, who fought at Sobrão, vividly depicted that hour of crisis:

'It was like the meeting of two mighty rivers: . . . and as the swifter penetrates the deeper stream—then, yielding, is rolled back and swept away—so would the conquered trenches of the Sikhs have been wrested again from the British division, had not Sir Hugh marked the crisis, foreseen its issue, and ordered up the other divisions to the rescue.'

On they came, in the teeth of a terrific fire from every foot of the entrenchments—the strongest part of the enemy's position. Yet they were carried, after a desperate struggle, by those indomitable divisions: and the Sikhs, thrust back inch by inch, were hurled pell-mell into the river. The one bridge they relied on had broken down under a party of flying horsemen. The Sutlej—rising seven inches in one night—had flooded the ford. Hundreds upon hundreds were drowned or killed in attempting that perilous passage; and the river was choked with dead and dying. None who beheld that awful wreckage of a great army would forget it while they lived. Slaughter and confusion so terrible must have stirred humane Englishmen to compassion, had not their hearts been steeled against the Sikhs by ruthless murdering and mangling of their own wounded soldiers earlier in the war.

By half-past ten that night, not a Sikh soldier was left alive on the British bank: and next day the Governor-General, with his victorious army, crossed the river of death.

There were those who questioned whether, even now, the Sikhs had accepted defeat. But Henry Lawrence assured his Chief there would be no more fighting; as neither Lahore nor Amritsar could stand a siege. And so it proved.

By the 14th the whole force had arrived unmolested within thirty miles of the capital ; and on that very evening there appeared a strange triumphal procession of three elephants and a buggy, loaded with English prisoners—a peace offering from Gulāb Singh to the victors. Presently came young Dhulip Singh—devoid of power or blame—who ‘ arrived in disgrace and went away in honour.’ And, ten days after that mighty battle, the Army of the Sutlej was encamped on the plain outside Lahore.

The Sikhs themselves must have marvelled at the sight of victorious English Generals—three miles from a rich and conquered city—permitting neither loot nor slaughter ; punishing with severity any soldier or camp follower who dared, even from curiosity, to enter Lahore. Well they knew how Delhi would have fared, if the Khālsa had fulfilled its proud boast of carrying ‘ the baby King ’ to that imperial city. History has few parallels to the forbearance of the English at Lahore ; and the tone of Hardinge’s proclamation very soon calmed a terrified people. Chiefs and officers came freely into camp ; and were received by all with the generous consideration their gallantry deserved. As for the Sikh Durbar, its leaders had succeeded in breaking the dominion of the army at terrible cost to invaders and invaded, without a finger seemingly lifted by themselves. And here were the victorious British ready to treat with them, in the mysteriously just and generous fashion of their kind. So they tendered their submission, and hoped for the best, which proved, on the whole, better than they deserved.

For the English must either completely conquer and annex the Punjab, or create an independent state, with a reduced army and British Resident to uphold peace and justice. But Hardinge had neither the means nor desire for annexation. Like Lawrence, he believed in preserving the independence of conquered states. Indeed the two men, thus happily united, were of one mind in many matters vital to India ; the soldierly qualities in both being enriched by the vision and high purpose of the statesman. Both aimed at a benevolent personal influence, rather than mere

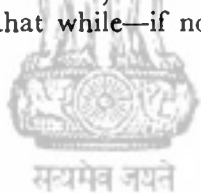
exercise of power. Even before they met, Hardinge had formed a high opinion of Lawrence ; had read with keen interest his Punjab articles in the *Calcutta Review*. Here, it seemed, was the one man fitted to handle the conquered Sikhs and inaugurate a new régime. The treaty of March, 1846, bore the stamp of a wise moderation and magnanimity common to these like-minded men. There was to be no annexation, except of the fertile Jalandhar Province and the hill-country just beyond it. The young Dhulip Singh would be restored to his uneasy throne. His intriguing mother—self-styled Maharāni—would remain as nominal head of the Regency Council ; eight chosen chiefs acting under Lawrence, as Resident—a man ‘known to them for his energy, talents and integrity.’ Without undue interference in local affairs, he was to aim at inspiring the selfish and venal Sikh Durbar with a sense of public duty ; to guide, or coax its leaders along the new paths laid down for them. At the request of a nervous Ministry, a British garrison would remain at Lahore for the present ; the Sikh army to be reduced by two-thirds ; the indemnity for waging an unprovoked war was fixed at a million and a half sterling. But, as only half a million could be scraped out of a depleted treasury, the wily and miserly Gulāb Singh offered to pay the extra million, if the British nominated him ruler of Kashmir. His offer was accepted as the simplest way to get the money and to solve a difficult problem. For a Resident at Lahore could hardly extend his vigilance to that distant region. So Gulāb Singh—a proper villain, but a strong ruler—became the first Maharajah of Jammu and Kashmir : hence the anomaly of a Hindu ruling a Moslem race. There were those at the time who condemned the whole affair as ‘an iniquitous arrangement,’ handing over the hapless Kashmiris ‘like so many logs of wood,’ to the tender mercies of a Dogra Rajput. But the fact remained that only Gulāb Singh could produce the required million ; and as regards change of rulers, there was little to choose between this particular ‘pair of aimiables.’ If Gulāb Singh had a taste for flaying his subjects alive, the deposed Governor had been known to boil a

Pundit. Strong rule, in the East, is apt to spell tyranny ; but the English would keep an eye on Gulāb Singh.

The annexed province of Jalandhar was also consigned to a strong ruler of very different quality—the redoubtable John Lawrence, who was appointed Commissioner, by way of reward for his signal services in speeding up ammunition and supplies for the victory of Sobrāon.

Thus, within sixty days, at the cost of four pitched battles, a British force 17,000 strong had overthrown an army of no less than 100,000 fighting men, whose generalship and skill and stubborn courage had been proven afresh on every field, and had almost conquered at Ferōzshah. Young Hodson, writing home, denounced, as a ‘tissue of blunders,’ that ‘glorious campaign, in which a hundred English gentlemen and thousands of brave soldiers died to retrieve their General’s errors ; and nothing but the cool determination of the soldiers not to be beaten, saved the day.’

But ultimate success covers a multitude of sins. India’s finest and best-organised army had been broken, in body and spirit ; and for that while—if not for ever—the Sikh war was at an end.



TREATIES signed and armies dispersed, Lahore was left in charge of a British garrison and the new Resident, who had also been appointed Agent to the Governor-General for North-West Frontier Affairs. An Agent, it should be realised, was an officer of high standing in the Indian Political Service ; a title carrying with it the position and the powers of an ambassador, but with far larger responsibilities and a wider scope for action. It was a dual position singularly well suited to the genius of Henry Lawrence, for working on his fellows through precept and influence rather than direct command. And in March, 'Forty-Six—while Honoria was renewing her links with Home—he was grappling with a task for which he had unconsciously fitted himself during his two years at Nepal.

In the Sikh Durbar he found human elements hardly more promising than those of the Gurkha Court : a Queen mother, who was no queen, but ' a strange blend of the prostitute, the tigress and Machiavelli's Prince ' ; a group of Sirdars, each at deadly feud with the other ; all past masters in deceit. Could any but a Henry Lawrence hope to conjure from such material wise rulers for the good of their people, which not one of them had at heart. Yet he faced the attempt in no spirit of blind optimism. He understood Sikh character—good and bad—as did none other of his generation. Throughout, he was the champion of independent Native Chiefs ; and of him it was written, ' Could any Native State have been rescued, in spite of itself, from British Dominion, the Punjab would have been saved by the hand of Henry Lawrence.'

The question remains whether the failure to save it was not to prove the greater boon for the people themselves. For even he could discover in the Sikh Durbar ' nothing

of greatness or firmness, and little of earnestness,' except in the Queen's lover, Lāl Singh, now raised to the position of Chief Minister. The Punjab itself was a prey to official tyranny : no semblance anywhere of government or justice. To Lawrence, the Ministers looked for help ; the soldiers looked for pay ; the peasants for fair dealing. The need was for no mere official Agent, but for a ' dominating influence, a sympathetic understanding, a faculty for sudden . . . decisions and an unconventional energy, that would act without reference to the proprieties.' ¹ All these were united in the man, whom Hardinge had rightly chosen to fill the most difficult and delicate post in India.

Great news for Honoria, when it reached her, that full and generous recognition of her man, who could himself have asked nothing better than leave to re-create the Punjab and its border land—the barren jagged strip of country from Hazāra, Peshawar and the Khyber, to Kohat, Bannu and the Derajāt, now known as the North-West Frontier Province. The magnetic attraction of that unruly region for adventurous Englishmen dates from those great days, when it first came under the control of half a dozen subaltern soldier-Politicals, all chosen by Lawrence, all so loyally attached to him, that they came to be known as ' Lawrence's young men.'

But in March, 'Forty-Six, the border tribes were still nominally under Sikh dominion. Actually they carried on unchecked their murderous marauding lives, their raids and family blood feuds ; paid no taxes, except when these were forcibly collected by armed bands of Sikhs, who plundered all they could get in the name of taxation, and rode away. Yet it was here that Lawrence and his ' young men ' were to achieve their most notable triumphs. And during this good year of 1846, he had the satisfaction of discovering several of them, through his unerring eye for character, his rare capacity for arousing enthusiasm and loyalty.

At Kabul, he had been introduced by George to the first—and greatest—of his Assistants, John Nicholson, in whom he had recognised a character of remarkable strength, a

¹ Professor Morison : *Lawrence of Lucknow.*

strain of nobility, underlying proud reserve and a fiery temper. Now, on the banks of the Sutlej, they met again ; and here was Lawrence, at last, in a position to lift young men of promise early out of the ruck. For Nicholson he secured a Kashmir appointment which soon led to better things.

It was at this time, also, that he discovered one of his most loyal disciples, Herbert Edwardes—a talented subaltern of six-and-twenty, who possessed many tastes and gifts akin to his own : a love of books and writing, a gift for leadership, a fine blend of enthusiasm, humour and capacity for devotion. Like Lawrence, he had fallen in love early, and had kept his own counsel, till future prospects should be fairly assured : a coincidence—revealed by chance—that swiftly drew them together, and enabled the older man to speak his real thoughts to the vivacious subaltern, twelve years his junior—obviously an Assistant worth acquiring. And Lawrence lost no time in acquiring him for the new *régime*. It was first arranged that he should be placed under John at Jalandhar ; but the two had not worked together many days, before Lawrence realised that here was a man cut out for himself.

Looking up from the letter he was writing, he asked, in his sudden fashion, ‘ How would you like to be *my* Personal Assistant ? I think you and I would work very well together.’

Edwardes—dimly aware of the implied honour—agreed with alacrity.

‘ Very well. That’s settled.’ And Lawrence returned to his writing.

A moment later he again looked up.

‘ There’s only one thing I wish you to remember. If I say or do anything that hurts or vexes you, don’t brood over it. Just out with it ; and we shall come to an understanding at once.’

Unerringly he had touched the younger man’s one weak point, a morbid sensitiveness that would not let him own he was hurt. To be frankly told of it put him, once for all, on the right footing with his new-found friend.

It was a stiff task he had undertaken ; but the stiffest

task became a pleasure under one so eager and human ; so stern with his own failings, so quick to make allowance for the failings of others. And if Edwardes worked hard, Lawrence worked harder. * On him devolved all unpopular measures ; including the transfer of Gulāb Singh to Kashmir. For Durbar rule had collapsed almost as completely as the usurped authority of the army.

But before the Kashmir change could be effected came news from John of disturbance looming in Kangra, the hill region north of Jalandhar, where a certain hereditary chieftain was refusing allegiance either to British or to Sikhs. He and his forbears could trace back their not ignoble history for over two thousand years. Even before Rome's great days there had been a monarchy at Kangra. What cared they for upstart white men, or even for a Sikh Durbar ? Secure in their rock fortress—a very Gibraltar—the garrison raised their flag of rebellion ; refusing to consider even the most generous terms of surrender. So John Lawrence proceeded to apply a form of persuasion peculiarly his own. With one hand—as it were—he offered them a brisk bombardment from elephant batteries, that could scale the steepest heights. With the other hand he indicated the British Resident, proffering honourable terms. But the garrison, sceptical of elephants on hill paths, remained obdurate. Then did their elders—sent out to confer—behold with amazement, three eighteen-pounders, hauled up impossible paths, persuaded round sharpest corners, by two elephants apiece, harnessed tandem-wise ; a third with his great forehead, pushing from behind.

Not until the last gun had been dragged into position on the hill, opposite the fort, did the enlightened elders gravely salaam and take their leave. And, within an hour, a white flag above the ramparts waved the only possible answer to those all-surmounting guns.

That was neither the first nor the last of many bloodless victories achieved, in early frontier days, by resolute men who never threatened without full power to perform. Nicholson, Edwardes, James Abbott and the three Lawrence brothers—to name but six out of a dozen—came to exercise

over those independent tribesmen of the North-West, a personal dominion, a lasting influence, rooted in courage, force of will and an unswerving honesty, that often puzzles an Asiatic, yet always commands his admiration.

The Kangra trouble over, Henry Lawrence was forced to admit the need for a month or two at Simla, where he could have many talks with his Chief—now Lord Hardinge ; a just tribute to his leadership in the war, that had won for Lawrence the coveted C.B. and the Brevet rank of Lieut.-Colonel. In Simla he annexed yet another promising young man—William Hodson, whose name was to live as a cavalry leader of genius and daring, the creator of Hodson's Horse. In 'Forty-Six, he was an active, intelligent subaltern, with reddish hair and fine blue eyes, a man of courage, culture, and ready wit ; only a Second-Lieutenant at five-and-twenty, because he had graduated at Cambridge before deciding that the Army would suit him better than the Bar. He was then stationed at Sabāthu, where Lawrence was seeking a site for his first Hill school. Hodson, keenly interested, helped in the decision ; and Lawrence, on impulse, invited his new friend to return and spend a week at Simla in the small bungalow he was sharing with his married brother Dick and John's wife, ' Harrie.' There, in one room, the two men slept and worked and sowed the seed of a curious friendship ; Lawrence using Hodson, to make abstracts of his letters and copy out confidential papers, and writing warmly of him to Honoria : ' I brought up with me from Sabāthu, a fine young man named Hodson, son of the Archdeacon of Stafford. . . . I have seldom met so promising a young fellow. I will try to get a month's leave for him to accompany me to Lahore and Jammu in October.'

Of Honoria's own doings in England little or no record has survived ; and it creates a curious sense of blank that her voice should not be heard in these two years of his supreme achievements ; that she should be half a world away while he was actively planning to build the first of those Hill Schools that were to immortalise his name ; to give children, or orphans, of British soldiers, the advantage

of being reared on English lines, in a climate finer than any in England.

But never was he allowed to enjoy for long his few opportunities of rest and change. In September came disturbing news from Kashmir, where the Sikh-appointed Moslem Governor was refusing to make way for his ancient enemy Gulāb Singh. The affair, so far, had been ably handled by John Lawrence, a man equal to any emergency. Though still Commissioner of Jalandhar, he was now also 'acting Resident' at Lahore, like a circus rider keeping a foot on the back of two horses at once. On the whole he preferred his own position and province, for at heart he was sceptical of his brother's chivalrous attempt at making a silk purse out of a sow's ear. But a threat of armed resistance to Gulāb Singh roused all his capacity for vigorous action. In August, the troops sent up to prepare Kashmir for its new Maharajah had been attacked and driven into a strong fort, where they hoped to hold out till relieved, either from Jammu or Lahore. In September, John reported the affair to Henry, and recalled Herbert Edwardes—on leave in the Hills; promptly despatched him to Jammu, as a responsible Political officer, to aid and advise the Maharajah. 'How you *would* laugh!' Edwardes wrote of it to a friend, 'a Lieutenant of Foot advising the King of the Mountains! But such is India!'

Such it was, in those early days; a fine field for young men like Edwardes, eager to prove their mettle; and very wisely he urged on Gulāb Singh the soldierly course of sending up fresh troops to relieve the fort-bound remnant; while John Lawrence was pressing the Durbar chiefs to drive out the rebellious Governor, Imām-ud-din. Their obvious reluctance aroused his suspicion that the real power behind the insurrection was the Rāni's lover, Lāl Singh. The Sikh soldiers were obviously keen enough for a fight on any issue. It was their leaders who could not be trusted—once out of reach among the hills. But, in October, down came Henry, bringing his friend Hodson on special leave; grasped the whole situation in a flash, and decided to lead the force himself.

'Then, for the first time was seen'—he wrote afterwards—'the extraordinary spectacle of a few British officers leading a lately subdued mutinous army, through as difficult a country as there is in the world.' Well he knew the risk involved: unreliable leaders with his force; and behind him, in Lahore, a secret plotter, who had all along been abetting the revolt. But he knew also that most of the Sirdars hated each other even more than they hated the British; and he had left word at Lahore that, if any harm should come to him, his brother would promptly occupy the fort, take over the young Maharajah, and imprison Lāl Singh. His own force of will and energy did the rest; backed by the magic of his personal influence over the Sikh leaders, and their knowledge that a British force was following not far behind.

Again, as at Kangra, the mere threat of vigorous action quelled armed rebellion without another shot fired. The Governor, seeing that he had stirred a hornet's nest, preferred surrender to a fight: and that bloodless victory may almost be reckoned the most notable of the whole campaign. Yet no honours were awarded, because it had been won by skill and force of character, not by clash of arms.

That first adventurous British march into Kashmir was, in itself, an achievement; and it was in camp, on the way up, that Hodson first met John Nicholson, the chance beginning of a sincere friendship between those 'mighty opposites': Nicholson dark, grave and reserved, with a flame at the core, that only flared up when his temper was roused; Hodson fair and lively, a man of culture and action, his restless spirit eager for adventure. Nicholson was in all ways the greater man; but both were endowed with qualities that fitted them for frontier service under Lawrence, to whom both looked up as the commanding influence of their public lives.

By mid-November the threatened crisis was over; Lawrence and his troops acknowledged masters of the 'unfoughten field'; Edwardes escorting to Lahore the ousted Governor, who now admitted that he had all along been acting under secret orders from Lāl Singh. Here was material for a political crisis, which must be held over till

Lawrence had settled 'the King of the Mountains' on his purchased throne.

A strange task, it seemed, for a high-minded Englishman, to uphold a ruler notorious, even in the Punjab, for duplicity, cruelty and savage abuse of power. And perhaps only a Lawrence could have achieved within a month, the moral victory of persuading a Gulāb Singh to abolish—more or less—the immemorial practices of slavery, *sati*, and the killing at birth of undesired daughters. The promise, at least, was given; one tribute, among scores, to the unique influence of the man, whose personality is still remembered and revered in India, close on eighty years after his death.

A minor episode, worth recording, was told of this period, by one who was present at the time. On a certain morning Rajah and Resident were at work over State affairs; Lawrence absorbed in a long report to his own Government; Gulāb sitting idle, with his mind on recent events in the Punjab; possibly also remembering those difficult months outside the Khyber Pass, when disaster had been conjured into victory. And again, since then, he had observed how these blundering, indomitable British had skirted the edge of a defeat at Ferōzshah. Yet, even so, they had triumphed in the end.

From such reflections, must have sprung the curious question: 'Lawrence Sahib, why is it that the English, in the end, always conquer—even if at first all goes against them?'

It was a searching question; and Lawrence, very busy at the moment, had no answer ready to hand.

'I'm afraid I can't explain that just now, Maharajah Sahib. I must finish this report.'

'But there must be *some* reason,' Gulāb Singh persisted in his fine-toned voice. 'I greatly want to know.'

Pressed for a reason, Lawrence proffered one as curious and characteristic as Gulāb's own question. On a blank piece of paper he inscribed three letters—'I.H.S'¹; pushed it, without a word, towards the puzzled Maharajah—and went on writing.

Gulāb Singh turned the riddle over in his astute mind,

¹ 'Jesus the Saviour of Men.'

and evidently took the three letters for some sort of Abacadabra ensuring victory. So he sagely decided to have them stamped, for luck, on his new Kashmir rupees. This, in course of time, was actually done ; and the Christian sign on Kashmir rupees gave local coin-collectors furiously to think. Among many explanations put forward, none came near the singular truth ; and those who questioned Gulāb Singh were only told it was by order of Lawrence Sahib, which few were likely to believe.

Whether Lawrence ever heard what came of his simple answer to a complex question has never been revealed. His time in Kashmir was shortened by the need for his presence at Lahore, to preside at the showing up of Lāl Singh, who was by now—according to John—‘in a devil of a funk.’ Explicit charges of double dealing, and signed letters to the Kashmir Governor, could only be dealt with by a formal Court of Inquiry. So a Commission of five British officers, civil and military, sat in judgment on the man whose secret orders had provoked the very resistance that his own troops had been sent up to quell. Clear proof of his guilt having been admitted by his fellow Ministers and all the leading Chiefs, he was removed, as prisoner, from the tent he had entered as Prince, and despatched to Agra fort ; none lamenting his departure, except that strange woman, the so-called Maharāni.

Remained the momentous question—who should take his place, if the English withdrew altogether from the Punjab ? If the Sikhs wished them to remain, it must be on condition that the Resident should have full power to govern the whole kingdom, through a Council of Sirdars, till Dhulip Singh came of age. They would then restore the country to its own ruler. The Sikhs had no two opinions on the subject. Fifty-one Sirdars implored Lawrence to make a new treaty for the British to remain and govern the kingdom on their own terms. On those terms, Sikh and British signed the treaty of Bhairawal ; and thus it befell that Colonel Henry Lawrence—still in the Army List, a Captain of Bengal Artillery—became, by common consent, uncrowned King of the Punjab.

JANUARY, 1847, marked more than a change of status for Henry Lawrence from the restricted influence of a Resident, to powers almost viceregal. It ushered in a year that was to prove not only the most important, but probably the happiest year of his Indian service, though it involved continued separation from her who was his born companion and the guiding star of his life. It was a hard fate that prevented her from being beside him in those great days, in a position that offered full scope for his constructive genius, his knowledge of Asiatic character, his indefatigable energy. The need for going to and fro in the land, the many and varied demands on his resourceful brain, were as the breath of life to him. His sanguine spirit was cheered by the hope of saving one great Native State from the rising tide of British annexation ; stimulated by working with a chief who believed in him and shared his aims, with a band of young men, all personally introduced to the Punjab by himself ; all linked, through him, into a bond of brotherhood, the like of which has never again been seen in India.

His system of governing that wild, ungoverned frontier was to set one chosen officer with a force of Irregulars in each tribal area ; bidding him 'settle the country, make the people happy and avoid rows.' Among his chosen few, all were hard riders, men of fearless honesty, swift decision and human knowledge, who ruled those wild hill tribes by individual mastery, by power to convince them that the Sahib's word was his bond—and must be obeyed.

Lawrence himself was peculiarly fitted for the personal system he initiated : a system that justified itself over and over, even as the men themselves justified his choice of them ; his way of working with them in 'that admirable kind of equality that a great man can so easily will into existence.'

Herbert Edwardes had already been singled out as first Personal Assistant ; and of him Lawrence wrote to Honoria after five months of sharing one room and working often fourteen hours a day : ' Take him all in all—bodily activity, mental cultivation and warmth of heart—I have not met his equal in India.'

For the rest of his chosen band, there was John Lawrence creating the new province of Jalandhar, writing characteristically, ' I want to put my stamp on it, that the people may recall my Rāj with satisfaction ' : a wish that amounted to a prophecy. There was young Nicholson, exploring Multān and the Derajāt ; returning in May to Lahore, where he spent several hot but happy weeks with his friend and master, in the Residency—a large, comfortless abode, ill supplied with even the common needs of life. Both Lawrences were utterly careless of externals ; and Henry, absorbed in his work, never noticed his surroundings. Though lamps were easily procured, he and his assistants worked by the gleam of a solitary candle stuck into a beer-bottle. If they required more light, he would naïvely remark, ' Someone had better drink another bottle of beer ' : a way of life hardly credible to young men in this age of comfort and ' safety first.'

In June, Nicholson was sent off to Amritsar with strict injunctions to ' seek peace and ensue it ' ; but in any case of serious disturbance, he was at once to ' act energetically.' And serious disturbance soon arose in the turbulent Hazāra country, where James Abbott had been sent to bring order out of chaos. The tale of how he achieved it—how the fierce Yusufzais accepted him as ' prophet, priest and King '—would form a minor epic in itself : as would the true tale of almost every station along that stormy Border.

Peshawar—guarding the Khyber—was in the capable hands of George Lawrence, eldest and most experienced of the frontier group, a year older than the brother he served. If he lacked the shining qualities of Henry and John, he matched them in courage, integrity and zeal. Of his work at Peshawar, Lord Hardinge wrote to Henry that summer, ' I am rejoiced that I appointed him, notwithstanding objections raised to a triumvirate of Lawrences beyond the

border. . . .’ And he was well served by his assistant, Lieutenant Harry Lumsden, who, at twenty-five, had been entrusted with the honour of raising and commanding the famous Corps of Guides. For the seedling idea—suggested by Lawrence in ’39—was now to blossom and bear fruit beyond expectation. In young Lumsden he recognised the man for the job. It was the day of subalterns ; boys in age, men in character ; blessed with the adventurous ardour and audacity of youth. To Lumsden he gave Hodson as second in command ; and earlier in the year he had curiously chosen that born fighter to superintend the building of his own first Hill school at Sanāwar. For, after much official discouragement, he had at last aroused widespread interest in his project ; and he now proceeded to will the school into existence. Subscriptions were coming in. Gulāb Singh of Kashmir had been allowed by Government to endow the first school with a lakh of rupees, and Lawrence was putting into it a good deal more than he could afford. His immediate need was a capable man to overlook the building, to deal with accounts and correspondence ; and there, at Sabāthu, was Hodson, devoted to himself and a devil to work.

‘ You would be amused,’ that favoured subaltern wrote to a friend, ‘ to see me undertake this *magnum opus* with so little previous training. It is only a specimen of the way in which India brings a man out ; so varied and unusual are the calls on one’s faculties of mind and body. Colonel Lawrence invariably replies to every question :—“ Do what you think right ” ; “ I give you *carte blanche* to act in my name—draw on my funds ”—and while he trusts me so implicitly it would be a shame not to work *unlike a nigger*.’

In that spirit, then, he worked till all was achieved, and the school opened by Mrs. George Lawrence : a landmark in the haphazard lives of soldiers’ English children in India. With equal zeal and capacity they all worked at their arduous tasks that ‘ band of brothers ’ ; accepting responsibility, and making audacious decisions ; all looking for approval and advice to a leader, who gave them the full meed of personal encouragement so vital to himself.

‘ In times of danger and difficulty,’ wrote one of them—

'his confidence seemed almost an inspiration. . . . It kindled a genius and a glow in all those who came within his influence.' And again another looking back, years afterwards : '*What* days those were ! How Henry Lawrence would send us off to great distances : Edwardes to Bannu, Nicholson to Kohat, Abbott to Hazāra and so on ; giving us no more helpful directions than : "Settle the country : make the people happy : take care there are no rows."'

How effectively they acted on those simple directions was proved by their many bloodless victories.

'See how the Hazāras took James Abbott for their Khan ; how the Yusufzais loved Lumsden ; how the men of Rawal Pindi followed Nicholson !'—wrote Edwardes, adding a pardonable comment on his own achievements : 'A master, who had confidence in me, gave almost despotic power ; and I trust the people never saw me wield it except for good. I found five countries oppressed by one tyrant—and I removed him. I found three chiefs in exile—and I restored them. Those countries and those chiefs rallied round me in the hour of need. . . . When I held up my hand for soldiers, they came. When I left the province, during an imperial war, peace reigned undisturbed behind me.'

Human and faulty, they were, with the faults of great character ; but all were inspired with an enthusiasm of service 'akin to the days of chivalry,' with a code of conduct that may be said to have given Englishmen their proud position in the world. Whatever the demand on them, they never stayed to ask—'Is it possible?' And Lawrence, having chosen them, and set great ends before them, left them free to achieve those ends through their own resource, energy and courage. Himself a born adventurer, he set them a standard of untiring work for the good of the people, that 'stamped his rule with the impress of his own heroic personality.' Never was man more willingly, more ably served. It was like nothing that had ever been before, or could ever be again. Owing to great distances and lack of swift communication, it was the age of wide powers for the Man on the Spot. The Governor-General himself came out as unquestioned autocrat. What he did could not even be known in England for months afterwards. If the Court of Directors consistently disapproved of his actions, they could

recall him, as they had recalled Lord Ellenborough : a distinction in which he stands alone. So with all rulers of districts or provinces ; greater powers involving greater responsibility, worked more often for good than ill ; worked infallibly for the making of men.

Hodson, having built his school, was ordered off, with no training and little notice, to make a road from Lahore to the Sutlej, distance forty miles, as speedily as possible. ‘ Colonel Lawrence,’ he wrote, ‘ walked into my room promiscuously one morning, and said, “ Oh, Hodson, we’ve agreed that you must take in hand the road to Ferōzpur. You can start in a day or two.” On the willing-to-be generally useful plan, this is all very well. I certainly fancied I knew nothing at all about the matter. But *here I am !*’ And he made his road as successfully as he had built his school ; then went off to the more congenial task of making Guides.

So it was with the others :—they learnt how to govern by governing ; how to handle the fierce Moslem tribes—by handling them : and when they made mistakes—through quick temper or hasty judgment—they learnt from those also, more than any training college could have taught them in a year. Probably all of them—including Lawrence and excluding Hodson—would have been ploughed by Army examiners, had they been subjected to the pen-and-ink test, that would certainly have turned down three-fourths of the men to whom England owes her finest traditions.

If the Lawrence system had its failings, it was eminently well suited to the holding of an intractable frontier ; but perhaps he alone could so successfully have carried it through. Though the period of his absolute rule lasted a bare seven months, it stamped frontier service with precisely the right tone and mode of control ; it gave the key-note to the whole eventual Punjab administration—admittedly England’s finest achievement in India.

And Border affairs were but a tithe of the great task laid on Lawrence in that memorable year. It needed all his tact and skill to reduce the Sikh army, to settle discharged soldiers in peaceful callings, and see that they were paid regularly—an attention they dreamt not of. Obnoxious taxes must be

scrapped ; and Sikh tax-gatherers—' official locusts '—be forced to disgorge ill-gotten gains. The unfamiliar blessing of law and order must be restored by means of a simple penal code. And all these measures must be carried out through the medium of a venal self-seeking Durbar. Everything hung on his capacity to carry the chiefs with him by convincing them that he was at once their master and their friend. All this and more he achieved in seven months, working ceaselessly through the Punjab furnace—at what cost to his hard-driven body he was to realise before the year's end.

In June, he could write to Sir Frederic Currie :

' I can now certify to this people having settled down in a manner that could never have been believed of them ; yet they have not lost their spirit. . . . They have settled down because they have been well treated *by us*, protected from their own army and chiefs *by us* . . . because the rights and even prejudices of all classes have been respected.'

Yet, even so, there remained inimical influences behind the scenes, where the Maharāni schemed persistently against the British, who had banished her lover, her readiest instrument for intrigue. The chiefs might hate her, but they feared her. Till she also was banished there could be no stable government. Only a pretext was needed. And in July she considerably supplied it, by prompting her son to insult Lawrence and the Sirdars at a public ceremony. So palpably was the boy acting under orders that the resentful chiefs advised the Queen's immediate removal from control over their Maharāj. So the matter was duly planned ; but when it came to direct action against her, ' not a chief could be found '—wrote Henry Lawrence—' to bell the cat.'

There she might have permanently remained, had not Lawrence himself and his Assistants agreed to accompany those stalwart yet fearful warriors half-way to the royal apartments, whence the Queen was ignominiously transferred to a doolie, raging and scratching and threatening to appeal to England. Yet, the doolie joggled off, with no murmur of protest from Court or people. Even her son seemed quite unconcerned ; playing his childish games and sending ' Salaams ' to the Resident Sahib as before.

Lawrence, himself, having worked at high pressure through two hot weathers, was ordered off on sick leave to Simla. Reluctantly he handed over his absorbing charge to the one man capable of replacing him—his brother John, whose arm was as strong as his brain, was massive and his spirit willing. But the man who crams into a few months the normal work of a few years must pay the price.

Lawrence returned in October, only to face the unwelcome fact that long leave to England, rather than short leave in Simla, was the prescription for his malady. In vain he protested. The doctors were deaf to his concern for the great work growing under his hands. And for him only two considerations blunted the keen edge of disappointment: the thought of once more seeing Honoria, and the knowledge that his frontier system had justified itself even beyond his own high hopes. From Bannu came news that the genius of Herbert Edwardes had wrought miracles of peace and order in an untamed region that had defied Sikh arms for twenty-five years. Nicholson reported that his own disturbed tract of country was perfectly quiet: and from all other Border districts the same good tidings. Even the troubled valley of Peshawar had so prospered under the firm and kindly rule of George Lawrence that the chief *mullahs* had been moved to offer a public thanksgiving; and George felt justified in paying a farewell visit to Henry; even planning to take his family back with him to Peshawar after months of separation.

For Henry himself, it was hard enough to leave the Punjab, without the added uncertainty of returning to a region that he had made so peculiarly his own; and to Lord Hardinge he could write frankly on the subject. 'My heart is in the work here, and I would prefer carrying out the present frontier policy to obtaining a seat in council.' He further ventured to hope that his brother John might be transferred to Lahore till his return, if the matter could be arranged with Hardinge's successor. For Hardinge also was leaving India. Having achieved—to all appearance—a lasting peace, he felt justified in resigning his office before the full five years' term; able to assure the new Governor-

General—Lord Dalhousie—that ‘it should not be necessary to fire a gun in India for seven years to come.’ He graciously invited Lawrence to travel home on the ship assigned to him by the East India company, and promised to arrange for his return to Lahore ; only regretting that he could not accede in the matter of John. Lahore must be assigned to a man of higher rank ; and Hardinge was not unaware of a feeling in Government circles that the Lawrences were tending to make the Punjab a family preserve. He himself rightly believed in those notable brothers ; believed also in their frontier policy ; and had he acted on his own conviction, his bold prophecy of seven years’ peace might conceivably have been fulfilled. For character is the determining factor in history. John, however, was allowed to remain at Lahore till Sir Frederic Currie could take over charge, while Henry embarked on the voyage to England that could now be accomplished in little more than two months.

His departure closed the first great administrative phase of his career—the happiest and most fruitful years of his life : though at the time he must have looked confidently forward to achieving greater things on his return. But a younger, more masterful autocrat had succeeded Lord Hardinge : and again it was character that created history.

सत्यमेव जयते

AND how fared Honoria Lawrence in England—six thousand miles away? What of the child she had expected in the spring of 'Forty-Six? No record has survived of her doings in that year so memorable for her husband; but, even afar off she was taking her share in the great event of opening the first Lawrence Hill school at Sanāwar, where George's wife—not yet allowed to join her husband—was filling the post of Superintendent, till a man could be found in England able and willing to take her place. So Honoria, at Clifton, was advertising for masters and a governess, interviewing possibles and impossibles; reviving her own keen interest in methods of education. She it was who discovered Mr. Parker; and so imbued him with the spirit of the undertaking that this first school largely owed its success to him.

How, year by year, the new venture flourished, and grew almost into a parish, how it gave rise to others in Utakamand, Mount Abu, and finally at Murri, is a tale that all India can tell. But for the two, who had hoped and willed the scheme into existence, that first school had the peculiar thrill of a first achievement, that could never be recaptured. And Honoria's motherly heart rejoiced over all those unknown children, rescued from the pitiless Indian plains, the squalid barrack life; while her immediate concern was Alick's schooling and copious notes for the book on Nepal, that she had long wanted to write—she being the one English woman who could speak with authority on that little-known country.

One solitary letter to Alick has survived from the many that she must have written and received in those months of separation. It was written from Bridgnorth, where she has gone on a visit to her brother William Marshall without her sons.

December 29th, 1846.

MY OWN DARLING BOY,—

I got here safely last night, and felt very well to-day. The only slippery place was down Park Street, where the driver led the horse along, making a great many Zs and Ss. I reached the station in good time, but felt very odd without my little cock sparrows to look after. At Gloucester, where we changed trains, there was a great bustle and my luggage was left behind. At Spetchly there was no *fly* to be had ; plenty when we were there last summer, swarming over the confectionery tables ; but this cold weather kills them ! So I went in an omnibus to Worcester, and there got a Fly to Kidderminster. Another Fly brought me to this house by half-past eight, very little tired.

While I was waiting at Worcester, I saw a newspaper, and in large letters, 'Indian Mail.' I found that Colonel Lawrence had reached Nowshera on the 18th October : and from what was said, I hope Colonel Lawrence will be able to keep all the people there from fighting. Now I hope in a day or two to get my letters.

I thought I should be very busy when there were no little people to bother me, but all to-day I have found it hard to do anything, wondering what my picaninnies are about. I have never before been even half a day without a *bāba* to look after, since the 6th September, 1838, when I first kissed a very small, soft, red baby, called Tim. Give my love to them all, and give Harry as many kisses as he will allow you ; and don't let Aunt Charlotte *bully* him. I wonder how many wonders you will have to tell me after a whole week's absence !

Always your own fond Mamma,

H. LAWRENCE.

The tale of 1847 was scantily told in a small old-fashioned diary, three days to a page, two inches for each day ; and those not always filled by the one-time ardent diarist of Indian scenes and events.

Her brief New Year prelude, on the blank page of the little book, strikes a characteristic note :

'With what a peculiar, awful feeling one writes the first entry in a book ruled to the end of the year! Where, oh where, shall I be when the 31st of December comes? God forbid that I should know. He knows my heart's desire . . . above all things earthly, to be re-united, in health and peace, to my husband. Yet infinitely beyond this is my willingness for further separation, for sickness—for death itself, if He see either to be for the eternal good of my husband and children. God is my witness that I bear them in my heart to live and die with them and for them. H. L.'

On the 11th came 'H. M. L.'s official budget: such a feast.' And a shrewd comment on a neighbour, in true Honoria vein. 'To be as candid as Pepys, I note that Miss Simon *really* came over to try on *my* velvet gown!'

Mainly she stayed at Clifton with her brother-in-law, Dr. Bernard, to whom she afterwards entrusted her boys. But even in England she was almost as restless as in India: Bridgnorth, London, Eltham and back to Clifton, all in the one month. And on February 4th came the brief but jubilant entry: 'Got Indian mail, with news that the Punjab is *ours*!' Heavy snowfalls and frost were followed by a bitter March and April—'Rain, rain—cold, cold'—that laid her up for a time; and she was sad at parting with Alick, sending him on ahead of her to stay with her parents at Cardonagh. 'But, having endured the separation from his father, all other partings are bearable.' For her, it was Henry *first* all the days of her life.

In May she was enduring agony with 'tic dolooureux all over.' Letitia insisted on the doctor; and his visits were recorded with an eloquent brevity, suggesting much torment yet leaving all to the imagination.

May 10th. 'Dr. K!!!'

May 11th. 'Dr. K—dreadful!'

May 12th. 'Dr. K—*Most* dreadful!'

May 14th. 'Up and in the next room, but much spent.'

More exclamation marks, later, suggest the miseries of primitive tooth extraction, before the marvels and mercies of painless dentistry.

ITHURIEL'S HOUR

May 17th. 'At noon, Dr. K. Ether!!!! Oh!!—William left me.'

Followed many days of collapse, 'very weak and ill from the ether.' Then—'Dr. K—caustic. Better.'

May 26th. 'Lovely day. Walked to Hatch Street; my longest walk since 1844, when we were in Matábar Sing's garden.'

If ever a high-spirited woman was crucified in the flesh, that woman was Honoria Lawrence. But even incessant bodily suffering failed to break her spirit. On the 2nd of June her barometer was rising; and in July she was well enough to join Alick at Cardonagh. She arrived none the worse for her crossing: 'My Tim, in high beauty, bounding forth to meet me. I am glad the dear old man has laid his hand on our son's head.'

Next day: 'Glorious. Sitting on the grass, *devouring* the air. My boy breathing in health and strength.'

The 24th brought news of the assassination plot, at Lahore, lightly dismissed by Henry; but it left her anxious for further news—and none came. Day after day, she recorded, 'No Letters.' 'Still no letters.' And not until August 5th came relief: 'Day wet and cold. Very sad: feeling it is probably my last at Donagh. In the evening I got my comfort—my H. M. L. of May 30, June 2, and June 4.'

On Tuesday the 16th, she crossed by steam packet to Scotland; landed at Greenock; and there had her first view of highlands wild as her own. On again by steamer through Loch Long, Holy Isle, the Kyles of Bute; till at last she came to the manse of Kilhoman at Islay, the Scots home of Mary Cameron—last seen in 1834—with her Minister husband and five children. Thirteen years to be bridged: yet, even half a world apart, they had remained close-linked in heart and spirit. Of their meeting and wonderful week together too little is told by the Honoria who had once written 'It is my nature to diffuse.' Now her entries were reduced to a telegraphic brevity: 'Long talk with M. C. I like all her whereabouts. And to see

my children playing with hers !—Evening got my H. M. L. Lovely letter.'

