

A few months later the King and Queen set out on their journey to India—the first and only reigning sovereign and his consort to visit India during the period of British rule. Early in 1912 the magnificent Coronation Durbar was held in Delhi; it was announced that the capital and seat of government were to be transferred to Delhi from Calcutta, and a new city built commensurate with the dignity, authority, and (as it seemed then) permanence of the Indian Empire. The partition of Bengal was annulled, and—as a climax and crown to my work in past years and the work of those who had co-operated with me so zealously and steadfastly—Aligarh was given the status of a university. The King-Emperor personally bestowed on me the highest decoration which it was possible for any Indian subject of the Crown to receive, making me a Knight Grand Commander of the Star of India.

Splendid as were the Durbar ceremonies they were marred by two curious contretemps. At the great State banquet, to which most of the notabilities of India had been invited, some disaster occurred in the kitchen, and the food that emerged was just enough to give the King and a handful of people sitting near him a full meal. For most of the guests it was the only chance in their lives that they would ever have of dining in the King's company; and nearly all of them had no dinner to eat.

The other had far more alarming implications. The investiture, at which I received my decoration of the G.C.S.I., was held at night in an enormous and brilliantly lit tent. It was a full State ceremony: the King-Emperor and his Consort sat enthroned, the Viceroy, the Provincial Governors, the Commander-in-Chief and all the senior military Commanders, a superb assemblage of ruling princes, all the leading officials, Indian and British, from every corner of India, were gathered in honour of a stately and memorable occasion. Suddenly one of the electric light bulbs, high up near the canvas canopy of the roof, began to play pranks. All eyes went to its flickerings . . . Suppose it were to explode . . . in that instant the same silent, horrifying thought occurred to almost everyone present. Whistles were blowing, we could hear fire-engines clanking up; behind their Majesties' thrones officers had already drawn their swords and were hacking at the hangings and the canvas to make a way out for the King and Queen. But the

rest of us were trapped. Had the tent caught fire it would have blazed up like a celluloid ping-pong ball put near the hearth, and hardly one of us inside it would have survived. The humanitarian aspect of the disaster which we contemplated was appalling enough. Even more fearful to most of us was the thought of the political, administrative, and social chaos all over India that would have followed. The country would have been left without a single leading figure. Next day both the King and the Viceroy told me that instant orders had gone forth that no ceremony of this sort was ever to be held again by night in a tent.

A great military parade was of course a central feature of the Durbar celebrations. Many of us, Indian and British alike, were becoming more acutely aware of the importance of the Indian Army in Britain's world-wide imperial strategy, with her vast commitments and the growing sense of international tension. Britain's own Regular Army, a considerable portion of which was habitually stationed in India, was—though well trained and of admirable morale—small in comparison with those of any of her possible challengers. Haldane, as Secretary of State for War, had thoroughly reorganized the military machine, and had brought into being the volunteer and part-time Territorial Army; but Britain had refused to heed the urgent pleas of the veteran Field-Marshal, Lord Roberts, for a Continental system of universal national service. I was able to link the developing recognition of Britain's military needs and of India's position in relation to those needs with my own passion for Indian education.

In an article which I contributed to Leo Maxse's *National Review* in July 1911 (it was not a journal whose imperialist politics I shared, but it was widely read by people whom I was eager to reach with my views) I put my arguments as forcefully as I could.

Educate, educate, educate [I said]. Look for a passing moment at the question of manpower. India could put troops into South Africa as quickly as they could be sent from England, she could land soldiers in Australia long before England could do so, and forces from India could reach western Canada almost as soon as from England. If by education the myriads of India can be taught that they are guardians and supporters of the Crown, just as are the white citizens of the

Empire, then the realization that India and the self-governing dominions stand and fall together, bound by a community of interests and a common cause to maintain, will have come. It is imperative to give Indians the education to fit them for their future role in the British Empire.

In two World Wars, one of which was to break out only three years after these words were written, my arguments were justified to the hilt.