Their week of long talks drew them once more into a closer personal intimacy : but on August the 23rd, they must part—not to meet again in the flesh ; firmly convinced of an ultimate meeting in the spirit.

Honoria with her boys went back by railway to Glasgow, and across to Edinburgh, through the Trossachs ; then southward to Berwick, where the unfinished railway condemned her to a horsed-rrawn rattle-trap 'coast omnibus' : her bald tale of the journey almost as staccato as the inimitable Jingle.

'Berwick. Tremendous bridges. Newcastle. Omnibus again to Carlisle. Slept at railway hotel. Bugs—wretched !'

September 1st. 'Left Carlisle—Kendal, Ambleside, Fox How. Found Indian letters, 4th July. *Coming home !* Can it be true? . . .'

September 2nd. 'More letters. I think he is coming. Oh my husband !'

On the 9th, another Jingle entry : 'Lovely day. Lat breakfast, much talk : Carlyle, Ireland, Espinasse—smoking—lunch—brandy. At 4 p.m. left Manchester for Liverpool. Steam packet full. Night pretty fair, but all ver uncomfortable.'

And so back to Clifton, after a wonderful circuit for 1847. There Dr. Kennedy pronounced her quite well again, except for the spine ; yet by the end of September she was ill with 'glandular inflammation'—suffering much. 'In bed a day expecting Dr. Kennedy to burn me. Great roasting—better !'

By mid-October she had Henry's August letters : 'For return still uncertain. The need for it quite certain. Lo! thou hast been our refuge and strength—'

Another long break in the Indian mail, just when she craved full assurance of his coming, was peculiarly hard to bear. On the 26th, she was writing, 'Very perturbed day about Henry and India. Where *are* my letters? (this suspense is racking.' Two days later : 'Still no letter

—this is distracting.' The strain of not knowing must have recalled her autumn of endless waiting eleven years ago. But when at last the delayed letters came they banished uncertainty.

November 5th. 'Bright day—bright heart. Got my H. M. L., up to September 20th. *Coming!!* Almost weary with excess of happiness.'

But there was still a full six months of waiting before he could reach her : and as always, her spare time was filled with constant writing : most of it devoted to the book on Nepal, which was never finished—the fate of all her literary beginnings. Throughout December—spent at Bridgnorth with William—she was writing incessantly. Witness her entry of the 30th : 'Wild day, frost and snow. Since I came here on the 6th, I have written more than fifty letters, twenty pages of journal for H. M. L., and a hundred and twenty pages of the Nepal book.'

Of neither book nor journal has any trace remained : only a brief note that the year closed in peace, haloed by a radiant hope of the longed-for reunion in 1848.



IT was near the middle of March when, at last, Henry and Honoria Lawrence met again after more than two years of separation ; and to Honoria's joy was added the pride of hearing that Lord Hardinge had already recommended her husband, in terms of highest praise, for a well-earned K.C.B. 'There is no one,' he had written, 'of the many officers I have left in India who has such good pretensions to the favour of Government as my friend Colonel Lawrence ; and there is nothing you can do for me which will give me greater pleasure than to honour him as he deserves.'

The stormy year of industrial revolutions had dawned on Europe when Lawrence and Lord Hardinge were crossing the continent. Thunderclouds were gathering over Paris ; but they themselves had been neither inconvenienced nor unduly delayed. To Lawrence this England of 1848 seemed a new and unfamiliar world ; changed, even as he was changed by twenty years of life and work. Yet many who saw him now for the first time were struck with the singular simplicity and unworldliness of his nature ; and even strangers felt themselves in the presence of no ordinary man. Unpolished, always, in dress and manner, he was out of his element in fashionable London, where he again met his friend and editor, John Kaye, who wrote of him afterwards :

'There was no defiance of small conventionalities, no studied eccentricity ; but his active mind, ever intent on great realities, over-leapt his social surroundings of the moment. I well remember how, on the day after his arrival in London, as we walked up Regent Street together, and met the usual afternoon tide of well-dressed people, he suddenly turned upon me an amused and puzzled look, saying with a humorous smile, that all those fine people must look on him as "a great guy," asking if there was any place near by at which he could purchase an

overcoat to hide his imperfections. It had dawned on him that, in his antiquated frock-coat, and the old grey shepherd's plaid crossed over his chest, he was very much unlike other people. A few paces brought us to Nicol's great shop where he soon exchanged his plaid for a fashionable paletot, and asked me if that was "rather more like the thing?"

But not yet could he and Honoria escape from the social penalty of his distinction. Soon after his arrival they were bidden to a great dinner of all the London notabilities; and Lord Hardinge again paid tribute to Lawrence, to the untold value of his work in the Punjab. Then there was the formal presenting of his K.C.B., and a note of congratulation from Hardinge, coupled with a singularly understanding message to Honoria: 'My warmest, affectionate congratulations to *Lady* Lawrence on a change of title, which she will only prize as a recognition by the Queen and Government of her husband's most excellent services.' And there was Letitia, in her sisterly pride, recalling how their old Civilian friend, Mr. Huddleston, had prophesied the event more than twenty years ago, when he assured her—'All your brothers will do well; but Henry will be "Sir Henry" before he dies.'

At last, in early summer, they escaped to Cardonagh and the wilds of Innishowen, happily unaware of the tragedy that had shocked and startled British India within a month of Henry's arrival at Home.

That treacherous double murder of two fine young Englishmen—sent on a peaceful political errand to Multān—had threatened to shatter Lord Hardinge's reasonable hope of seven years' peace for India, unless the ensuing outbreak were promptly damped down—as it would have been had Lawrence remained at Lahore. Vans Agnew and Lieutenant Anderson—civilian and soldier—had been sent to effect a change of Governors at Multān, without reason to expect the slightest disturbance. But, as they rode out of the city, with Mulrāj—the retiring Governor—they were set upon, cut down and wounded by some unknown fanatics; deserted by more than half their escort, and forced to seek refuge in a ruined mosque from the startling

outbreak of mob violence that Mulrāj made no effort to suppress.

With the loyal half of their escort they attempted a vain and valiant defence of the indefensible Idgarh. Agnew despatched two urgent appeals for help, that could not possibly arrive in time to save them. For Sir Frederic Currie, at Lahore, was two hundred miles away; the nearest frontier station eighty miles distant; and the raging Multānis were at their very door. The few loyal Sikhs fought desperately against impossible odds, but were all too soon overpowered and killed. Vans Agnew, undaunted to the last, told his murderers: 'We are not the only Englishmen. Thousands more will come, when we are gone, to annihilate Mulrāj, his soldiers and his fort.'

Thousands did indeed come, but they were over-long about it. Currie, well-meaning but slow, called on Lord Gough—the Commander-in-Chief—to despatch a force at once. But Gough flatly refused to send British troops across blazing desert country at that season; and the new young Governor-General was twelve hundred miles away, kept in touch with urgent events by a *dāk* that travelled five miles an hour! John Lawrence—who should have been at Lahore—was on leave in the Hills; unable to do more than press for instant action in two vigorous letters; one to Currie, one to a Member of Council adjuring the Government to strike at once—and strike hard.

'Despite heat and the advanced season of the year,' he urged, 'I would counsel action. . . . The Durbar neither can nor will do anything, I never saw them do anything. The initiative must come from us. . . . If you don't act till the cold weather, you will have the country, I fear, in a flame. . . . In the event of your not sending our troops, it would be better not to send *any Sikhs*, who would assuredly fraternise with the rebels. . . .'

His wise counsel fell on deaf ears. Only a Revenue Subaltern, in the Derajāt, rose to the occasion, as his seniors signally failed to do. For Vans Agnew's tragic note had fallen into the hands of Herbert Edwardes, a Lawrence man, who would act first and explain afterwards. If he could

not save two fine fellows, he could at least make an effort to save the situation. With no troops at command, and only a small escort, he promptly enlisted a band of Pathan levies ; collected boats, and crossed the Indus. Thence, with his Irregulars, and an officer from Bannu, he made a rush by forced marches towards Multān. But Mulrāj was already in the field, with four thousand Sikh rebels and eight guns.

On the 18th of June they met in battle ; Sikh trader and British subaltern : a curious pair to decide the destiny of the Punjab. Edwardes with his four hundred, felt like ' a terrier barking at a tiger ' ! But courage has great allies. Loyal levies were added to him from the Moslem state of Bahawalpur ; and all through the Multān hot weather—the hottest in India—that invincible terrier kept on barking at the tiger ; pitted Pathan against Sikh ; won two decisive victories, and drove the four thousand, with heavy loss, back into the ancient fortress of Multān. Thence he also wrote to Currie : ' Now is the time to strike. It is painful to feel I am at the end of my tether.'

But Gough—under Simla deodars—was planning a regulation campaign after the monsoon. And Edwardes could only explode in a characteristic letter to Hodson, now Assistant at Lahore :

' As if rebellion could be put off, like a champagne tiffin, with a three-cornered note to Mulrāj to name a more agreeable date ! . . . Sir F. Currie has made a mistake past all calculation in yielding to the Commander-in-Chief's wish to postpone hostilities for five months. Postpone a rebellion ! Was ever such a thing heard of ? Postpone avenging the death of two British officers ! *Should* such a thing be ever heard of in British Asia ? . . . Give me two of your prophesied brigades, and Bahawal Khan and I will fight the campaign for you, while you are perspiring behind tatties in Lahore bottling up your British indignation at the murder of our countrymen. Action, action—promptitude : these are the watchwords of *ikbāl*.¹ . . . I quite blush for our position in the native eye ; and am striving, within my own humble sphere, to throw a veil of little victories over it. . . . Some extraordinary infatuation rests upon you all in Lahore ; while Mulrāj is daily adding to his means of resistance ; digging up long-buried guns ; enlisting about a hundred men *per diem* ; etc. Is this the sort of stand-

¹ Prestige.

still you all contemplate for five months? . . . While I write, the rebels are firing a salvo across the river. Ammunition is more plentiful with them than it is with me !'

If Edwardes underrated the military difficulties involved, he himself had defied sufficient odds to justify his indignation. The spirit of rebellion could not be postponed, even to suit a Commander-in-Chief.

All through that fateful hot weather it spread like flame through stubble. Lahore was seething with disaffection. Round Pindi and Peshawar, and in the wilds of Hazāra, disturbance was rife. Only in Simla and Calcutta calm continued to prevail ; though one Sikh Governor was raising an army in Hazāra and another—sent with troops to Multān—had gone bodily over to the enemy. To high authority it seemed of no account that Sher Singh's augmented army was marching northward unopposed ; that the ' drums of religion ' were beating throughout the land, bidding all true Sikhs rise, ' for God and the Guru,' against the foreigner. To men like George Lawrence, Nicholson and Abbott, it not unnaturally looked as if the real aim of their new ruler was to let rebellion run on till it offered plausible excuse for a sweeping war and full conquest of the Punjab.

Happily for England's honour, in the eyes of fighting races, a few young soldier statesmen on the Border upheld her *ikbāl* during that gloomy and dangerous hot weather of 1848.

James Abbott, in Hazāra, had subdued, by firm and fatherly rule, a region in which the Sikhs had kept ten regiments without effecting control. Now, at the open challenge of the Sikh leader, Chathar Singh, the fierce armed peasantry had rallied round ' father Abbott,' their white protector, and enabled him for weeks to arrest the forward march of a whole brigade.

At Peshawar George Lawrence, with Nicholson for Assistant, was holding his own in the chief danger centre, where the Afghans—for the first time in history—were being drawn into an alliance with their age-old enemies, the Sikhs ; refusing to send his wife and family down to Lahore,

'because it would stamp us as being afraid and having no confidence in our own troops.' Yet no two men saw more clearly than he and young Nicholson the perils looming round them, or tried more courageously to defer the evil day.

It was during those critical months that John Nicholson—at five-and-twenty—rose to his full stature as man and soldier. News of the Hazāra revolt found him prostrate with fever, yet he spurned the suggestion that another officer should be sent off, with a few reliable troops, to save the fort of Attock from yielding to Chathar Singh. 'Never shall I forget him'—wrote Lawrence afterwards—'as he prepared to start, full of that noble reliance on the presence and protection of God which—added to his unusual share of physical courage—rendered him almost invincible.'

In that high confidence, he set off for his fifty-mile ride from Peshawar to the rocky ramparts of the Indus opposite Attock—he that a few hours earlier had been tossing on his bed in high fever. All night long he and his handful of men rode without a pause; and early next morning he cantered his tired horse through the gate of Attock fort—just in time to prevent the plotters within from closing it against him. Once inside the fort, he soon won over the bulk of the garrison; for his name was a word of fear throughout the district. When the Sikh guards, at one of the gates, attempted resistance, 'he stalked among them like an avenging deity, dared them to lift a finger against him, and forced them to arrest their own leaders.' Before his men had arrived, he was collecting supplies, communicating with Abbott; and the very next day he was off again; leaving the fort under a loyal Sikh commander; hurrying on towards Rawal Pindi—where a body of Sikh horse had risen against their officer for refusing to join Chathar Singh. He, the one white man—six foot two of him, with a towering spirit to match—paraded the whole party, arrested the ringleaders, acquitted the penitent, and set about raising a local militia to protect the Pindi district. Like Edwardes, his urgent need was a backing of regular troops. But in vain he pleaded; in vain he insisted on the

danger of delay. Currie had no power over batteries and brigades ; no power to galvanise into activity the lion couchant—Lord Gough.

While Lawrence, Nicholson and Abbott were pitting their Irregulars against Chathar Singh ; while Edwardes held the field at Multān ; while Kohat was in Afghan hands, and the flame of rebellion sped on to the Derajāt ; the Commander-in-Chief of all India declared himself unable to place an adequate force in the field. Yet he had two great camps, of nine thousand men apiece, assembled at Lahore and Ferōzpur, ready to march at a day's notice. And Lord Dalhousie was writing to England his significant statement that suggests the wish fathering the thought : ' The insurrection, if let alone, would make head, locally ; and in the cold season we should be obliged to walk into them ' ; a consummation devoutly to be wished ; since he could ' see no escape from annexing the infernal country.'

No wonder there were those who saw policy rather than indecision behind that strange prelude to the second Sikh War : a policy that seemed to be ' waiting only for a decent excuse to set aside the 'Forty-Six treaty, and reduce the Punjab to a British province.' The outstanding facts remain that nothing short of six months' inaction would have emboldened the Sikhs to attempt a general rising against British dominion ; that troops were sent against Mulrāj too late ; that the wise advice of John Lawrence—not to use the Sikh army—had been disregarded, with inevitable results. Sher Singh was moving up to join his father Chathar Singh ; disbanded veterans flocking to his standard. Even the most hopeful now recognised that the work of 'Forty-Six would have to be done all over again, to a different issue. Not till then did Lord Dalhousie—chafing at Gough's tardiness—take matters into his own hands. Large reinforcements were ordered up from Bombay and Bengal, while the Governor-General travelled northward to exercise his supreme power on the spot.

' Since they will force war on me, I have drawn the sword,' he wrote to Sir George Couper. ' And this time I have thrown away the scabbard.' More publicly he

ITHURIEL'S HOUR

announced his resolve at Barrackpore, where a great military ball was given on the eve of his departure. 'Unwarned by precedent, uninfluenced by example,' he told his hearers, 'the Sikhs have called for war. And on my word, Sirs, war they shall have—with a vengeance !'



IT was about mid-June when the first tidings of the April tragedy reached Henry and Honoria Lawrence, in the far north of Ireland ; breaking up their peaceful summer together ; disturbing Henry's mind and drawing it back to India long before his body was fit for the arduous work he had been forced to give up only six months ago. At first there was no actual thought of his return ; but when later mails brought news of the outbreak, with its serious implications, he felt bound to offer his services, in the hope that his authority in the Punjab might calm the troubled waters. In vain he was warned by doctors and friends and Honoria herself that he was still utterly unfit for the fatal Punjab climate, the demands of a dangerous situation. If war threatened, go he must ; and those who knew him best realised that even if he could be persuaded to remain at Home, he would simply ' beat out his life against the bars of his cage.' To Honoria the whole affair must have recalled their Allahabad days ; his soldierly sense of duty, his anxiety for the Punjab, dwarfing all personal concerns.

His first move was a letter to the Court of Directors, who expressed themselves ' very sensible of his zeal ' ; but, since he was on sick leave, they left the matter to him and his doctors. He was, however, advised to see the Duke of Wellington, who told him plainly that he ought to return and join the new Governor-General. Here was backing from a high authority, confirmed by worse tidings mail after mail ; the spread of disaffection, and incredible Government delays. Only the news of Edwardes' gallant dash to Multān and his two brilliant victories raised hopes in England that his timely action might avert war ; and Lawrence was persuaded to wait till October, when Honoria and her three-year-old Harry would be able to sail with him.

So strong was his friendly feeling for the Sikhs, that he could not readily bring himself to believe in the depth and extent of their revolt against his own people. At heart he probably agreed with Herbert Edwardes that 'Mulrāj did not rebel because the Sikhs were ready to back him up ; but the Sikhs backed him up because the Government did not put him down.' That this was not the Government view, Lawrence discovered long before he sailed ; having been freely consulted by the India Board, by Lord Hardinge, and even by Lord Dalhousie, who was writing to him in August : 'Multān *must* be taken . . . the army, which has declared its object, must be met and crushed. . . . Frankly I see no halting place midway any longer.'

The underlying inference was clear. The ominous question of annexation, as a penalty for Sikh revolt, already loomed on the horizon. And, to Henry Lawrence, annexation was anathema, both in principle and in fact. Anxious to keep in close touch with Indian affairs, he spent most of his time in London, while Honoria must perforce remain chiefly at Clifton. Though her health was improving, her tiresome spine still condemned her to the indignity of a 'wheel chair' ; so that, even in England, unwilling separation was their portion.

On the 2nd of October, she was writing from Clifton :

'Darling Love, I enjoy, for you, this fine day for going into the country. . . . I am feeling better and going in a wheel chair for a little while. . . . I am reading a *Life of Mahomed*, pottering at writing and doing a hundred little matters preparatory to our going. . . .

'Darling, how I *shall* rejoice to see your face again ; and I shall be well pleased when the next three weeks are over, with all their partings. I daily bless God for my being able to go with you. To remain behind now would be more than I should know how to bear.'

And in distant India events were moving inevitably towards declaration of war on a fighting people, who had dared to make a bid for independence. By mid-September

England's professed allies had become her open and determined foes. Sher Singh was still marching northward, calling on the faithful to drive out the red-faced, cow-killing infidels who had come between the wind and their nobility. In the new Jalandhar province a handful of fanatics had been trying to stir up the people ; but John Lawrence—who asked no questions and waited for no orders—promptly used his own small force to crush the threat of an ugly rising. At very small cost in lives and money, he made short work of a dangerous outbreak in a province new to the yoke ; while Nicholson and Abbott, in the Pindi area, worked manfully to prevent a junction between the two Sikh leaders. At Peshawar George Lawrence was still holding the chief danger-point, also begging for regular troops, since his own Sikhs might mutiny any day. Bannu regiments near at hand would join them. Dōst Mahomed, after stoutly refusing to fight the English, had become puzzled at their inaction ; and, tempted by the promise of his long-lost Peshawar, had cast in his lot with the side that looked like winning.

Lack of reliable troops had forced George Lawrence at last to send his wife and two small children through Kohat to Lahore, under an escort of five hundred Afghans led by Sultan Mahomed Khan—brother of the Dōst—a man who had been befriended by Henry Lawrence in time of need. On the Korān he had sworn to see Mrs. Lawrence and her children safe across the Indus. But, soon after they started, came news that Chathar Singh was sending troops to intercept them ; and at once the faithless Afghan fell back on Kohat, where his charges became Sikh prisoners—though for the moment they were safe. Lawrence—remembering the dark days at Kabul—doggedly hung on to his post in the Residency with his Assistant and the married doctor, whose wife had chosen to remain and take her chance. But, when Moslem gunners joined the revolt, the loyal Sikh Governor begged the Englishmen to fly, if they valued their lives. The guns were to be turned on the Residency ; and defence would be impossible. Thus besought, they rode off with an escort of fifty men—only just in time.

The road to Attock being closed, they proceeded to Kohat,

and there placed themselves under the protection of Sultan Mahomed Khan. Nominally guests, virtually prisoners, they were later passed on to the Sikh camp, where they remained, in polite custody, till the end of the war.

In November—according to plan—Gough's grand army assembled at Ferōzpur, nominally to avenge two officers, murdered seven months earlier; actually to conquer the Punjab. But a series of delays and disasters marked the opening moves of that inglorious campaign; Gough's initial tardiness being only equalled by his rashness in the field. Two doubtful actions, claimed as victories, merely caused the Sikhs to retire, at their own discretion, from a good position to a better one, where Sher Singh could await, in safety, the coming of his father from the north. General Gough, on the other hand, was left powerless to attempt any further blundering operations, till the fall of Multān—now again invested—should add another twelve thousand men to his own army.

While the fate of Northern India hung in the balance, a succession of steamships was bringing Sir Henry and Lady Lawrence out by the new Mediterranean route. Lord Dalhousie's letters had foreshadowed probable discord on Punjab affairs; and Sir Henry's own letter—written from England in October—had been frank, to the verge of un wisdom, in its pointed emphasis on the evils of delay.

'What I always urged on my brother John and on my Assistants'—he had written from the fullness of experience—'was never to allow rebellion one day to make head. Had I been at Lahore, I would have asked my brother to take my place, while, with two or three Assistants and half a dozen volunteer officers, I pushed down by forced marches to Multān; the Lahore and Ferōzpur brigades following on.

'The original movement was developed to save two officers' lives; surely it was as incumbent to prevent the murder of half a dozen others—and above all, to break up the nest of rebellion. . . .

'If there had been the tenth part of an Edwardes' energy,

ability and honesty in the Lahore Court we need not, and should not, have been there : and if there had been any patriotism among the Sirdars, the Hill country would now belong to Lahore ; but it is not the fashion of Orientals to make war, or do anything else, as Europeans do it. If they did so, India would not be ours. . . .

‘ From earliest days down to those of Kabul, Sindh and Lahore, when have we ever had support or aid from allies, unless urged or led on by judicious and brave English officers ? My brother George and Lumsden effected with hundreds of Sikhs what their Sirdars could never achieve with thousands : . . . and so it will ever be.’

His friendship with Hardinge and his habit of plain speaking, to those above or below him, may have blinded him to the possible effect, on an opiated man, of a just, yet unpalatable indictment, little calculated to increase the warmth of his own welcome.

The voyage itself created for him the curious detached pause that seemed always to precede any period of crisis or demand. No longer an affair of three to five months, it now took less than six weeks for the new, small, comfortless steamships to throb and puff their way through the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, with a strange interlude of land-travel by van, across the Egyptian desert.

For Honoria—in spite of her first real parting with Alick—it was a time of health and happiness recaptured, after two years of separation and intermittent suffering ; with Henry—snatched from the anxieties of his brief and troubled furlough—at leisure and all her own. Once their battering in the Bay was over, her natural buoyancy lifted her easily above all physical discomforts ; and from Malta she could write to Alick : ‘ the change in me is like a miracle ; nearly free from pain, and stronger than I have felt since my bad illness at Paddington.’

With them went Henry’s sister Charlotte, a Mr. Le Geyt and a boy named Halifax to be pupil teacher at the Kasauli school. Her detailed journal letters beguiled the empty hours. At Malta they changed into a French steamer, where she suffered from the ‘ prevailing odour ’ of tobacco.

'Every man high and low, smokes continually, and the French lady also takes her cigar. A slow match hangs by the chimney : and thither is continual resort. Many of the gentlemen take snuff as well. May you never, my son, put yourself in bondage to the dirty unwholesome habit of smoking.'

A night on shore at Alexandria came as a relief from cramped berths and cabins ; but none could rest except in snatches ; for 'the mosquitoes were voracious, jackals howled and yelled ; cocks began to crow about sunset, and continued on and off till daylight.' At seven they breakfasted and lumbered on, by omnibus, to the narrow canal that linked Alexandria with the Nile ; thence to Cairo in a small steamer packed with a motley crowd : 'Many Turks, half Europeanised, and many Europeans more than half Turkified.'

From Cairo they at last set out on their eighty-mile journey by 'van,' across the desert, to Suez. Their primitive coach and four was drawn by two mules and two horses, that rumbled them along at seven or eight miles an hour, with a change at every five-mile stage ; the van itself 'something like an inside Dublin car, mounted on very high wheels, the sides lifted up to admit light and air.' On a high driving seat perched the shabby Arab coachman ; a negro boy, scantily clad, crouching at his feet or standing on the step 'like a bus conductor.'

Roused at 1 a.m. they swallowed some very bad coffee and started before two ; a waning moon in the heavens, a blazing torch to light their way. Every few miles they passed a two-armed tower like a windmill, for 'the telegraph' ; and at every fourth stage they found a resting-place with refreshments for travellers. One of these they reached at dawn—'a table prepared in the wilderness ; cold fowl, hash, potatoes, tea and coffee ; just our one little group of life in the midst of that wild waste.'

But a full sense of the desert—its vast desolation—came to her only as the day wore on ; stage after stage, nothing but sand and rock, sand and rock, till at last the monotony was relieved by outlying hills of the barren range that skirts the

Red Sea. And their strange journey culminated in a desert sunset, that evoked a flash of her old descriptive fervour.

'As the sun declined almost behind us, the western sky began to glow with colours that made the desert itself seem a part of heaven. Clouds, like masses of rough gold, brilliant rose-tinted, and near the horizon, a band of pale green; all of a jewelled splendour that is never seen in more northerly latitudes. So sank the sun; and the sky took an appearance of red flame with dark smoke—like vapour such as, I think, must have appeared over Mount Sinai. The lower mountains had, till he sunk, shone with rosy light, and the east had a rich neutral tint; but now, the hills stood forth so close and forbidding that they seemed like those the impenitent will see, when they "cry to the mountains, 'Fall on us,' and to the hills, 'Cover us!'" It was a scene of such solemnity as I hope never to forget.

'At nine o'clock we reached Suez; and right glad we were to get out of our vans, into our beds, after being refreshed by a cup of tea without milk, made from brackish water! We were very weary and I have never slept sounder.'

On the 8th of December they reached Bombay, there to be greeted by news of the Peshawar rising, of George and his family in enemy hands—an unpleasant reminder of 'Forty-Two, that now seemed half a lifetime away. Letters brought on board absorbed them to the exclusion of all outside interests. One from Lord Dalhousie bade Lawrence join him as soon as might be. Two from John were full of news and sound comment. He strongly advised Henry to leave the women-folk in Bombay, while he took steamer to Karachi and up the Indus, joining 'the Lord's camp' at Ferōzpur; 'the Lord' being his quaint abbreviation for Governor-General.

'I would not delay. It is your interest to be on the spot. Currie, I think, now looks to get a seat in Council. The sooner the better. He has lost credit with everyone—some of it undeservedly. . . . Our political and military manœuvres have been such as almost certainly to cause the Sirdars to take the line they have done. We stood and

looked on and did nothing. . . . One would almost think that Government had delayed in order to make matters as bad as possible. We have given the Sikhs so long to collect their forces and take possession of the country that they have now become really formidable. Successful we shall no doubt be ; but with prodigious loss, I fear. I do not believe one word of a conspiracy. Mulrāj's affair was an accident. Delay converted it into a successful rebellion.'

It is interesting and significant to discover that Edwardes himself was writing to Lord Hardinge in the same strain on the very same date. And yet another—looking back on that bewildering pause, asked pertinently : Was Dalhousie's deliberate abstention from using British troops to suppress the crisis in real accord with his insistence on having done all that man could do to support the Sikh Government ? What the Sikh leaders thought, Henry Lawrence may have known, if any ever did. But, where motives are called in question, history can give no answer ; since none can read the secret hearts of men.

In December, 1848, however, the war was still to win ; and the pith of John's advice—that most concerned Honoria—ran, ' When you get to Multān you can judge best whether the womenkind should come by Calcutta or your way. *Don't* let Nora come with you—and make haste.'

It was the same injunction as Currie had sent him three years ago ; and with the same alacrity—yet with what different anticipations—he obeyed the call that shattered their hope of a united Christmas, and wrenched them apart in the very moment of return to the country more beloved by both than England itself.

On Friday the 8th they had arrived ; on Sunday a steamer was sailing for Karachi. In it Henry embarked, leaving a desolate Honoria to await his instructions ; praying that she might not be condemned to the Calcutta route and a long hot journey up the Ganges.

On the 14th she was writing to Alick :

' MY DARLING BOY,—

' Many days have passed without a letter. For I have been busy and my heart has been very sad. Papa is gone. . . . If he finds all quiet at Multān, he will write

for us to proceed up the Indus. His heart, too, is very sad about the Punjab. He had laboured with his brothers to establish peace in that country—and while he remained, the work prospered. Now all is destroyed. Battles and slaughter and misery in whole provinces; the time of their tranquillity is removed very far. “The Lord reigneth, be the people never so impatient; He sitteth between the cherubims, be the earth never so unquiet. . . .”

‘On that assurance I try to rest my soul.’



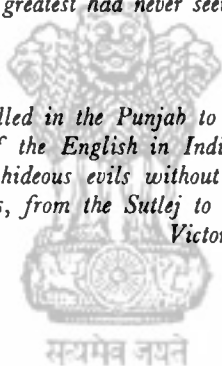
PHASE SEVEN
CLASH AND CRISIS
(1849-1853)

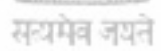
Those men understood the nature of their work more or less dimly ; though even the best and greatest had never seen it clearly because of its magnitude.

Joseph Conrad.

One has to have travelled in the Punjab to realise what an immense benefit the domination of the English in India is to humanity. . . . One cannot witness its hideous evils without ardently desiring to see them carry their frontiers, from the Sutlej to the Indus.

Victor Jacquemont (1831).





सत्यमेव जयते

THE return of Sir Henry Lawrence to his kingdom proved, from the first, an altogether different affair from the return he had anticipated a year ago. In spite of clear evidence that Lord Dalhousie's aims and outlook differed radically from his own, he had yet to discover the full effect of that disagreement on his position at Lahore. An almost brotherly intimacy with Lord Hardinge made it difficult for him to grasp at once his altered relation to the Supreme Government. Nor could he know that Lord Dalhousie had already been warned to keep an eye on 'clever functionaries placed at a distance'; that he himself had been mentioned, and had not improved matters by his over-frank letter from Home. If he had erred in returning too impulsively, at serious risk to his health, it was the impulse of a man who honestly believed that his presence was needed; that Government trusted and valued his experienced opinion on Punjab affairs; though he could not see fully from England how radical a change had been wrought in his absence. To say that 'he made the mistake of supposing himself to be indispensable' savours of injustice to a singularly modest man.

The Sikhs themselves had not failed to notice that the outbreak happened so soon after his departure. To them it seemed that the *ikbāl* of the great English chief had been withdrawn from his countryman; that only his return could restore it. And *ikbāl*, in the East, has a meaning not easily compressed into any single English word. Prestige, honour, power—it implies all these, and something more; some quality that lifts a man or a nation above the common chances of disaster or defeat.

This general belief in the Lawrence *ikbāl* was enough, in itself, to antagonise Lord Dalhousie, who lost no time in

administering a flick of the whip to the man whose help he should have welcomed in the hour of crisis. It was occasioned by an unfounded rumour that Mulrāj had said he would surrender his fort only to Sir Henry Lawrence, whose generosity might win for him more favourable terms ; and Sir Henry, unaware, gave it colour by making straight for Multān, in spite of a warning from his warier brother that he might there be regarded as an interloper ; a warning confirmed by Dalhousie himself.

MY DEAR SIR HENRY,—[he wrote],

There are strong rumours current that if you should arrive anywhere near Multān, before operations are renewed, the Dewan Moolrāj means to surrender to you. I have no doubt whatever that you would not receive him, or act in any public capacity at present. Nevertheless, as you are necessarily ignorant of much that has passed, I have to inform you that I will grant no terms whatever to Moolrāj, nor listen to any proposal but that of unconditional surrender. If he is captured, he shall have—what he does not deserve—a fair trial : and if, on that trial, he shall be proved the traitor he is . . . then, as sure as I live, he shall die. But you have one answer to give him—‘unconditional surrender.’ I shall be very happy to see you, and shall be found somewhere near the Sutlej. Believe me,

Yours very truly,

DALHOUSIE.

In itself that letter was natural enough. But the whole tone of it started their official relation with precisely the kind of ‘rub’ that Lawrence had a fatal tendency to exaggerate. By some unlucky kink in his nature he was apt to see personal hostility in any form of opposition, to let disappointment or vexation fester into a grievance : and Dalhousie’s opening move was the more regrettable because the rumour was unfounded—Mulrāj being still in no mood for surrender. The unwelcome greeting emphasised also Sir Henry’s invidious position arising from his hasty return ; his personal prestige backed by no official status, till Currie secured his seat in Council ; the Punjab itself still to be



JAMES ANDREW BROUN RAMSAY.

10th Earl and 1st Marquess of Dalhousie.

*From the drawing by George Richmond in the possession of Mrs. Broun Lindsay,
at Colstoun.*

won. As regards Honoria, it had now been arranged that, until the war ended, she and her party were to remain with John's wife at Jalandhar. They had been allowed to travel up by the shorter route ; the faithful Edwardes bidden to 'see her gently on her way' from Multān, as she was no longer the 'sprightly lass' of an earlier day.

By mid-January another pitched battle was imminent. The fortress of Attock—defended for two months—had fallen, through treachery ; the Sikh garrison opening the gates to Chathar Singh, who had captured its plucky subaltern defender and set off to join his son, Sher Singh, on the river Jhelum.

Clearly this was the moment to strike, before father and son joined hands ; and Lawrence, arriving in Gough's camp, offered his services in any line. He found Nicholson there, acting A.D.C. ; and they two, Resident and subaltern, served as gallopers for General Gough through the disastrous conflict of Chilianwala—pithily described as 'an evening battle, fought by a brave old man in a passion, and mourned for by the whole British nation.'

An evening battle it was never meant to be. By the time both armies were in position, it was near three o'clock of a winter afternoon ; and Gough had promised not to attack till morning. But, unexpectedly, the Sikhs opened fire ; and, although their guns were quickly silenced, Gough's 'Irish blood was up.' To the dismay of those not so afflicted, he suddenly ordered an advance in line against an enemy double his strength, covered by a thorny tract of jungle, its nature and extent entirely unknown.

In vain his Political Officer reminded him that jungle fighting was a terror to sepoys, implored him to use only guns till next day. 'I am C.-in-C. of this Army,' the General retorted, 'and I desire you to be silent.'

The 'Advance' was sounded : into that thorny jungle hapless infantry regiments were launched pell-mell. Each lost its neighbour and fought its own battle, unsupported by guns, that dared not fire—being in the rear. Campbell's division alone advanced nobly, capturing and spiking

hidden enemy guns, carrying all before it. But everywhere Sikh numbers prevailed ; and the fighting was desperate ; ' front, flanks and rear literally at the same time ' ; no supports, no reserve. Cavalry on the left did all that men and horses could. Those on the right—Lancers and Dragoons—lost in dense jungle, misheard their leader's word of command ; took it for an order to retreat—and fairly galloped to the rear. Pursued by a handful of Sikh irregulars, they galloped over their own artillery, dashed into the field hospital, upset the surgeons operating on the wounded ; and were only stopped at last by the chaplain, pistol in hand.¹

Yet, for all the confusion and carnage, British troops had captured, before night fell, a clear space beyond the jungle ; and the Sikhs—broken but not routed—had withdrawn to their entrenchments on the Jhelum.

Despatches, effectively touched up, proclaimed a victory. But facts spoke louder than words. All India knew the truth ; and Dalhousie himself admitted ' another such would ruin us.' In the Army, gloom prevailed. In England, news of the ' famous victory ' was received with consternation ; the brave but reckless General promptly superseded, and Sir Charles Napier ordered to India as Commander-in-Chief.

But India was far ; and much was to happen before he could reach the country.

A few days after Chilianwala, Sher Singh was firing a grand salute to announce the arrival of his father with strong reinforcements ; and a week later, Lawrence was writing to Kaye : ' The C.-in-C.'s battle on the 13th was a very bad affair. He had promised every one not to fight that day. . . . I am to take over charge on February 1st ; and in the interval am doing what I can . . . We hourly expect news of the fall of Multān. . . . '

It fell on that very day. The fort—according to Dalhousie—' had been battered to everlasting smash ; the troops were about to assault—when the gates were opened and Mulrāj surrendered unconditionally with three to four

¹ Lord Dalhousie.

thousand men.' That incalculable streak of fatalism, so common in the East, saved many lives and sent the Multān force intact to join the main army.

The fall of Multān moved the Sikhs to try for terms. But Dalhousie dismissed their demands as 'preposterous'; and his own counter-demand for unconditional surrender stiffened their proud necks. Once more they would try conclusions with the victors of Sobrāon. The moderating influence of Lawrence, on which they had counted, was clearly of no avail. The personal power of the man best loved and trusted by the whole Punjab was now to be ruthlessly restricted; and Sir Henry's full enlightenment on that head came in terms that jarred his sensibilities the more for being entirely unexpected.

On the eve of taking over charge, he drafted the usual form of proclamation; expressing his natural concern for those who had been misled, and his personal feeling for the leaders, with whom he had lived on terms of friendship.

That rough draft, sent to Lord Dalhousie for approval, was denounced root and branch in the great man's straight-from-the-shoulder style.

'The proclamation you have proposed is objectionable in matter, because it is calculated to convey to those who are engaged in this shameful war an expectation of much more favourable terms than I consider myself justified in granting them. It is objectionable in manner, because (unintentionally, no doubt) its whole tone substitutes you personally . . . for the Government which you represent. It is calculated to raise the inference that the fact of your arrival, with a desire to bring peace to the Punjab, is likely to affect the war-like measures of the Government; that you are come as a peacemaker for the Sikhs, as standing between them and the Government. This cannot be. . . . There must be entire identity between the Government and its agent, whoever he be. And I see no reason whatever to depart from my opinion that the vital interests of the British Empire now require that the power of the Sikh Government should not only be defeated, but subverted and their dynasty abolished. No terms can be given but unconditional surrender. . . .'

There was more to the same purpose; justifiable in essence, from an autocratic ruler to a masterful Resident; but the whole tone of the letter must have been gall and

wormwood to Henry Lawrence, who fortunately could not know of Dalhousie's comments on the episode to an intimate friend at home :

'My new Resident Sir Henry Lawrence commenced his career by proposing a Proclamation, which I have forbidden and shaken him for it. Lawrence has been greatly praised and rewarded and petted, and no doubt naturally supposes himself a King of the Punjab ; but as I don't take the Brentford dynasty for a pattern, I object to sharing the chairs : and think it best to come to an understanding as to our relative positions at once.'

But the understanding could surely have been arrived at without a rap over the knuckles, for his greatest subordinate, from a man who was strong enough in character and position to dispense with mere self-assertion. True, Lord Dalhousie had found the Punjab so completely under the dominion of three Lawrences that he might well be excused for an authoritative gesture ; though hardly for the relish with which he wrote ten days later : 'I have my Resident's nose tidily down.'

With a Governor-General in that frame of mind, there could be small hope of working harmoniously ; and the barbed phrases in his provocative letter must have hurt Lawrence the more for their partial truth. Indirectly he was informed that his local experience and unique knowledge were to count for nothing against the will of a man who had spent little more than a year in India, and barely two months in the North.

His own considered reply must have severely taxed his self-control.

'I have written the proclamation in the terms I understand your lordship to desire, but any alteration made in it, by your order will be duly attended to when translations are prepared. I may, however, observe that the Natives do not understand "unconditional surrender." With themselves, it implies murder and spoliation. I would therefore suggest that those words be omitted, as they may be made use of by the ill disposed to blind others to the real conditions. . . .

'My own opinion, more than once expressed, is against annexation. I did think it unjust ; I now think it im-

politic. It is quite possible I may be prejudiced and blinded ; but I have thought over the subject long and carefully. However, if I had not intended to do my duty, conscience permitting, I should not have hurried out from England to have taken part in arrangements that, under any circumstances, could not but have in them more of bitterness than aught else for me.'

Perhaps only Honoria could estimate the full extent of that bitterness. He had sacrificed much in the belief that his presence, early in the war, might accomplish much. From England he could not see clearly how deep was the bog into which the new Government had stumbled ; how completely his own dream of a friendly, independent Sikh State had been shattered. Dalhousie—dreaming of an Empire—ruthlessly rubbed it in : 'The task before me is the utter destruction and frustration of the Sikh power, the subversion of its dynasty, the subjection of its people. This must be done promptly, fully and finally.'

For the Sikhs it amounted to summary execution. For Lawrence, an end of the old happy pioneering days. His most trusted lieutenants—Edwardes and Nicholson especially—were to be treated as 'exuberant young men' and kept well within the limits of their powers ; while his own powers would be curbed in a manner peculiarly exasperating to one who might reasonably suppose himself 'a King of the Punjab.'