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The autumn of 1912 found me on my travels again—this time to Russia. The Tsar Nicholas II, in appearance almost the double of his cousin, King George V, had visited India when he was Tsarevitch; that was, however, a good many years earlier, and I had never met him since. Many of his relatives habitually visited the South of France—the Grand Dukes Boris and Nicholas among them, and the Tsar's own brother the Grand Duke Michael—and with several I was on terms of warm friendship, and they had often asked me to visit them at home.

Patrician and aristocratic life in England and in many other European countries had its own magnificence and stateliness; but they were as nothing compared with the luxury and opulence of the elaborate and gilded existence that was led by the Russian aristocracy in St. Petersburg, as I saw it that winter.

More than thirty years have passed since the Revolution shattered their world; many were murdered, many went into exile, in towns like Harbin and Shanghai, in Constantinople, in Berlin, Paris, and the South of France. Among those who had to refashion life from its foundations upwards was a distinguished soldier, formerly Military Attaché in London, General Polovtsoff, who for many years has been a well-known and much-liked figure in Monte Carlo. Like many of his companions in exile, he has borne his vicissitudes with courage, dignity, and a fine, high spirit. It happened that in 1912 I was the guest of General Polovtsoff and his brother in the house—the palace—which they had inherited from their father who had been a Minister of the Tsar.

The splendour of that house was beyond description. The banqueting hall, in which my hosts gave a luncheon party in my

honour, was, I am sure, fully three times the size of the great salon of any eighteenth-century Italian palazzo. Its walls were hung with magnificent pictures and tapestry; there were great, many-coloured, strongly-scented banks of hot-house flowers, and the luncheon itself was on a prodigious scale. And this was only one of many similar functions at which I was entertained at similar houses of almost fairy-tale magnificence.

Life was adjusted to a curious, and, at first, somewhat unsettling timetable, for which—accustomed as I was to social life in London and Paris—I was not immediately prepared. The first of my many invitations to supper showed me what I had to learn. I had been asked to what I knew was to be a big supper party at a famous general's house, to be attended by several of the Grand Dukes and a number of leading ladies of the theatre. With my notions of this kind of entertainment in London and in Paris, I arrived at the house a little after midnight. To my surprise there was nobody else there at all; even the servants looked as if they had just woken up, as they scurried around turning on the lights. For an hour or thereabouts I waited in some embarrassment, until at last my host and hostess came downstairs. Between half-past one and two the other guests began to arrive and the vast salon began to look a little less empty. It was well after two o'clock when we went in to supper. After supper there was some music, and it was nearing half-past four when the party broke up and we went home. This, I quickly learned, was the normal convention.

St. Petersburg was a winter capital. Its season was a winter season. I arrived there near its beginning, in late November. The cold was already intense. The days were dark and short, the nights long and bitter, and the city itself snowbound. Here were the reasons for the—to me—unusual tempo and rhythm of life. The day ordinarily began about noon; shops, banks, and offices remained open until late in the evening. Work was done and business transacted from midday onwards; and the nights were given up to the varied and elegant pursuits and distractions of a gay, cultivated, and sophisticated Society. The theatres were excellent, so were the opera and the ballet. There were parties innumerable; there were moonlight drives in troikas across the icebound Neva to some of the islands that were not too distant from the capital. In the few hours of daylight there were often

shooting parties in the surrounding countryside when enthusiastic sportsmen went out not only after game birds and deer, but after bears.

All the houses were to my way of thinking grossly overheated and thoroughly underventilated. I had grown accustomed in cities like London and Paris to houses in which, even in cold weather, the windows and the doors were constantly open, and I was shocked and not a little disgusted by Russian habits in this matter. All houses were built with double glass windows. Some time in early November, when winter was setting in, workmen would come and nail down all these windows so that they could not be opened again until the end of April. One small pane was left free at the top of each window, every morning this would be opened for an hour or so and then shut again. This was all the fresh air that any room got. On my very first night at the British Embassy I said to my hostess, the Ambassador's wife, Lady Buchanan, that I thought this a most unhygienic and most unpleasant custom. She answered me that when she and her husband first went to St. Petersburg, they tried to live as they would have done in England with the windows hardly ever fully shut, either by day or by night. However, the whole family fell ill, and they had to adopt the custom of the country, and since then there had been no illness. She told me, too, that in all the big houses, at which parties were given and large numbers of people gathered together, the rooms were scented and the air specially sweetened and purified.

The corollary of this permanent overheating of the houses was that Russians of all classes had comparatively light indoor clothing. But when they went out of doors they all piled on heavy furs. The well-to-do would be thickly wrapped in sables, and the poorer classes in sheepskin. Everyone had sheepskin or fur caps, thick warm gloves, and snowboots. I had been accustomed to being told that one ought not to go suddenly from warm rooms into bitter cold outside, and at first I thought the whole Russian way of life—similar to some extent, I suppose, to that in Canada in the winter and in many of the northerly states of the U.S.A.—“unhealthy”; but a few weeks in St. Petersburg and Moscow rid me of this prejudice.

I came to the conclusion that the Hermitage Museum was the

finest I ever saw in my life, far superior to the Louvre, the National Gallery, or New York's Metropolitan Museum. Its superiority lay in its rigid selectivity. There was no indifferent or third-rate stuff on view; everything shown was of supreme merit. There was no need, as in every other big museum or art gallery that I have ever been to, to trudge mile after mile past inferior works, questionable attributions, copies and studies by the pupils of great masters. At the Hermitage, under the direction of Count Tolstoy, a relative of the great novelist, all this kind of stuff had been sternly relegated to the vaults. He had instituted, so I was given to understand, a régime whereby everything was taken off the walls which, whether by a great artist or merely alleged to be by him, did not possess its own intrinsic beauty and merit. The effect therefore was of a small, pure collection of masterpieces and it was extraordinarily refreshing.

One of the treasures of the Hermitage was a wonderful collection of old English silver, of the period of Charles II, when the art of the silversmith in England was at its height. The collection, so I believe, was made by Peter the Great, who visited England as a young man and worked in the shipyards at Deptford. Half-savage, half-genius as he was, he had a strong and genuine aesthetic streak in him, excellent taste—witness the pictures which he chose while he was in Holland—and sure, clear judgment.

I remember being transported with delight by the choral singing in the Cathedral of St. Isaac in St. Petersburg. I have often listened to fine singing in both Catholic and Anglican cathedrals in Western Europe; but never have I heard a choir whose singing was as pure and as majestic as that of the cathedral in St. Petersburg. Boys were recruited, I was told, from all over Russia, trained from an early age, and given sound professional or technical schooling at the same time.

Despite the full social life that I led with the Tsar's brother, the Grand Duke Michael, his cousins, and the officers of his crack regiments, I never met or had an audience of the Tsar. He lived a strangely secluded existence; and in the last years of his sad and troubled reign his seclusion deepened and his circle narrowed. He was of a nervous, shy, and naturally melancholy disposition; his Empress was superstitiously pious, courageous, and dignified, but utterly out of touch with reality; his son and heir was delicate and

ailing. All the circumstances of his life combined to encourage him into a sombre remoteness. I was told that if I wanted to see him an official approach and a request for an audience would have to be made through diplomatic channels; and that it would have to have the character of an official visit. I did not, therefore, even make the attempt. One of the Tsar's few sociable characteristics, so I was informed, was his love and enjoyment of the theatre, especially ballet and the opera. He had a habit of coming into a theatre after the performance had started, accompanied only by one or two officer friends, and would slip unobserved into a small stage box. The only indication of his presence would be the loud and enthusiastic applause, the hurrahs and bravoës, which were heard behind the curtain of his box. Perhaps only there a few feet from the make-believe world beyond the footlights could this shy, sad, solitary man forget his sorrows and shed his inhibitions.

From St. Petersburg I went on to Moscow. Moscow's prosperity in those days was founded on commerce and industry. The Court and the aristocracy made St. Petersburg their headquarters; rich industrialists were the chief citizens of Moscow. Their wealth was derived from various sources: sugar, the rapidly developing oil industry of the Caspian Sea region, and piece goods from the cotton factories of Moscow. They bore a considerable similarity to the same powerful capitalist class in the United States. They lived in magnificent style; their houses were virtually palaces and museums, for, like the nobles of St. Petersburg, many of these merchant princes were connoisseurs of the arts. I noticed incidentally that Moscow's tastes seemed more catholic than St. Petersburg's; my favourite French impressionists had to some extent taken their fancy, whereas in St. Petersburg all the paintings that I saw were of the classical schools.