FROM the first of February Lawrence found himself firmly pinned down to Lahore ; bidden to keep his ' young men ' in order ; and subjected to the unfamiliar process of being kept in order himself. It was an irksome experience for the impetuous, unconventional Irishman, officially overridden by a critical, authoritative Scot. Lawrence could never function according to pattern. Original in mind and character, almost to a fault, he must act on his own belief, follow his own star—even against his own interests—with a singleness of heart and purpose, perversely allied to an over-sensitive regard for the esteem of others. Very early, there was discord, and some ruffling of temper, over the old controversy as to the loyalty of Gulāb Singh, to whom Lawrence had always given the benefit of the doubt ; and, again it was Dalhousie's tone that pricked him to defend his own principles ; to admit that he did not feel sure of possessing his Lordship's full confidence.

Thus challenged, Dalhousie replied in his forthright fashion :

' Differences of opinion must not be taken as withdrawal of confidence. You give and will, I hope, continue to give me your views frankly. I shall give you my opinions as frankly ; and be assured that, if ever I lose confidence in your services—than which nothing is farther from my contemplation—I will acquaint you of the fact promptly enough.'

But the differences in their case cut deep. All that was most Irish in Lawrence resented a tight hand on the rein ; and Dalhousie had unfortunately started with an adverse view of him, coloured by just enough of unflattering truth to hinder clear seeing. After Gulāb Singh, followed friction over Herbert Edwardes—now a Brevet Major and C.B. in honour of Multān ; back in political service, governing his

district on the free-and-easy lines of a happier day. Unadvisedly he had taken it on himself to disarm a Pathan regiment, suspected of disaffection, without reference to higher authority ; and the discovery spurred Dalhousie to an eminently characteristic letter.

'I am greatly surprised with what you write to me about Major Edwardes, or rather I am greatly vexed, not surprised at all. From your letter I perceive it is not necessary to say that you should pull Major Edwardes up at once for this. But I wish to repeat that there are more than Major Edwardes in the Residency, who appear to consider themselves as Governor-General at least. The sooner you set about disenchanting their minds the better for your comfort and their own . . . I don't doubt you will find bit and martingale for them speedily. For my part, I will come down on every one of them who may try it on, from Major Edwardes, C.B., to the latest enlisted general-ensign-plenipotentiary on the Establishment.'

Letters so incisive, however racy and opportune, scarcely tended to make men love him ; least of all one who resented the flick at his own system, who neither could nor would apply 'bit and martingale' to his chosen few. He did, however, reason strongly with Edwardes on the subject.

'Where would be the end of men acting on their own responsibility if not only you, but others, could, without reference to me, disarm and discharge a regular regiment for an offence committed months ago? If such is right, there is no need of a Resident at all. . . . Just now, when you are only recovering from sickness, I am sorry to have to find fault with you ; but . . . the times have loosened discipline ; and the sooner it is restored, the better for all parties. You know me to be your friend, in the best sense. I know and admire your excellent qualities . . . but this is not the first time we have had a discussion of this kind. I most sincerely hope it will be the last.'

To Nicholson also, a week later, he wrote a word of warning as to the changed hand on the helm.

DEAR NICHOLSON,—

You are, I think, right as to the guilty and guiltless ; but don't be in a hurry to judge, and don't make rash promises ;

for I find the G.G. very particular *indeed*. He has forbidden any grants at present. Of course this is not to prevent your putting people in possession, who have been ousted by the enemy ; but you should not restore *jaghirs*¹ confiscated by the Durbar. Keep, or let go to their homes, those who have stood by you, as they choose. Don't incur *any expense* without authority ; or we shall have the G.G. about my ears as well as yours.

Yours very sincerely,

H. M. L.

But if Dalhousie chastised exuberant young men with whips, he chastised with scorpions the brave blundering old Commander-in-Chief. Of him he wrote also to Lawrence, who had heard from camp that the General thought he would not cross the Jhelum that season :

'The camp's business is to find fighting : I find the thought : and such thought as the Camp has hitherto found is of such d——d bad quality that it does not induce me to forego the exercise of my proper function. . . . The camp *will* cross the Jhelum ; . . . and, please God, the Indus also. I pray God we may have achieved a "crowning" victory before long.'

On that very day, as it chanced, Gough had been joined by the last of his troops from Multān. The Sikh leaders had massed their whole army round the walls of Gujcrāt, covering the road to Attock. Gough had been using his despised military brain to good purpose ; laying his plans for a last decisive battle to retrieve his reputation ; while Dalhousie had planned in advance the 'quick march' that was to carry a flying column, under Sir Walter Gilbert, two hundred miles on, to the mouth of the Khyber Pass.

It was only a few days before the battle that Sir Henry Lawrence, at Lahore, had the surprise and pleasure of welcoming his brother George—not seen for more than a year ; still a prisoner, with his family, in the hands of Sher Singh. Yet here he was, given eight days' leave on parole,

¹ Grants of land.

to confer with his brother, in the vain hope of extracting eleventh-hour terms through one who could not now command influence at Court. Sher Singh, at parting, had told George Lawrence that, if a battle were fought in his absence and the Sikh army was beaten, he need not return. His wife and family would at once be sent to join him at Lahore. He had replied that, having given his word, he would return in any case. And he was still at Lahore when the battle of Gujerāt thundered out its opening chorus : a crashing bombardment, for three hours on end, that practically silenced the enemy's guns. But the Sikhs—numbering 60,000 against 25,000—fought with indomitable persistence. Not until two strongly held villages had been stormed and captured, did their whole line at last begin to shake ; and retreat, once started, soon became a rout.

In Dalhousie's vigorous phrases :

'Enemy retired ; our people advanced ; kicked them from pillar to post ; drove them into their own camp . . . and out of their own camp ; . . . pressed upon them, till they fled in utter rout ; . . .

'I rejoice heartily that the old Chief has been able to close his career with this crowning victory. One is apt to overestimate what happens in his own time, but I really believe . . . no victory ever gained in India was more important in its results, or more calculated to impress the native mind with a sense of our invincibility. . . . To gain such results against an enemy triple our strength, skilful, brave and obstinate, is a great and real triumph. . . . I may say this without conceit, for I have no share in the glory. . . .'

In the same letter he quoted, with pardonable relish, the assurance of Lord Hardinge that there would be no second Sikh War—for he had drawn their teeth. 'Yet, during this second war the troops . . . have taken a hundred and twenty-nine guns ! If their teeth were effectually drawn, this looks as if they had had a good set of false ones made to supply their place !'

But the victors had still to welcome all British prisoners ; to receive all the surrendered swords and muskets of a mighty army. Three days after the battle, George Lawrence—true to his word—left Lahore for Sir Walter Gilbert's camp on the river Jhelum opposite the Sikh headquarters. The two armies were firing into each other, keeping up a

lesser war of their own, when Lawrence waved his handkerchief for a boat to come and ferry him across. The boat was sent ; and firing ceased on both sides, while that solitary Englishman—who might well have remained at Lahore—was ferried over the river. His surrender was received with amazement by the Sikhs, who cheered him ‘long and loudly for returning to them now that they had been beaten.’ It was all quietly done, quietly told. There was nothing spectacular about George Lawrence ; ‘but it has been through actions such as these that the Frontier peace still stands between India and disorder, and British honour still keeps bright.’¹

It was from George Lawrence—prisoner and friend—that the Chiefs now sought advice as to whether they should submit, with their beaten army, or retreat across the Indus with their personal retainers, join the fleeing Afghans, and make for Kabul. The information that, in Kabul, they would certainly be treated as prisoners and forced to turn Moslems, decided them in favour of surrendering to the British, with Sir Henry Lawrence—just and merciful—in command of Punjab affairs. Already Gilbert’s flying column was off and away pursuing fleet Afghans, ‘who had ridden down from their hills like lions, and ran back into them like dogs.’ At almost every stage, Sikh veterans were brought into his camp by their chiefs, laying down, perforce, their matchlocks and swords, receiving in return a beggarly rupee that would take them home. Many of them stalked away ignoring it ; others muttered ruefully—‘*Mera kām hōgya*—my work is done.’

By March the 7th all the British prisoners, with Mr. Thompson, Mrs. Lawrence and her two children, were welcomed in the British camp. But not until the 12th did Sher Singh rejoin his father at Rawal Pindi, that he might prepare all chiefs and troops—still some 20,000 strong—for the final surrender of arms and guns and chargers—a needlessly cruel infliction : triumph or tragedy, according to the point of view. The Sikh soldiers, unbeaten at heart, were furious with leaders who had betrayed them to the

¹ Professor Morison.

foreigners ; and the scene that followed at Pindi was as moving and unforgettable as any in the British Indian history ; a scene immortalised by Sir Edwin Arnold :

‘ With noble self-restraint thirty-five Chiefs laid down their swords at Gilbert’s feet ; the Sikh soldiers—advancing one by one to the long file of English troops drawn across the road—flung tulwars, matchlock and shield on the growing heap of arms ; salaamed to them, as to the “ spirit of steel,” and passed through the open line—no longer soldiers.’

Sadder still was the parting of each horseman from his charger—faithful friend in peace and war. More than one could scarcely tear himself away for the last time. Again and again resolution failed. Again and again he turned back for a last caress, brushing aside tears without shame ; ‘ expressing in one pregnant phrase the key to his manly resistance and no less manly submission—“ Ranjit Singh is dead to-day.” ’



ON that proud, yet tragic day of wholesale surrender, the heart of Henry Lawrence must have been torn between natural satisfaction over the triumph of his own country and acute sympathy with a race of born fighters, who could fight no more. For them, in that black hour, the cloud showed no rim of any silver lining, unless it were the knowledge that Sir Henry Lawrence—peacemaker and friend of Sikhs—was once more paramount at Lahore.

To Lawrence, himself, the knowledge of their faith in him was no longer the unmixed satisfaction that it had been in Lord Hardinge's day. Too clearly he realised, by now, that his belief in still maintaining a Sikh Punjab, under British leadership, would find no favour with one who was frankly an imperialist, of a splendid, if aggressive, type. Lord Hardinge himself was soon to admit that 'the energy and turbulent spirit of the Sikhs' would incline even him to annex; and John Lawrence, who had been against it, was now prepared to vote in favour of boldly adding to British India a country half as large again as England and Wales.

Look where he would, Sir Henry found none but Edwardes and Honoria who could see the question through his eyes. Yet his own heretical conviction remained unshaken; a fact that did not ease his relations with Lord Dalhousie, who saw the conquered Sikhs as a brave but brutal race of tyrants; first appealing for British help to govern their Kingdom, then repaying it with treachery and rebellion; a perfectly fair statement of half the case. Nor could he perceive any distinction between the corrupt court, the aristocracy and the army. In his eyes, they were all treacherous rebels who had got their deserts. Lawrence, with his faculty for seeing through Eastern eyes, could realise

the effect of recent British blunders on Sikh mentality ; the irresistible urge to make one more bid for power, seeing that the British were no longer the invincibles of an earlier day. Yet, for all his unique experience, he could neither serve them nor influence Lord Dalhousie, though he knew more and cared more for the land and its people than any man living. For him—not to annex the country meant upholding the young Maharajah and ‘ using all the resources of the Punjab exclusively in the service of the Punjab,’ working the whole state through the pick of Punjabis and Sikhs ; a fine idea, possibly unworkable. But it has been well said that ‘ no other scheme could compete with it, whether in audacity of conception and belief in the best that the Punjab could offer, or in sympathy with a point of view not English, but Indian.’¹ Its weakness lay in taking for granted a succession of men like himself ; and ‘ the great disinterested sympathetic Resident is as rare a bird as the benevolent despot. Still, to have conceived the idea places its author on a different plane of genius from either his brother or the Governor-General.’¹

The singular persistence of his conviction, in the teeth of overwhelming dissent, bore no relation to mere obstinacy, headstrong though he was. Human considerations came first with him always ; heightened in this case by his spirit of championship for all who were down—good or bad—simply because they were down.

The whole complex question took on quite another colour when seen through the eyes of John Lawrence—the level-headed administrator, unbiased by any personal feeling for the Sikhs, who had ‘ ably assisted at their own destruction.’ Concerned only for the future safety of India, he saw the Punjab—British owned and ruled—as an advanced post protecting the provinces from invasion ; and becoming in time a valuable asset to the Treasury, in place of a liability as at present. That last important consideration carried little weight with Henry, who had ‘ no head for figures,’ and so little regard for money, as such, that he was apt to lose patience with those who recognised it as one of the

¹ Professor Morison : *Lawrence of Lucknow.*

governing elements in human nature. It has been aptly said, by one who knew both, that 'Henry would have had a contented people and an empty treasury; John a full revenue and a mutinous population.'

The two were still living together at Lahore; their wives, at Jalandhar, impatiently awaiting the summons to rejoin husbands devoutly loved. Lord Dalhousie was at Ferōzpur, writing his jubilant tale of Gujerāt, with never a doubt as to the fate of the Punjab in his clear-cut brain.

'Hurrah for our side! This time we have got a victory—and a sniffer! . . . On the 14th the leaders and Sirdars gave up their swords . . . and the remains of the Sikh army laid down their arms to the British troops. It must have been a proud day for old Gilbert. I do not know that I ever spent five minutes of such intense pleasure as when the guns in my camp were cracking out the tidings that the war with the Sikhs was ended. . . . The people and the newspapers cannot make out—not nohow—what I am going to do with the Punjab. They are divertingly peevish; and because I won't tell them . . . they tell *me* I don't know my own mind. I do, though. "First catch your hare"!' "

For form's sake, however, he must confer with his heretical Resident; but Henry, when the time came, transferred the honour to John, as being a convert, yet a fair and right-minded man. It was thus that Dalhousie first met the younger brother, whose policy and outlook more nearly matched his own; and from that frank encounter sprang a cordial co-operation such as he and Sir Henry could never hope to achieve. Difficulties, many and obvious, were discussed between them. Admittedly annexation was a hazardous step fraught with great possibilities for good and evil. But the chivalrous experiment of upholding the Khālśa against its own corruption had signally failed; and to both men there seemed no choice in the matter. 'That thou doest, do quickly,' was the gist of John's advice. The Khālśa must not be given time to regain prestige or reorganise its armies; and prompt action would settle the Directors, who could not query an accomplished fact.

Talk so sane and resolute marched well with Dalhousie's

conviction that the step he intended was 'just, politic and necessary.'

So John returned to Lahore armed with his Lordship's decision ; and Henry—after painful heart-searching—decided to send in his resignation, sooner than pledge himself to assist at the overthrow of all he had hoped for and achieved. Here, then, was Lord Dalhousie's chance to be rid of a man who would never heartily carry out his policy of subjection. But in matters of public interest he could be single-minded. He neither liked Henry Lawrence, nor appreciated the qualities that made him often so difficult to work with ; but his known integrity, his genius for handling Asiatics, proclaimed him the one man who could 'gentle' a proud race into its changed status. From him the Sikhs would accept conditions which they would resent if applied by another. So Dalhousie sent to Lahore his Foreign Secretary, Mr. Elliot, armed with the irresistible argument that Sir Henry, by resigning, would defeat the aim he had most at heart ; would remove the one moderating influence between conqueror and conquered.

It was perhaps the only plea that could have prevailed with a man little given to change of purpose. Sir Henry withdrew his resignation ; and at once an order went forth : the Punjab to be annexed ; its deposed Maharajah to receive a pension of £50,000 a year and to live where he pleased, outside his lost Kingdom ; all Crown property and jewels—including the famous Koh-i-noor (Mountain of Light) to be taken over by the conquerors.

Then was Ranjit Singh—the greatest of Maharajahs—dead indeed ; a tragic day for the Sikhs ; not equally so for the whole Punjab, which was neither all Sikh, nor all Hindu. The bulk of its people were Punjabi Mahomedans, a stalwart, simple-minded race of landowners, peasants and redoubtable fighters. For them annexation meant only a change from grinding Sikh tyranny to the strong even-handed rule of the English Sahib. The Court and chiefs accepted the inevitable with seeming indifference. From all the land came no voice of dissent or protest ; and Lord Dalhousie could sun himself in the 'honest conviction that

the deed I have done is for the glory of my country, the honour of my sovereign, the security of her subjects and the future good of those whom I have brought under her rule' ; could justly indulge ' a sentiment of honourable pride . . . in contemplating the brilliant success which has been achieved.' Thus lavishly did men express themselves in an age as spacious as their own sentences.

And what of Henry Lawrence ?

Set upon the pinnacle of that great achievement, loved and respected by his fellows, almost worshipped by Indians—for his understanding of their thoughts and ways—he seemed, in that hour, the most enviable of men ; Honoria, his wife, the proudest of women. By all normal standards of expectation, he should now be entering on the most satisfying stage of his career ; and so it would have proved had another than Lord Dalhousie been handling the ship of State.



IT was no mean Kingdom—the Land of Five Rivers, its foothills and border country—that had been taken over at last from the successors of Ranjit Singh : a kingdom to be for ever linked with the name of Lawrence and the fame of Lord Dalhousie. The vast extent of northern India that it covers—74,000 square miles—can be seen on any map. But only men who have lived and worked there, for half a lifetime, can adequately realise its infinite variety of country and climate : its fertile river region watered by the Sutlej, Beās, Ravi, Chenāb and Jhelum—all rising in the Himalayas and uniting in the Indus, greatest of all ; the stark desert country round Multān and along the Dera-jāt ; the earthly paradise of its lower foothills and the grandeur of its hill stations.

The Sikhs, who had conquered it forty years ago—through the military genius of Ranjit Singh—numbered only a fifth of the population ; and the country itself, even under an enlightened Eastern ruler, had been left more or less as God made it and as man disfigured it. Roads, in the proper sense—none ; public conveyances and bridges—none ; Ministers of law and justice—none ; schools (except the simplest), hospitals and asylums—none ; prisons few and mainly empty. So much less trouble it was to mutilate the wretched criminal—ears, nose or hand, according to his crime—and let him loose as an example to his fellows. Much had already been done by Henry Lawrence—in his unshackled years—to lighten taxes and check the worse abuses ; the ground-work laid, in an astonishingly brief time, of a great administration. And perhaps it was mainly his deep-seated desire to build up the new province on his own basis that had induced him to withdraw his resignation ; backed by his chivalrous hope of softening Dalhousie's

hard terms and upholding the British tradition of generosity to a conquered foe.

That hope, and the chance of a return to independent rule, had been early nipped in the bud. Lord Dalhousie had decided that his new province should be governed by a Board of three members, drawn from both services ; an unwelcome decree that converted Sir Henry, at a stroke, from Resident to President. And the trivial addition of one letter robbed him of precisely that which his masterful, impetuous soul coveted most—swift independent action, with only a distant hand on the curb. Having bound himself, he could only accept the inevitable with a sore heart and steadfast courage ; a private resolve to win for the conquered every ounce of consideration that could be squeezed out of a high-handed victor.

And since it must be a Board, all depended on his fellow-rulers ; a point fully recognised by Dalhousie. ‘ You shall have the best men in India to help you ’—he had written by way of encouragement to the dispossessed—‘ Your brother John to begin with ’ : as fine a pair as he could have chosen, if not the most harmonious for joint labour. But as a Board may not consist of two persons, he added a third, who would act as buffer between the born leader and the born administrator. Charles Greville Mansell—a civilian from the judicial line—had justice and the police as his particular charge. John was to be mainly responsible for revenue and finance ; Henry for defence and political affairs ; for raising new regiments, relations with border chiefs and keeping the peace between Government and the old Sikh ruling classes. To that favoured three, Dalhousie added a strong administration of picked men drawn equally from both services : the Border still shepherded by Sir Henry’s most notable Assistants, raised to the rank of Deputy Commissioner ; George controlling Peshawar ; Abbott, Hazāra ; Nicholson, Rawal Pindi ; and Reynell Taylor, Bannu ; while Edwardes—broken in health by two strenuous hot-weathers—remained with his beloved master at Lahore. Seldom has a brighter galaxy of men graced any Indian administration. But a Board—however

well chosen—remains an uninspired form of government, peculiarly unsuited to the East, where only allegiance to a personal ruler is welcomed and understood. From the start, it was favoured by none ; least of all by the two distinguished brothers, both ill-adapted to double harness.

Dalhousie, himself, has been praised for his choice of the best man for a time of transition, in spite of underlying antagonism between them ; but on his own showing, he was 'tied to Sir Henry.' He admitted as much in a letter to the Board of Control that summer : 'Having so lately, and in such peculiar circumstances, replaced him as head of the Government, I could not take him out, if he was willing to act. . . . But he was not competent to the sole charge of the Punjab. . . . It was indispensable to give him a coadjutor.'

This, of the man who had brilliantly proved his more than competence to deal single-handed with the great province of his heart's desire.

And again, long after, Dalhousie wrote in even stronger terms to the friend at home, who served as his 'safety valve' : 'Sir Henry Lawrence was head of the Punjab Government . . . because I found him Resident. . . . But I would not make him the sole head. Well aware of the innate evils of a Board, I created one rather than have what I considered the greater evil of a sole authority vested in Sir H. L.' Clear witness to his antipathy and his lack of confidence, acutely felt by Lawrence from the first ; and stoutly denied by Dalhousie at the time.

It was an unkind Fate that forced into such close co-operation these two strongly individual men—one of India's greatest Proconsuls, and one of her most enlightened statesmen. Antagonistic in policy and temperament, they could not fail to jar on one another—personally and officially—to a degree that more painfully affected the more sensitive nature. Indeed, to those who knew both the Lawrences and Dalhousie, it seemed as if even India was hardly big enough to hold three personalities at once so gifted, so individual and so masterful.

Dalhousie's Board was admittedly a compromise ; a

Cerberus Government—‘three gentlemen at once.’ But its lack of controlling power made it precisely the right instrument for a man who had resolved to keep the real control in his own hands. It was said that the Lawrences, through Lord Hardinge, had been forced on Dalhousie ; and it is certain that he found the Punjab a family preserve for them and their friends. But, being Dalhousie, he used his high position to force his own master-will on the two distinguished men who—in none but the official sense—were his inferiors. The Punjab was *his* conquest, the first step towards *his* dream of an enlarged and consolidated British India. He aimed at nothing less than supreme control of his difficult team. Whatever their personal theories, or experience, they must recognise themselves as instruments of his policy, there to do his bidding.

An autocrat, by temperament and position, he had a remarkable power of impressing himself on his fellow-men, for all his lack of inches. Slim and well knit, of less than middle height, he conveyed a suggestion of mental and moral stature even among his peers. Good looks and noble bearing he inherited from a beautiful mother ; eyes of a bright blue, large and finely shaped under a wide forehead ; a nose slightly aquiline with chiselled nostrils ; thin flexible lips above a resolute chin ; his manner frank and courteous, his humour sharpened by flashes of satirical wit ; altogether a man clear-cut without and within.

No completer contrast could well be imagined than his two north Irish Lawrences—ill-dressed, careless of externals, rugged as he was polished, yet fully his equals in force of character and personal power ; more than his equals in the rarer qualities of mind, sympathy and foresight.

There was John with his commanding height and bulk, his hard features and big untidy head of hair ; a giant in strength and courage, in roughness and kindliness, a lurking twinkle never long absent from his eyes ; his hard surface only skin-deep. There was Henry, long and lean, his sunken cheeks and eyes, his scanty beard and shabby clothes making him look a decade older than his forty-three years ; yet hardly less a man of whipcord and iron than

his stalwart brother. Unmethodical and impatient of detail ; he cared above all for men, and the freedom of men—brown or white—to live along their own lines. He needed, above all, to work out his beliefs in his own inspired if erratic fashion, unhampered by the jerk of ‘bit and martingale.’ He understood and loved the people and the country into which he had thrust roots so deep that England had seemed, by comparison, almost a strange land, whither he had small desire to return.

Dalhousie had hated the prospect of coming out ; and, after a year of it, he frankly owned to his ‘safety valve’ : ‘I don’t deny that I detest the country and many of the people in it. I don’t proclaim it ; but I don’t doubt that my face does not conceal it from those I have to do with.’ It was not humanly possible that such a man should see eye to eye with a Henry Lawrence, who could and did sacrifice, in the interests of the Punjab, his own health and that of his dearest belongings.

To complete the three-headed Government, there was Charles Mansell, as buffer State, doing his best to harmonise the gifted brothers, who were seldom in accord on public affairs. The position, for all three, was no bed of roses ; Henry himself called it ‘a bed of thorns’ ! Each Lawrence acted as a foil for the other ; though both were inherently men of action ; and Mansell, a man of thought, could throw the dry light of intellect on their perpetual controversies. He would uphold John’s view to Henry ; and Henry’s view to John, with an irritating impartiality for which the strongly biased pair were not always as grateful as they might have been, when each sought the casting vote for his own line of action.

And now to Lawrences at Lahore, and a Dalhousie at Simla, was added a yet more tempestuous element—the new Commander-in-Chief, Sir Charles Napier. Hurriedly appointed after Chilianwala, he had set out ‘in hot haste’ and reached India at leisure, spending two and a half months in transit. A distinguished soldier of sixty-nine, he was singularly ‘well-preserved,’ in the phrase of the day ; long grey hair, combed back off his forehead, piercing eyes

under pent-house brows and a high commanding nose distorted by a bullet. The call to action had revived his insatiable military ambitions. He had started with his head full of fine schemes for army reform and winning the Punjab for India. He arrived to find the Punjab already annexed ; the half-victorious Sikhs of January, changed, by June, into half-contented subjects ; the province he had hoped to rule entrusted to ' ignorant civilians ' and that singular anomaly the soldier-political—a kind of amphibian, for whom he had nothing but contempt. From Calcutta he went straight up to Simla—three weeks of riding and joggling in a stuffy doolie, through the furnace of May and early June. There he paid his respects to the ' young Scotch lord,' whom he told off in one of his slashing phrases—' weak as water ; vain as a pretty woman or an ugly man.' The lord, nevertheless, gave the new-comer a taste of his quality at their very first interview.

' I have been warned,' Dalhousie stated with good-humoured directness, ' not to let you encroach on my authority ; and I will take damned good care that you do not ! '

But even a Dalhousie had some ado to maintain his god-given supremacy over the brilliant, unmanageable soldier, who went on his turbulent way scattering misjudgments the more exasperating for their patent exaggeration. But his scathing portrait of ' an old Indian '—probably aimed at some obstructive authority—contains more than a dash of truth under its caustic humour : ' By an old Indian, I mean a man full of curry and bad Hindostani, with a fat liver and no brains, but with a self-sufficient idea that no one can know India except through long experience of brandy, champagne, gram-fed mutton, cheroots and *hookahs*.'

On the strength of a flying visit to the Punjab—and one private interview with Lawrence—he launched a virulent attack on the whole system—chiefly remarkable for uniting Sir Henry and Lord Dalhousie, for a time, against a common enemy, who gave them both more trouble, in his short violent reign, than any Sikh chief in creation.

Thus, with his arrival in May 'Forty-Nine, the stage was

set for a dramatic clash of character, a battle of wills and temperaments, less stirring than the clash of arms, but hardly less significant for India's destiny. Individuals counted more decisively, for good or evil, when the country was ruled *in India*, not in Westminster ; though, at all times, the lack of a continuous foreign policy has proved more dangerous to India's safety than any actual war. Impossible, in a few crowded years, for even the most brilliant Viceroy to probe the deep and subtle under-currents of Indian thought and feeling. This knowledge had been gained, in a rare degree, by Henry Lawrence, in fifteen years of actual contact with chiefs, landowners and peasants ; and Lord Dalhousie ' would have added a cubit to his stature, had he chosen to recognise that, at Lahore, Henry Lawrence was the better man ' ; to deal with him ' as a man should with his equal.' But Dalhousie had the weakness of his strength ; a tendency to exercise dictatorship even at the expense of men whose knowledge and judgment exceeded his own.

Which was right and which wrong, in the matter of Punjab policy, is a question that depends on the political point of view ; but there exist no two opinions—with the violent exception of Sir Charles Napier—as to the wisdom of entrusting the Punjab to those dissimilar brothers, who achieved, between them, a rule ' unsurpassed for efficiency, unequalled for the rapidity and thoroughness with which a disorganised State was brought into order, an embittered and turbulent race turned into a loyal and contented population.'

SO it happened that, in the spring of 'Forty-Nine, Henry and Honoria Lawrence were once more setting up a home in India ; Honoria the better for her voyage and the quiet months with Harrie ; Lawrence himself ill again, from having returned too soon, and out of humour with things in general. Alrcady he began to realise that the cause for which he had sacrificed his independence was like to prove an uphill fight to an uncertain end. Disappointment and ill-health told on a temper quick at best to flash out in hasty speech ; though, as often as not, he would afterwards disarm his victim by frank apology and sincere vexation with himself.

But if the going was rough, it was much to be once more settled in a home ; though here they could not be to themselves, as in Nepal. The old Residency, enlarged and improved by Currie, offered ample room for any stray Assistant, glad of a roof over his head in that blazing season. Edwardes also was with them, as Henry's Personal Secretary, looking forward to his long-deferred Home leave ; to claiming his Emma, for whom he had worked and waited through five eventful years. He had still further enhanced his reputation by his famous bloodless victory at Bannu, where the local tribes, at his bidding, had pulled down their own four hundred forts, had allowed their country to be annexed without a shot fired ; had even, for the first time in history, submitted to payment of revenue. His ascendancy over Asiatics—quite as remarkable, in its different way, as that of the older man—had gained him the certainty of returning to a distinguished political career. His love-story, known to Henry and Honoria, had engaged their sympathy from its likeness to their own. But Henry, at the moment, had need of him ; and he had agreed to

postpone his leave till the autumn, when he could do John a service by escorting home his two small girls of six and seven, under decree of banishment from India's fatal climate. There would also then be a chance of travelling home with Nicholson, now Deputy Commissioner of Pindi, where his name was in every mouth, as 'the great warrior whose valour had delivered the Punjab from its Sikh oppressors.' Of late, the warrior had been locally promoted to godhead, by a sect of devout worshippers, who received more kicks than ha'pence from their fiery deity. His puritanical soul saw their natural Eastern tribute as rank blasphemy, for which he dutifully cursed and flogged them, without abating one jot of their adoration. Were not all their gods terrible and incalculable beings, readier to ban than to bless?

Not until later in the year was he able to join Edwardes at Lahore, where all through April and May the crowded Residency hummed like a hive; the two Lawrences and their secretaries working 'full sixty minutes to every hour'—the two wives as busy in their own line, with fifty officers and their families arriving from different parts of India, all to be housed and fed and passed on to frontier stations, through a roadless and disturbed country:

'Every room and every bed in the Residency and adjoining houses filled or over-filled, and crowds everywhere,' wrote John's wife—recalling that strenuous time—'but in spite of overwhelming heat and turmoil we were all too busy, I believe, to be ill. A wonderful work was accomplished during those days, and happy memories I have of them. How I prized my evening drive with my husband; how vigorous and strong he was! He never seemed too busy to attend to my wants, or help me in any troublesome matter; and, in addition to his own hard work, he always made time to look after his brother's private affairs. Indeed, that brother remarked that he would have saved little for his children, but for John's wonderful aid. . . . While careful for others, he never spared his own purse or time or thought, when he could be helpful.'

That will and capacity to help was a shining quality in the man, whose rough tongue and blunt manner made him, in younger days, more often feared and respected than loved. He lacked his brother's gift for getting at men through their hearts; but as a husband, he was no less

devoted and probably more considerate, in practical ways, than Henry, whose spirit was always seeking some distant goal, his feet less firmly planted on earth. To those who knew and admired both, he seemed to present the poetry of Indian statesmanship ; John, its clear forcible prose. His aim, first and last, was to make the land yield, in revenue, all it reasonably could ; while Henry aimed chiefly at making it serve the welfare and happiness of the people. For that very reason their joint rule was as valuable for the Punjab as it was harassing to themselves. But these were early days ; their discord less in evidence than the happy accord of their wives.

That patriarchal existence in the old Residency was long and affectionately remembered by all who enjoyed its odd mingling of discomfort and hospitality and furious industry. 'A wonderfully *real* and happy life,' it was for the group of young Assistants, looking again to Henry Lawrence as their chief. Ill, and hot-tempered and harassed by his changed position, intent on fighting his uphill battle for the rights of the conquered, he seemed ten years older than in 'Forty-Six ; but he had not lost—nor ever could lose—his 'grasp of men.' Honoria—his 'fount of inspiration'—delighted the hard-worked youngsters by her zest and Irish humour, her apt nicknames, her disregard of the conventions. Edwardes, addicted to verse-writing, she christened The Bulbul ; lank John Becher, the Pelican. Her room—where any of them were welcome at any hour—became the rallying-point for all the wit and talent among them. Her informality set the shyest at ease. There was no trace in her of the official Burra Mem, genuine helpmate as she was of the most unconventional Burra Sahib in India ; so careless of externals that he would have gone almost in rags, without a woman to look after his scanty wardrobe. She herself had little more concern for surface proprieties. When increasing heat made stiff-boned Victorian gowns a burden, she would go about—for comfort—in a long grey flannel petticoat and high-necked cotton bodice : 'perfectly decent, of course, but not presentable,' was the comment of Helen Mackenzie—now happily married to Colin, who

had served for her as many years as Henry for Honoria and Edwardes for his Emma. Marriage, so approached, wrought a reality of union undreamed of by modern pseudo-lovers, who limply think they will try the registry office—and see how it works.

It was well for the young Assistants in the Residency to see for themselves how it worked in the case of Henry and John Lawrence. Well for them to accept cheerfully the lack of luxury, and even of comfort ; the half a room that was better than no bed ; to learn from the master-spirits—who practised what they never preached—‘lessons of simplicity and contentment, of absorption in work, of sympathy with the natives, which they were never afterwards to unlearn’ ; lessons that became, by force of example, a living power in India.

‘No one ever sat at Sir Henry’s table’—it was written long after—‘without learning to think more kindly of the Natives.’ Yet none had a clearer knowledge of their failings. He understood their different standard—and he *made allowances*. That was half the secret of his grip on men, dark or white ; that, and the fact that he treated his subordinates like brothers.

Honoria’s only comment on the Residency life, at a serious moment, survives in one brief fragment from a lost journal :

‘There is something unspeakably solemn in the *status* of our household just now. That young fellow suddenly leaving earth ; the young couple full of hope and joyance ; Harrie with her sore grief’ (parting from her children) ‘drawing daily nearer ; “Bulbul” all restless with hope and fear ; yet how we go regularly on, eating and drinking, sleeping and waking as if there were no care or trouble in life !

‘I try to keep before me that all this is but a *training*—a discipline for our real being. Words easily said—but oh, the difference between the dead and the living faith in them !’

That her own faith was by no means as unfaltering as her courage, draws her humanly nearer to our more fallible and sceptical generation.

By the middle of May she was returning to Kasauli with Henry—forced by constant fever to take short leave. Together they stayed at the Sanāwar school, where she saw for herself the fitness of Mr. Parker to be its leading spirit. There Henry's health was revived by a welcome respite from incessant demands on him, as chief organiser and correspondent with a Governor-General, whose racy, incisive letters—often two and three a day—increasingly revealed their political discord.

Sir Henry insisted that the rights of conquest could only be justly exercised by a government pledged to maintain 'a purifying, humanising influence on the governed'; a consideration for ousted chiefs and landholders, who would have fared ill, if left entirely to the tender mercies of Dalhousie. But small chance was given him to use his moderating influence.

In vain he pleaded, day after day, for more lenient treatment of the less guilty Sirdars. Dalhousie would make no distinctions. To do him justice, he could probably see none, in his haughty anger with them all for daring to flout and fight the British Government. He was 'out' for strength and safety; out to disarm the people, to deprive all chiefs and fief-holders of the power to do further mischief. He aimed at destroying the status of a class that Lawrence was resolute to preserve—not merely as an act of justice, but as the policy best fitted to win friends for the new Government. Dalhousie refused to see it so. 'Nothing but their lives and the barest maintenance,' was his stern decree. The chiefs were to be 'stripped of all rank, deprived of all property,' to be granted a monthly pittance, and personal freedom, within very narrow limits, strictly watched by the police.

'If they run away,' was Dalhousie's last word, 'our contract is void. If they raise tumult again, I will hang them, as sure as they now live, and I live then.'

Nor did it ease matters that John also believed in crushing out individual Sikh power, in easing the peasantry rather than the dispossessed landowners. Bluntly put—and John was blunt as the top of a tent-peg—he did not trust them. He could not see their political value as allies. He cared

not a jot—as Henry did—for the men themselves. They had broken a signed treaty—and had got less than their deserts. It was the beginning of a cleavage that cut deep, between two men of equal worth and diverse views, immovable in their differing sense of duty to the Punjab. And it did not improve Henry's temper, health or spirits to find himself in conflict with the brother who had been his right hand throughout the good days of 'Forty-Seven.

But his combat, in these first months, was mainly with Dalhousie, from whom he had won grudging consent for Chathar Singh and Sher Singh to remain in their homes, under the same restrictions as their fellows. His fight for these being only one among many lesser conflicts, he decided—while at Kasauli—to spend a week in Simla, to try the effect of an official interview on various points at issue. He was also concerned, among other things, for the trial of Mulrāj, then in progress, after many delays. Fair justice, at least, was assured to him, since he had been allowed to nominate his Counsel for the defence; and he would have none of his own countrymen. All he asked for was a British officer; no matter who, so long as he was British; a high compliment to the race. But it did not avail to save him from transportation for life.

Once again Lawrence was facing the hateful possibility of resignation, sooner than continuing to sacrifice his principles on the altar of another man's policy. The choice thrust on him was as cruel as even his worst enemy could have desired: either a denial of the faith that was in him—or good-bye to the Punjab; the one province that had captured his imagination and his heart. Unhappily there exists no fragment, written by himself or Honoria, to throw light on the dark places of his troubled mind.

He went to Simla. He achieved his interview; lost his temper with the suave, incisive autocrat, who had all the dice loaded in his favour—and gained precisely nothing, except a firmer conviction that the Gordian knot could only be cut by resigning his post. The sole allusion to that heated interview has survived in a letter from Dalhousie to Sir George Couper:

'Sir H. Lawrence is of course disgusted at being a Board and that Board under strict control. He has tried restiveness once or twice ; and here, where he has come sick, he began to try the stormy tone. Upon this, I tipped him a little of the "*grand seigneur*," and the storm sank to a whisper in a second.'

The tone of that comment does little credit to the man who could use his high position to silence a Political Officer better qualified than himself to judge of the questions at issue.

It was fortunate for Lawrence that the Mackenzies were in Simla that summer. To them he could pour out his troubled thoughts, his sudden impulse to desert India and settle in New Zealand. Mackenzie used all his powers of dissuasion ; 'and from us both,'—wrote Helen—'he met with the warmest sympathy. But that did not prevent what Herbert Edwardes called "the sufferings of his poor beard." It was a scanty one ; and in troubled moods he would tug at it, or stuff the end into his mouth and gnaw it, till I was often on the verge of exclaiming, "Oh, *don't* bite it any more !"'

Finally, for good or ill, they quashed the idea of New Zealand, that might have blessed Henry and Honoria with peace and health and length of days. At the end of July she returned with him into the fiery furnace seven times heated, to find that, among the others, that cruel hot-weather had done its worst. Mansell and John's secretary were both ill ; ten men out of the Punjab establishment down with fever. Edwardes, far from well, had arranged for his Home leave with Nicholson ; and Lawrence—looking round for another good Assistant—secured his young friend Hodson, who had been dropped out of the coach, when annexation led to new appointments all round. By September he was sufficiently run down again to welcome the idea of a tour through Hazāra and Kashmir, where Gulāb Singh was said to be raising a suspiciously large army ; and Lord Dalhousie wished for a first-hand report of Abbott's proceedings, that rarely met with his approval. Also Sir Charles Napier—who had started well with Dalhousie—was now beginning to show the cloven hoof, making himself an active

nuisance to the Board, for which he never had a good word. The wilds would be a pleasure unalloyed, if only Honoria could go with him. But he must travel light and fast ; and she—hampered again by the ‘ hopes and fears of expectant motherhood ’—must resign herself to the chronic curse of separation.

So Sir Henry went off with a small escort of thirty men, for *izzat* rather than protection ; to cover four hundred miles of country that no Sikh official would have cared to cross with less than a regiment at his heels. In the course of his tour, he disproved the Gulāb Singh rumour, and strongly approved the work and influence of James Abbott, who gave most of the credit to Lawrence for the change wrought in that wildest tract of the Punjab Border :

‘ He sent to these people . . . the same message of peace borne by his agents throughout the Punjab. Their wrongs were redressed, their rights restored. The sentence of death, for praying openly to their God, was removed. A curb was put upon the rapacity of native officers ; exiles flocked back by thousands—and there was one great jubilee throughout the land. The people of the Punjab—the industrious classes—blessed the coming of the English, and the name of Sir Henry Lawrence.’

He himself, in those far regions, could forget the discord and constraints of ‘ being a Board ’ ; could recapture, for a while, the freedom and ease of his Regency days, that would never come again.

Only an occasional letter from Lahore would remind him of the dogged, industrious brother, taking the world on his shoulders, like another Atlas, and saying little about it, though he thought the more. All through that abnormal hot weather of ‘Forty-Nine, he slaved at office work with small relief. He became a familiar figure in the district—his fine physique and the gnarled stick that the Sikhs deemed an emblem of himself, and christened ‘ *Jān Larins*,’ their version of his name. Since others fell ill, he must keep well ; and John Lawrence never quarrelled with hard work. But, like his brother, he needed independence for full exercise of his powers ; he was restive under discords that no amount of good-will could resolve. Both men had

quick tempers—Henry's the least controlled. Both had strong wills and unshakable convictions to match ; John aimed at rigid public economy ; Henry was liberal even to excess ; John, ruled by his clear head, Henry by his human sympathies. They were for ever at variance, on greater points or less. Personally, John would rather have remained at Jalandhar, where he had been his own master. His present position he summed up in a letter to a friend :

'There is hardly a single subject on which we all concur. My brother's temperament is very similar to my own, but we have been bred in different schools. With a keener, higher order of intellect than mine, he is, from habit and ill health, unequal to systematic exertion. Mansell, contemplative and philosophic, shrinks from action. I am restless and impatient, and chafe at delay.'

By sheer will-power he had pulled through that killing season. Now here he was—with Mansell prostrate, with Henry in Kashmir, filling the double gap and dealing competently with Lord Dalhousie's copious correspondence : a change that worked to the disadvantage of Henry, and thrust John into a prominence unsought and undesired.

October brought a welcome diversion from office work to action : a diversion provided by the very Sikh chiefs for whose benefit Henry had been making himself disliked up at Simla. The favoured pair—permitted to live in their homes—were under strict orders neither to receive outsiders, nor to mix with former associates. Yet here they were—according to report—daily feeding crowds of Brahmins and *Khatris*¹ ; sending secret messengers to other Sirdars ; feeling their way—it was said—towards yet another rising. Rumour whispered that they were even brewing treason with Gulāb Singh and Dōst Mahomed. Here was John's opportunity ; and he promptly decided to investigate the report ; glad, perhaps, that there was no magnanimous Henry at his elbow. He would not leave it to the local officers. He would go himself.

About one o'clock, on a clear night of moon and stars, he set out, with Robert Montgomery—now Commissioner of Lahore—Edwardes, Hodson, and a small force of native

¹ Warriors.

troops. Riding hard, they reached Attari—home of father and son—at dawn ; quietly surrounded the house ; arrested Chathar Singh and followed up his sons, who had gone for an early ride. Back they brought them all, full speed to Lahore before their absence had even become known. By the same prompt moves, other Sirdars had also been arrested ; buried arms had been discovered and confiscated ; suspicious correspondence with Gulāb Singh and the Dōst had been seized ; and all were safely clapped into Lahore fort, pending removal to Agra. It was a brisk and valuable stroke of work, ably done ; a triumph for the views of John and Lord Dalhousie. What Sir Henry may have thought or said on the subject has not been recorded.

He was still touring the Frontier, scouring the whole region from Peshawar to Multān ; with never a suspicion in his mind that he was not the only one contemplating a break-away from the hard task thrust upon two admirable men, for the good of the Punjab and to ensure Dalhousie's personal supremacy.

And John, in November—with arrangements on hand for official visits from Napier and 'the Lord'—was unburdening his mind to Dalhousie ; enlarging on the drawbacks of his position for 'a man of decided opinions and peculiar temperament.' In conclusion, he frankly confessed :

'I am not well fitted by nature to be one of a triumvirate. Right or wrong, I am in the habit of quickly making up my own mind . . . and undertaking the responsibility of carrying out my own views. The views of my brother—a man far abler than I am—are in many ways opposed to mine. I can no more expect that, in organic changes, he will give way to me, than I can to him. We have always been staunch friends. It pains me to be in a state of antagonism towards him. A better, more honourable man I do not know . . . but, in matters of the first importance, we differ greatly. Mr. Mansell's views incline more to his than my own. Thus I have not only my work to do, but to struggle with my colleagues. This is not good for the public service. . . . I have no claim on your lordship's patronage ; but if there is another post available, in which my talents and experience can be usefully employed, I shall be glad to be considered a candidate.'

A clear but modest statement of his work at Jalandhar led to a repetition of his plea :

'I feel myself now in a false position ; and would be glad to extricate myself, if I can do it with honour. . . . If it is necessary that I stay at Lahore, I will do so with cheerfulness and fulfil my duties as long as health and strength may last.'

Unhappily for John at the moment—and for Henry later—Dalhousie's high opinion of the younger brother put his transfer out of the question. He was needed at Lahore to counter the very qualities in Henry that irked him most ; and Dalhousie—in reply to that honest statement of his case—justly insisted that although their joint work might be irksome to the brothers themselves, it was unquestionably for the public good.

John pocketed his very real troubles ; and so it came about that Mackenzie and Dalhousie between them, checked the impulse of these public-spirited brothers to break away from the great work of creating the modern Punjab that was to place its founders in the 'forefront of Indian administrators.'



THE first week of December, 1849, brought to Lahore all the volcanic elements of the Administration : Governor-General, Commander-in-Chief, and both Lawrences. It opened with the arrival in state of Lord and Lady Dalhousie ; chiefs riding out to meet them, troops paraded ; ‘ an abundance of God save the Queens, lowered colours and roaring salutes.’ To Dalhousie’s admitted satisfaction, the British camp was pitched outside the Lahore citadel, in full view of the captured chiefs, the condemned Mulrāj and the child Dhulip Singh ; an arrangement acutely distasteful to Henry Lawrence, just returned to his deserted wife and a round of social duties for which neither possessed any taste or capacity whatever. And there was no Edwardes now, to cheer them. He and Nicholson, homeward bound, had lately started on the river journey down to Karachi, with the two small girls, whom Edwardes had offered to take under his wing. Parents were put to strange shifts in those days ; and few young unmarried officers of any day could or would have undertaken so responsible a charge. But Edwardes loved children, as they loved him, for his sense of fun and his ready invention. Both young men were trusted friends. ‘ And right nobly,’ wrote the desolate mother, ‘ they fulfilled their trust.’ The little girls no doubt enjoyed the adventure. Every night, when the boat *lagāo-ed* they would be taken for a run ashore, to hunt for tigers’ foot-prints ; and their April tears dried sooner than those of the mother left behind, in no mood for days and nights of festivity.

‘ Great have been the doings ’—wrote Hodson, now Assistant to the Lahore Commissioner—‘ two balls, two durbars, two levées, and a *fête-champêtre*, all in one week.’ But the event for him was an introduction to Sir Charles Napier,

whose genius and daring as a soldier appealed to a like strain in himself.

Dalhousie, by now, was less well pleased with his change of War Lords ; and Napier—finding no worlds to conquer—already talked of going home in March. He had arrived fresh from a tour, that was to have resulted in plans for army reforms. But all genuine criticism was drowned in wholesale censure ; in dark prophecies of danger to the Punjab from the evil designs of Gulāb Singh—though Sir Henry had sent him facts and figures disproving his scare. The Sikhs, he asserted, were hiding guns in the jungles for a fresh revolt ; and he was known to be at work on a scathing denunciation of the whole Punjab system. During his stay at Lahore, he studiously avoided the Lawrences, refused to discuss the frontier defence force or the building of cantonment stations in the Punjab. He preferred prophesying the evils he desired, in a manner most likely to bring them about ; and his going was a relief to all heads of departments.

Dalhousie departed also, on an informal touring of the provinces ; and rejoiced to find, everywhere, a disarmed people welcoming the humane rule of the Sahib ; warlike Sikhs back at the plough, or joining the newly-raised Punjab regiments, wherein they were soon to rank among the bravest of Indian Army troops. Nor did Dalhousie fail to note how faithfully the Lawrences' example of energy, integrity and zeal was emulated by every officer in the Punjab Commission.

And those very Lawrences, left behind at Lahore, must resume the honourable burden that each had vainly tried to shift from his shoulders. Relations between them had begun to show signs of strain : Henry combating John's rigid economies by his own arguable conviction that money freely spent for the people's good was the truest economy ; John countering Henry's concern for the chiefs by his own belief that no amount of generous treatment would ever attach them to British rule. Backed by Dalhousie, he favoured progress along Western lines. Henry believed in maintaining the people's own simple standard of happiness, and in heartening the defeated ; always with one underlying aim—to blunt the keen edge of Dalhousie's ruthless policy. In

his letters he has left a noble record of his attempt to defend the rights of a conquered race ; an attempt constantly thwarted, yet not wholly vain.

Local discords conspired with his restless energy of mind and body to make him happier when he was touring the outer circle of his domain than working at the centre. And only so could he come to know the people as few Englishmen, in high office, have ever done before or since ; only so could they learn to know him. And it was not the least factor in the success of his personal *régime*, that he enjoyed exercising the form of rule in which he believed.

He had barely been back at Lahore two months before he was planning a Punjab tour of inspection, annexing Hodson, who had been ill for some time, and was glad to combine a little work with the need for change of air. Honoria, expecting her child in April, would run no risk of another mishap. So the two men travelled light, and travelled far—a paltry thousand miles or so in the saddle ; often with no escort but a single soldier. For there were more disturbances in the Company's Sepoy army than in that newly-conquered country.

He was back at Lahore for the birth of their fifth child on April the 26th. This time, to their joy, it was a daughter ; whom they named Honoria Letitia. For they could not bring themselves to leave Letitia out of it. Any daughter of Henry's must bear her name ; and John was of the same persuasion. They agreed—if on nothing else—in their unswerving allegiance to 'the guardian angel of the family.'

Child and mother both flourished so happily that, by the end of May, Honoria was planning an adventure into unknown Kashmir. For the first threat of real heat prostrated Henry with malarial fever ; and his roving mind saw Kashmir as a stepping-stone to unexplored regions beyond ; Little Tibet, Skardo and even Gilgit, should time and health allow. But first he must convince Dalhousie of the need for these far flights.

'Gilgit, Skardo and Ladakh,' he wrote hopefully, 'all verging on Gulāb Singh's territory, are well within my charge ; and we know so little of that frontier that I expect my trip to be useful.'

But Dalhousie was inclined to discourage a taste for peregrination that pinned the other two down at Lahore. More especially he was concerned for John, who had borne the brunt of the last cruel hot weather. He expressed a wish that the younger brother should come up and see him at Simla before the elder left Lahore ; and the implied reproach was not lessened by his lordship's final comment : ' Gulāb Singh's territories can't be said to be within your charge.'

Lawrence, ignoring the second prick, merely stated :

' If my absence throws much extra work on my colleagues, it will be more their fault than mine ; as nine cases out of ten admit of reference to me. I am able and willing to work while absent ; and I have already said that when my health absolutely prevents my being able to stay in the Plains, I will be quite ready to resign my post.'

But while he remained, he could not cease from his constant plea for the doomed Sikh landowners :

' I require little more consideration for them than would be shown to a native gentleman by any real English gentleman in any part of India. But, because they have sometimes abused their power, some of our officials seem to take delight in degrading them before those who four years ago were at their feet. I would break the fall of these men, and treat them with all possible consideration.'

It should never be said of him that he had not done what he could.

And at last, he had his grudging permission to arrange for the Kashmir adventure—after John's command visit to Simla. But John was hard to detach from his desk, much as he longed for relief from the killing sun of the Punjab. ' The work here is so heavy,' he explained to Dalhousie, ' and I have so little hope of its being carried on according to my own view, that I think it will be my duty to stay as short a time as possible. I shall arrange to work my department while away.'

This was their notion of taking a holiday, that inconceivable pair. They had spent four years at a school where they

had few holidays. So they took none now ; and the rest—unless driven by illness—must follow their leaders as best they might. In their eyes it was expedient that a few white men should suffer—and if need be—die for the dusky millions of the Punjab. Without any tall talk of the white man's burden, they shouldered it as a matter of duty.

From those days of arduous work and no leave sprang the ailment known as a Punjab head, signifying collapse from overwork ; a fate that few escaped. Even the stalwart John must pay his toll for excess of industry. ' No man can serve two masters,' was the faith he held and acted on, through all his illustrious days ; and his two weeks in Simla were chiefly notable for the amount of work he crammed into them. But the change of scene and climate helped to lift him through the long trying hot weather, with his Finance department and the bulk of official desk-work still on his shoulders.

Henry, by nature locomotive, had no love for his desk. Though he could and did, at need, grind out twelve and fourteen hours a day, he achieved his most valuable work along other lines. To spend half the year under canvas, riding thirty or forty miles a day ; to keep in personal touch with every corner of the Punjab—with his Assistants no less than with the people ; to dash off an article when sparks were alight, and Honoria at hand to fill in the gaps—for Henry Lawrence that was life. Its variety, its freshness, its keen human interest suited his temperament and his health. Dalhousie's famous three had been christened by a smart young civilian the Travelling, the Working and the Sleeping partners : and by the end of May the Working partner was back at his desk, the locomotive one getting up steam for the most notable and enjoyable of his grand tours.

This time he again collected Hodson, on medical certificate ; and the two set out together at the famous ' Lawrence pace.' Honoria, with her two children, was to follow more leisurely, under the care of Dr. Hathaway, Lahore Civil Surgeon, travelling by the old Road of the Emperors, where almost every rest-house had once been a Moghul *serai*. At once she began a journal record of it all. But with no com-

manding emotional impulse to self-expression, she achieved little more than a tale of outsettings and arrivings, with occasional vignettes that recalled days when India was a new world unrolled before her wondering eyes.

On the 10th of June she had set out, the hot weather at its fiercest. A week of the 'jumbling doolie'—moving only by night—brought them from Lahore up to Bhimber, a sleepy little town where Persian wells creaked, and *lotah*-crowned women came down for water through flowering pomegranate trees. Another ten miles brought them to a fine old Badshahi *serai* with arched gateways and battlemented walls. Here Gulāb Singh's people offered trays of fruit; and the *bunnia* refused payment for supplies, in spite of 'Board Sahib's' orders that payment must be made. For bewildered Asiatics, 'Board Sahib,' like 'Company Sahib,' had become a mysterious unknown entity, no way related to Lawrence Sahib, well known in the flesh.

On they fared again, at five of a June morning, by a path running alongside the river, huge boulders blocking the way. The bungalow—when they reached it—proved to be a single room, boxed in a closed verandah, set on a tongue of land jutting into the stream; and in June rivers were liable to a sudden spate from the snows. So when clouds rolled up and thunder rumbled, Honoria chose to risk rain rather than flood. Spurning the bungalow, she pressed on: and, just before sunset, clouds dispersed, revealing snowy battlements of the Pir Panjāl. Southward an angry sky still flashed lightning. Westward the sun was setting in a golden mist.

When darkness fell, they were still far from Rajori, with no lanterns to guide them along the narrow way. But resourceful coolies tied bundles of dry reed to slips of pine and flung the blazing fragments down the *khud*, where brushwood caught fire and a wavering light illumined the scene. So they came safely to their destination.

Next day, after two weeks of travelling, she confronted her first real hill march; a two hours' climb to the top of a pass; then down through a forest of walnut, beech and maple; up and up again—every fresh ascent giving a wider view of the plains below.

. . . At Bharamgāla village, on the crest of the ridge, all the folk came out to stare at us ; the sun shining on their gay dresses : the village sepoy in scarlet shawls and tiger-skin belts, tasselled lances, matchlocks and powder horns. From the gorge I looked back and saw our cavalcade of scarlet doolies and caparisoned horses winding down the path. Crossed bridge of two pine stems, and planks laid across, with a little fear. Came at last to a green level, where a bungalow had just been finished for our reception : two rooms divided by rough palisades through which you could put your hand. Temperature delicious.

'Near the halting-place we came upon a mighty waterfall, tumbling into an abyss of foam ; mists rising in clouds, and a rainbow above the torrent ; some whitish birds flitting about like silver creatures.'

The river wound on between stupendous cliffs, with cascades on each side ; but the last mile ran level to the village of Poshiana—flat-roofed huts built up a hillside precipice. The eerie-looking place, 'with an end-of-world air about it,' was sketched by Honoria in a few stark sentences—the last fragment of her unfinished journal : 'Tent pitched on flat roof of a house. Very cold. I slept in a stable, whence cattle had been summarily ejected—fleas and bugs . . . !'

Henry, having already arrived in Srinagar, came out to meet the party, to see them safely over the Pir Panjāl Pass ; and by July 1st they were all together in Kashmir.

'A heavenly place,' wrote Sir Henry to Kaye. 'Such views of hill and lake, river and forest, as Paradise alone could compete with. . . . But, unfortunately there are daily *dāks* that bring letters and endless applications—from brown and white and whitey-brown—on every subject under the sun. I have also to advise, help and control Gulāb Singh, without affecting his authority—a delicate task. I refuse to receive petitions, but pick up all I can ; then I read lectures, as opportunity offers, to G. S. and his Ministers on mercy, justice and good faith ! . . . The beauties of Kashmir in summer beat Nepal out and out. My wife is with me ; and we only wish we could remain here for the rest of our Indian career ; leaving the poms

and bothers and heat of Lahore to more ambitious people. Her health is better than it has been for years ; and we have a sweet little daughter to comfort our old age.'

In spite of work unceasing, they fully enjoyed the wonders and delights of that secluded valley now known to all the travelling world. They explored and sketched the impressive ruins of Martand, Temple of the Sun, built by a little-known race of men a thousand years ago. From India, Lawrence heard, without regret, that a serious clash between Dalhousie and his War Lord had resulted in the resignation of Sir Charles Napier—that queer compound of petulance, egotism and prejudice, with flashes of wit and even genius. 'We shall be well rid of him,' was Sir Henry's conclusion. 'His natural arrogance has been so increased, by the circumstances of his return to India, that there is no holding him. . . . To us, in the Punjab he has become a greater hindrance than all the ex-chiefs and rebels.'

Too soon their golden month ebbed away. By the end of July, Lawrence and Hodson were making ready to start upon a far journey through Little Tibet to Leh ; and what would Honoria not have given to go with them. But in India the wife, who is also the born comrade, must pay a higher price for motherhood than her less venturesome sisters. She would receive long and detailed letters from every accessible halting-place : and with that lean diet she must contrive to rest content.

AT half-past three of a midsummer morning, Lawrence and Hodson rode away, through a dream valley of drifting mist and ghostly snow peaks awaiting the flush of dawn. They themselves went as lightly equipped as the great distances and varieties of climate would allow. But, for *izzat*, they must submit to an escort from Gulāb Singh's household brigade ; a party from his court circle, with their crowd of followers, coolies and cattle without number—a cavalcade of some two or three hundred souls of all colours and creeds.

Until they left Kashmir proper, it rained and rained, without perceptibly damping British zest, or Indian endurance. A party of Guides and former Sikh officers, who had begged leave to join ' the picnic,' tramped along with native blankets knotted over their heads, always grinning and expressing themselves happy, even when the Sikh officers ' tried to dry their nether garments over a great fire while the rain drenched them ' ; and the Englishmen made merry over a rain-diluted breakfast—' good tea, cold mutton (very good), rice and *chupattis*,' was the curious menu detailed by Henry in his journal letter to Honoria ; supplemented by a picture of himself, wandering under an umbrella after flowers and bits of rock for his nature-loving wife, in a *choga* over a puttoo coat and flannel jacket—only wet from the knees downward. They were then nearly 14,000 feet up ; and above them through the mist towered mighty snow peaks. Below, they could see and hear loosened boulders crashing down, and the rush of a stream from the summit.

At the end of their next long tramp, he paid tribute to the native servants, never more admirable than on the march :

' Tents pitched at 3 p.m. We had left them standing, dripping wet, twenty miles back at 6 a.m. Everything,

clothes and all, ready to hand, except the *chilumchee*.¹ So I rubbed my legs and feet ; and was washing them in the frying pan, when the *chilumchee* arrived ! . . . To-day I am in no way the worse for wetting or walk or ride. I send you the flowers and stones I picked up. . . . I don't know when I have felt so exhilarated and *koosh*,² as yesterday ; not even the day of the two *bottles of beer* and the *four rupees* ! !'

More and more his letters reveal the lift of his spirits with returning health : and Hodson proved excellent company, full of brains, energy and humour.

'He has his faults,' Henry wrote later on to George, 'positiveness and self-will among them ; but it is useful to have companions who contradict us and keep us mindful that we are not Solomons. We have enough to differ upon. . . . And if he has a good opinion of himself, he has more reason for it than most men.'

From the Zoji-lâ Pass they had dropped down into the bone-dry strip of desert country known as Little Tibet ; on one hand, mountain masses stark and treeless ; on the other, a mighty torrent rushing to join the Indus. And on the 29th, at Dras Fort, they became curiously entangled with a stray pair of fellow-beings ; a young unrelated man and woman travelling together towards Kashmir. The young woman—according to Hodson—was

'a very pretty creature, gifted with indomitable energy and endurance—except for her husband, whom she can't endure, and therefore travels alone. For three months she has been pony-riding through country few men would care to traverse, over formidable passes and across the wildest deserts in Asia. For twenty days she was in Tibet, without seeing a human habitation ; often without food or bedding. When we met her, she was over sixteen miles from her tents, rain and darkness coming on apace. So we persuaded her to stop at our encampment. I gave her my tent and cot and acted lady's maid ; supplied her with warm stockings, towels, brushes, etc. Then we sat down to dinner ; and a pleasanter evening I never spent.

Lawrence, keen-eyed and critical, took a less romantic view of the unauthorised pair. He judged that talkative

¹ Brass basin.

² Happy.

young woman to be 'wayward and headstrong, with very lax notions on many subjects,' yet he could not but admire her pluck in the face of all difficulties.

'She had had no dinner the day before, no bedclothes at night,' he wrote. 'She has been over some of the worst passes; and proposes now to go on from Kashmir, across the hills to Kunāwar and Simla. I advised her against it, and would have prevented her, could I have done so without using violence. It is not to the credit of our name that she should be travelling the country in this style, especially as I cannot ascertain that she pays her coolies.'

His critical attitude was sharpened by the doubtful repute of her companion, Captain H—, a soldier-civilian from Kangra, who had not found favour in the eyes of 'Board Sahib.' Now, here he was, absent from his district without leave; travelling with another man's wife, and committing, by report, the unforgivable sin of commandeering goods and coolies gratis.

Lawrence did not mince his words, when writing of the episode to Barnes, Deputy Commissioner of Kangra: 'The night before we met, she had a bed and he had none; and they had only one tent up. The same thing would have happened last night, had we not given them shelter.'

To mak' *sikka*, he offered Captain H— a *charpoy* in his own minute tent; Hodson, self-evicted, sleeping on another. But he would give the absentee no help as regards getting back to Kangra, beyond advising the shortest route; H— having chosen the longer route via Kashmir.

Next morning, after an early breakfast, Hodson set the 'pretty creature' on her pony: and they saw her no more.

But that was not the last Lawrence heard of her; for he had written of her to Honoria, the only other white woman in Kashmir. And Honoria saw herself as her sister's keeper; the more so when Captain H— paid her a visit and embarrassed her with 'very unnecessary particulars' as to the lady's virtue. Privileged by her age and position, she frankly told him that the truest act of friendship—such as he professed—would be to leave the young woman at once and

return to Kangra. The nature of his friendship and the futility of her advice were proved that very night, by an appeal for protection from the virtuous lady, who had been grossly insulted by her self-styled friend.

Honoria—shocked yet distressed—replied without hesitation :

DEAR MADAM,—

On receipt of such a note as yours, there is but one step for me to take—to beg you will at once come here and place yourself under my care, where you will be as safe as if you were my daughter. I have ordered the boat that is at my disposal, and one of my servants will attend you. Pray do not lose a moment in coming. It is exactly midnight when your note has arrived. Do not delay to pack. I can send for your baggage in the morning.

Yours sincerely,

H. LAWRENCE.

But as the night passed and no stranger guest arrived, Honoria wrote again :

‘I am sorry you did not come over last night. A bed was prepared, and you would not have put me to any inconvenience. Let me urge you to come to-day. At the same time as one old enough to be your mother, let me speak frankly but kindly. Had you come to Kashmir alone, I should at once have asked you to be our guest, but I could not countenance what I felt to be very wrong in your conduct. . . . A young married woman so unhappy as to be separated from her husband . . . should not wilfully expose herself to scandal, insult and temptation. Yesterday you would probably not have listened to these words ; to-day I hope you will consider them. If so, I shall gladly ask you to be my guest—and give you any help I can in returning to your brother, or whoever else may be your proper protector. . . . Do not cast away my letter as harsh. Indeed it is not in that temper that I write. Pray come to-day, whether Captain H— leaves you or not. Alone, you cannot feel safe from a repetition of insult. I have a room ready, and I dine at two o’clock, by which time I hope you will be here.’

But still the young woman either hesitated or was dissuaded by the man who at once insisted on her virtue and assailed it. The tenor of Honoria's next appeal suggests that she must have sent a note politely excusing herself, and announcing her prompt departure from Kashmir.

'MY DEAR MADAM,—

'I repeat you are heartily welcome, and I hope you will not hurry away. I will send my boat at twelve to bring you. . . . Let nothing prevent you from coming to me. Trust me to judge for myself of you. . . . It would be very foolish in you to leave Kashmir to-morrow. I will at once send my boat for you.'

But her good intent must have been thwarted by the influence of Captain H—. For a few days later the wayward lady, in spite of sane advice, was arranging for cash to finance her journey, coolly asking the Maharajah for money and Kashmir shawls. Honoria—consulted on the subject by one of Gulāb's men—wrote to the culprit, expressing her surprise at the information :

'I can hardly believe he understands you aright. But, for fear of anything being done against my husband's wishes, I write to say that if the Maharajah should send the customary presents, my Duffadar will take charge of them for Government. If you want ready money, any Mahajān will cash the treasury bills of which you were speaking this morning.'

And so an end of the wayward one, who finally crowned her unique adventures by publishing an account of them in fashionable three-volume form.

By that time, the travellers in Ladakh were nearing their farthest point, the desert city of Leh ; and Hodson was writing from their camp on the Indus :

'I am sitting in a little tent eight feet long, which just takes a narrow cot, a table and camp chair, my *sac de nuit*, gun, etc., and one tin box of books and papers. . . . Under the same tree is Sir Henry's tent, a ditto of mine. . . . The kitchen is also under a tree ; and round a great fire are squatting our gallant guards. The Indus is brawling along five hundred feet below us. One's neck aches with trying to see the top of

the craggy mountains that shut us in. So wild, so heaven-forsaken a scene I have never beheld. . . . Not above four Europeans have ever been here before. But travelling suits my restless spirit. Sir Henry and I get on famously together.'

Two days later they reached Leh—a rocky promontory, set in a background of rust-red hills and snow peaks of the mighty Trans-Himalayas. A week they spent in that strange city, full of human traffic, where never a wheel revolves, save the prayer wheels of the pious, twirled by hand or blown by wind, keeping them automatically in touch with the Unseen. Both men found themselves exhilarated to a marvel by its clear skies and sparkling air ; Lawrence—neck-deep in work—interviewing over a hundred merchants of all races and creeds, as to the levying of customs, and the petty tyrannies involved. Before leaving, he crowned his good impression by feasting three hundred of them in a large garden : ' probably the most original and picturesque, as well as the most costly entertainment which even he—in his boundless hospitality—had ever given.' Good for trade and good for the English name, was his view of the affair ; knowing well that his trader-guests would carry the tale of their feast over half Asia.

That week at Leh was the only pause he allowed himself in his strenuous tour of Gulāb Singh's frontier. Thence they were to march back by a different route ; following the northern branch of the Indus to Skardo, and striking westward to Gilgit, where no white man had penetrated yet. The marches were longer now, and the ascents often bad ; but here, among the greatest mountains of earth—free from overwork and rasping opposition—Henry Lawrence renewed the adventurous spirit of his youth. On his wedding day he was writing happily to Honoria from a village set among frowning heights, fantastically carved by snow and frost. Its small Rajah had come out twelve miles to meet them, with brass band and kettle-drums that ' thundered and screeched from the top of a hill,' while they were yet a mile off.

His next was from Kuru, a short march that took them down again to the river : ' Here I am sitting under a walnut

trec, on the banks of the Indus, a reach of nine miles by one and a half broad—more like a mountain lake than a river.’

Their quiet spell with books and writing was broken by a note from the headman announcing frightful difficulty in getting the mules and horses over the river. Hastily they collected their belongings ; and down by the stream they found some four hundred people, with the Rajah’s son, forcing a cavalcade of wretched mules into the river. Though each was tied to an inflated goat-skin, the strong current swept them away ; and while the two men awaited a raft from the far side, Hodson amused himself by swimming, fully dressed, across higher channels, in the vain hope of coaxing the mules to follow his lead. At last they were more or less safe on the raft, propelled by eight naked men with poplar staves, the band and kettle-drums speeding their departure with a brave attempt at ‘ God Save the Queen.’

At Skardo—an isolated rock washed by the Indus—Lawrence decided that another wholesale feast would best commend his Government to a simple people. This time all were bidden who chose to come ; rajahs, traders, the whole of their own camp and the garrison of Skardo : ‘ nearly four hundred men,’ he told Honoria, ‘ at an expense less than an ordinary big dinner-party at Lahore.’ And here it was that these two Englishmen, for the first time, saw polo—an Eastern game, dating from 600 B.C.—described by Lawrence as ‘ the game of Chogān, or hockey on horseback’ ; a pastime that did not find its way to India till 1863.

About this time, he was writing to Nicholson in England : ‘ You should stay two years at Home ; and when you do return, it shall not be my fault if you are not provided for to your satisfaction. I hope Edwardes has been happily married ere this, and that you will come out suitably matched.’ Honoria was also writing to him from Kashmir : a reply to his unappreciative account of an evening at Covent Garden, where Alboni and Lablache enchanted all those who had ears to hear. But Nicholson had been bred in too narrow and stern a school to be lured by an operatic travesty of life ; and to Honoria Lawrence he could frankly confess his unfashionable disability.

'We were delighted,' she assured him, 'with your verdict on the Opera. When we were in town, we went *once*; and said, like you, "We have nothing so bad as that in India!" Did not London bewilder you with the sight of such luxury as we, in the jungles, had forgotten could exist? Of vice and misery which—except in a year of famine—could hardly be equalled here? If Jung Bahadur of Nepal is dazzled at the splendour he sees, he must be equally astonished at the wretchedness. I do not believe that, in Nepal, one man out of a thousand lies down hungry at night, or rises without knowing where he will get his day's food.'

Her two years at home had confirmed her allegiance to India, with its freedom and constant movement and escape from the conventions—India that had blessed her with a unique marriage. For all her abiding love of Northern Ireland, this was the country in which she desired to live and die: never more so than during that secluded summer in Kashmir.

It was now near the end of August; half of Henry's two months' absence had slipped away. He and Hodson were marching across the high and desolate Deosai plateau towards Astor, the crazy fort on the Indus, whence he would strike off towards Gilgit. His journal letter of the 28th told her how, for miles along the river, the people had destroyed their own cultivation that the Sahibs might have some sort of road. 'And this morning,' he added, 'I overtook not less than forty cows and twenty-five calves coming *with me* to give *me* milk!' None troubled how the hapless villagers fared, deprived of their staple food, except the stranger Sahib who was angered, not pleased, at these inspired plans for his comfort. 'I dismissed the cows; giving twenty rupees among the owners. It is most disgusting the way we are made to bully these people.'

By long and rapid marches they reached Astor—town, monastery and fort set upon a cliff of many-coloured rocks; and here, for the first time, they encountered serious disturbance. A neighbouring tribe—at feud with Astor—had coolly carried off its Rajah and his family and destroyed

its one bridge, over the Indus. Gilgit was said to be besieged ; a thousand Kashmiris marching to its relief. It looked as if Lawrence would do well to forgo his final adventure. Ignominious capture in the wilds would be a sorry end to his achievement. Already Indian papers were reporting him and his party 'lost, stolen or strayed,' to the huge delight of Sir Charles Napier—not yet out of the country ; his excitable brain foreseeing a grand mountain expedition in the style of Alexander the Great. He only wished 'they would nab the Laird of Cockpen,' who was then planning a tour along the Frontier. But the fiery warrior was disappointed of his hope. Sir Henry wisely decided to make straight for Kashmir ; while Hodson worked his way across the hills to Simla and Kasauli, feeling himself, in every respect, a better man for his two months with Henry Lawrence and his unforgettable journey to the heights.

The descent to earth with its rubs and realities—was, in many ways, harder for Lawrence than for the younger man. Matters were going to be no easier at Lahore, with John forcing him into an open opposition, that he had been vainly trying to avoid, over their former bone of contention—the character of Gulāb Singh. John had insisted on forwarding to Government a very strong minute against the Maharajah, on account of letters brought to light by his own arrest of the Sikh chiefs. Henry, with fuller knowledge, could see many flaws in the evidence brought forward ; and with his instinct for fair play he could assert, 'I am quite satisfied that if *we* had acted differently by Gulāb Singh, he would have acted more openly and cordially by us.'

In vain he argued ; in vain offered to sign John's letter, if certain alterations were made. John was a hard man to shift from any fixed opinion. Ignoring the plea for modification, he wrote a minute twice as strong as his letter and sent it up to Government ; thus forcing Henry to counter it openly ; reluctant though he was to thrust upon Dalhousie's notice the widening rift between himself and his brother. The whole affair was the more exasperating in

view of the Maharajah's generosity to the Sanāwar Hill school, and their friendly relations all the summer.

But, even while it rankled, came news from Lahore that dissolved vexation in anxiety for the brother he loved as sincerely as he disagreed with him. John, who seldom succumbed, had been struck down by a virulent attack of remittent fever—sickness, delirium and intense pain in the head. As often happens with very strong men, his strength seemed to break up all at once, leaving him weaponless against the worst and commonest enemy of the Englishman in India. Luckily for him, Dr. Hathaway had just returned from Kashmir. And when the fever had done its worst, it was he who extemporised a cold douche—and saved a valuable life for India. Delirium subsided; Lawrence fell into a quiet sleep; and when he woke, the crisis was over.

Even he must now admit the urgent need for a change; and Dalhousie had invited him to join his own autumn frontier tour. But sudden trouble with the Kohat Afridis had moved Henry to volunteer his services as Political Officer; and John had generously urged that his brother would be more needed on the frontier than himself. That was not the same thing at all; and Dalhousie would permit no backing out of the man who had borne the heat of the day. His personal anxiety over that dangerous illness had conclusively proved his warmth of feeling for the favoured John.

'I am terrified,' he wrote, 'at the thought of your being compelled to go home for a time. I plead with you to spare yourself as earnestly as I would plead to save my own right hand. Two of you have been working hard enough, Heaven knows, for the third: let the other two now take their turn of working for you.'

So it came about that, as Henry and Honoria returned to Lahore, John and Harrie set out to join Dalhousie's moving canvas city. More and more the brothers tended to play 'Box and Cox' at headquarters: a tendency that might lessen chances of personal friction, and defer—if it could not prevent—the inevitable.

THEY were all together at Lahore for Christmas ; no social function this year ; no easing of their chronic tension, from which Honoria and Harrie must have suffered hardly less than their husbands. That difficult pair were remarkable—perhaps unique—as brothers of almost equal distinction, who could disagree, even to bitterness, while preserving their love and loyalty. Only men of more than common stature could so rise above jarring dissension that at no time was there any taint of rivalry or jealousy between them ; nor could either tolerate the partisan spirit that tended to exalt one at the expense of the other. For it has been said, with equal wit and truth, that, at heart, Henry was a staunch John-ite, and John a staunch Henry-ite—a truth he proved in his later years.

But neither love nor loyalty could constrain their independent spirits, that were constantly irked by having to consult others before action. Do what they would, some cause for disagreement would trip them up five days out of seven. They still differed acutely as to the treatment of old Durbar officials ; as to rewards for those who had helped the English during and after the war. Henry still pressed for employing Punjabis, wherever feasible, and helping the sons of old officers. John, impervious to sentiment, ignored the personal element that aggravated Henry's difficulties tenfold. In his own words :

‘ The chiefs and people of the Punjab had been accustomed to come to me for relief and advice. Now I could literally never say or do anything without, almost to a certainty, my orders being counteracted by my colleagues. Parties appealed to me in questions on which I had given my vote ; and I could not even tell them I *had* voted for them. Knowing what power I had at one time, they

could not understand, and often did not believe, in my present helplessness.'

Bitterly he wrote to Major Reynell Taylor about help for certain deserving men at Bannu : ' I will do my best for them ; but John and Mansell outvote me. I am a King *only in name*.' For one who had almost been King in fact, whom the Sikhs still regarded as such, the false position was peculiarly galling ; not to mention his sympathetic concern for the people themselves.

Thus each continued to hamper the other, as often as not by virtues pushed too far ; the best motives wrongly applied. Faults there were, undeniably, on both sides : Henry's uncontrolled temper, his incurable lack of method and fatal tendency to confuse disagreement with personal antagonism ; John's masterful spirit, and undue self-reliance, his hardness that sprang from imperfect sympathy. And minor vexations arose from Henry's love of touring the land ; his long absences, that created a disturbing element of uncertainty, where there was need for swift decision and threefold assent. Inevitably also they thrust John into a prominence he neither sought nor desired ; revealed him increasingly as Dalhousie's man.

His grave illness moved ' the Lord ' to prescribe a summer at Simla for the Working Partner : an order peculiarly welcome to one who had never, in twenty years of service, spent a summer in the Hills—' those delectable temptations to the neglect of work and duty.' His first attempt, in 'Forty-Eight, had been interrupted by the Multān rebellion ; and the two enforced years at Home had been his only separation from the work that was his religion. He was now to bask, by order, in the sunshine of Simla and of Lord Dalhousie's special favour. For, to John Lawrence, Dalhousie revealed the full warmth of a heart capable of very deep feeling ; to Henry the coolness of his critical brain. That John would run his own department, while in Simla, went without saying ; but in such surroundings it seemed like no work at all.

For Henry it was, in all respects, a trying summer : unrelieved desk-work and the ceaseless correspondence with

Commissioners, Deputies and Assistants, usually handled by John. Of that picked band it is written : 'Probably never, in the history of our Indian Empire, have so many able men been collected within a single province. There was a glow of work and duty round us all, in those days, such as I have never felt before or since.' And it was the fame of the Lawrence brothers that had brought them all together ; had made service in the Punjab an object of ambition throughout India.

If there was now no Edwardes to lighten Henry's labours, there was Honoria copying all he wrote into his letter-books ; toning down unguarded or vehement phrases : devoting herself to their endless cases of charity—gifts of money and the greater gift of human kindness : her generosity tempered with a shrewd yet unworldly wisdom, and an instinct for character, hardly second to his own.

His alert eye for signs of promise singled out many young men who came to the Residency in those days. If he liked the look of one, he would go up and talk to him, draw him out on various subjects. Then he would ask Dr. Hathaway, 'Who is that young fellow over there ?' Enlightened, he would mark the name in his Army List ; and the favoured youth would never suspect that he owed a step in life to a chance conversation with the kindly, keen-eyed President of the Punjab.

He himself attributed most of his success in life to that faculty for penetrating men's characters, for winning and holding their allegiance. It was said of him by men little given to exaggeration : 'Lawrence was a chief for whom not only one, but a score of us, in the Punjab, would have even been ready to die.'

And James Abbott testified eloquently to the powers of mind which these years of annexation called forth :

'What the watchmaker is to the watch, that was Sir Henry Lawrence to the Punjab. . . . His was the spirit which touched the hearts of his subordinates with ardour. . . . His presence seemed all pervading ; the interests of the meanest as dear to him as the most powerful. Goodness and greatness were so natural wherever he came, that other fruits seemed strange and impossible.'

As for the Sikhs and Punjabis—who had known his rule since 'Forty-Six—they saw him as an *avatar* of the all-conquering English race in its best aspect : an estimate as near the truth as Indian estimates of Englishmen are apt to be. Would that Dalhousie could have seen him so. But Time wrought no improvement in their relation. More and more Henry was rasped by scathing comments and incessant orders, that goaded him into giving the favoured John a taste of his mind on the subject.

'I am at a loss to understand the Governor-General. We are snubbed about Edwardes ; then about the Gurkha corps of Guides, on the assumption that we intend to change their head-quarters. Bad enough to snub us when we are wrong, intending to do right ; but to be insulted by assumptions and tittle-tattle is too bad . . . I am heartily sick of it. One works oneself to death . . . for a man who vents his impertinences upon us in a way that would be unbecoming if we were his servants :'

Perhaps his impatience was sharpened at the time by anxiety for Honoria, who fell seriously ill in June and July. Lahore—still unreclaimed from its primitive insanitation—was a hotbed of pestilence and fever : streets unswept and undrained ; refuse heaps that were veritable Gehennas ; dead animals left to rot where they died. Germs must have done fatal work unknown to doctors, many of whom were almost as primitive in their mental furniture as Lahore City.

Whatever the cause, Honoria was twice 'at the point of death' before she recovered sufficiently to stand the hillward journey at that fiery season. As for her small Honoria and Harry, just turned six, they had no business at all in that disease-haunted region.

At Kasauli, they stayed in the Sanāwar school, Honoria looking into everything herself, testing the work in all its branches ; taking as keen an interest in the girls and their future as if they had been her daughters. Still an invalid, she would be carried out to their playground in her flat open doolie known as the Tea-tray ; the girls flocking round, attracted by her friendliness and lively humour.

Henry, left desolate, managed a short escape in Septem-

ber, though John had not returned ; having again succumbed to remittent fever. Four doctors between them, saved his life, and unanimously urged that nothing less than two years in England would enable him to carry on. But no medical croaking would induce John Lawrence to leave his Punjab work in other hands. Stoutly he refused to go Home ; so Dalhousie had insisted on at least keeping him in Simla till November.

Before his return, a welcome change had been effected in the personnel of the Board. Both brothers had felt Mansell to be, at times, a drag on the coach. At their suggestion he had been offered a vacant Residency : and had probably parted from his very good friends with a sigh of relief. His successor, Robert Montgomery, was, curiously enough, a former fellow-pupil at Foyle College ; an Ulsterman and a lifelong friend of the Lawrence family. He had known both wives when they were girls, and had been for two years Commissioner of Lahore. So he stepped, as of right, into the vacant place ; and behold, there were three Scoto-Irish men of Ulster ruling the Punjab, to their own honour and its lasting benefit.

He was a bold man who accepted that ' bed of thorns ' ; but Montgomery had loved Henry Lawrence all his days. His appetite for work was insatiable ; his resource unflinching ; and his serene temper could not be ruffled even by two Lawrences in collision. In all ways he seemed the very man to modify the heart-burnings and dissensions of that high-spirited pair, who might have been less antagonistic had they loved each other less. And the shared Irish background coloured a characteristic episode, that first Christmas, when the three Board Sahibs were enjoying a family dinner with their wives.

A chance remark from Henry had carried the men back to those years at Foyle College, when they had never known the treat of a holiday journey home.

' I wonder,' said he, ' if the two poor old Simpsons are having any better dinner than usual to-day.'

The thought was typical of one who could never enjoy life's good things without a pang for those who had none :

and the poor old Simpson brothers had been ushers at the college—underpaid, and often tormented by thoughtless boys. Mention of them awakened school memories and emphasised the strange coincidence of the three former pupils translated into Rulers of the Punjab. Finally it moved Henry to a characteristic suggestion: ‘Let each of us put down £50 and send it off to-morrow as a Christmas box from the Punjab Board of Administration.’

Promptly the others agreed; and next morning a Treasury remittance on England was posted to Ireland, in the hope that some day, somewhere, it would find the two Simpsons—probably very old and very poor—and give them the surprise of their lives.

More than two months were to pass before Henry’s post-bag produced a letter from Londonderry, written in a quavering hand and blotted with tears. To those old brothers, in their extreme poverty, the sum of £150—later swelled to £200 by George—seemed a small fortune; but ‘far above the value of the gift’ was the proof that they had not been forgotten by four pupils now risen to eminence. The writer had no idea what a Board of Administration might be; and he had searched his old School Atlas in vain for the Punjab and Lahore—places that had had no geographical existence in his day.

At a time of increasing friction it was much for Henry and John to be at one in generosity of spirit, in friendship with their new colleague, who frankly dubbed himself ‘a tame elephant between two wild oxen.’ John, recovered in health, was heartbroken by the loss of his small son, born at Simla; and for such a man, work was the only anodyne. In January he went off on his usual round of cold-weather camping; while Henry sped back to the frontier, where he was to meet a distinguished traveller at Hazāra. Thence they marched to Bannu, where they found the turbulent John Nicholson, fresh from Home, spruce and shaven, after two years of civilised life. Lawrence, true to his word, had arranged for him to ‘take over’ as Deputy Commissioner from Reynell Taylor, going on furlough: and already Bannuchi marauders were feeling a stronger hand on the

rein. Nicholson was to complete at Bannu the pacification that Edwardes had begun ; and each gave to his friend the glory.

The tour with Lord Stanley proved an unqualified success ; a release from desk-work, problems and friction. With pride, Lawrence could report that ' even in the wildest parts of the country, there was as much safety for travellers . . . as in any part of India.' Frontier defence, his special concern, had been secured by a substantial increase of the Guides Corps, the most uncanny and invaluable corps ever created ; and by the raising of ten Irregular Punjab regiments—five infantry, five cavalry and three mountain batteries—for exclusive service along six hundred miles of mountain and desert country. That picked body of men and officers was to become known throughout India as the ' Piffers '—the famous Punjab Irregular Frontier Force. Its officers were men of specialised training and knowledge ; men who created the Piffer tradition : and Lawrence could justly take pride in the fulfilled idea of his own brain.

In the process of fulfilling, all concerned could claim an active share—Lord Dalhousie not least ; but none could take from Sir Henry the credit of the original plan. He alone—in the great days of 'Forty-Six and 'Forty-Seven—had laid the foundation of all that others had helped to build. Now, in this spring of 'Fifty-Two, it was with keen satisfaction that he escorted Lord Stanley from end to end of his virtually created kingdom—and saw that it was good. During that brief interlude, he recaptured also much of the old happiness in his work, impaired of late by ill-health and controversy and criticism from high quarters.

Early in April he returned, refreshed in mind and body, to a Punjab hot weather, to wife and children, to desk-work—and John.

TOO soon after his return he and John were at odds again, over one among those fifty thousand or so of pensioners who, in John's view, were eating up good money needed for public works, or other schemes to benefit the people. Worse : in this case, Montgomery agreed with John ; and Montgomery had always been Henry's very special friend. That he was so still, and always would be, the wiser Henry knew beyond a doubt. But whenever he perforce agreed with John, the very human Henry was apt to feel as if his own familiar friend had turned against him. The appointment originally so welcome, now seemed likely to make matters worse. Knowing Montgomery so well, both were more outspoken when argument grew heated, or tempers flared. Henry complained that John thwarted him consistently in small, yet important, matters of patronage, preferment and hereditary pensions. John retorted that Henry's long absences and impatience with practical details, threw the heaviest work on to his overburdened shoulders.

Well might Montgomery describe himself as ' a tame elephant between two wild oxen.'

It was the old story of an irresistible force meeting an immovable object ; and Montgomery had the world's work at times to prevent his two ' wild oxen ' from injuring each other. The very depth of their brotherly feeling seemed to embitter their conflict. Ruefully Henry contrasted their close friendship, in comparative obscurity, with the coolness, amounting to estrangement, engendered by success. Now they seldom met and still more seldom discussed public questions, unless needs must. But of enquiries into pensions and privileges there still seemed no end. Most of the local work it entailed had been assigned to the

invaluable Edwardes ; and since he left John Becher—the Pelican—had taken his place. Both were apt to side with Henry in favouring the pensioners or fief-holders ; but their generous recommendations must be signed by every member of the Board. As the brothers worked in separate rooms, Becher must first take his paper to the President, who would sign any pension proposal on generous lines. Not so John. With the twinkle that tempered his blunt speech, he would thrust aside the paper—unsigned.

‘ You want to get round me, do you ? Let these lazy fellows waste good public money ? I won’t have it.—Take it away.’

Montgomery would usually agree with John : and the ‘ unfriendly act ’ would mortify Henry.

Montgomery—understanding and admiring both—found it as difficult not to *feel* with Henry as not to *think* with John. The appeal of one was to the mind, of the other to the imagination and the heart ; so that the strongest partisans of John could not fail to love Henry ; nor their opponents fail to trust John. Each, in a sense, acted as a check on the other ; yet each aggravated the other’s faults ; both being hardened in their own view by the certainty of meeting opposition. And now, as the tension increased, they inclined to use the faithful Montgomery as a go-between. A long and moving letter of remonstrance from Henry ended with a reproach in the third person, intended for his delinquent brother.

‘ However able, honest and industrious John be, he may rely on it that there are many others who work as hard and as honestly. His great error is excessive reliance on his own judgment, and denial or doubt of the labours of others, especially when they are not exactly akin to his own. I freely grant he has hit on my defects, though I think he has caricatured them . . . and I will be glad if he will think over what I have said of him.’

Montgomery, in his turn, would try to calm Henry’s ruffled sensibilities with the sane reminder :

‘ You can never get three mortals to agree. It is no use trying to

move John, when he has made up his mind, or vexing and worrying yourself. If you can get Government to agree to your opinion—be thankful. If not, go to sleep with the satisfaction that you have done your best—that you can do no more.'

Sound advice more easily proffered by a smooth-tempered man than followed by a thwarted one. And in May, when a rising thermometer made it hard to keep cool in any sense, Henry vented his stifled exasperation in another long letter to the sinner—through their mutual friend.

'It is not so much on large questions that I consider I am the one who has to complain: but on everyday matters of patronage, favour or promotion. I have seldom, if ever, made a proposal that he has not opposed it; the inference being that I am either dishonest in my views of patronage or incompetent to judge the merits of individuals. I might say a good deal as to pensioners, and how I am daily vexed about them, owing to John's own line of conduct and the spirit he has engendered in some of our officers. . . . Independent of humanity, I look on the way these folk are treated as most impolitic. The country is not yet settled. Troubles may rise at any hour, when the goodwill of Dena Nath, Jey Singh and others would be of real consequence. . . . I heartily desire not only peace, but confidence: and if I have neither it is not my fault.'

John could not see it as his fault either; and his vigorous rejoinder covered a wider field of remonstrance. In early days, Henry, being ill and 'chafed at annexation,' had left over much work on his hands.

'All details,' he complained, 'were thrown on me; everybody was referred to me. . . . As regards pensions and *jaghirdars*, I give way as much as I can; . . . but I find it does little good. Henry thinks we treat these classes harshly. I think we have been very kind to them. . . . With our utterly different views of civil administration it is not possible that we can work together pleasantly to ourselves. I would wish that we discussed public questions as little as may be; that when we differ we record our views in writing, when one or the other will be supported by yourself: or, in special cases, go before the Government.'

Well Montgomery knew that the matter would not end there; that John's letter would rouse all the fighter in Henry. Yet it must be delivered.

'Read it quietly and calmly,' he urged, 'and I think you had better not answer it. I doubt not that you could write a folio in reply; but it would be no use. I am happy to be the friend of you both. Though differing from you often, I have never found you judge me harshly; and I would, in my heart, much rather agree than differ.'

Those words of genuine friendship must have fallen like the 'gentle rain from heaven' on Henry's heart, tormented by the bitter truth that

'To be wrath with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain.'

But inevitably a folio *was* written in reply: and the much-enduring go-between never did both friends a better service than when he persuaded Henry to absolve him from forwarding a retort that would only make matters worse.

'I will tell John,' he suggested, 'that you felt hurt at his letter, and add some of your chief remarks as mildly as I can. When this daily strife is over: how wretched will appear all these bickerings and heart-burnings which occupied so much of our time.'

Such a plea could not fail in its appeal. The folio was never sent and brotherly kindness was restored: but Henry knew in his heart that either he or John must go. Not much longer could he endure the mental strain, or put up with being 'king only in name.' What Honoria suffered, for and through him, during those months of tension, no record has survived to reveal. Her influence would be all on the side of keeping the peace: and, for a time, the impending crisis was adjourned.

The hot weather was mainly occupied in working out a full statement of the transformation wrought by the Board, under Dalhousie's brilliant leadership, in four strenuous years. The bare record of that Herculean task confirms the statement that 'never—in India or elsewhere—have changes so rapid and remarkable been achieved in a newly conquered country.' The wonders of engineering, of canal- and road-making, deserve a chapter to themselves. In Colonel Robert Napier, Henry Lawrence had secured not only the finest Civil Engineer in India, but a man after his own heart, one whom he counted among his closest friends. A man of vision and vast ideas, Napier's

engineering genius found expression in those splendid public works, which are the pride of the Punjab and still a model for the rest of India. His Great Canal revived dead villages and created new ones throughout a course of two hundred and forty-seven miles. As for roads, a record of three thousand miles in four years, and over five thousand miles surveyed—with no transport but bullock, horse and coolie, with an impossible climate for five months of the year—gives the normal worker furiously to think. These years saw the beginning of India's famous Grand Trunk Road, the cleansing and draining of those Augean stables, the greater cities and suburbs, so that even Lahore could show a moderately clean bill of health; the building of twenty-five jails—Henry's special concern—where criminals, not promiscuously flung together, were disciplined and taught useful trades. Carpets woven in Punjab jails were to become famous throughout India.

The whole crime problem, in a land where life was cheap and many tribes criminals by profession, had been admirably handled by Mansell and Montgomery. Schools had been started. Forests conserved, thousands of trees planted, the land-tax reduced: and yet—here was John's personal triumph—the Punjab 'paid,' as none had supposed it could do for a decade, with vast reconstruction proceeding at railroad pace. A surplus of over fifty lakhs¹ each year was his proud record; for the rest, in one sentence the Rule of Three could announce, 'a frontier established and controlled, an efficient Punjab army and police force raised, crime reduced, and justice carried out by such a body of young officers, civil and military . . . as never before or since has been concentrated on the work for a great Indian province.' More: two fine hill stations had been started for troops and officers on leave; one among the Murri hills and one beyond Chamba—rightly called Dalhousie, after the master builder, whose share in the great achievement was second to none, except that of Henry Lawrence, by whom the foundation had been laid.

That remarkable report drew from him a sincere tribute

¹ 1 lakh = £10,000.

of admiration ; and, in due time, the Court of Directors gave them its official blessing that set them 'in the foremost ranks of Indian Administrators.' But the highest tribute was paid many years after by Sir Richard Temple, who had seen men and cities, and had played a distinguished part in the governing of almost every Indian province. 'Looking back upon them all,' said he, 'I declare to you that I have seen no government to be compared with that of the Lawrences in the Punjab.'

But not even that heroic achievement would resolve the increasing discord between the brothers, who had quarrelled and suffered, and worked so manfully to such great ends. As December drew to a close, it became clear to all concerned that the three-headed Board had fulfilled its purpose in easing the years of transition ; that the time was ripe for a return to normal one-man government. And in Lord Dalhousie's mind there was no doubt as to the man. But he could not, in decency, remove Sir Henry after dissuading him from resignation. He could only await the possible outcome of discord at Lahore.

Sir Henry himself was again looking towards New Zealand, with the idea of settling out there, sons and all, to form a colony. From Honoria's early friend, Margaret Irwin, they had heard much of that beautiful country, and both were born pioneers. Neither of them, curiously enough, had any wish for a permanent return to England. Although Honoria's Irish heart would be 'turning ever' to Lough Swilly and Fahan, her two years in England seemed to have quenched all desire to live there : and Henry had been away too long. That he might be allowed to die in harness, was the sincerest prayer of his heart.

It has been said that to overhear a man's prayer is to know him as he is, and in a fragment of journal, written this very autumn, a short prayer was inscribed by one little given so to reveal his inner self :

'Oh, Lord, give me grace and strength to do Thy will, to begin the day and end it with prayer and searching of my own heart, with reading of Thy word. Make me to understand it, to understand Thee ; . . . Make me

humble, reasonable and contented, thankful, just and considerate. Restrain my tongue and my thoughts. May I not fear man and man's opinions, but remember that thou knowest my motives and my thoughts, that Thou wilt be my Judge. It is not in me to be regular. Let me be so, as much as I can. Let me do to-day's work to-day, not postponing ; so living in humility, thankfulness, contentment.'

In those few unadorned sentences, in the frank admission of his failings, you have the man. 'A certain heroic simplicity'—a phrase applied to John—was the keynote of character in both brothers, now approaching unaware the inevitable crisis that must remove one or other from Lahore.



IT was in early December—not long after Henry's return—that fresh altercations with John moved him to prepare the draft of an official letter reporting to Lord Dalhousie his 'serious intention of proceeding, at the end of next year, to New Zealand with a view of spying out the land and settling there,' if he found it answered. But before that draft was copied, he heard that a new Resident was to be appointed at Hyderabad, India's premier Native State: a position barely second in importance to that of ruling the Punjab; but—it was not the Punjab. Only to make the way clear for John could he dream of a transfer that was the last thing he desired in life. The struggle with himself must have been severe, as it was brief. In spite of hard words and embittered feelings, the blood link, for both brothers, transcended all else. But, by now, both recognised that they could not carry on together without embarrassing the Government they served. One or other must go; and, sooner than stand in John's way, he was prepared to accept a post of first-rate importance like Hyderabad, though leaving the Punjab would be the heart-break of his life.

Action followed sharp on resolve. He at once wrote a note to John, announcing his decision. John, it seems, sent on the note to Dalhousie; he himself having already written to the Simla Secretary:

'MY DEAR COURTENAY,—

'The circumstance that General Fraser is about to leave Hyderabad has led me to a hope that it may give an opening for some change in my present position. My brother and I work together no better than we formerly did. Indeed the estrangement between us has increased. . . . I wish to make no imputation against him. We have been trained in such different schools that there are few questions of internal policy in which we coincide. . . . And what I feel is the mischief of two men brought together who have both strong wills and views diametrically

opposed, whose modes and habits of business do not conform. . . . To me this state of things has been so irksome, so painful, that I would consent to great sacrifice to free myself. I care not how much work I have, or how great my responsibilities, if I have simply to depend on myself: but it is killing work always pulling against wind and tide. If I feel so heavily the discomfort of my position, my brother is equally sensible of his own. He thinks he has not that power and influence which his general ability and force of character should ensure for him; and he deems himself checked and trammelled on all sides. If Hyderabad is not thought suited to me, or is wanted for another, I shall be glad of any berth which may fall vacant. Rajputana, Lucknow, Indore, would any of them delight me.'

Henry himself shrank, proudly, from approaching Dalhousie on any personal concern: but hearing that his note had been forwarded, he felt bound to write at once and confirm his willingness—if needs must—to make way for John: for no one but John.

'I did not think,' he began, 'of addressing your Lordship on the subject of Hyderabad; but as my brother tells me he has sent on my note, I beg to explain that—though I prefer this frontier to any other part of India—there is so much that is unpleasant in my position, in reference to my brother, that I would willingly make way for him, should your Lordship be disposed to appoint me to Hyderabad. I would do much to preserve amity with my brother, with whom I never disagreed until we came together on this Board. He chafes more perhaps than I do; and it was seeing this that emphasised my notes of yesterday. Could I see him provided for to his satisfaction, and be myself entrusted with the sole executive responsibility on this frontier, as Chief Commissioner on my present salary, I would have nothing to desire for the short remainder of my Indian career. . . .

'The Board has been the best engine for clearing off pensions and *jaghirs*, and organising affairs; but it is difficult to conceive the vexations and heart-burnings of everyday work, when three men of different temperaments have to agree on every measure. I have not often troubled your Lordship on personal matters, and should not now do so were it a question of emoluments or indeed other than of public business.'

So it came about that, by mid-December of 1853, Dalhousie had in his hands those two characteristic letters : clear proof in one that Henry Lawrence desired, above all things, a return to the independent charge of his beloved province ; clear announcement, in the other, that the independent charge of any state would delight John. Henry was the senior by six years. It was he who had laid all the foundations. He was everywhere, to an unusual degree, trusted and beloved. If it came to a choice, the post of honour was his, by indubitable right. But the damning fact remained that he was not, never had been, and never could be Dalhousie's man. Which policy was right or wrong does not affect the question. Dalhousie believed in his own policy ; John Lawrence was his man ; and here, at last, was the chance for which he had been waiting. Sir Henry had given himself away ; and Dalhousie promptly took him at his word.

Two days after receiving these letters he wrote :

' It has for some time been the recorded opinion of the Supreme Government that, whenever an opportunity occurred for effecting a change, the administration of the Punjab would best be conducted by a Chief Commissioner, having a Judicial and a Revenue Commissioner under him. But it ~~was~~ also the opinion of the Government that, whenever the change should be made, the Chief Commissioner ought to be an officer of the Civil Service.

' You stand far too high, and have received too many assurances of the great estimation in which your ability and services have been held, to render it necessary that I should bear testimony to the value which has been set upon your labours as the head of the Administration of the Punjab. . . . We do not regard it in any degree disparaging to you, that we, nevertheless, do not consider it expedient to commit the sole executive charge of the administration of a kingdom to any other than to a thoroughly trained and experienced civil officer. . . .

' Your present letter, in which you state that you are willing to accept the Residency of Hyderabad, though by no means desirous of quitting the Punjab, has reopened the question ; and if you are willing to accept Rajputana, retaining your present salary, the Government will be happy to appoint you to it, with a view to effecting the changed form of administration in the Punjab, to which I have already referred.

' The Rajputana Agent marches all the cold weather, and in the hot weather is privileged to retire to Mount Abu. These are considerations which render the appointment agreeable as well as important, though I do not pretend to compare its importance with the Punjab.

' I hope you will be satisfied that the Government has evinced every

desire to treat you with the highest consideration. Although it is not to be expected that you can concur in the view taken regarding the Chief Commissionership, you will at least be convinced that neither I nor my colleagues have any desire of forcing our views into practical operation at the expense of your feelings or doing anything that might discredit your public position. . . .

‘I must take the liberty of adding that, in all our correspondence regarding your differences with John Lawrence, I have always found you acting towards him with frankness and generosity.’

These were the main points in a long letter that amounted to a decree of banishment for the man who desired full control of the Punjab beyond anything in life. Instead he was offered—not a Governorship, nor even Hyderabad, already allocated, but the Agency of Rajputana : in his own bitter phrase, ‘£6,000 a year, to watch the wayward fancies of a score of effete princes.’ Nor could the pill be sugared by the courteous tone, the final tribute, nor even the assurance that, if Sir Thomas Munro himself had been head of the Board, Dalhousie would still have chosen for Chief Commissioner, no other than ‘a thoroughly trained Civil officer.’ That last affected Lawrence like a turning of the knife in his wound. In almost every form of civil post he had done successful work, had trained himself through the doing of it. True, he had never excelled in routine, method or application ; but for twenty years he had filled civil and political posts all over the Punjab and its border ‘as few civilians in India could have filled them.’ There was yet another knife-twist in the sentence that seemed to picture Government as looking for an opportunity to effect a change of administration ; viewing him as the sole impediment.

He did not attempt, when replying, to conceal his twofold mortification. Whereupon, he was politely informed that he had misread the offending sentences ; that he was free to go or stay. But—if he stayed, his brother also would be kept where he was doing such useful work. Seeing that both had said they could not carry on together—‘What was that,’ queried Sir Henry, ‘but a push—ay, a *kick*?’ Free to go or stay was an empty phrase, enabling Dalhousie to assert that he had shelved Lawrence ‘without doing anything ungracious.’

Yet even he might have been impressed, could he have witnessed the stupefying effect of the news that Lawrence was leaving the Punjab, on old and young, soldier and civilian, English and Indian. For Henry and Honoria, a Christmas darkened by suspense, gave place to the saddest New Year they had known since 'Forty-Two. Herbert Edwardes, a strong man of cheerful temperament, wept unashamed over his own loss and the loss to the Province. Lately back from England, he had come over from Jalandhar for Christmas, to introduce Emma to his dearest friends ; and, in his own words,

' a happy visit was heavily clouded by the crash that fell at that time on the Punjab in the loss of Sir Henry Lawrence, who was to be taken from the country he had made his own, from the men he had gathered about him, who had caught from him their inspiration, who felt sure at all times of his support and generous praise. What could the Punjab be to them without their head ? '

From Indians, high and low, came wails of lamentations. Letters of dismay and disbelief poured in from all parts of the kingdom, over which he was to rule no more. Nicholson wrote with a vehemence that meant much from him :

' I don't know how I shall ever get on when you are gone. If there is any work in Rajputana that I am fit for, I wish you would take me with you. I certainly won't stay on this border in your absence. And I am afraid poor little Abbott will soon be driven out of it.'

Then it was Robert Napier—his quietness cloaking a profound sincerity :

' I assure you the news was a very severe blow. . . . I feel as greatly distressed at it . . . as at an act of injustice inflicted on myself. I will not speak of the change to me personally, though it will be a great one. . . . I have no fear whatever for your future career : *one man* may find your independence interferes with his plans ; your value remains and will be appreciated when any emergency arises.'

Edwardes, with his instinct for metaphor, likened the Punjab without Henry Lawrence to ' a watch in which the mainspring was broken.' And the same idea found expression in a letter from Saunders, Deputy Commissioner for Amritsar :

'No other consideration but the most disinterested brotherly love could have induced you to leave the country . . . whose people are attached to you in no ordinary way. . . . You may derive some satisfaction from knowing that this act of self-devotion on your part has raised you to the highest possible position in the hearts of all who know and appreciate your motives. . . . You will be regretted by all. The Sirdars and Jaghirdars will lose in you their only friend and benefactor. . . . Lord Dalhousie, in offering you Rajputana, has struck out the *keystone* of the arch of the Punjab administration.'

Strong words ; but all who had served under Lawrence would have affirmed their truth. And, if those many spontaneous tributes were balm to Henry's hurt spirit, their price, for Honoria, was beyond rubies. She herself copied out a long article from the Lahore paper, as an impersonal estimate of his influence and work. A paragraph must suffice.

'The service of the East India Company has no lack of able and honest men. But Sir Henry's successor can never be to the Punjab what Sir Henry Lawrence has been. Fourteen years of association between a public officer and a people is rarely to be seen nowadays in India. . . . The Sikhs have always known "Lawrence" as a friend ; whether in the Khyber, or at Lahore, or as President. Powerless Sirdars, *jaghirdars* and disbanded soldiers, have found in him a natural representative such as they can find nowhere else ; and must be disfranchised by his loss. . . . But a people's regret is a ruler's reward. Let Sir Henry go where he will, the kindly memory of him and his good deeds, in thousands of Punjab homes, will follow after him as a blessing.'

Part of a long frank letter to Saunders, written this month, throws light on his own state of mind :

'Of course I would rather have remained. There is nothing I would have preferred to unshackled power in the Punjab. But still, it was I who made the offer to go—to Hyderabad, *not* Rajputana. Doubtless it is all for the best. In many respects J. L. is the better man. If he can be persuaded to moderate his tone in some matters, he will make an admirable Governor. I never had that support from the G.G. which could alone have made my position pleasant. I know I am derided as a spendthrift, as caring only for Sirdars and men of rank, whereas I respect their position simply as a matter of justice and policy . . . my own feelings being rather with the poorer, more industrious classes.

‘Rely on it, my dear Saunders, however folks, in smooth weather, may sneer at what is called forbearance and consideration, when the storm comes, then is felt the advantage of having something more than hireling service in favour of Government. I know I have failed, as all of us must, more or less, aliens as we are ; but keeping a good standard before our eyes, we may at least try to do our duty . . . I expect to pass through Amritsar about the 22nd—but I do not feel as if my connection with the Punjab will cease this month. John may be Governor of Agra or Bombay, or he may retire : and unless I much change my sentiments I would not then be unwilling to return.’

Perhaps that lurking, unquenchable hope alone enabled him to pull through the ordeal of such a sending off as men rarely receive anywhere but in India.

On the 19th of January all arrangements had been made for departure ; and he was writing a reply to Dalhousie’s unconvincing assurance as regards the unlucky sentence that still rankled in his mind.

‘I have the honour to acknowledge your Lordship’s letter of the 9th ; and I regret that I have misapprehended the sense in which your letter of the 23rd December uses the expression, “the recorded opinion of the Supreme Government.” The context led me to suppose that there was a recorded opinion of my presence here being the only hindrance to the adoption of an improved administration of the Punjab. I also regret if I expressed myself as to the mistakenly option left me of resigning my position. I am quite aware that your Lordship offers me the choice ; but the views of the Government having been made known, it would be repugnant to my whole nature to remain where I hinder those views.

‘That when a single head should be appointed, I was deemed unfit to be that head, was a mortifying discovery ; and I could not but write as feeling the disappointment, though I hope I expressed myself with due respect. However, if I was before ready to vacate the post here, there are now stronger reasons to request my removal. I therefore at once accepted your Lordship’s offer of Rajputana,

and made my preparations accordingly. . . . I leave Lahore this week.'

To all concerned it must have seemed incredible that the actual end was at hand : the last days and last moments that must be lived through somehow. Honoria's health had been much revived by the autumn trip ; but the shock, the pain and anger she suffered on Henry's account were putting a severe tax on her slender reserve of strength.

And those days of tragedy for Henry—of prevailing woe, tinged with resentment—were not all glory for John. A man in whose nature there was nothing ignoble could not, without a pang, find himself exalted at the expense of a brother he had loyally served for the last seven years, often at the sacrifice of health and his own inclinations. Too well he knew that Henry had rightly hoped and expected to remain ; that his devoted band of officers were all up in arms against Dalhousie's decree ; many wishing to leave the Punjab ; others possibly imputing to him unworthy motives that had never entered his mind. Too clearly all that Henry suffered in silence was written in his eyes ; and John himself—a man of strong, if hidden feeling—could not but suffer also from this tragic parting, from knowledge that the brother, who had been ' Hal ' to him, until these last two years, might now hardly care to meet him again. Only his very few intimates realised a measure of his inner distress during those first weeks of the New Year when the whole Punjab was seething with sorrow or indignation at the loss of a Chief more widely loved than any before or since.

To Nicholson he wrote at once to assure him that although he was losing ' an irreplaceable friend,' he could rely on full support and goodwill from himself : a generous assurance that only drew from Nicholson another letter to Henry. ' I cannot but feel obliged to him, yet I know that, as a kind and considerate patron, *you* are not to be replaced. I would, indeed, gladly go with you, even on reduced allowances. . . . It would do your heart good to hear the Sikhs, in the posts along the border, talk of you. Surely in their gratitude and esteem you have your reward.'

On the last sad day of actual departure, Henry wrote a short farewell letter to John : so ingrained had become their habit of writing rather than speaking on any matters of importance.

‘As this is my last day at Lahore, I venture to offer you a few words of advice which I hope you will take in the spirit it is given ; and that you will believe that, if you preserve the peace of the country and make the people happy, high and low, I shall have no regrets that I vacated the field for you. It seems to me that you look on almost all questions affecting Jaghirdars and pensioners in a perfectly different light from all others ; in fact, that you consider them as nuisances and as enemies. If anything like this be your feeling, how can you expect to do them justice as between man and man ? I am sure if you will put it to yourself in this light, you will be more disposed to take up questions affecting them in a kindly spirit. I think we are doubly bound to treat them kindly *because they are down* and because they and their hangers on have still some influence. . . .

‘I would simply do to them as I would be done by. I by no means say much in favour of most of their characters : I merely advocate their cases on the above grounds. . . . I will not trouble you on other subjects. Wishing you health and all success,

‘Yours affectionately,
‘H. M. L.’

That letter being sent, and all things ready for their long reluctant journey, he knelt down with Honoria for a last prayer in their blank dismantled bedroom—and prayed, with the simplicity of a child, for a blessing on John’s administration. It was of this last act that Herbert Edwardes afterwards wrote to Nicholson : ‘We who know all that they felt, the passionate fire and earnestness of both their natures, her intense love and admiration of him, whose fame was the breath of her nostrils, must see, in the victory of that prayer, one of the finest and loveliest pictures our lives can ever know.’

It was a characteristic ‘Amen’ to his long and faithful service. After it they went out and took their leave of all.

Sikhs and chiefs and Punjabis, assembled to do him

wonour, wept without shame, and refused to let him go unattended. Many rode with him and the few special fought who were escorting him on his way. Behind them a losing ing cavalcade, old and young, followed after for many battle—five, ten and even twenty—loth to return and see his face is more. They had nothing to gain from him. His sun had seno But in no other way could they show their grief and gratitudownd deep respect to him who had been ‘the friend of everyone who was down . . . who got a little more for everyone, and fought every losing battle for the old chiefs and jaghirdars, even against his own interests.’

So they followed and followed till their horses or country ‘tats’¹ could no more, ‘a living funeral procession from Lahore nearly to Amritsar.’ There he stayed with Charles Saunders, Deputy Commissioner ; and there more sorrowing folk came to bless him and bid him God-speed. One who was present, as a young civilian, has left a vivid record of that unforgettable scene ; a tribute to the

‘marvellous sway exercised by Sir Henry over classes of men differing widely in every feeling except love for him.

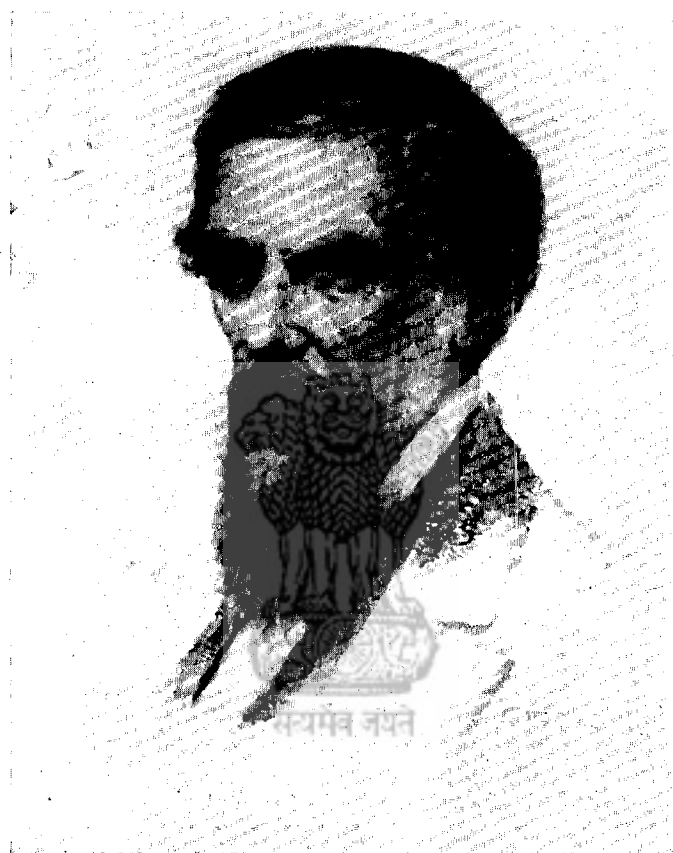
‘There were the conquerors and the conquered—some of the best specimens of English gentlemen, with the roughest of Asiatic chiefs, all alike lamenting the departure of the man who seemed to be the personal friend of each one. Charles Saunders had his large house so crammed with visitors, that he and Mrs. Saunders had taken up their quarters in a tent on the flat roof of their own house. There was an even larger throng of native Chiefs from all over the Punjab, who watched his every footstep and pressed to get a last word, even a last look, from their departing Hakīm. It was impossible to say—whether natives or Englishmen were the more zealous to show their respect and love.’

The last of his personal friends to tear himself away was Colonel Robert Napier, to whom he was dearer than a brother. Affectionately he took his leave : and when it came to Charlotte Lawrence—‘Kiss him,’ said Henry. ‘He is my best and dearest friend.’

Then he, too, was gone ; and the three of them were left to pursue their way alone.

Thus, after fourteen years of love and labour unceasing,

¹ Ponies.



BRIGADIER-GENERAL.
SIR. HENRY MONTGOMERY LAWRENCE, K.C.B.

1806--57.

Bengal Horse Artillery.
Died of wounds at Lucknow.

Henry Lawrence passed out of his kingdom, 'dented all over,' in Edwardes' phrase, 'with defeats and disapprovals'—honourable scars, gained in battling for the rights of others would those whom he had at once ruled and served, saw his been no more.

Perhaps there has been no individual exodus quite like it, no truer estimate of the man than that of John's biographer. And John himself would have endorsed every word :

'Take him all in all, no Englishman in India has ever influenced other men so much for good ; nobody has done so much towards bridging the gulf that separates race from race and creed from creed ; nobody has ever been so beloved, or ever deserved to be so beloved, as Sir Henry Lawrence.'





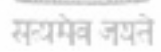
सत्यमेव जयते

PHASE EIGHT
'ADVENTURE BRAVE AND NEW'
(1853-1857)

*From beginning to end, this was the salt of life ;
This have I thought and sung, this have I known and proved—
That, whatever end there be to the blindness and the strife,
It is well to have loved.*

Gerald Gould.





सत्यमेव जयते

BEHIND them lay the Punjab, loved more than any region of earth ; before them Rajputana, the vast desert country as large as France : ‘ twenty sovereign states ’—in Sir Henry’s own phrase—‘ as old as the sun and moon, but with none of the freshness of either orb.’ Over these, as Agent to the Governor-General, he was to exercise a limited measure of control. At Dalhousie’s decree he must exchange a land where he knew the work and had countless friends, for an unknown land full of strangers, except for the welcome presence of George, lately transferred from Peshawar to the Residency of Udaipur.

Though the worst wrench was over when they left Lahore and Amritsar, they did not leave the Punjab till near the middle of February. At Agra, Honoria must face the wrench of parting with her eight-year-old Harry, who had endured his fill of India’s climate and insidious influences. Henry—in his concern for her—had suggested keeping him another year, in the good climate of Abu. But she had seen too often the effects of children remaining over long in India ; and she loved her boy too genuinely to keep him even for one more year. An escort had been found : and by some means she must steel her heart against his tears and pleadings. When they left Agra, he travelled down to Calcutta—and she never saw him again. For consolation, she had her little Honie : and every post still brought fresh tributes to Henry. A civilian wrote in dismay at the news : ‘ Your name is essentially Punjabi. You will find nothing to fill your ambition among the descendants of the Moon.’

And Nicholson, the bereft, was writing again : ‘ Certainly if good wishes are of any use—the sun of your prosperity will not cease to shine. I don’t know how to say all I would, but I hope you will be able to imagine it.’

Not less welcome was a note to Honoria herself from the devoted John Becher : ' The loss of Sir Henry will be felt as a blow through the whole Punjab. For myself I wish I could throw down sword (!) and pen here, and follow one who has ever been to me the kindest of friends——'

And inevitably there were articles in various Indian papers, some laudatory, some adverse, in the petty personal fashion of the day. None knew better than Honoria how they hurt Henry—those malicious mosquito-bites ; and in one case she vigorously took up the cudgels herself ; the only surviving expression of her own strong feeling on that painful subject.

' There is much justice in your remarks on the greater efficiency of a Government with one head : what I demur at is that the members of the late Board should be praised at the expense of their President, although Sir Henry Lawrence may well say to those who come after him : " Except ye had ploughed with my oxen, ye had not found out the riddle." The knowledge that he won during his years of hard labour among the Sikhs, is the inheritance his successors take up. You concede to him this experience, but you couple it with the suggestion, " perhaps his very sympathy with native dynasties and native ideas may have slightly diminished his desire for improvements."

' Whereon do you found this statement ? The character Sir Henry Lawrence has long borne, among those with whom he has worked, is rather that of an enthusiast, urging on improvements for which the people were not yet ripe. What indeed but the springtide of enthusiasm could have floated him over the obstacles he has met since he first showed the people of the Punjab by what spirit a civilised and Christian Government was actuated ? He has lived to see many a plan, at first derided as visionary, proved practicable and useful ; as many another will so be found, long after he has passed away.

' If the new doctrine holds that sympathy with a people unfits a man to rule them, then indeed Sir Henry Lawrence has shown himself unfit for his position. If it be unlike an English gentleman, to consider the rank and feelings of other men, irrespective of colour, or language, then truly has he renounced his birthright, to adopt native

ideas. Twenty years of varied civil experience have given Sir Henry Lawrence a rare knowledge of these people's language and character, their wants and wrongs, the good and the evil that our system has introduced among them. I watch the conduct of the English in India, from the private soldier to the general officer—from the clerks to the Judge; and I see prevalent the spirit that talks of the “black fellows,” that assumes—perhaps unconsciously—that the Natives are very much in our way, in their own country, except so far as they may be turned to our comfort or aggrandisement. It therefore provokes me to see the slender appreciation of a man who uses his authority as a trust, on behalf of the people, so strangely brought under our rule.’

Directly they entered Rajputana, Lawrence set to work in his rapid fashion; paid flying visits to Jaipur, Jodhpur, Alwar and Bhurtpur, that would give him a working idea of the Princes and their kingdoms. To the surprise of Rajahs and Political Agents, he visited not only the palaces, but schools and jails—one of his chief crusades in the Punjab. Wherever they halted, he would make straight for the jail, and rage against the conditions that prevailed: sixty to sixty-five men crammed into a space barely adapted for thirty; prisoners chained up at night so that the guard might sleep sound. Even in a jail hospital he found patients chained together, because there were no doors to the ramshackle place. The doctor, it seemed, had protested in vain. Clearly there would be work enough among these backward princes of high lineage, who must be firmly yet tactfully constrained to see the error of their ways.

On March the 4th, John's birthday, he wrote a friendly line of greeting to his victorious brother, from Ajmir.

To Montgomery, he wrote also, in a friendlier strain:

‘The sad and provoking thing was, when there was so much on which we agreed, that we should wear out our hearts in mere matters of detail. You expressed regret—no doubt sincere—at my having proposed to the Governor-General to remove me from the Punjab: and perhaps I too bitterly replied that I did not regret the step. I may

now add that there was scarcely a month, since annexation passed, that I did not suffer more annoyance than in any whole year of my previous career : . . . You were right in supposing I had little to expect from his Lordship ; though I *had* a right to expect more courtesy and consideration in carrying out the change. But enough : my wife told you we should bring away no angry feelings. We are sorry, not angry ; and our best wishes are for the prosperity of all Punjāb undertakings and for the happiness of you one and all.

‘ H. M. L.’

Honoria, meantime, had been writing to Emma Edwardes, a young wife, suddenly uprooted from her first home, by a Government order bidding Edwardes ‘ take over ’ Hazāra, at ten days’ notice, from poor little Abbott, on whom the axe had fallen without warning. All the new treasures to be sold, or crammed into cases and jolted on the backs of camels. No prospect of a house at Hazāra ; no white woman having ever invaded the region. The familiar tale drew from Honoria a letter full of sympathy tinged with humour :

‘ MY DEAR EMMA,—

‘ You have been very often in my thoughts . . . It seems a formidable thing for you to go to so lonely a place, without a house fit to receive you ; for Herbert would never put you into Major Abbott’s den—a mud umbrella, surrounded by stagnant water and filthy huts, with an exhilarating view of the gallows standing amid rice swamps ! The want of a dwelling at Hazāra will make your going to the hills a “ must ” ; and a timely sojourn in a good climate will help you to weather out your Indian days. The uprooting from Jalandhar is sad work. I feel for you as I did for myself in 1838, when I thought we should have years of comfort, with Alick then just born. My household gods were not so pretty as yours ; but I well remember the pain of giving them up. The effect of the lesson has been to bind me closer to that within which makes the home. . . . You are one who wants another to turn to in trouble ; a more amiable nature than mine. For, if I cannot have my husband and

children, I would fain go, like a wild beast into a den, and howl it out alone.'

In some such mood she must have felt, at the time, over her own more tragic uprooting. In her expressive phrase, she had to keep her finger 'tight pressed over the wound, or it would start bleeding afresh.'

Two weeks they halted at Ajmir, and there Henry—after weeks of brooding—unburdened his mind to Lord Hardinge in a long letter, ending in a statement of his own case and a generous tribute to John :

'I am quite ready to allow that my brother is well qualified for the post ; but his special fitness is—not that he is a civilian, but that he would make a good soldier. I think the Governor-General has gone ahead twenty years too fast ; that already we have too many civilians, too much of Regulations in the Punjab—that the proper men for it are Edwardes, Nicholson, Taylor and others of that stamp : . . . men who will mix freely with the people and do prompt justice in their shirt-sleeves. . . . It seems to me the merest prejudice to say—I am not fit to be at the head of the Administration—which I have, with perfect success, been conducting for the last six years. I have kept the peace. Had the peace not been kept, perhaps I should have been more heard of. . . . I feel I have been very egotistical. But I must stop. . . .'

By early April they had marched, here and there, over twelve hundred miles, and were at last settled in the new home at Mount Abu, a spur of the Aravalli range, the only water-shed in Rajputana. No likeness here to the Himalayas ; no *khuds* and deodars, 'no eagles sailing in the vast blue, no glorious background of snows.' But here were Honoria's old friends the bamboo and mango and banyan, set among beetling rocks, honeycombed with caves—one of the holiest places of pilgrimage in all India. The people, as wild as the country, were mainly Bhils, an aboriginal tribe portrayed by the immortal babu as 'very like a black man, only much more hairy. If you meet him, he stabs you with a javelin and flings your body in a ditch. By this you know

the Bhil': posthumous knowledge of doubtful use to the traveller.

Their house, perched above the rock-girdled lake, she charmingly described in a letter to Alick.

'Our house here stands on a granite rock, round the edge of which are some flower-beds, not much bigger than cheese-cakes. With diligent watering, these produce roses, geraniums, passion flowers and one thriving honeysuckle. From our bedroom is a door leading into a little thatched verandah and out into the tiny garden. Here I greatly enjoy sitting, looking down into the lake, surrounded by rock and wood. I like to watch the kites sailing in circles, and the busy little swallows skimming among them unmolested. Then we have a lovely little humming bird, that hovers like a butterfly over a flower, plunges in its long slender beak, and sucks the honey. Altogether there is great happiness here, of which the greatest to me is the tranquillity, and enjoyment of your father's society such as we have never known since we left Nepal.'

Socially, Abu had all the faults of a small Indian station packed close on its rocky plateau. But it possessed the great merit for Honoria, that most of Henry's work could be done under his own roof. True, he must dash down the hill at intervals to reason with some quarrelsome Rajah or confer with George at Udaipur. But in the main he worked by correspondence; and she—copying endless letters into his book—noted, with a pang, how constantly he dwelt upon the ungracious manner in which he had been 'elbowed' out of the Punjab. Especially that 'cant phrase,' a 'trained civilian,' seemed to stick in his mind, like a poisoned arrow in a wound. He wrote of it to Sir James Hogg—Court of Directors, who had promised him a writer-ship for Alick—soon to be fifteen:

'As to the cant phrase about "a trained civilian," I can only say that, having had to put my own shoulder to the wheel, I have had the best sort of training. I know of no single instance of a man who, for six years, *successfully* administered a province like the Punjab, being rewarded by the Governor-General whom he had served—as I have been.'

He wrote of it, by inference, to Lord Stanley, with whom he had parted on very friendly terms :

‘Here I am seven hundred miles off, dealing with a perfectly different people : descendants of the sun and moon ; proud of their antiquity as the Sikhs were of their parvenuism. Some men would like the change. I do *not*. I should prefer to have something more satisfactory to do for my six thousand a year. We have both often thought and talked of New Zealand since you left us. I would gladly go there as Governor, with a view to eventually settling there. More than ever I feel that my career in India had better close.’

Nor was his galling sense of having been ‘let down’ mitigated by the discovery that the Agent whom he replaced had actually been pressed by Dalhousie to accept Hyderabad, though reluctant to move, on account of health, and the fact that he had only one more year to serve in India. Lawrence, in such circumstances, may be forgiven for his bitter comment on the transaction : ‘As I have now eaten all the dirt that the Governor-General has been pleased to offer me, I will try to be content where I am for the short remaining period of my service.’

Though he told himself and others, that he had ‘no wish to be considered a man with a grievance,’ the fact remained that he had suffered a grievous hurt, that he found his present duties insignificant and uninteresting, compared with the ‘noble field of usefulness’ from which he had been turned away. And he had barely been a month at Abu, when he found himself once more in collision with Dalhousie over the threat of a minor annexation.

A certain young Rajah of Karauli—a small Rajput state—had died at fifteen, having adopted, during his illness, an infant son descended from a common ancestor. The keen eye of Lord Dalhousie had detected legal irregularities that might justify absorbing the little state into greater British India. But his Council had been divided ; and the question had been referred to the Directors in England. Meantime the principal chiefs—fearful of British designs—had chosen, as their Rajah, a grown man of the same

lineage, a choice approved by Lawrence in the interests of the State. So when the time came for decision, he found himself opposed to both authorities—to Dalhousie in respect of annexation ; to the Directors, who favoured the infant. But on this occasion, Lord Dalhousie did not prevail. Decision was finally given in favour of the grown man ; and Lawrence must be off to see him installed.

Very soon, he became almost as popular among those Rajput princes as among the northern Sirdars : through his courtesy and frankness, his singular understanding of the Oriental mind. The Karauli decision had allayed prevailing fears of Dalhousie's policy ; had proved the advent of a *régime* at once kindly in spirit and unflinching in justice. He owed much, in many ways, to his own fine and just phrase, 'It is the due admixture of romance and reality that best carries a man through life.' The Punjab had given him stern reality. Rajasthan gave him romance, at its worst and best. Had he come earlier, among these men of legendary lineage, he might have done wonders for them. But his years among them were few, and he had left his heart elsewhere.

It was good to be working again with his favourite brother, George. Both men used all their personal influence for the abolition of *sati* and child-murder ; for the humanising of jails in every State. 'No officer seems ever before to have been into one of these dens,' Henry wrote to Kaye. 'I found that the Jaipur Agent had not even been into the dispensary.' And he could never leave ill alone. After his first rapid tour, he had surprised both Princes and politicals by speaking his mind on that unregarded subject.

To opium-sodden Rajahs, he sent outspoken circulars, urging that prisoners should at least be classified ; should be allowed ventilation and the commonest human decencies. The Princes had simply not thought of such things. Their 'faces were blackened' ; and many were stirred to practical response. At Udaipur two hundred prisoners were released ; and the wealthier Princes proposed to build new jails ; no stimulant like a spirit of emulation. Where most men would have shrugged their shoulders and talked of the unchanging

East, Lawrence took bulls by their horns : and, more often than not, he was justified of his courage.

Nor was he forgotten by the men for whom he had fought a losing fight in the north. One day among his crowd of petitioners, there came smiling and salaaming towards him three small Punjabi landowners, who had tramped some seven hundred miles from Ferōzpur, to consult their Burra Sahib friend about certain boundary disputes and other land troubles. Only one who intimately knew their way of life could realise the loss entailed in money and time ; could fully appreciate—as he did—their simple confidence in his will and power to help. Though he could give them little but advice, they were overjoyed to see him once more.

Early in July, he was writing again to Lord Hardinge ; a long letter not quite free from his grievance, but mainly dealing with larger issues ; with practical suggestions for Indian Army reform that were decades ahead of his time. He urged the need for giving chances of higher promotion to Ressaldars and Subadars, to ‘even the one bolder, more ambitious spirit that must exist in every hundred.’ He would also have favoured openings for Adjutant or second-in-command to picked Native Officers.

‘Such a dream,’ he admitted, ‘may seem over-liberal, because we have gone on a different system. But *how* we have gone on—your lordship knows. I only wish those in power would deal with the Army for *futurity*.’ But like most far-seeing men, he spoke to deaf ears.

And again he harped on the indelible insult : ‘John Lawrence is, perhaps, next to Thomason, the best civilian on this side, the best man they could choose for a minor Presidency ; . . . and *I* would rather be C.C. of Punjab than hold any other office in India. Indeed, it will be difficult to wipe out the insult I have received, except by replacing me there.’

Nothing less could ease his inner ache. Instead—out of the blue came a letter from Dalhousie offering him, at this late hour, the Residency of Hyderabad ; Colonel Low’s health having failed—as anticipated. This post, that would have eased his exodus from the Punjab, was offered him in

flattering terms, after he had endured the vexation and cost of the move to Abu. He had wished for it then, as being the most important post available. Now—the damage had been done, the advantages of undesired Abu fully proven. And since the offer was coupled with an option to refuse, Lawrence did not hesitate to decline the honour, by return *dāk*, on the triple score of health, climate, and cost of the move; nor did he honestly feel up to tackling another unknown region. He had, by now, schooled himself into a measure of content; and from afar he could still keep in touch with Punjab affairs—the commanding interest of his life.

He had lately written a long letter to Raikes at Amritsar, on the evils of alienating Sikh chiefs who had undeniably done what they could, after conquest, to help the conquerors:

‘It is easy now to sneer at them, and ask what good they did us? They did as much *as we allowed them to do*. Many of them would and could have done much more, had they been permitted. . . . And any kindness you can show to any old Durbar people will be accepted as a kindness to myself. It is the most extraordinary policy, on a war-like frontier, to leave ourselves without one well-wisher and trust entirely to bayonets.’

As regards the policy he deplored, his generous spirit must have been cheered by the knowledge—if he ever did know—that his very absence from the Punjab was tending to bring about the change of attitude for which he had pleaded in his parting letter to John. Whether from natural human perversity or some deeper cause, there were many who detected palpable signs of Henry’s influence modifying John’s administration, once he was cased from the ill effects of constant friction. Even in the vexed question of *jaghirs* and pensioners, he tended to deal more liberally with the very class he had opposed in Henry’s day. Those who knew and admired both brothers recognised that no mere perversity, but release from tension and a basic likeness between them, wrought the increasing and enduring change not only in John’s policy, but in himself.

‘Without losing a particle of his energy’—wrote one of them—‘his independence and his zeal, he did lose something of his roughness, of the brusque manner that to many seemed hard, even harsh ; did in fact succeed to many of the graces of his lost brother.’ In effect the province that brother had started so brilliantly had caught from him an imperishable spark of life. Nor was there any taint of exaggeration in the simple statement : ‘It is, I believe, true that the influence of Henry Lawrence was greater on his brother, and was even more felt through the Punjab, after he had left the country for ever.’¹

Henry Lawrence, in his time, enjoyed many triumphs : but this unrealised triumph of the spirit—springing from apparent failure—excels them all.

¹ Bosworth Smith.



OUT of their darkest new year blossomed a spring and summer that were, on the whole, happier for Honoria Lawrence than she could have believed in January. Though Mount Abu was not comparable to Kashmir, its tumbled masses of granite gave it a wilder, more rugged aspect that carried her back to her beloved Innishowen. There, a lonely young Honoria had dreamed of life and love, untroubled by knowledge of reality. Here, the older woman had leisure to look back on both ; and—in spite of lost illusions, much rough going and chasms of separation—she could say from her heart, ‘ the face of God is a rock, but the face of the rock is fair.’

The happy, free-wandering girl, with her bright curls, her natural wit and charm, had blossomed into a gracious woman of five-and-forty, already assuming the prescribed Victorian dress and habits of early middle age ; the golden hair, dulled and demurely parted under a bonnet-shaped cap, with a frilled rosette over each ear ; the inevitable shawl draped round her shoulders ; a tempered Honoria, who had ‘ warmed both hands at the fire of life,’ and had many times confronted death. Yet the same unconquered spirit looked out of her blue eyes ; the quick response to beauty, outward and inward, was still a lamp to her feet ; her religious faith and undimmed love a light to her path. Age had matured her shrewd critical faculty, her warm-hearted interest in men and things. And, during those peaceful summer months, her health seemed to revive past all expectation. Once again she was facing the prospect of another child ; no light matter at forty-five. But she would not let anxiety mar a time so full of quiet happiness that she could even rejoice at having left Lahore.

In June she was more than usually well ; and they two

in consequence more than normally happy, with a good deal of pleasant reading together on wet evenings. They were working again at articles for the *Calcutta Review*; and a living picture stamps itself on the mind of Lawrence, sitting in the drawing-room, writing at railway speed, littering the floor round his chair with loose sheets, to the silent dismay of Charlotte and the probable delight of his small daughter.

But, in August, Honoria was struck down again by a sudden and dangerous illness, that threatened to make an end of her hopes, even of her life. Happily, their Residency doctor was no Christie. Between his skill and her vitality the threat was averted; and the reviving autumn air of the hills gave her back a measure of strength. While she was still very ill, and Henry sat beside her writing to John Nicholson, she wished to have her share in the letter.

‘Tell him I love him very dearly, as if he were my son, I know he is noble—and thinks not of himself, but tell him he is a sinner; that he will one day be as weak and near death as I am . . . I often think of all those fine fellows in the Punjab, what our example should have been to them, and how we have neglected them.’

Even illness never seemed to check her natural activity of mind, her constant thought for others. But whatever she could do to help Henry came before all else.

By the middle of October she was facing the bitter fact that she could scarcely expect to win through her coming ordeal. ‘I have no feeling that can be called presentiment about my confinement,’ she wrote. ‘But my reasonable conviction is that I am likely to die then.’

Possibly that conviction inspired a brief but fervent religious exhortation to her sons, beginning:

‘MY BELOVED SONS,—

‘My heart is very full of what I would fain say to you, though strength is lacking. But my letters for the last five years have left a record which I hope may come home to your hearts as you grow older.’

Followed a moving appeal—over the heads of nine and

fifteen—to which Henry added a short postscript, bidding them remember ‘how much your mother’s happiness—indeed her very life—is in your hands.’

Later on—they may have understood.

As autumn gave place to winter, her strength seemed to ebb with the ebbing year ; and in December she privately noted down certain wishes for Henry’s guidance—afterwards.

‘ Let my grave be as low and plain as possible ; the simple inscription and a text from Daniel ix : “ To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him.” ’ The choice and the admission were characteristic of one who had been no meek, acquiescing Christian : one who, from early days, had always questioned and often rebelled. She would admit it even on her gravestone, where pious insincerity too often prevails over truth. Of her personal property she mentioned only ‘ My large Kashmir shawl for Honie ; my underclothes for Charlotte—she can wear them without Henry seeing them ’ : a thoughtful touch that must have contracted his heart. Her few small legacies were followed by an ‘ earnest desire ’ that her sons, before marrying, should insure their lives, ‘ because without something of the sort, no man is justified in marrying. I know the temptations of abundant worldly goods, but I also know the temptations of penury ; how the thoughts are held to earth by having to look twice at every shilling.’

Christmas came with another birthday, another New Year : and on the 5th of January she was inditing a different kind of letter to her boys, dictated by their very intelligent small sister not yet four years old. The set phrases—‘ Every day I say my lessons, very good—and I don’t mind about it ’—ending in a few quaint fragments of information from a creature who was already a horsewoman in her degree :

‘ Alick and Harry’s *kutch* black mule is here. I do not ride on it ; because one day I was frightened of it. It was very naughty. It standed with two feet. No more. Nothing else. Yes, about Auntie’s White Horse. I saw one day it jumped—it *did*. I sometimes jump too.

‘ HONORIA LETTIA LAWRENCE.’

Less than a week later she became so seriously ill that Henry himself must now face the terrible truth ; but she, who had faced it long since, did not speak of it to him, knowing that it was more than he could bear. For her, there was very real comfort in the thought that Charlotte—devoted to Honie—would wisely and tenderly mother her child.

One day she spoke of a great longing to see her dearest friend in India, a Mrs. Hill, who was happily not out of reach. At once Henry sent for her ; and she came with all haste, arriving on the 13th to find Honoria weak and in pain, but sufficiently herself, to be overjoyed at sight of her.

‘I have been longing to see you,’ was her greeting. ‘Thank God you have not come too late !’

When the two were left together, Honoria spoke calmly of the coming child, as though there were still hope for the event ; and as she had not yet engaged a nurse, Mrs. Hill jokingly offered her services.

Honoria was delighted. ‘You shall be my “*Belaiti Ayah*”—what wages ? To start with, I will drop Mrs. Hill and call you Kate !’

Cheered by her friend’s presence, she refused to be left alone, though orders had been strict as to a short interview.

‘Henry won’t mind how long you stay,’ she urged, ‘when he sees how it revives me to have you here. You must come in any time—any time. There are very few that Henry could bear to have in the house just now. You are one. And I am glad—glad.’

But the lift of her spirit could only give her passing ease. After a wretched night of pain and sickness, she could hardly greet the welcome friend. When she revived again, they talked of the strange and wonderful scenery of Mount Abu, so unlike the Himalayas. Mrs. Hill, on the march up, had been impressed by an immense banyan tree, sending down roots from its branches, living on to see its children for many generations.

And Honoria said, ‘I never thought of it like that. The banyan seems to me always as if it were putting out feelers

for some blessing not yet attained—for ever seeking something this world cannot bestow.'

Her tone and her after-silence gave Mrs. Hill an impression that she saw the tree as an emblem of herself and her ever-seeking spirit.

That afternoon she flagged again ; and at times her mind seemed to be wandering. She spoke of her boys and her longing for the fortnightly English mail that must surely have arrived. Henry had not told her ; and she had not asked for the letters, wishing him to do what he thought best for her. But she knew they must be there ; and she longed for them. Both Kate and Dr. Ebdon assured her that the mail had not yet arrived ; yet still she doubted, knowing it was due.

Looking from one to the other, as if she would read their thoughts, she said at last with a flickering smile : ' Well, you two speak the truth—as much as most people. So I suppose I must believe you.'

Absolved, they told her frankly that the mail had been delayed. She should have her letters directly they came.

That evening she begged Kate to stay with her till midnight, when Charlotte would take her place. They talked peacefully and quietly ; Honoria asking after Colonel Napier and Mr. Montgomery ; constantly reverting to the one who dominated her thoughts ; murmuring at intervals ' My Henry—my dear love—'

And Mrs. Hill—telling him all afterwards—declared with perfect truth, ' I don't believe she really ever thought of anyone else.' The moment she seemed a little better, she would say at once, ' Tell Henry I am easier.' But Henry knew, by then, that there could be no real hope of reprieve. He spent most of his time in the cold thatched verandah, outside her room, where he could hear her voice.

There was urgent need for his presence at Udaipur, but he could not bring himself to leave her, even for a day or two, lest he return to find her spirit flown. And she herself confessed to Kate how she had longed to speak of it and beg him not to go ; but, even in extremity, she would not swerve from her wifely resolve never—God helping her—

to hold him back from his duty. Now she had her reward ; and the happiness of it put more life into her—she vowed—than all the champagne she had been begging the doctor to give her.

But her small store of strength was ebbing, like an outgoing tide. About midnight she simply and frankly told her heart-broken husband that in twelve hours' time she would be gone from him.

Before midday her spirit passed—and he was left alone. . . .

That first and saddest night, he kept vigil with her who had never failed him in more than sixteen years of marriage.

Still sitting beside her, at five o'clock in the dark and cold of a January morning, he was writing of her to their sons, whose longed-for letters had arrived just two hours after her death.

'Alone with your dear Mother I passed the night. Now—having read some of the Psalms she loved best and prayed near her pillow—I take up this letter to you, my sons ; especially to you, dear Alick, for you are at an age to know what you have lost. . . . Mama has gone without fulfilling the wish of her heart—the wish once more to see you and bless you. It has pleased God to deprive her of this earthly joy, to leave you and me and many others without the light of her lovely and loving influence. . . .'

During the next five days, at intervals, he wrote fragments of this first long letter to his boys ; a letter poignantly frank and simple in its avowal of his own pain, his unquenchable hope and faith, his exhortations—especially to Alick—that they would quit them like men, and be strong ; bidding them think of her always ; 'for you can hardly go wrong if her image is in your hearts. . . . Remember her with love ; and show your love by your acts. Few boys ever had such a mother.'

Sincerely he would have affirmed the few lines written of her by Herbert Edwardes after his own death : 'In sickness and sorrow, she had disciplined herself more than he had ; and as they walked along their entirely happy

way, she went before, as it were, and carried the lamp. So she arrived first at the end of the journey—and dear heart-broken Lawrence was left alone.'

Yet not altogether alone. Belief in immortality apart, she was one of those rare spirits who do not die with their death. For him, the lamp that she had carried before him all their days was alight for evermore.



IT was a changed Henry Lawrence—changed in aspect and in spirit—who faced the few years of life that remained to him. Though, in time, he recovered his surface cheerfulness, his flashes of humour, some vital spark seemed to have been extinguished on that sad 15th of January, 1854; a change only discernible to those who had known him in younger, happier days. Herbert Edwardes, writing of the earlier Lawrence as ‘*emphatically a good man, influencing all for good,*’ added the characteristic touch: ‘*But how much of the man there was in him. How unsubdued he was. How his great purposes, his fierce will, generous impulses and strong passions raged within him, making him the fine, genuine character we knew. . . . He had not yet been tempered, as it was meant that he should be.*’

With the loss of her, on whom he had depended more than he knew, the tempering was complete; and again it was Edwardes who noted that ‘*his character came out of that fire refined and sweet to a degree that we never saw before. . . . Grief made him grey and worn, but it became him like the scars of battle. . . . The great change was in his spirit. . . .*’

To others he gave the same impression. Behind all his cheerfulness and active interest, the real man seemed already to be living in another world. Yet his ingrained tendency to overwork brain and body was, if anything, intensified by the blank in his personal life, the bitterness of a grief not untinged with rebellion.

To his son Alick, he wrote from camp, five weeks after his loss:

‘I have already (8 a.m.) travelled on elephants and horseback, twenty miles to-day. To do this, I got up at

half-past one. Now, when I have breakfasted, I shall be busy with people all day, then move on twelve miles in the evening. It is good for me to be very busy and to move about. Not that company or change of scene can make me forget that I have no wife, and you have no mother. I am wrong. We have her in heaven. Her prayers and blessings are with you still.'

Fortunate they who can genuinely so believe.

Daily he communed with her spirit. Daily went alone to the beautiful burial ground at Mount Abu, where she had been laid, with the simple stones at her head and her feet; the last inscribed with her chosen text. Round the railed enclosure sprang six tall poplars, apt symbols of her aspiring mind and spirit. There, beside the iron railings, he would stand with bowed head, would imbibe, as it were, 'a fresh draught from the bitter waters of unavailing sorrow; then return to his endless round of work; to his house, always full of visitors; always at command of those who came to Mount Abu without friends or introductions.' Yet to John Kaye, he wrote feelingly, 'My house is dark indeed.'

In a measure the darkness was lightened by his four-year-old daughter, whom he described to her brothers as 'a very precious little thing, clever and self-willed; a sun-beam running in and out of my room all day; more intelligent than many children twice her age. Takes care of me, helps me to dress, tells me not to walk on the grass for fear of snakes! Everyone likes her.'

And through her father the child continued her dictated letters to those far-off brothers, quaintly introducing herself to them:

'I am their little sister. Ask them—when they see a picture of this little girl, will they know it? The little girl has brown hair and curls tied at the side. She has a fat face; and Captain Brian is going to make her picture. But she mustn't frown, or there will be no eyes in the picture . . . and her name is Honoria Letitia Lawrence. Three kisses and plenty of tickles for my brothers. That's all—*bus*!'¹ Say that—*bus*. Now the letter is finished. Ask them why they don't answer my letters. Not kind of them—write that. I am their dear little sister,
HONIE LAWRENCE.'

¹ Enough—finished.

If Honie was the gleam of light, Alick—his mother’s treasure—seemed like to prove a disappointment ; had, in fact made such poor progress at Rugby, that he had been removed and handed over to a tutor. Even so, there seemed small hope of his passing into Addiscombe ; nor did the disability appear to trouble him. In May of that sad year, his father wrote frankly of his disappointment :

‘ I was only a few months older than you are now, when I passed *out* of it. Had I failed in that examination, I would have felt vexed and ashamed. You expect much from your father ; surely, my dear Alick, I have a right to expect much from my son. I will not say more now. I am sorry to be so often lecturing you. I would much prefer to praise.’

He now wrote often to Kate Hill ; confessing his religious doubts and difficulties ; frankly admitting that he hardly knew what he believed or disbelieved. Beyond everything he craved the assurance of a future with her who had gone on before and left him desolate. Above all he was grateful to Mrs. Hill for her sketch of Honoria’s serene face, before it was taken from him for ever. It had grieved him that he possessed no picture of her, except the miniature of a girl with fair curls and proudly carried head, that he had worn always for more than twenty years night and day. Delighted with Mrs. Hill’s achievement, he had arranged for her to take the sketch Home ; had commissioned Richmond, the portrait painter, to copy it—as he eventually did, and the resulting portrait was hung in Burlington House.

During this first year of loneliness and depression, Lawrence took up his writing again with renewed zest. His mind, released from the stress of active administration, was free to range over wide problems : the Crimean War, now agitating England—and India hardly less ; a military system rotten at the core ; and, not least, the chaotic state of Oudh, flagrantly ill governed by a King whose rule has been described as ‘ an orgy of massacre set to music ’ ; robber barons terrorising his peasants ; the British Resident

powerless to intervene. Yet Sir William Sleeman, a former Resident, saw annexation as a false solution. And Henry Lawrence in 'Fifty-Four' was writing to Lord Stanley on the same vexed question, in blunt phrases such as he could use at need :

'You ask me how long Oudh and Hyderabad are to last? It is the fashion to cry out for their annexation . . . and bad as we are, I believe we are better than any native ruler of the present age; but that does not justify us in picking their pockets. The Oudh treaty permits us to take over the management of the country, if necessary. But it is a novel mode of protection to seize it for ourselves. . . . We can protect and help the peasants, without putting their rents into our own pockets. . . . I am, however, in a terrible minority. The Army, Civil Service, Press and Governor-General are all against me. I still say—look at our treaties. We have no right to make one day and break the next.'

With equal vigour he insisted on the wisdom and common justice of dealing liberally with obvious causes for discontent in the Bengal army :

'We ought either to disband the army,' was his drastic conclusion, 'or open our posts of honour to its more aspiring members. We act contrary to common sense in supposing that the present system can end in anything but a convulsion. We are lucky in its having lasted so long.'

But if none heeded his unworldly wisdom, there was plentiful scope, in his pleasant backwater, for adding lustre to the British name, and helping his fellows, brown or white. For years he had given away a third of his income to societies or individuals and to his Military School at Sanāwar. A third was set aside for his children, a third sufficed for his simple needs and unbounded hospitality. No success or high salary could ever make a rich man of him. But having now, with John's help, saved £20,000 for his children, he felt justified in helping all and sundry, as he delighted to do. There was the stray subaltern to whom he lent four thousand rupees, with small hope of

seeing it again. There were officers, overdrawn at the Agra bank, to whom he lent money for clearing themselves, at a nominal rate of interest. Many times he paid for the passage of widows returning to England, that they might use the sum granted by Government for their expenses on arrival. Already he had started the second Military School at Abu, for soldiers' children in Bombay, supported by that Government and helped by all his good friends in Rajputana. Morning and evening he would visit the temporary houses and make friends with the happy youngsters ; 'running races with them, or letting them drive him, in a game of horses, all about their playground'—he, the A.G.G. of Rajputana.

It was in June, 1854, that the first railway engine travelled forty miles on the first railway line in India, an event of keen interest to Lawrence. And that same month brought news of his appointment as Honorary A.D.C. to the Queen. Had it come sooner, how it would have delighted Honoria. For himself a year of the Punjab would have been worth more than any royal honour of them all. There his thoughts were still centred ; and sincere zeal for the country enabled him to rejoice that John was, in all ways, proving worthy of the trust reposed in him by Dalhousie. Edwardes also was winning fresh laurels as Commissioner of Peshawar ; feeling his way to a better understanding with Dōst Mahomed Khan. Though John, Abbott and Outram were all against him, a backing from Dalhousie had spurred him to overcome John's opposition ; to achieve a treaty of peace and goodwill between England and the Great Amir. And Nicholson—still unshakably Henry's man—was ruling Bannu to such good purpose that John appraised him as 'the best district officer on the Frontier . . . well worth the wing of a regiment, for his prestige with the people.' He himself had written to Henry of his new chief—who could never replace the old, 'John has been very forbearing ; and puts up with much from me on your account.'

John Lawrence, indeed, who handled men in masterly fashion, had no more difficult subject to cope with than 'old Nick,' whose boundless affection for Henry made him

stiff-necked and insubordinate to the brother who had supplanted him. And in no case, perhaps, was the largeness of John's nature more strikingly revealed. Fully aware that Nicholson never really liked him, even spoke against him, he never let the knowledge affect his own admiration for his 'finest District Officer.'

'There was nothing small or mean in him,' wrote Henry Daly of the Guides—an equal friend of both brothers—'He was the *biggest* man I have ever known. On the frontier we used to call him "King John." ' And in the first year of his reign he was having a deal of trouble with Nicholson, who remained a soldier at heart and died fighting. A clash with Neville Chamberlain had been followed by the vexation of John's refusal to let him serve under Edwardes at Peshawar, as he would not hear of 'two top-sawyers' in one station. So Nicholson, thoroughly disgruntled, wrote off to Sir Henry, longing for his companionship, begging for any sort of work in Rajputana, at any loss of salary. But Lawrence thought too highly of him to help him into a post unworthy of his great qualities. And it was well for the Punjab that the older man steeled himself to that hard refusal: well for John that he afterwards withdrew his objection to Peshawar, and had his 'two top-sawyers' there when the Mutiny broke, like a thunderclap, over northern India. सयमन नयन

Already the air was full of vague portents and misgivings. With the Bengal Army far outnumbering British troops—increasingly sullen and aware of its power—there was no lack of dry timber needing only a spark to set it aflame. Dalhousie's many annexations had scattered over the country a dangerous number of princes and landowners, dispossessed and aggrieved; crowds of unemployed retainers faced with ruin. Worse: the 'General service Act'—making Indian troops liable to serve overseas—had created a scare among men who saw defilement in 'crossing the black water.' But the event itself could not be foreseen, because, like many great events, it sprang suddenly from a seemingly trivial cause—if any cause can be deemed trivial, in the East, that touches caste or religion.

During those last few months of ‘Company Sahib’s’ dominion—as so often on the eve of calamity—it seemed as if men’s eyes were holden and their ears dulled, that they might not clearly foresee impending danger—and so escape the wrath to come.



FEBRUARY, 1856, saw Lord Dalhousie's abnormally long reign nearly ended. Arrangements had been made for Lord Canning's arrival at the end of February : and Dalhousie—utterly broken in health—had at least the high satisfaction of leaving behind him a record of achievement that has hardly, if ever, been surpassed : British India vastly enlarged and unified, by the halfpenny post, by the beginnings of a great railway system and a far-seeing scheme of education ; above all, by the ' electric telegraph,' that seemed, to Asiatic minds, a dream of the genii.

To practical Anglo-Saxons, the thing had seemed a sheer impossibility, considering the nature of the country and its fearsome climate ; no skilled electrical engineers, no appliances, no transport but the camel, the coolie and the mule. Yet the impossible—as often—had come to pass. Miles upon miles of telegraph wires had been laid down, over desert and swamp ; through jungles, where wild beasts used the posts for scratching stations, white ants riddled them with galleries, and the people stole them for firewood ; where ' monkeys dragged the lines into festoons, and crows, kites and eagles used them for roosting places.' For a time, monsoon disturbances threatened to have the last word. But even so, the work went on. Within fifteen months, telegraph wires were operating over more than three thousand miles of the most difficult country on earth : wires that were worth thousands of troops to the English, when the thunderclap of open mutiny startled them into realisation of their insecure hold on India.

Beyond any doubt, Lord Dalhousie deserved well of his country. But his iron rule was leaving a dangerous legacy of suppressed ill-feeling. From first to last his limited sympathies had debarred him from understanding Indian

character ; from seeing—as the humbler Henry Lawrence could see—that most Indians, though alive to British benefits, would gladly return even to tyranny and cruelty inflicted by their own folk, to the old familiar feuds and intrigues and exciting vicissitudes—painful or otherwise. He was incapable of picturing the cumulative effect on the native mind of the annexation policy then in favour, of realising that Asiatics—especially Hindus—are less enamoured of material benefits than the practical Anglo-Saxon.

And now, as his brilliant reign drew to a close, the fate of Oudh became a matter for definite decision. Much has been said of Dalhousie’s hesitation over the inevitable issue ; but his private letters clearly reveal the mind of the man.

As early as May, ’55, he was writing :

‘ It seems impossible that the Home authorities can any longer hesitate to overthrow this fortress of corruption and infamous misgovernment : I should not mind doing it as a parting coup ; but I doubt the Home people having the pluck to sanction it. . . . I count it as a symptom of reviving health that the desire has revived in me to upset that court, before I go—if they will let me. . . .’

Again, in September, he was irate at letters from England :

‘ I see they will not dare to face Oudh—the miseries. They are unwilling to provoke hostility. I do not believe there would be any hostility. The public are quite ready for the move in England. In India they are clamorous for it. What folly and feebleness then would it be to take half-measures !’ . . .

Thus the man—self-revealed ; yet history records that the Governor-General would fain have avoided the ‘ heavy burden thus laid upon him ’ ; that he had warned the Court ‘ the measure would be violently assailed,’ yet expressed himself willing to ‘ bear the odium ’ rather than leave it to fall on his successor.

By early January, to his immense relief, the period of ‘ see-sawing ’ was over. On the 30th Colonel Outram had his orders : the King of Oudh to be offered his choice between deposing himself by a signed treaty, or having his kingdom taken over, and leaving the Indian Government to decide on his position and pension. In the racier words of Dal-

housie : ' We shall offer him a treaty ; and if he refuses it—swallow him ! '

The King, debauched and degraded though he was, did refuse to sign the instrument of his own humiliation. Placing his turban in Outram's hands, he signified that he and his kingdom were in the hands of the British Government : and three days later the proclamation was made to a long-suffering people whose minds remained unrevealed.

As for Dalhousie, neither hostility nor odium were his portion for winding up his remarkable reign with an annexation more justifiable than most of its kind. The end was near now ; and, for all his broken health, he could not without reluctance lay down the sceptre—after eight years. If he had never loved India or her peoples, he loved power ; and if he did not readily make friends, there were many whom he could not leave without regret. To John Lawrence—lately recommended for a K.C.B.—he wrote from a full heart : ' There is not one from whom I shall sever with more sincere regret than from yourself, my dear John.'

It need hardly be said that John fully approved of the latest annexation. ' I wish I were thirty-five instead of forty-five, and had to put it in order ! ' was his natural comment ; never dreaming that the onerous privilege was reserved for his elder brother.

Lawrence himself—equally unaware of his coming link with Oudh—was on tour among his Rajput Kings, with a recently acquired Assistant, Captain Oldfield, whom he had met and liked at Mount Abu. His offer of the appointment had been coupled with a characteristic warning that he expected men under him ' to give the whole of their energies to the public service.' The prospect had not alarmed Oldfield, who welcomed a change from regimental idling to life in camp with Lawrence and his party, covering twenty-five to thirty miles a day. Lawrence, up at five every morning, would ride through the town and outlying villages, returning about seven for breakfast, and his daily task of listening to long-winded grievances from high and low. In the shade of a large gateway, he would sit on the ground,

like one of themselves, a pillow at his back, and give his whole attention to the hearing of petitions without end. At seven, they would all dine together—his home party joined by any passing traveller; and directly afterwards he would return to more work, or to some form of exercise for his tireless brain.

Marching thus, they reached Agra in February. Here he left his party, while he hurried down to Calcutta that he might meet Lord Canning and see the last of Dalhousie. And in Calcutta, of all places, he encountered John with his Harrie, bent on the same errand as himself.

Dalhousie had expressed a particular wish to see his Chief Commissioner before he sailed, to confer on him personally the coming K.C.B., if the *Home Gazette* arrived in time. So John—who never took a holiday, or ‘knocked off except to feed’—had dutifully arranged for his first real break away from work since 1843. And no sooner had he reached Calcutta—at the season’s height—than he wished himself back at Lahore; in spite of the more than friendly tone of Lord Dalhousie’s note from Barrackpore :

MY DEAR OLD BOY,—

I shall be in Calcutta to-morrow evening for good—and will see you with sincere pleasure on Tuesday. . . . As for my health, Ján La’rin, I am a cripple in every sense.

Ever yours most sincerely,

DALHOUSIE.

The *Gazette* had not arrived; but Dalhousie had the keen satisfaction of recommending that the Punjab be raised to a Lieutenant-Governor’s province, with Sir John Lawrence for its first ‘L.-G.’

Thus it came about that the two brothers met once again—for the last time. And they met in friendliness, both glad to efface the memory of their tragical parting at Lahore. Of that meeting Henry left no record; but John wrote of it to the faithful Edwardes: ‘I saw Henry here for three days: and I never saw him looking better. His beard is longer and greyer but he looked strong and hearty. He was full of going Home; and I think he will certainly go next year.’

But he had not yet sent in his application, when he heard that Outram—first Chief Commissioner of Oudh—had been ordered Home ; and the unlooked-for opening gave him pause. A new Governor-General, a great province to reconstruct on Punjab lines, a chance to wipe out the sense of insult that had seemed indelible : these things impelled Lawrence to write and offer his services till Outram returned from England.

By ill luck—both for India and himself—his offer arrived just too late. Lord Canning had already appointed a civilian to act for Outram : a fatal error in the eyes of Henry Lawrence, who wrote of it frankly to Kaye :

‘I am sorry to see the Province fall into the hands of civilians only, good men though they be. . . . New Provinces need to be nursed into our system. I saved the Punjab much rough-riding ; and, though I say so, it would have been well had I remained there. The only ambition I have left is to return there, if anything takes my brother away. . . . My taste for politics is gone.’

Not altogether gone—as he was to find when his chance arrived.

In October of that year he wrote a long letter to Sir George Clerk : a letter of special interest for his critical estimate of his own children, and for the frank revealing of his mind to an intimate friend before the last turn of the wheel. At the time of writing all seemed settled for his voyage home with Charlotte and Honie in March, '57.

MY DEAR CLERK,—

I was very glad to see your hand-writing. I hope Alick looked in at Cannon Row, as you desired him. He is not clever, nor very industrious, but he is well spoken of as an intelligent gentleman-like fellow. Harry has more character and ability. But my little Honoria, six and a half years old, born at Lahore, has more intellect than either ; and, though plainer than her brothers, is a most engaging, loving child.—This is really a heavenly place ; Kashmir and Nepal in miniature. I ought to be happy here, but I bother myself with many things present and past. The present are that

my foolish Rajput chiefs are running their heads into the annexation net ; especially the Udaipur people. The Rana expects us to put down the Chiefs, and at the same time will not do them the commonest justice ; while many of the Chiefs are most contumacious. . . . My past troubles refer to Lord Dalhousie's treatment of me, after my six years' successful administration of the Punjab. Bothering myself on such matters is all very foolish. If from one man I have received less than my deserts, I have from many better men received more than my due ; and in my private relations I *have been blessed* as few men have been. I hope to see you by next April or May ; and face to face to discuss old times. I have made up my mind that, all being quiet, I will go Home next March. My eyes are failing a good deal. I shall be glad of a little rest and the opportunity of seeing you and other friends. . . .

But I must confess the ungrateful fact that I am a discontented man. I don't want money. I have more than ample. I have two lakhs so that each of my three children has £5,000 and I have another £5,000 to spare. Money, therefore, is not my aim. But I *do* desire to wipe out the stain cast on me by Lord Dalhousie. . . ' *Bus !* ' ¹—or rather ' *Zyddah.* ' ² . . . I must not begin another grumble !

Yours,

H. M. L.

So he laid his plans ; but Fate withheld him from leaving India on the eve of her greatest crisis. While he was actually writing for his modest twelve months' leave, came a rumour that John's health had again given out, that his doctors had persuaded him to go Home on furlough. Here was the one chance for which Henry would sacrifice his health, his hope of England, Letitia and little Honie : were it only as stop-gap for the favoured John. Midway through his letter to Lord Canning, he changed the nature of his request.

' If the rumour be true,' he wrote, ' I would forego all private views about Home, could I thereby return to the Punjab, even for a twelvemonth. Your Lordship is aware that I served on that frontier for fourteen years . . . I

¹ Enough.

² Too much.

felt bitterly the termination of so many years of successful labour . . . and I hope it will not be considered an unreasonable ambition that I should desire to return to a province where I left no enemy and so many friends.'

Too soon that flicker of hope was quenched by news that the rumour was unfounded. Let doctors never so furiously rage, John had no idea of handing over his precious Punjab to any man alive. Again the shadowy hand of destiny seemed to intervene; and Henry, stifling his bitter disappointment, laid his plans for Home.

By the end of the year all had been arranged for the flitting in March with the sole proviso—'I will *not* go unless all be quiet.' George was to act in his stead; passages had been taken; Charlotte and Honie going straight down to Bombay, while he took a final tour through the country to judge whether he could 'without anxiety go Home.'

So the fateful New Year dawned with never a definite suspicion in men's minds of the coming event, that for years had been casting its shadow before. There were many, like Lawrence, who realised that the Crimea and Persia had dangerously denuded India of British troops, leaving the country largely in the power of the Bengal sepoy. But it is the nature of the average Englishman to shut his eyes against any threat of peril till the ground opens under his feet. And the dawn of 1857 showed no visible signs of earthquake or storm. The only cloud on Lord Canning's immediate horizon was the increasingly disturbed state of Oudh under three civilians, all at odds with each other. Outram, the soldier—recalled to pacify them—had been appointed from Home to command the 'little war' in Persia: and Lord Canning—in search of another placable soldier—recognised in Lawrence the very man for the task.

The offer reached him on the eve of starting for his final tour; an offer at once disconcerting to the man and flattering to the Political—a salve to his wounded pride. The inner struggle was sharp: the result a foregone conclusion.

He wired his acceptance, and wrote at once:

‘MY DEAR LORD,—

‘I am honoured and grateful. Quite at Lordship’s service. Will cancel my leave and move to Lucknow, if you think fit—after my explanation—to appoint me.’

His explanation concerned the dismay of Dr. Ebdon and two staff doctors, who had insisted on his leave. But he was able to add at least a qualification :

‘Both doctors, who know me well, say my constitution has such elasticity, that, with work so much to my taste, I may be able to hold out. Annoyances try me much more than work. And ever since I was so cavalierly elbowed out of the Punjab, I have fretted even to the injury of my health. But your Lordship’s handsome letter has quite relieved my mind. So I repeat I am ready for Oudh, if you think fit ; and can be there within twenty days of receiving your telegraphic reply.’

Thus the Political—once more given his due ; but it was the man who wrote to Letitia Hayes from the deep of his troubled heart :

MY SISTER,—

It grieves me more than I can say that I must again put off my trip Home. My effects are with Charlotte and Honie, on their way to Bombay, where I had appointed to meet them, when I received a letter from the Governor-General—asking me to go to Oudh. According to my views, it is my duty to hold on as long as I am wanted ; and our steps are ordered by unerring wisdom.—You know every personal feeling dictates my return Home. I therefore put it to the doctors ; and it is difficult to tell you the struggle I have had in the matter. You—my little daughter—my boys, Charlotte and other friends, torn from me while in the very grasp.

I rather feel it is a judgment on me for my wicked repinings at my wife’s removal. I have no fear for Oudh. On the contrary I feel, with God’s blessing, I may do some good and prevent more evil. All is in His hands. While writing I got your precious note of the 19th of October. Thank you for all your love to me and mine.

H. M. L.

He left the Land of Kings without regret ; and he could hand them all over to George with a clear mind as regards the straight dealing that so deeply concerned him in any connection with India's ruling States ; not for their good only but for the honour of his country.

In February he was writing of it all to Edwardes, who could always be trusted to see through another's eyes :

AGRA, *February 26th.*

'Your two letters reached me yesterday. . . . I am ready at a day's notice to start for Lucknow. You say you are sorry I am going, and *so am I*. I give up a great deal—indeed, all my private desires, my little daughter, my sons, my sisters and probably my health. But I could not withstand the offer, made as it was, by Lord Canning ; I have also the vanity to think I can do good. The one personal motive was, to prove that I was not the Pootlee puppet in the Punjab that Lord Dalhousie and — have been for the last four years asserting. I hope also the move may help George, who was in any case to have acted at Rajputāna. Now you have it all, good, bad and indifferent.

'Certainly Lord Dalhousie's act roused my worst passions ; and the last few years of ignoring me in the reports has often made me angry. My mind is now quiet. . . . Man can but die once, and if I die in Oudh—after saving some poor fellows' health, or skin, or *izzat*—I shall have no reason for discontent. I wish to be at peace with all men. I can now more freely forgive Lord Dalhousie, and a few others who have done me injustice. But the price I pay is high for I had quite set my heart on going Home. . . .'

That characteristic letter was written from Agra, where he spent three weeks, winding up Rajput affairs, with his oldest friend Edward Reade—the Antæus to his Tellus. Here once more they had strangely come together at a turn of the road for Lawrence. It was Bump the Fifth—and last : they two alone ; Lawrence bereft, and Mrs. Reade in England.

In Reade's own words :

'The last Bump between Tellus and Antæus was soft and sad. Lawrence said again and again that he ought to be on his way to England. The constraint of public duty alone was taking him to Oudh—to the last

great fight of all. Forebodings of a troubled time were heavy upon him. He declared—as once before—that the Sepoys would have Colvin, myself and all the big Brahmins, in Agra fort before many months were out : We parted with a promise that I should take Lucknow in my next tour. But he was worn and depressed ; and our mutual misgivings were revealed by his parting wish that we might go Home together—he to rest, I to retire from the Service. His last letter, from Lucknow, was full of direst apprehension——'

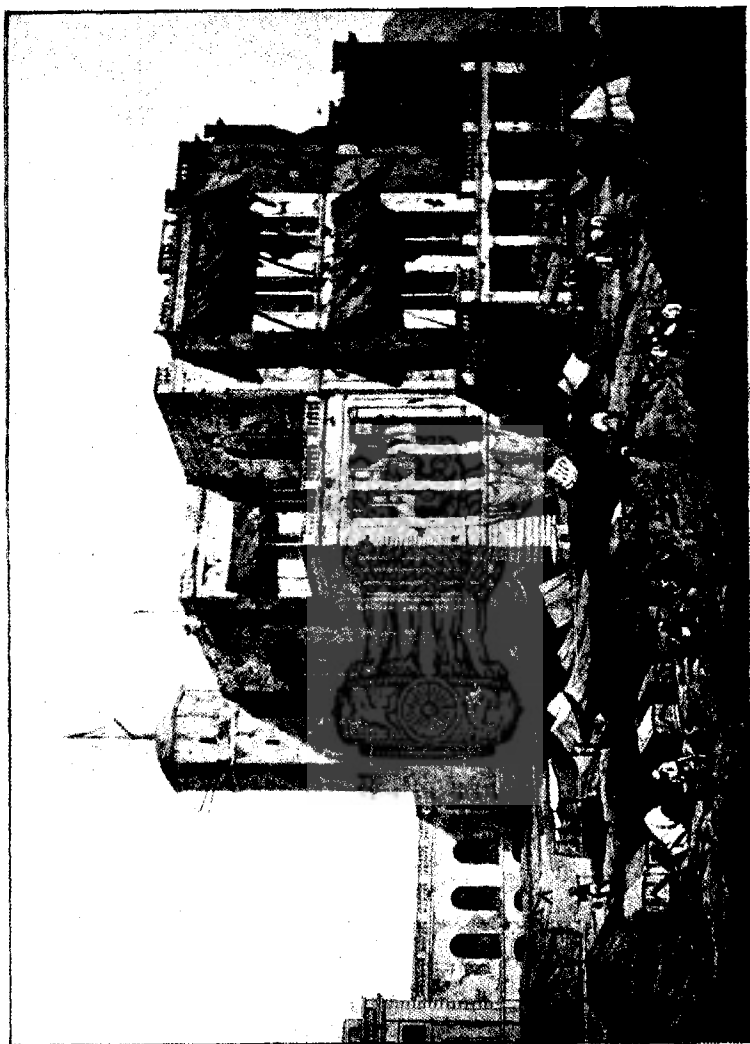
So they parted, friends of a lifetime—not to meet again.



OF all English buildings in India there are few that stir more poignant feelings than the battered shell of that which was once the Residency at Lucknow ; the one place in the Empire where the Union Jack is not lowered at sunset. In April, 1857, it stood aloof on rising ground, in a garden of roses and lawns and flowering trees ; a stately building, three storeys high, with an underground suite of comfortable rooms for hot-weather use, known as the *tai-khāna*. Wide verandahs and porticoes looked over Lucknow city and cantonments and the river Gumti, Honoria's old friend. Turret staircases led to a terrace roof that commanded far-reaching views of river and wooded plains, parks and sprawling palaces, gilded domes and slender minarets, like inlaid work on a background of azure sky. In Lucknow itself the clash of contrast was sharper than in most Indian cities. Eastern splendours mingled with balustraded houses that might have been lifted out of old Regent Street, gilt litters, jostled by English landaus and victorias, gave the city a curiously hybrid air.

A belt of trees divided the high Residency garden from a maze of houses and hovels still inhabited by court musicians and entertainers—their occupation gone. Dense groves, alive with monkeys and parrots, followed the gleaming curve of the river : and scattered among the groves lay the famous city of Lucknow ; its many streets blocked with elephants and camels, with an armed and swaggering populace, a perpetual turmoil of processions, illuminations and festivities. Deprived by the stroke of an English pen, of its royal incentive to profligacy, it must live on by order, as best it might, in dreary courtless poverty.

In early April, the heat was still pleasant enough for dwellers in cool houses and shady gardens ; though Lucknow



RESIDENCY AT LUCKNOW, 1857.

Front View.

From a sketch made at the time by Lieut. C. H. Meham.

mosquitoes were even more venomous and voracious than they of Nepal. In a corner of the vast house Lawrence lived with his nephew—George’s eldest son—already a Deputy Commissioner, glad to serve under his distinguished uncle, whom he hardly knew as yet. Their only visitors, at the time, were Captain Henry Daly with his wife and a boy fourteen months old—Sir Henry’s godson. Daly had just been appointed to command the Guides, Lumsden being away in Persia. Reluctant to leave Lucknow so soon after Sir Henry’s arrival, he had yielded to his host’s insistence that he must not dream of refusing the finest appointment open to a soldier.

‘If you lose a little money now,’ said he, ‘you will find the advantage by and by.’

As it happened, he found the advantage sooner than either could guess. For the days were at hand when the Guides—joint creation of Henry Lawrence and Harry Lumsden—were, in soldierly phrase, to cover themselves with glory.

At present, his young wife was enjoying the change from a Captain’s bungalow to a ‘whole suite of four large private rooms’; and the proud position of hostess at dinners and entertainments given by Lawrence, chiefly in order to getting in touch with all the human elements around him, white or brown. To that end he entertained the whole station, and kept open house for all nobles and gentry of the district; an honour as new to them as it was welcome. He had found many princes and nobles in dire extremity, not even assured of maintenance, as in the Punjab; and had set himself, as far as might be, to amend evils that none could undo. His reputation had preceded him; so that his mere arrival had speedily soothed the excitement and distrust of all classes; and dispossessed Taluqdars were overjoyed to find an Englishman so affable and sympathetic, so easy of approach. His own first impressions of the new surroundings were given very fully in a long letter to Dr. Bernard, of which a few paragraphs must suffice.

‘LUCKNOW, *April 7th.*

‘MY DEAR JAMES,—

‘You will be glad to hear that I find myself more com-

fortable here than I expected. The work is decidedly *not* overwhelming. There is a large town house above the city ; and another, nearly as large, in cantonments, four miles off, at my disposal. I was never so well housed. All hands seem glad at my coming, the natives especially. For the first time, since annexation, the doors of the Residency have been open to the nobles and traders. I have held large Durbars for both classes ; and individuals come to me daily. . . . The Judicial Commissioner is not a wise man, jealous of interference and yet fond of interfering. Mr. Ommaney is his name. . . . The Revenue Commissioner, Gubbins, a better and abler man, whom I like, may be a more troublesome coadjutor. . . .

'The military and political arrangements are perhaps the worst ; and are mostly due to General Outram . . . troops, magazine, treasury, etc., all scattered over several miles ; the magazine almost unprotected. The Governor-General seems in sincere alarm regarding the state of affairs, though I hope there is no serious reason. . . .

'My health is better. I am easier and quieter than I have been for years ; and take intense pleasure in looking about this vast city, dealing *with authority* in matters affecting the welfare of many thousands. Charlotte and Honie are about now joining you. I do not allow myself to think that I too might have been of the party. I still believe it was my duty to come here. There is a bad feeling afloat in the Native Army ; a feeling due to our most absurd system, that allows no outlet for ambition. I have preached warnings about it for the last thirteen years. I hope Government will mend their ways before it is too late.'

Those fatal words cast their shadow across the whole of his last adventure. He himself had been sent too late to Lucknow ; his civilian forerunner, though an able man, had spent more time in quarrelling with his fellows than in pacifying Oudh ; and by March, '57, no power on earth could have prevented the explosion. Yet even now Calcutta did not seem actively alive to the imminent danger, in spite of many disturbing symptoms and the serious outbreak at Barrackpore, owing to a rumour that all cartridges for the new Enfield rifle were greased with cow's fat. For Hindus

that spelt defilement ; and seemed to confirm a wilder rumour that the British intended to destroy all caste, to force Christianity on Hindus and Moslems alike. Though the January disturbance had been calmed down, the rumour persisted—and was widely believed. A live spark had been dropped on highly inflammable material ; and no prescience could foresee where or when it would spurt up in flame.

Sir Henry’s mind was full of foreboding ; but the stimulant of working arduously, to a great end, had notably improved his health, as Ebdon had foreseen. Colonel Edwardes, a welcome guest, wrote of it to his Emma—lately ordered Home by her doctor ; the perpetual tale of life in India.

‘ I got here to breakfast yesterday and found Sir Henry Lawrence in much better health since he came to Oudh. That is characteristic of him. He is raised out of the very pit by any call to work ; ever ready for the battle. But he is much greyer ; beard and hair all grey, passing into white.

‘ He is evidently happy in his new appointment. By as much as he felt injured and depressed by Lord Dalhousie’s treatment of him, so much does he go up again, now that Lord Canning has conferred this charge on him. I believe he will do a great deal of good here. He comes as a peacemaker ; . . . and is already winning golden opinions among all classes by his kindness and sympathy. . . . Occasionally we have such hearty laughs together that the rooms echo again : quite like old times. . . .

‘ Christian and Mrs. C. arrived this morning. . . . Then ensued a great search for a double bed, and a despairing hunt for sheets to fit. . . . This all put me so in mind of the Residency at Lahore, where Sir Henry and I slept, ate and worked in one small room ; . . . and when the brigadier came to stay for a night, we put a *charpoy* for him between our two, and thought we were all handsomely provided for . . . !

On Good Friday the two friends parted, both cheered by their week together ; but Captain and Mrs. Daly stayed on till near the middle of April, as loth to leave him as he was to lose them. Daly himself was a great favourite ; and the little godson, a privileged person, would pursue the kind stranger, pull at his coat or his book without ceremony. Mrs. Daly left a pleasant picture of those happy, uneventful weeks ; a picture to linger on, as the last clear gleam of daylight, before the shadows lengthened and deepened in the murky glare of a blood-red sunset.

Sir Henry—declaring he had only one knife and fork to his name—had given Daly *carte blanche* to order furniture and a carriage and all household etceteras for his wife.

‘He has a habit,’ said she, ‘of leaving all minor details to anyone who will attend to them. . . . I don’t consider housekeeping his *forte*. We have very bad dinners often, but Sir Henry cares nothing for that and the servants soon find it out. Then there is no knowing how many guests will be present. One day I had sent out cards for a party of fifteen, when George Lawrence came up, two hours before dinner, to tell me that his Uncle had invited about twenty more—and forgotten to mention it ! Breakfast is the agreeable party here ; a meal that lasts from ten till twelve ; the animated conversation is a great contrast to the vapid talk one usually hears ; Mr. Christian, very plain, but very clever ; Colonel Edwardes, Dr. Ogilvie and my Henry—all clever men.

‘Sir Henry had a most romantic attachment to his wife—a talented and accomplished woman. One day the bearer called my nurse into his master’s room and showed her a miniature of Lady Lawrence as a girl, which Sir Henry always wears round his neck. The bearer had never known him leave it off before. My Harry says that, cheerful as he is now, there is a great change in him. He certainly—more than anyone I ever knew—gives me the sense of living for another world. Yet he is always active and interested, especially fond of collecting young people about him, not despising any of their amusements.’

In praise of his generosity she recorded that, since his wife’s death, he had subscribed to his schools and different charities £10,400 ; believing that he had saved enough for his own three children, ‘as the boys would be good for nothing unless they had to work for themselves.’

On the 13th of April, the cheerful pair reluctantly took their leave ; Daly charged with messages to John, full of brotherly kindness and seasoned with the constant plea for gentle, considerate treatment of the Sirdars. Now, more than ever, he was impressed with the value attaching to every ounce of good feeling for British men and measures. And now the time was at hand when the seeds of kindness he had sown in his early Punjab years were to bear fruit beyond expectation.

The ‘cloud no bigger than a man’s hand’ was slowly, imperceptibly, spreading over the heavens. Panic and disaffection were spreading among the Bengal sepoys. And a mysterious omen, in the familiar form a *chupatti*, was being

passed from hand to hand, from village to village : a symbol of their food, signifying that they must hold together, or they would lose all. Men talked of a prophecy that this hundredth year from the date of Plassey would bring to pass another marked change in India's history. And there were many changes already to disturb the minds of ignorant people. There were those rumours of wholesale conversion. There were new ‘lightning posts’ and ‘fire carriages,’ devil-driven. There was talk of the new cartridge, greased with fat of cows and pigs, the last affecting Moslems as the first affected Hindus. And the sepoys knew, if the villagers did not, that there were now too few white soldiers in India. For years the Bengal Army had been inflamed with dangerous discontents—not all fanciful. To these were now added an even more dangerous consciousness of power.

Lawrence, alive to these significant omens, honestly admitted that the people and the army had many just causes for complaint, that the English were too apt to undervalue Indian forms of government and thus multiply discontents. To Canning he wrote bluntly :

‘We measure too much by English rules ; and expect, contrary to all experience, that the energetic and aspiring should like our arrogating to ourselves—even where we are notorious imbeciles—of all authority and all emoluments. These sentiments, freely expressed in the last fifteen years, have done me injury, but I am not the less convinced of their soundness. Until we treat natives—and especially the soldiers—as having much the same feelings, the same ambitions . . . as ourselves, we shall never be safe.’

But no words of wisdom could undo damage already done, or check the rising storm.

Throughout the spring of 1857, a vague sense of unsafety—more unnerving than obvious danger—was pervading all British India. Panic prevailed—not only among the sepoys. In Oudh the spirit of disaffection was aggravated by the fact that the Bengal Army was mainly recruited from that province. Disarmed troops returned there to sow ill-feeling or to join the robber bands that infested the country.

All that could be done, at this late hour, Lawrence did, to keep the soldiers loyal, the people reassured. He knew that the dense city of seven hundred thousand souls must be humming with secret hostility, that there was much insidious tampering with his native troops ; but open hostility had not yet reared its head. Till that happened, there was need to walk warily, between the possible unwisdom of ignoring significant trifles and the greater unwisdom of treating them with premature severity ; to take advance precautions—without seeming to do so—against a deadly peril that might tarry for weeks, or come upon them suddenly like a thief in the night. Even at that early stage, he was unobtrusively preparing for a possible siege of his weak position, while the station was enjoying its regulation round of drives, dances and picnics ; not seriously troubled by far-off thunder rolls, or even by news of incendiary fires at Ambala.

The first local rumble sounded unmistakably in a suburb of Lucknow, a few miles up the river. The Oudh infantry regiments stationed there had suddenly refused to bite or to handle suspicious new cartridges, which they had been using for weeks without demur. Seizing arms and ammunition, they had threatened to kill their English officers ; nor was the case against them lightened by chance discovery of a misdirected letter, revealing the fact that they had acted in concert with the 48th N.I. in cantonments. The plan for a mutual rising had missed fire : but clearly the Oudh regiment must be disarmed at once.

Lawrence lost not a moment. The drastic measure was carried out swiftly and effectively. Ringleaders were tried and imprisoned ; the loyal few liberally rewarded. The station recovered from its passing alarm. But Lawrence, in his own mind, accurately measured the extent of the coming peril, as proved by his long illuminating letters to Lord Canning throughout May. He also talked freely to the better class of sepoys, who in turn spoke frankly to him.

‘If the sepoy is not speedily redressed,’ said one, ‘he will redress himself.’ Another warned him to expect a landslide once open mutiny started. ‘I tell you they are

like sheep,’ he said. ‘The leading one tumbles—and down they all go after him.’

But even in early May, the country round still seemed quiet enough. People were travelling about unmolested, to the Hills and elsewhere. There was a certain amount of vexation over the cartridge blunder that had provoked local disturbances: increasing vexation when it was rumoured the telegraph and the postal services were out of gear. By the 12th of May, rumours of open revolt became more serious and circumstantial. There could no longer be any doubt that something extremely unpleasant must have happened up-country.



EXTREMELY unpleasant was a mild description of the grim doings in Meerut Cantonments on the 9th and 10th of May. Again it was a spark from the cartridge episode flaring up in a fresh place. Panic is blind and unreasoning. Certain sepoys caught it like an epidemic. Others remained unaccountably immune.

Those who caught it at Meerut were eighty-five troopers of good repute in the 3rd Cavalry regiment. Suddenly, obstinately they refused to touch the accursed things ; and since flat refusal implied insubordination, they were tried by a court martial entirely of their own race, and condemned to ten years' hard labour : an excessive sentence, that reflects curiously on the different degrees of feeling among soldiers even of one regiment and one caste. As if that were not enough, the General Commanding decreed that the sentence be announced before a parade of the whole garrison, the men to be publicly stripped of their uniforms and the leg irons riveted on one by one—there, before the whole mixed crowd of white men and brown.

The long ordeal, the needless, cruel indignity, must have severely strained the loyalty of even the most loyal. Yet none stirred when the troopers called on their fellows to rescue them and do them justice. They were marched down the line, their fetters clanking ; escorted to jail and placed under a weak native guard—a curious oversight, after a scene that must have stung the whole brigade to the quick. The General Commanding complacently reported that most of the prisoners seemed to feel acutely the degradation to which their folly had brought them. There were those present who did more than feel it, they acted on it—in prompt and terrible fashion.

The Sunday massacre on May the 10th is an all too familiar

talé. The 3rd Cavalry, joined by three Native Infantry regiments, entered the jail, unopposed by the guard, and released some twelve hundred prisoners; their numbers swelled by a mob from the city fully armed for the work of destruction. Bungalows were fired and gutted; white men, women and children ruthlessly killed: and never a move to check the terror from British lines not a mile and a half away. The troops were got under arms, it was said, ‘in an incredibly short space of time’; yet they did not succeed in reaching the Native lines till the work of slaughter was complete and the rebels—under cover of confusion and darkness—fleeing from the supposed wrath to come.

There were more white men and women in India. ‘To Delhi! To Delhi!’ was the cry. It was but thirty miles off; and they covered the distance before morning. Pursuit would probably have been vain. But in India the moral effect of prompt action is all. A Nicholson or an Edwardes would surely have had troops in Delhi by the night of the 11th: and even if the first massacre could not have been averted, much else might have been saved. The lack of common precautions and promptitude at Meerut afterwards brought severe censure on the General, who was rightly relieved of his command. But the severest censure could not undo the hideous result of those lost hours.

The lighted brand sped on to Delhi, where no tiresome British troops would oppose them. The three Native Infantry regiments caught the contagion—and there followed another indiscriminate massacre in the English quarter. In the palace, the old puppet king Bahadur Shah—idling away his remnant of life with verse-making and women—found himself proclaimed Emperor of a restored Mogul dynasty. The Company’s Raj was no more. A raid on the ammunition magazine was only foiled by the courage of two young British officers. Looking vainly, hour after hour, for a cloud of dust on the Meerut road, they finally blew up the magazine, with themselves and all others who were in it.

The rebels, looking also for the pursuing dust-cloud, and

seeing none, decided that the Masters were helpless. Within twenty-four hours, five thousand armed rebels held the Mogul capital—a challenge to flouted British power; a centre in which they might reasonably hope to concentrate a mighty army. And not a regiment had been moved from Meerut. Throughout India's upper provinces the Pax Britannica had ceased to function. For travelling, for life or property, there was no assurance of safety any more—

Not until the 14th did that startling news reach Lawrence at Lucknow: clear confirmation of the Delhi catastrophe he had imagined and described, with singular accuracy, in his defence of Sir William Macnaghten, fourteen years ago.

No delay here, where he had the reins in his own hands. He had already wired to Canning, 'Give me full military authority. I will not use it needlessly'; and had been raised forthwith to the rank of Brigadier-General. He knew that the flame, once alight, would spread fast and far; expected, in fact, a bigger conflagration than actually occurred. He believed the whole Indian army would go, except his 'children'—the Sikhs; that most of the people would remain unaggressive, or even friendly—and it was so. His insight into public feeling and the causes affecting it was admittedly unique. In a bare two months he had transformed his own new province of Oudh; had allayed irritation; righted the wrongs of chiefs and *taluqdars*; secured justice and protection for the peasants. He had cleared the surrounding jungle, repaired and garrisoned the old Sikh fort of Machchi Bhawān, commanding the city; and now his hands were free to deal promptly with his corner of the greatest crisis that had ever faced the English in India.

He at once called a council of his chief subordinates; Colonel Inglis and Major Banks, both good men; Ommaney, whom he still disliked, and Gubbins, a man of many good qualities, who 'might be a more troublesome coadjutor'—and so he proved. All women and children and invalids were shifted into the high Residency area, that comprised several buildings besides the Residency proper—hospital,

church, Dr. Fayrer's house and many others. It was the only defensible position to entrench, in view of a possible siege—a possibility so little credited that many had derided his early precautions as superfluous. Had he waited to strengthen his posts and collect provisions till the wolves were baying round them, they might all have shared the tragic end of Cawnpore. As it was, the 17th of May saw him holding his planned positions against any contingency ; impressing on the garrison officers his three principal aims : to keep up a resolute and bold attitude, to secure the safety of the English community ; to maintain, at all hazards, the character and prestige of the ruling race.

These were also embodied in a Memorandum issued on the 18th :

‘Time is everything just now. Time, firmness, promptness, conciliation, and prudence. Every officer and individual, high or low, may at this crisis prove either most useful or even dangerous. A firm and cheerful aspect must be maintained : there must be no bustle, no appearance of alarm, still less of panic ; but everywhere the first germ of insurrection must be put down instantly. Ten men may, in an hour, quell a row which, after a day's delay, may take weeks to put down. I wish this point to be well understood.’

Had it been equally well understood and acted on elsewhere, much discredit and many lives might have been saved. As yet there seemed no sign of mutiny spreading outside the Delhi area. After the thunderclap of that dramatic opening, there fell a puzzling, ominous pause.

Those who wondered at it, did not know till afterwards how the Delhi master-stroke had proved, instead, to be a stroke that crippled the sepoy's chance of victory. The cause, as usual in the East, was religious. The sepoy rebels had been mainly Hindu ; and the sudden announcement of a Mogul Empire restored gave them pause. It also gave pause to the great body of Rajput States and others in Central India. The Moslems, in fact, by their Delhi *coup d'état*, had showed their hand too soon. Many disaffected Hindus took fright at the prospect of another Mogul

dominion. Between that false step and the unpopularity of Bengal sepoys throughout India, the successful start hung fire. But the fact remained that the English had been exterminated in Delhi ; that five thousand sepoys held the Mogul capital : and British troops at Meerut showed no signs of disputing their claim to it.

Sir Henry Lawrence, on the whole, felt sure of his province and the good feeling of its *taluqdars* ; but much hung on the major Native States. He had left behind him a well-disposed Rajputana ; and he could trust George, with his mixture of firmness, friendliness and tact, to keep those eighteen States at least passive and aloof. But most of all hung on the Punjab, where more British troops were quartered than in any other province. If the Irregulars, who loved not the Bengal sepoy, threw in their lot with the British, all would be well. He believed that the Sikhs and their chiefs could be counted on, if they had not been alienated by the harder rule of John. And, in any case, John himself was a guarantee for strong, swift action—a soldier at heart, ‘trained civilian’ though he was.

Here, once again, by a lucky chance for India, was the ‘triumvirate of Lawrences’ paramount ; not merely beyond the Border, but over the whole north-west of the country. Henry controlling Oudh ; George responsible for Rajputana ; John with the Punjab and the Border in his iron grasp. From that region, above all others, Lawrence longed for definite news. For well he knew that, by the Punjab, British dominion would stand or fall.

It may safely be said that no other man in India was more alive to that vital truth than Sir John Lawrence ; and obviously the deciding factors were the Sikh Rajahs, the Chiefs and the Irregulars, on whom Henry had always pinned his faith. These, including the Frontier Force, numbered 14,000 of India’s best fighting men—Sikhs, Pathans and Punjabi Mahomedans—as against 36,000 sepoy Regulars. Thus a bare eleven thousand of British troops were outnumbered by twenty to one. All hung on the Irregulars casting in their lot with the smaller alien force. It

was not ten years since Gujerāt. John’s rule, though just and beneficial, was hardly popular. But there remained the abiding impress, left on the whole province, of the man who had been at once ruler and friend ; an impress deepened by the four years that followed under both brothers. More : the Sikhs hated equally Bengal sepoys and Moslems. Most of all, perhaps, they relished the thought of looting Delhi, under the Company’s *izzat*.

Delhi was the word on all men’s tongues and in all men’s thoughts ; for the very allegiance of Sikhs and Punjabis hung largely on its prompt recapture. The rebel cry, ‘To Delhi—to Delhi—!’ was the reiterate call of John Lawrence, during the strange and providential pause that followed the opening crash. ‘Advance at all costs,’ was his soldierly maxim, ‘to stand still is fatal.’ Dangers that may be dispelled by a forward move, thicken round the man who hesitates : and too often the price of one man’s hesitation is paid in other men’s lives. Could even a moderate British force have appeared before Delhi during those weeks of reaction, the city would almost certainly have succumbed ; both races would have been spared incalculable suffering and loss.

But the climate, the season, lack of transport and supplies, the slower working of certain men’s minds—all conspired against the urgent need to strike at once and strike hard. John Lawrence, supreme in the Punjab, was not Commander-in-Chief ; and General Anson had, from the first, been hopeful that the cartridge excitement could be calmed down by the soothing syrup of reasonable explanations— as though panic were ever amenable to reason. He and his staff were in Simla for the hot weather. Three invaluable British regiments were up at Sabāthu and Kasauli. John Lawrence himself was on his way to Kashmir for a brief respite, suffering from fever and over-work—though he chose to call his raging headaches neuralgia.

The Delhi news reached him on the 13th at Sialkōt. And from that hour his tenacious mind was ruled by two ideas : the safety of his own province ; the resolve to make that province the means of recapturing Delhi. The first

essential was achieved—around Lahore at least—by the prompt and daring action of Robert Montgomery, left in charge. He had received the telegram on the 12th; had also received secret information from Richard Lawrence that the four Native Infantry regiments at Mian Mir were ‘in it, up to the neck.’ To disarm them at once was the only safe course, though they were seven times the number of the British who must carry it through.

A ball, to be given that night, was not deferred, so that none might suspect danger in the air. Next morning, all troops were assembled at a general parade; and the sepoy, without warning, were bidden to lay down their arms.

To all present, their moment of hesitation must have seemed half a lifetime: but the argument of unmasked guns with port-fires lighted, carried the day. Without a shot fired, four regiments laid down two thousand muskets and seven hundred sabres. The native garrison of Lahore fort was disarmed and relieved by three British companies: and the imminent peril was over. A company of the same British regiment had been rattled off in country carts to Amritsar, where danger was also nipped in the bud.

The stroke had been so swift, so bold in design and execution, that even John Lawrence was taken aback, half doubtful of its wisdom. Had those armed sepoy defied the order and mutinied, the results might have been incalculable. As it mercifully fell out, the result was one of the most striking episodes in the Great Rebellion. Within forty-eight hours of receiving that ill news from Delhi, Lahore and Amritsar had been saved, Ferōzpur garrison strengthened, Multān and Kangra warned. No standing still, or scratching of heads, in the non-regulation province.

The news reached Simla on the 12th also, and created a passing panic; but General Anson did not manage to reach Ambāla till the 15th. As for marching on to Delhi at once if not sooner, the thing seemed impracticable to regulation-minded men; and it may have been more so than Lawrence—demolisher of difficulties—could be induced to believe. Causes for delay multiplied; so did letters and wires from Sir John, whose quick wit never

failed him in any contingency. Hearing a rumour from the Ambála Commissioner that Anson was said to be entrenching there, instead of marching to Delhi, he flashed back the apt reminder, ‘Clubs not spades are trumps. When in doubt, take the trick’; a witticism doubtless appreciated by Anson—who was not entrenching, and who had published a standard book on whist. Anson was short of guns; and his Commissariat officer had declared that he needed sixteen days to collect the necessary supplies. Lawrence insisted that enough to start upon could be procured in three or four days; he had done as much himself in ‘Forty-Eight. The rest could be collected on the march.

In any case, while Anson delayed—or was delayed—he himself lost no time in marshalling his Irregulars—now definitely in with the British, as also were the great Sikh Chiefs, Patiāla, Nabha and Jhind. In Peshawar, Edwardes and Nicholson were acting vigorously, needing the curb rather than the spur. Though the tribes were still uncertain, Afghan neutrality was assured, thanks to the treaty, in which Lawrence had only half believed. The spirit of the Irregulars—duly impressed by prompt action at Lahore—was admirable; and on the 21st Lawrence could report to General Anson :

‘The Punjabis are marching down in the highest spirits, proud of being trusted, eager to show their superiority over the Regulars and fight shoulder to shoulder with Europeans. Recollect that, while we are pausing, the emissaries of mutineers are writing to or visiting every cantonment. It seems lamentable that, in no case, have they yet suffered. . . . Reflect on the whole history of India—where have we failed when we acted vigorously? Where have we succeeded when guided by timid counsels?’

In the same remarkable letter, he also sent word that he was pushing on several other regiments of Sikh and Punjab Infantry, including the Guides under Captain Daly—‘the men would go anywhere and do anything’—as they were now to prove in unexampled fashion.

On the 13th, at breakfast, Daly had received ‘marching orders’ for Delhi: next morning the Guides breakfasted

at Attock on the Indus thirty miles off. And they kept it up in that style all the way to Delhi—double-marching on, in spite of deadly heat, halting briefly at Rawal Pindi, where Daly saw John Lawrence and gave him Henry's message to be gentle and considerate with the Sirdars.

'Ah, yes,' said John with his twinkle. 'That was always Henry's way.'

Daly himself has told of their parting: 'When I went in to bid him good-bye, he was lying on his bed in terrible suffering from tic; and as I was leaving, he said, 'You will very likely see Henry before I do. He has a terrible job down there at Lucknow.' All the afternoon gloomy tidings had been coming in that the Residency was beleaguered, that the whole country was 'up'; and he sent his brother a string of kindly messages. I can even now see his burly body lying on the bed as he ended up—'Ah, well! Henry has a greater grip of men than I have ever had.'

John himself, in those first Mutiny weeks, was reaping the fruits of Henry's 'grip on men.' It has been claimed that Lord Dalhousie alone saved the Punjab for England by his policy of ruthlessly crushing the Sikhs and stultifying their power for mischief. But in '57 they had power in plenty to embarrass the British; and they preferred to help them recapture Delhi. Far truer is the claim that ascribes the friendly Sikh attitude to the first years of British rule, when Sir Henry reigned over the defeated Khālsa. 'Had the Punjab been afflicted with the same early management as Oudh, not a single Sikh, chief or soldier, would have been present in June on the Ridge before Delhi.' To Henry Lawrence the credit may justly be given, for the conduct of those chiefs and their men, 'whose fidelity and heroism by the side of their conquerors lights up a dark page of Indian history.'

AND down at Lucknow Henry Lawrence was again turning to practical account his astonishing grip on men—the supreme asset in a time of crisis. He had moved now into his Cantonment Residency, leaving the higher cooler house free for others. Probably he thought it wiser to be on the spot among his troops ; and his house was guarded by a company of the 13th Native Infantry, the one native regiment he could count upon to stand firm. Here he invited the four ladies of the 32nd and their children ; giving them the choice of his most comfortable rooms. ‘In spite of all the great matters pressing on his mind,’ wrote one of them, ‘there was nothing too trifling for him to attend to.’

Very wisely he had already divided the sheep from the goats among his Indian troops ; putting his trust in the 13th ; and separating his Sikh infantry into a composite corps with other reliable sepoys. Steadfastly he set his face against the wholesale disarmament, urged by Gubbins and others, that would sweep away the friendly with the hostile, and create bad feeling. The bulk of his sepoys and Native officers already had confidence in his knowledge of them and their ways, his capacity for swift thought and decision.

‘When Lawrence Sahib,’ they said, ‘looks twice up to heaven and once down to earth, then strokes his beard—he knows what to do.’

And in less than two months he had completely won the hearts of his British troops, who let him know it in their own fashion. On one occasion, when siege drill was the order of the day, and Sir Henry went round to see if all the men were in position, he was greeted by the main body of the 32nd with a spontaneous cheer.

Turning to Colonel Inglis, he asked, 'Who made them do that?' The Colonel, not ill pleased, declared that he had done nothing in the matter—except try to stop it. And Lawrence must have gone on his way heartened by that stirring tribute from the backbone of his defence.

In those critical days, he had need of every heartening assurance, while he watched the gathering of the storm, and waited vainly for news of Delhi recaptured. He knew, and others knew, that his position was the weakest in India—excepting Cawnpore; but he did not know how anxious men all over the country took comfort from the thought that Henry Lawrence was there. More than once, Canning wrote Home to the Directors: 'All well at Lucknow. Lawrence doing admirably.' And by the middle of May he had, in fact, done all that was possible for the ultimate safety of those, who were to realise long after that 'his foresight, humanly speaking, saved everyone of the garrison.' Three weeks before others believed in the possibility of a siege, he had quietly laid his plans; had got in all the treasure from the city, bought grain and supplies of every kind . . . had arranged for water supply, strengthened the Residency . . . and made every possible preparation for the worst.

By the end of May he could write to Canning:

'Our three positions are now strong. Both the city Residency and the Machchi Bhawān are safe against all probable comers. But the work is harassing. . . . We have no tidings from Delhi and my outside perplexities are hourly increasing. In a few weeks, if not days, unless Delhi be captured, there will be one feeling throughout the army—that our prestige is gone; a feeling more dangerous than any other. . . . Once Delhi is recaptured, the game will again be in our own hands. If there is much delay, most of our outposts will be lost —'

That letter was interrupted by his own local crisis: a brief affair, foreseen and admirably handled; but at the moment, startling enough. On the 30th of May, he had asked a few friends to dinner; and none present could

have guessed that all his plans were laid to meet an imminent crisis.

Nine o'clock gun-fire was the signal, answered by a volley of musketry from the lines of the 71st N.I. *Chuprassis* ran in and reported a general rising. Sir Henry at once ordered horses for all : and there on the Residency steps, in full moonlight, he stood impatiently awaiting his mount : sixty sepoys, under a Subadar, drawn up in line not thirty yards away.

Captain Wilson, D.A.A.G., being present, described the episode :

‘The Subadar came up to me and saluted. “Am I to load?”’

‘I turned to ask Sir Henry, who said, “Oh, yes. Let him load.”’

‘The order was given ; and the ramrods fell with that peculiar dull sound on leaden bullets. I believe Sir Henry was the only man of us all whose heart did not beat the quicker for it.

‘As the men brought up their muskets, the tubes levelled against us, he called out to them : “I am going to drive those scoundrels out of cantonments. Take care that while I am away, you all remain at your posts ; and let no one do any damage or enter my house. Or when I return, I will hang you.”’

Those few words, so spoken, sufficed. While uproar raged, guns boomed and the flare of burning bungalows made night hideous, the sepoy guard would let none enter Sir Henry's house—the only one in all cantonments that was not fired or pillaged that night.

By prompt and vigorous action, by at once cutting off the city from cantonments, he had averted a second Meerut ; and next day he sat down to finish his interrupted letter with the warrantable conclusion, ‘We are now positively better off than we were. We know our friends from our enemies. The latter beggars have no stomach for a fight, though they are capital incendiaries.’

But if the snake had been scotched in Lucknow, that

first abortive rising, since Delhi, seemed to be the signal for local mutinies all over Oudh, the home of the Bengal sepoy, the focal point for all disbanded men, to whom it looked as if the British had not taken up the gage of battle flung down by the seizure of Delhi.

They did not yet know that, the very week of wholesale mutinies in Oudh, saw a British and Indian force of all arms marching down the Grand Trunk Road—not under General Anson, who had died at Kurnál from an attack of cholera, afterwards translated by the wits into ‘an attack of John Lawrence.’

Nor had the good news of that marching army yet reached Lucknow. From all sides came report on report of mutiny and murder and hair-breadth escapes of the fortunate few. Within a week the whole province had passed out of British hands. Of refugees from out-stations there seemed no end; most of them in a pitiable state after long jungle wanderings, days of privation and nights of terror. Though many cases of outrage and cruelty proved afterwards to be baseless or exaggerated, the miseries endured, by those who escaped death, were sufficiently real to need no embellishment: the anxiety of the men, the phantom horrors conjured up by terrified women, the torment of thirst, sleeplessness and exposure to a blistering sun. There were pleasanter tales, also, of kindness and help from villagers and *taluqdars*. One of these had escorted a party of ladies into Allahabad. Another protected several officers from the fury of pursuing rebels. And for all these mercies they had to thank the changed spirit diffused through the province by the coming of Henry Lawrence.

That week also saw the courts martial and hangings of prisoners taken in pursuit on the 30th of May. Thirty-three out of the sixty were pardoned—to the unconcealed disapproval of the stalwarts who could now believe in no virtue under a dark skin. Among the accused were a number of *bunnias*, mutineer agents from Benares. ‘A dozen of these,’ wrote one of the garrison—‘acquitted at the last moment, were so transported with joy that they danced and ran about like madmen, rubbed their foreheads on

the ground, and could hardly believe their own ears when their release was notified. Yet had the case been reversed, and we were in their hands, we should have met with no mercy.’

Most dismaying was the news from Cawnpore, where the native regiments had mutinied without doing any violence to their officers, and had marched straight off to Delhi, leaving General Sir Henry Wheeler with his handful of British troops and his acute anxiety for women and children, who had not been moved to Allahabad, as planned. The Nana Sahib, a second Akbar Khan—posing as friend and protector of the English remnant—had secretly sent messages after the sepoys, bidding them return and help to kill the few English troops and their families. Others joined them, and the weak little garrison was now closely besieged, with no preparations made for defence, or shelter or food. Certainly Wheeler had been led to hope for a supply of British troops from Allahabad; and had therefore failed to occupy his one strong position, leaving it for those others—who never came. But it was no time to count on outside help; and his position was far more perilous than Sir Henry’s at Lucknow.

Though the stations were but forty miles apart, the Ganges flowed between; its boats securely held by the enemy; so that, at worst, neither garrison could effectually help or support the other. But it is recorded as ‘one of the knightliest episodes in the struggle for life,’ that, before Cawnpore was surrounded, Lawrence sent Wheeler a small detachment of all arms to keep the Agra road; and Wheeler, later on, had sent Lawrence a handful of British troops ‘to repay the loan.’ Gladly would Lawrence have returned these now; but it might not be. He could only warn Wheeler—remembering Kabul—not to treat with the Nana Sahib, whatever befell.

But no warning availed to save Wheeler and his doomed handful from their fate.

At Lucknow, the city still remained quiet, and the whole Indian community seemed impressed by Sir Henry’s vigorous preparations to meet all comers. There were even

some who tried vainly to dissuade him from completing his Residency defences.

One of these, an aged and respectable Hindu, came as a well-wisher to suggest, in all seriousness, that it would be better for the British to propitiate Hindu deities, and regain popularity with the people, by procuring a number of monkeys to be attended and fed by Brahmins of high caste. Thus would ill feeling be assuaged throughout India.

Sir Henry, allowing the Wise One to have his say, agreed politely: 'Your advice, my friend, is good. Come with me, and I will show you my monkeys.'

Putting on his hat, he led his mystified adviser into a newly completed battery and laid his hand on the 18-pounder gun that lived in it.

'Here,' said he, 'is one of my monkeys. And that'—pointing at a pile of shot—'is his food. *This*'—pointing at the sentry—'is the Brahmin who feeds him. Now go and tell your friends that you have seen my monkeys!'

It was a trifling incident, but in small matters, as in great, Lawrence knew always how to impress the Indian mind.

In the whole Residency area defence preparations were vigorously carried on by thousands of coolies; the enclosure thronged with soldiers, sepoys, prisoners in irons, respectable Indians in carriages, field pieces, elephants and camels, bullocks and horses: one ceaseless noise and bustle from morning till night. Sir Henry's three-storey house was packed with 'ladies, women and children; every house and outhouse occupied.' A strange time; a strange scene. 'The noise of the children,' wrote one of the ladies, 'is something dreadful: not a hole or corner where one can enjoy an instant's privacy. The coming and going, the talking and bustle inside and out, the depression, the constant alarming reports, baffle all description.' More and more servants deserted, leaving harassed English women deprived of ordinary comforts, to sweep and cook and draw their own water, in the hottest month of the hot weather, tormented by flies that amounted almost to a plague of Egypt, defiling food and preventing sleep.

They were to survive more than that before the longest siege in the Mutiny was raised, in November ; and their survival was mainly due to all that Sir Henry Lawrence was doing and planning for them in those fateful June days, when anxiety and the dead weight of responsibility pressed more heavily than work upon his mind and body. How wisely and assiduously he worked and planned has been told by many who shared in, and benefited by, his labours.

‘ Sir Henry was indefatigable,’ wrote one of them. ‘ He seemed never to sleep. At night he would sally out in disguise and visit the native town, to make personal observations and see how his orders were carried out. On other nights he would have some thin bedding spread on the ground, near the Bailey Guard gate, and retire there among the gunners—not to sleep, but to plan and meditate undisturbed. He seemed to be ubiquitous. All loved and respected him ; and everyone had cause. None was too lowly for his notice. Any work well done was sure of a reward.’

And once again the 32nd expressed their feeling for him in the only permissible fashion. On the day when he was changing his headquarters from cantonments to the City Residency, ‘ he was loudly cheered by the men. “ Long live Sir Henry ! ” resounded from all sides ; and loud “ hurrahs ” continued as long as he was visible.’

‘ Sir Henry ’—wrote another—‘ tires out all his staff, who, I believe, take it in turns to go round with him. . . . He never seems to take any rest night or day, and appears to live in the saddle.’

It was the old peregrination habit ; the magic of the personal touch ; never more valuable than now, for its heartening effect, and for keeping all things under his keen observant eyes.

And this was the man stigmatised as ‘ worn out and unfit for his heavy duties ’ by Martin Gubbins, in whom the wish was clearly father to the thought ; he being next in civil rank, and full of valorous propositions that found no favour with his older and wiser Chief. Colonel Inglis, devoid of personal motive, observed that ‘ his powers of mind were unabated, his orders clear and concise, his advice excellent.’

But by the second week of June, the heat and increasing

anxiety forced even Lawrence to curtail his activities. Instead of riding everywhere, he now drove about in his carriage. He lost appetite and sleep—and still he worked on, till his overdriven body could do no more.

On the 9th, a sudden and alarming exhaustion obliged his Residency doctor to insist on complete rest for several days at least; and Lawrence—constrained to obey—appointed a Council of five; Gubbins and Ommaney, Inglis, Banks and Major Anderson; trusting the three soldiers to outvote the civilians and keep the over-active Gubbins in check. But no genuine rest could be his while northern India seethed with mutiny and the helm of his own ship was in other hands.

News had become scarcer than ever. He could discern no light, yet, in the surrounding darkness; no sign of active steps taken by Government or the army to counter the Delhi success. Even chronic and obvious defects had not, it seemed, been rectified. Through lack of forethought and neglect of crying reforms, an immature, spasmodic outbreak had convulsed half India; and even as he had prophesied, it would be a 'case of striking anew for our Empire.'

Greatly would he have been cheered, could he have known that, on this very 9th of June, the Queen's Corps of Guides had actually arrived before Delhi, having covered the five hundred and eighty miles in less than twenty-two marching days, in the hottest month of the year; had been welcomed by a British and Indian army three thousand strong, that had already fought and won a brilliant pitched battle; had swept the rebel host back into Delhi and encamped on the famous Ridge. More: his old friends the Sikh Rajahs had kept the way clear by posting their own troops along the Grand Trunk Road. And his generous heart would have kindled with an even deeper satisfaction had he realised how John was rising to his greatest occasion; marshalling all the forces, moral and material, of the Punjab—'youngest, most warlike and most trustworthy province of them all.'

And while those great deeds were doing, he was laid aside; shelved by order—but not for long.

Gubbins, ‘dressed in a little brief authority,’ proceeded to make the most of his coveted chance, especially in the matter of disarming all sepoys and dispensing with their aid. Briskly he started on his own line of policy, carrying Colonel Inglis with him by the vigour of his arguments, leaving Banks and Anderson in a minority. Without coercion of any kind, the sepoys gave up their arms and were dismissed wholesale with furlough tickets, to make for their homes—or for Delhi.

But the moment Lawrence realised what was afoot, he himself became a rebel against doctor’s orders ; declared that he was perfectly well—and proved it, by dissolving his council on the 12th, and sending fleet messengers after the departed sepoys, bidding them return. Most of them obeyed with alacrity—proud of being trusted ; and served their officers loyally throughout the siege.

But even that prompt counter-move could not at once quell the excitement caused by such wholesale dismissals. It flared up, now, in the ranks of the Military Police, an invaluable body of men, who suddenly mutinied, without murdering their officers, and bolted off to join the nearest body of rebel troops—some eight hundred of them ; a serious loss. Only twenty-six men and eight officers remained faithful, guarding the jail ; and that night an order for pursuit was given.

Owing to shortage of Indian cavalry a number of Englishmen formed themselves into a volunteer troop—some fifty officers, clerks and others, with seventy Sikhs ; but most of the rebels eluded them and made off towards Cawnpore. Such was the valuable service rendered by Martin Gubbins in two days at the helm.

No wonder Sir Henry wrote to Colvin—Governor of Agra—on the 13th :

‘Mr. Gubbins is perfectly insane on what he considers energetic, manly measures. His language has been so extravagant that, were he not really useful, I should be obliged to take severe measures against him. He is the one malcontent in the garrison.’

A sense of fair play compelled the admission :

'He is a gallant, energetic, clever fellow. He has done excellently during the last month; and is a valuable, though troublesome, collaborator. In case of anything happening to me, I think it would be dangerous to make him Chief Commissioner. Major Banks would be the safest man for the post. Colonel Inglis should command the troops.'

On the 21st he was writing again :

'From four sides we are now threatened; but if all goes well *quickly* at Delhi, and if Cawnpore holds out, I doubt if we shall be besieged. Our preparations alarm the enemy. It is deep grief to me to be unable to help Cawnpore. I would run much risk for Wheeler's sake; but an attempt with our means would only ruin ourselves without helping them. . . . I am very anxious for news. All my communications have been cut off for the last twenty days. A native from Delhi tells us our troops are before the city and have beaten the enemy. This seems authentic; and I doubt not Delhi is now in our hands—Pray succour Cawnpore speedily. . . . We have authentic intelligence of seven or eight regiments advancing against us. . . . There should be no delay in sending succour to us as well as to Cawnpore—'

Yet in every direction there *was* delay; inevitable, no doubt; but intolerable torment for the starving Cawnpore garrison; for Lawrence, torn between his own anxieties and his concern for the plight of that desperate few—not forty miles off, yet inaccessible as the moon. On June 24th, the cloud was darkened by a moving letter from General Wheeler—a prelude to disaster :

'We have had a bombardment in this miserable position, three or four times daily, for nineteen days. To reply is out of the question. All our gun-carriages disabled, ammunition short. British spirit alone remains; but it cannot last for ever. We have no instruments, no medicine, provisions for ten days at farthest, and no possibility of getting any more, as all communication with the town is cut off. . . . We have been cruelly deserted and left to our fate. . . . We have all lost everything—have not even a change of linen. Surely we are not to die like rats in a cage.

'God bless you, Ever yours,

'H. M. WHEELER.'

From that brave yet pitiful letter Lawrence boded the worst. Two answers he despatched on the same day—answers that might or might not arrive. He also sent word to Havelock at Allahabad urging an immediate move on Cawnpore. Wheeler himself had written five times ; but his notes may never have arrived : and at Allahabad the sepoy regiments had risen in a body, shooting their officers and bolting off to Delhi, leaving only one faithful Sikh regiment to guard the fort till a few British troops came to their relief.

Affairs were better there now ; and on the 27th Lawrence—fearing treachery—wrote yet again to the unhappy General :

‘Havelock with four hundred Europeans, three hundred Sikhs, guns and cavalry, will leave Allahabad immediately and *must* be at Cawnpore within two days. I hope you will husband your resources and not accept any terms . . . as I much fear treachery. You cannot rely on the Nana’s promises.’

But the word of hope and warning came too late—if it ever reached Cawnpore at all.

Wheeler had thrown his last stake—and lost. Distraught with anxiety for his troops, his suffering women and children, he was persuaded, by a plausible scoundrel, to believe that, on certain terms, his party would be allowed, unmolested, to leave by boat for Allahabad. Ignorant of coming help, he could see only the choice between ‘dying like rats in a cage,’ or a bare chance of escape from that place of torment. He chose the last—and who can blame him ?

The tragic sequel has been told with power and pathos in G. O. Trevelyan’s *Cawnpore* ; and even the bare facts make cruel reading. No sooner had the party reached the boats than they were fired on. Two of the boats capsized ; and those were fortunate who died by drowning. All who were not drowned, most of them women, were shut up by the Nana Sahib till the very day of Havelock’s arrival, when all were cruelly killed, and flung into the well of death, at Cawnpore.

It was on the 28th—the very day after Lawrence had sent his final letter—that news of Wheeler's disaster reached Lucknow ; news confirmed by two of Sir Henry's own spies, who had witnessed the massacre at the boats. One woe came treading on another's heels. For, with Delhi still holding out and many mutineers released from Cawnpore, his own situation was instantly changed for the worse. News of the surrender sped through Oudh like a prairie fire. It roused to action enemy regiments that had been hovering north-east of Lucknow, some twenty miles away—regiments that would soon be swelled by Cawnpore sepoys. It was Lawrence now who needed those British troops from Allahabad more than anything in life.

On the 27th he wrote urgently to Agra :

'We expect to be besieged in two or three days. In many respects we are strong enough to hold out, by God's help, till relief comes. With the overwhelming force that may be brought against us we shall not do badly if we hold out for a month. A thousand or fifteen hundred Europeans, with some Sikhs, Jāts and Rajputs, would be able to make their way here by one of the ghats. They should bring six or eight guns. Delay may be fatal. I need say no more. . . .'

सत्यमेव जयते

THE LAST

BY the 29th of June they knew that a large body of mutineers had moved nearer to Lucknow. They were said to have occupied Chinhhat, a village some eight miles from the city ; but accurate information was hard to get. Here was the chance, it seemed, for a dashing exploit, such as the valiant Gubbins had been almost daily pressing upon his harassed Chief, who knew now that the complete investment could not much longer be delayed ; knew also that his force was sufficient for defence, not for attack.

But his fighting temperament could not tamely endure to be upbraided by a civilian, with the incoherent taunt, ' Well, Sir Henry, we shall all be branded at the bar of history as cowards.' ¹ A report of eight or nine regiments at Chinhhat, with cavalry and ten guns, was dismissed by Gubbins, Director of Intelligence, with the elegant comment, ' What stuff ! ' His own patrol had reported five hundred men, fifty cavalry and one gun : a report so palpably inaccurate that Sir Henry himself sent out a party of cavalry, who brought word of a formidable number—two or three thousand, adding, ' Probably to-morrow there will be many more.' It was a clear case for prompt action, if—?

At heart, Lawrence felt certain that the venture would be of doubtful issue ; and Major Banks voted against it. But Gubbins had so vehemently and publicly advocated heroic measures that the less experienced officers deemed him the right man for the crisis. Only the older men, in Sir Henry's immediate confidence, could estimate all the conflicting difficulties of his position.

' The whole city of Lucknow was wavering,' wrote Captain Wilson, ' hourly reports were coming in of further intended defection. . . .

¹ Wilson Memorandum.

All the out-stations in Oudh were gone. Our servants were deserting us. Sir Henry felt he must take the initiative ; yet he feared to weaken the garrison or venture too far, lest he should endanger the position we were holding.'

Thus he saw himself wedged between two evils : refusal to act—and the wrong impression it might give ; or a bold venture that, if successful, would defer the inevitable siege. For reasons best known to himself, he chose the last, in opposition to his military instinct and his own considered judgment.

So the order was given for a start at dawn : an essential matter for British troops, who still fought and marched in scarlet tunics, with suffocating collars, and forage caps covered with white drill. The little force—all that could be spared—amounted to less than seven hundred men : three hundred of the Queen's Regiment, two and thirty Native Infantry, a hundred and twenty-five Irregular Cavalry, mainly Sikhs, and the volunteer cavalry, improvised for pursuit. For artillery : one large Howitzer drawn by elephants, four British guns and six from the Oudh field batteries ; the whole under direct command of Brigadier-General Sir Henry Lawrence. In the state of his health and his anxious responsibilities, he might well have devolved the command on Colonel Inglis of the 32nd (Queen's). But, in view of his secret doubts, he probably felt bound to take upon himself the full responsibility. It is on record that he 'gave clear directions for the troops to assemble and march at daybreak' ; also that 'coffee, biscuits and rum should accompany them, and be given out at the halt, prior to the advance against the enemy.'

What caused the fatal delay in starting has been told by none. It may not have seemed to matter much, in view of a brief sortie ; and no more was intended. No plans were laid for a general engagement, nor for covering a possible retreat ; Sir Henry having been informed that the rebel advanced guard had already gone on elsewhere. So his little force marched out confident of success, even against four times their number.

Some five miles out they halted by a bridge over the

Kokrail river. No enemy in sight, no signs of an attack. But to make matters certain, Sir Henry and his staff rode up towards a group of trees on rising ground to get a clear view beyond. By the bridge, with a level sun full in their faces, tired British soldiers and others were left standing at ease, obviously in need of refreshments, as ordered. The coffee, biscuits and rum were with the force. Yet—unbelievably—not a bite or a drop was offered to the men, who had not even water to quench their thirst—the *bhisties* having already deserted. For that incredible oversight Sir Henry has been unaccountably blamed, though he had given the order, and rations were with the regiment. To have them served out was the duty of their own officers, who could see the state of their men, and must have needed refreshment themselves; while Sir Henry was on ahead with his staff, being worried again by ‘forwards’ to countermand the wise order for a return march that he had just sent back to the bridge.

A party of native travellers, coming from Chinhat, declared they had seen no enemy. The rebel scouts had apparently fallen back. Then came a message from the bridge that the troops were ready for action, though many of their officers must have seen that they were not so: and the ‘forwards’ prevailed.

That was the real tactical error of the day. British troops exhausted, Native Gunners already wavering, *bhisties* gone, and the sun fiercer every hour: these were hardly the elements of success. But the word was ‘Advance’; and before they reached Chinhat a sudden turn showed them the enemy drawn up in fighting array, their centre on the road, their left resting on a lake; anything from ten to fifteen thousand horse and foot, with thirty-six cannon of different calibre. Clearly the native travellers had lied; and spies, acting for Lucknow, had no doubt given more accurate information to the enemy.

The hearts of even the bravest must have failed them at the sight: but there was little time for consternation. Swiftly they were deployed into line; British guns and Volunteer Cavalry supporting Native Infantry on the right;

Oudh gunners and Sikh horsemen with the 32nd on the left ; in the centre the eight-inch howitzer ; and, hidden in a ravine, were three hundred fully armed native police.

A shell from the howitzer crashed right over the main enemy column ; and as the rebels broke back, British guns following them up, Wilson remarked to his dismayed Chief : ' I think we're getting the best of it, sir.'

Lawrence answered briefly : ' Well, I don't.' His improvised force had no chance of victory ; and he knew it.

For an hour the English gunners worked manfully, the British-trained rebels firing with beautiful precision. Then the Lucknow force, flanked by two villages, was ordered to seize both. The Native Infantry and its cavalry obeyed with alacrity : but the exhausted 32nd moved too slowly. Their Colonel, urging them on, fell mortally wounded. His men halted, staggered and dismayed. Rolling volleys of musketry from the larger village told them they had been forestalled.

The elated enemy, safely housed, assailed them with a murderous fire ; throwing out skirmishers and clouds of cavalry to encircle the small party given into their hands. By now the plain, between the village and Chinhath, was one moving mass of men ; regiment after regiment pressing steadily forward, standards waving ; puffs of smoke curling up from every ravine and patch of long grass. What was to hinder them—thought one who beheld the dismaying sight—from doing just as they pleased ?

What, indeed ? The guns had ceased firing, though the howitzer still tore great gaps in the enemy ranks ; the whole police force, as if by a prearranged plan, had deserted at the first shot ; and when Lawrence rode back with Wilson, to bring up their weak reserves, the full calamity stood revealed. Two out of six native guns had been deserted and turned over into a ditch, the gunners galloping off to spread the glad news of an English defeat. Native drivers had absconded with the elephants for the howitzer. The team of bullocks for the limber was ' nowhere.' The Sikh cavalry were bolting, full gallop, towards Lucknow.

All hung on the British Gunners, a handful of sepoys, who

behaved gallantly throughout, and the demoralised 32nd, still keeping up their vain struggle against the occupied village. Now the word was no longer 'advance' but 'retreat': the hardest word for a leader to speak, and even for broken men to obey.

As they went, enemy guns swept them with grape-shot, swarming skirmishers poured a hail of lead into their ranks. Guns were spiked and abandoned, the valuable howitzer perforce left behind; gun carriages, laden with wounded, galloped off to Lucknow. Every man of the volunteer cavalry was burdened with them; for all doolie-bearers had fled. Men of the Native Infantry, leaving their own folk, helped to carry wounded British soldiers. The bulk of these, too exhausted to march, went stumbling on, griddened with heat and thirst; only one idea in their crazed minds—to reach Lucknow. In vain distracted officers—grimaced with powder, hoarse with shouting—implored rather than commanded them to halt and form up, to 'remember Waterloo and Vimiera.' The only ones who halted were those who fell sun-stricken and were cut up by a pursuing enemy. For the pitiless June sun did deadlier work that day than even a pitiless foe.

And Henry Lawrence, who felt responsible for every suffering man and beast, had no thought for anything but his beaten troops. Many officers bore witness to the unfaltering courage with which he covered the retreat, to the way in which his personal daring inspirited broken men.

'When all seemed lost,' wrote Wilson, 'he displayed the utmost calmness and decision. By a single act of coolness and resource he probably saved the 32nd from annihilation. When no shot was left in the tumbrils, he ordered a gun to be drawn up and the port fires lighted as if he were about to fire. Instinctively the enemy fell back: and under cover of that harmless piece of ordnance the detachment was enabled to retreat unmolested, till the ruse was discovered. . . . Wherever the fire was fiercest he rode from point to point encouraging weary men, doing his utmost to hold back the enemy; splendidly served by the 13th Native Infantry and his small yet fearless Volunteer Cavalry, none of whom had seen a shot fired in action before that day.'

And now they were nearing Kokrail—scene of the halt that should have ended in return. There swarms of enemy

cavalry, massing between them and the bridge, hoped to cut off retreat and crown victory with massacre. From afar it looked as if they might succeed. But here again Lawrence called a halt of brief duration. 'Hatless, as he sat his horse on the little bridge, rallying his men for a last stand—himself a distinct mark for enemy skirmishers—he seemed to bear a charmed life.' For a short space the rebels were kept at bay ; baulked of their aim to check that dismal retreat.

On they went, those dogged suffering men ; and Henry Lawrence—watching them all in an anguish of self-reproach—lost, for a moment, his schooled control. Wringing his hands together, he said above his breath : ' My God ! My God ! And I brought them to *this* ! '

Beyond the bridge he encountered his carriage and pair, sent out by his own order : a bitterly ironical comment on the hopeful anticipations of the morning. His horses promptly unharnessed, were mounted by tired men ; the lordly futile carriage was left sticking in the sand.

At that point Lawrence, giving up the command to Colonel Inglis, cantered on with Wilson and his A.D.C., to warn the garrison ; also to send out a fresh small detachment of the 32nd for defence of the Iron Bridge.

Guns from the Redan battery, turned in that direction, did valuable service ; and the fresh troops—with the help of all effectives—so stoutly held the bridge that the rebels were checked, the fugitives and wounded given a chance to escape. Beyond the Iron Bridge, native men, women and children crowded round the weary troops with food and drink, in simple pity for their plight ; while baulked enemy cavalry, galloping off to a ford lower down, swam their horses through the river.

So at last the beaten remnant reached Lucknow, two hundred of them killed and missing—with nothing achieved except the certainty of investment, which their leaders had hoped to delay. Yet, in spite of enemy numbers, many officers present were convinced that the day would have been won had the native gunners not deserted and had the 32nd been in a fit state to fight. ' Disobedience of orders.'

wrote Wilson, ‘as to the issue of biscuits, coffee and rum made the Europeans worse than useless.’ But orders or no, the General in command remained officially responsible for that day of disaster ; and Lawrence—being what he was—must have blamed himself, for going at all, more than any zealous detractor could have done. Only a remark to Dr. Ogilvie, his inspector of prisoners, revealed the lurking thought in his mind : ‘Well, Mr. Gubbins has at last had his way. I hope he has had enough of it.’

At noonday, on that fatal 30th of June, began the actual siege of Lucknow. Round shot, from an inspirited enemy, came dashing through the upper storey of the main Residency building. Terrified natives fled in all directions, riderless horses went galloping past ; every living thing hurried away from the danger zone of the British entrenchment. Within an hour there was hardly a soul to be seen. Lucknow itself seemed a city of the dead, shrouded in an ominous and fearsome stillness.

Within the Residency enclosure, shock and panic wrought dire confusion. Women and children rushed to Sir Henry’s house, leaving all property, only concerned for their lives. Trenches were manned. The banquet hall, serving as hospital, was crammed with wounded and exhausted men. Coolies and servants deserted wholesale. Officers, on the flat roof, surveying the scene through field-glasses, could see hordes of the enemy still crossing the Gumti, galloping up the wide streets, making for the jail and freeing the prisoners to join in the *tamāsha*. When darkness fell, they swarmed in between the Residency and Machchi Bhawān, loop-holed most of the houses with astonishing alacrity ; and at dawn greeted the garrison with a shower of bullets, pattering everywhere.

The only attempt at concerted attack was repulsed with loss ; but to Sir Henry the situation seemed desperate. With a few broken regiments and guns, with unsteady native police and very little cavalry, what hope of holding out against a mass of armed rebels, backed by half the population of Lucknow ?

And around him, at a small distance, all was darkness : communications cut, except for highly paid messengers, who might be faithless, or murdered, directly they left the enclosure. Now was seen the value of his earlier preparations, ridiculed by many as premature. A large amount of live stock had been collected, a vast quantity of essential foodstuff stored, with the help of his Commissariat Officer and friendly *taluqdars*. But systematic storage and a record of amounts available had been practically impossible ; since the stuff must be stowed away, as received, wherever room could be found ; and the Commissariat Officer was wounded at Chinhat. Though others were appointed for inspection and supervision, inevitable mistakes arose, later on, as to the whereabouts and exact amount of all supplies.

Throughout that first trying day Lawrence was seen everywhere, directing all details, visiting every post, concentrating his troops within the so-called Residency quarters, satisfied that they were amply provided with essential needs. 'It may be said, without fear of challenge,' wrote McLeod Innes, 'that his spirit and example inspired the whole garrison.'

For his own occupation he chose a small upper room in the highest storey of the Residency whence every movement of the enemy could be observed, every threat of attack anticipated. That it was singled out by the rebels for special attention, was proved, on the morning of the 1st, when an eight-inch shell, from the captured howitzer, burst between Lawrence and his secretary without injuring either. This so alarmed his officers that they begged him to leave the Residency, or at least move to a less exposed room in the lower storey. But no other room equalled that one for observation ; and Lawrence had too much else on his mind, having wisely decided to abandon Machchi Bhawān, to concentrate his entire garrison in the Residency quarter. So he jokingly dismissed their concern with the assurance that the enemy could have no gunner smart enough to put another shell into so small a room.

By way of comment, a lively shower of round shot pattered in. and Wilson again pressed the point, begging Lawrence

to let them at once shift his papers and table. Common sense and consideration for their safety won from him a promise to move next day. He could attend to nothing so trivial till he had withdrawn all troops from Machchi Bhawān and blown up the fort.

The damaged semaphore was repaired ; the order signalled ‘ Retire to-night at twelve. Blow up well. Bring prisoners, guns and treasure.’ Arrangements were made to shell the intervening space ; and absolute secrecy was maintained.

At midnight the small garrison paraded and marched out of the Eastern gate ; crossed the dark road as quietly as might be, and passed enemy pickets who fired never a shot. By a stroke of luck the rebels had chosen that very night to loot the city ; so most of them were more congenially employed elsewhere. Last of the garrison to leave the doomed fort was the subaltern, who had fired a twenty-minute fuse that would blow up the building, with two hundred barrels of precious gunpowder and nearly six thousand rounds of ammunition, impossible to remove in time.

So, without let or hindrance, they reached the Residency : and as the Water Gate closed behind the last man and gun, a thunderous report shook every building in the quarter. A brilliant flare lit up earth and sky. Dust and ruins, hurled broadcast, shrouded all in a black enveloping cloud ; and the startled enemy knew that Machchi Bhawān was no more.

For Lawrence, there can have been no rest that night. His new reinforcements must be posted, his new guns in position before dawn, when the enemy would no doubt return to the attack. And the small hours of that July morning saw the whole garrison concentrated in the Residency entrenchments, supplied with ample food and ammunition, with more guns than they could man, prepared to hold their own against all comers to the death.

A few hours later, in the first light of early dawn, Lawrence himself was going the round of his diminished kingdom, inspecting every post, impressing on every man what he must do, ‘ steadying them all to their duty.’

Soon after eight, he returned to his room, and was reminded by Wilson of his promise to move down below. Exhausted with heat and lack of sleep, he said he must first have a couple of hours' rest. Lying there, dead weary, he gave orders about rations ; and Wilson went into the next room to write them out. On return, he found young George Lawrence prone on a bed near his uncle's ; a coolie seated on the floor pulling the punkah.

Let Wilson tell what followed :

'I went between the beds and read out what I had written. . . . Sir Henry was explaining what he wished altered, when the fatal shot crashed in : a sheet of flame, a terrific report and dense darkness.

'I fell on the floor, stunned, for perhaps a few seconds. When I got up, I could see nothing for the smoke and dust. Neither Sir Henry nor his nephew made any move ; and in great alarm I cried out, "Sir Henry, are you hurt?"

'Twice I thus called, without any answer. The third time he said in a low tone, "I am killed."

'The punkah had come down, and the ceiling, with a great deal of plaster. It was some minutes before I could see anything ; but as the dust and smoke cleared away, I saw that the white coverlet of Sir Henry's bed was crimson with his blood.'

George, surprisingly unharmed, sprang up and hurried to the house of the civil surgeon, Dr. Fayrer, who found Lawrence laid in the drawing-room, a group of his officers standing round, anxious and dismayed.

A brief examination of the wound revealed that it was mortal. A fragment of shell, lacerating his left thigh and smashing the bone, had caused injuries beyond remedy even by amputation. Doctors could but try to stop the bleeding, and do all they could to assuage the spasms of pain.

Lawrence asked only one question : 'How long have I to live?' Nor would he accept the kind, uncertain answer : and Fayrer, pressed for the truth, replied with singular accuracy, 'About forty-eight hours.'

As the enemy still treated that particular house to an

increasing storm of shot and shell, he had Lawrence carried over to his own bungalow, laid him in a sheltered north verandah and revived him with stimulants. But the rebels were well served throughout by intelligence mysteriously conveyed. And now a close continuous fire assailed Dr. Fayrer's sheltered verandah, bullets falling like hail among the sorrowful officers grouped round Sir Henry's bed. Knowing that his time was short, he had asked to receive Holy Communion, and all who were present received it with him—a strange unforgettable scene : rough, hardened men openly weeping ; a group of awe-struck women looking through one of the windows ; the ceaseless din and confusion of enemy fire, and their own guns out in the garden, drowning the chaplain's voice.

When it was over, they moved Lawrence to an inner room, its windows roughly blockaded with furniture. There he revived sufficiently to talk, for nearly an hour, on matters of practical importance ; to disburden his mind with the unreserve of one who knew that he was dying.

In that hour he gave clear directions, to all who would be left in charge, naming Major Banks as his successor, with Colonel Inglis to command of the troops ; begging them all to promise that they would recognise Banks as leader. With a perfectly clear brain he gave detailed instructions for the defence : to reserve fire, to spare the health of British troops, to inventory all supplies, and to ‘entrench—entrench—entrench.’ Above all—remembering Kabul and the nightmare of Cawnpore—he abjured them to make no terms with a pitiless enemy. Let every man die at his post—and ‘God help the poor women and children.’ Fears for their possible fate haunted his mind. Even in extremity he thought of everything, everyone.

His favourite horse ‘Ladākhī’ was to be a gift for George. His faithful servants, sobbing in the background, were called forward by name, rewarded and consoled. Each was to have a year's pay, to serve any other Sahib who might wish for them, or to return to their own homes, if preferred. Personal messages to all whom he loved were conveyed through George, who had been to him ‘as a son.’

Only once he completely broke down, at mention of his wife and the precious little daughter, with whom he had longed to go home. The fate of his foster-children, the Hill schools, weighed upon his mind, left, as they would be, without his generous support. He could but commend them to the Government he had faithfully served—and they flourish to this day.

After that first supreme effort to say all that must be said, he spoke little, except in brief snatches. He joined in prayers read by the chaplain, and slept at intervals, when chloroform eased him of pain. Constantly he dwelt on his concern for the women and children; constantly repeated his last injunction, 'No Surrender.' For himself, he asked only to be buried with the men: 'No fuss. No nonsense.—Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty.'

That was the sole record he desired of a great career.

When all hearts were filled with sorrow and admiration for the man and the leader, he seemed only burdened by a sense of his own failings; haunted, no doubt, by the disaster of Chinhat. 'Don't let me be maligned,' was his plea. And Dr. Fayrer—who was with him till he died—afterwards told his friends the Colin Mackenzies that, near the end, speaking of forgiveness, he said, 'I forgive everyone—I forgive my brother John.'

All night, roar of cannon and rattle of bullets seldom ceased; yet it seemed not to trouble him. Next morning mortification eased him of pain; but weakness increased. And early on July the 4th—at the very hour when the shell had crashed into the room—the end came so quietly that he seemed indeed to have fallen asleep. George, himself wounded in the shoulder, went on kneeling beside him, heedless of pain and loss of blood, unaware that the uncle he so loved had ceased to breathe. Then Dr. Ogilvie leaned down and told him all was over—

That night they buried Henry Lawrence, according to his wish, with five soldiers, killed during the day; each man sewn up in a sheet. There was no time for making coffins—and none to make them. Nor could any officer leave his post—so fierce was the firing—to pay the beloved leader a

last tribute of respect. Most of them did not even know that he had left them——

Alone under the stars, the chaplain read a few hurried prayers, with the ping and crackle of bullets for response, over the grave of those five unknown soldiers and of Henry Lawrence, who had ‘tried to do his duty.’

So died, at the outset of that famous siege, ‘the man who above all others has done honour to the name of Englishman in India’—the man who could have desired no prouder epitaph than that sincere tribute from a fellow Punjabi.

For several days his death was not made known, lest it should dangerously dishearten the troops, who so implicitly relied on his courage and judgment, his fertility of resource and inspiring example in that hour of crisis. When at last the truth must be told, it spread consternation through the garrison. To those in command it seemed as if their ship had been suddenly left without Captain or rudder in the midst of a raging storm; and each man, even the humblest, grieved as at the loss of a personal friend.

Nor was that sensation peculiar to Lucknow. Sir Henry Lawrence belonged to India—above all, to the Punjab, where his death was accounted ‘the calamity of the Mutiny.’

‘In the North,’ wrote Herbert Edwardes, ‘every chief, every officer felt he has lost a friend. I have never witnessed such universal lamentation.—The feeling is not subsiding, it is growing. Hundreds refuse to believe it. And indeed we have not lost him. To all who knew and loved him, he will ever be present in spirit. His wife, too, is one of those whose death I have never been able to realise—and never shall I believe it. They seem only to have gone into another Residency.’

John Lawrence himself—no phrase-maker—spoke the simple truth when he said: ‘There is no man in India who could not have been better spared. The blow came like a clap of thunder on us.’

Yet, to the Punjab, all of him that could die, had in a sense been dead since the tragedy of January, ’53, when he had, as it were, witnessed his own funeral procession. And all of him that could live on, after the shell had done its deadly work, was living still. Even to-day, much of it

remains alive in India, where he is remembered by many, not merely as a great name in history, but as a true friend of her people, especially the Sikhs. In his own province, that was now weathering the storm—and was to prove the sheet-anchor of India—the fidelity of the great Sirdars may be regarded as a tribute to the memory of Henry Lawrence ; just as the contentment and well-being of the masses may be ascribed to John. But it remained for Lord Stanley to express the conviction of many who had known him best, that ‘his personal character was far above his career, eminent as that career had been. If he had lived and died a private person, the impress of his mind would still have been left on all who came into contact with him.’

Peculiarly sad it seems, in his case, that he should have died without knowing of the eminence to which he might have risen had he lived ; without knowing that in England—before they had news of his death—the Court of Directors and the Queen’s Government had decided, in the critical circumstances, to nominate a provisional Governor-General, in case the need should arise ; that they had unanimously agreed in appointing ‘Colonel Sir Henry Lawrence, K.C.B., to succeed to the office of Governor-General—pending the arrival of Lord Canning’s successor.’ And since it happened that the next Viceroy, Lord Elgin, died in India soon after his arrival, Sir Henry Lawrence—if then living—would probably have succeeded him.

But it was not to be.

Strangely and sadly, in each case where he attained a notable success, his achievement was shadowed by seeming failure ; and both high honours, for which he seemed normally destined, were reserved for John. It was John who became first Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab—Henry’s original kingdom—and was afterwards, deservedly, recalled to India as Viceroy : an honour too seldom conferred on men of Indian experience. Again, it was John who became Baron Lawrence of the Punjab, while Henry—made a Baronet after his death—became Lawrence of Lucknow. Could he only have known before the end that he—a Company’s officer—had been chosen by Government,

as the fittest man to hold India for England in that hour of crisis, the high tribute would have healed every rankling wound inflicted by Lord Dalhousie during, and after, the years of his Punjab administration.

But if, in public life, he was baulked of supreme reward, in his personal life he was, on his own admission, ‘blessed as few men have been’ by sixteen unclouded years of marriage with her whom he had known at sight for his destined mate : years of unfailing inspiration and companionship, far rarer between husband and wife than a lasting love. Absent or present, it may be truly said, that she played a vital part in most of his finest achievements ; a fact none recognised more clearly than Henry Lawrence himself. And it seems fitting that Herbert Edwardes—his disciple, biographer and friend—should pay the final tribute to the pair he knew and loved so well.

‘Their example lives vividly,’ he wrote to his own wife, ‘and will, I believe, exercise a remarkable influence in many parts of India. None of us ever saw a couple quite like them, and we cannot hope to do so again. It is a blessed thing to have known them.’

Simple words straight from the heart ; but no fine-sounding phrases could more perfectly convey the abiding impress left, on all who really knew them, by Henry and Honoria Lawrence.

Parkstone : November 15, 1934.

Parkstone : February 15, 1936.

LIST OF BOOKS CONSULTED

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Lawrence Family Papers.





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सत्यमेव जयते



सत्यमेव जयते

Scale
English Miles

A horizontal scale bar with markings at 0, 50, 100, 150, and 200 English Miles. The bar is divided into segments by vertical tick marks. The numbers 0, 50, 100, 150, and 200 are placed below the bar at regular intervals. The word "Scale" is written above the bar, and "English Miles" is written below the bar.

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