The gulf between rich and poor was truly appalling. I took some trouble to study labour conditions in the mills and textile factories; they resembled in many ways Bombay's cotton mills, but conditions in them were infinitely worse. I have no hesitation in saying that, poor, miserable, and ill-fed as were the Bombay mill-hands of those days, they looked happier and livelier than the Moscow workers of the same sort. In Bombay you could at least see smiles; every Moscow mill-hand looked drawn, haggard, and tired to death. Yet I doubt if either in the matter of wages or diet

the Moscow worker was worse off than his Bombay counterpart. The reason for the difference lay, I think, in one simple fact—the climate. In his hours off work, for at least eight months of the year, the Bombay mill-hand, however poor and downtrodden, could walk in the fresh air, could see the sun and the moon and the stars. For eight months of the year life for the Moscow worker, on the other hand, was only possible indoors—in the hot, steamy atmosphere of the mill, or in an overheated, overcrowded little room in one of the great, grim, barrack-like buildings that served so many of them as home.

An odd custom prevailed in those days in the public baths of Russia's great cities—I visited one in Moscow, so I am not talking from hearsay—in the administration of what were known as Russian steam baths, really very like our Turkish baths. The attendants who looked after you, gave you your soap and your towels, massaged you and looked after all your wants, were women—but elderly, and of so plain and sour a visage that it would have been utterly impossible to imagine even the slightest misbehaviour with them. Nor, I was assured, did misbehaviour occur. This was simply regarded as useful employment for women past middle age; and nobody—except the raw foreign visitor like myself—thought it in the slightest degree unusual.

While I was still in Russia the first match was set to the conflagration that soon was to engulf the whole world. The Balkan Wars—first the attack by a combination of small Balkan countries on the Ottoman Empire, and then their ferocious quarrels with each other—were not then merely localized conflicts, which many tried to convince themselves that they were; in fact they were unmistakable indications of what was to come. Turkey, whose internal difficulties and troubles had accumulated and deepened in recent years, reeled under successive blows from her enemies. Day after day news of fresh disasters reached the outside world. By the time I returned to Paris and before I left for India the extent of Turkey's plight was obvious; it seemed to be only a matter of time before her foes had her completely at their mercy. The feelings of Muslim India, indeed of the whole Islamic world, were deeply stirred. I made as much haste as I could to get back to Bombay.

My closest political friends and associates were active on behalf

of the Turks. An organization had been set up, representing all branches of Muslim opinion in India, including many of those most closely concerned with Aligarh, whose purpose was to render all possible assistance to Turkey, and to bring maximum pressure to bear on the British Government in order that Britain's influence should be exerted in the Concert of Europe, to make defeat tolerable and honourable for the Turks. A practical gesture of help had been made in the equipment and despatch to the war area of a Red Crescent medical mission, led by Dr. Ansari—one of India's outstanding medical practitioners. This was the kind of worthwhile, humane work which I was happy to support. I contributed too to Turkey's war loans; but I found myself involved in a distressing difference of opinion with the majority of my Muslim brethren in India over our attitude to this conflict—a difference of opinion which, I am sorry to say, disrupted for some time to come the hitherto close and intimate associations, in thought and action, which had subsisted between myself and other Muslim leaders in India.

We were giving as much aid as we could to Turkey, but how much, in fact, did it amount to? The honest answer was: very little. We were not, of course, our own masters; and our real influence on British policy towards the whole Turco-Balkan issue was negligible. The Government lent a courteous if distant ear to our earnest supplications, but they could well afford to pay no practical attention to us. British opinion in general about the Ottoman Empire—"the Sick Man of Europe", as portrayed by the political cartoonists of *Punch* and other papers—was at best lukewarm. The European political situation was tense and precarious. Britain's friends in the Concert of Europe, France, Russia, and to a lesser extent Italy, were anything but pro-Turkish, and the main concern of all of them was to avoid an open breach with Germany and Austria. A delicate but chilly policy of non-intervention was the furthest that Britain was willing to go. But the general run of Muslim opinion in India was far more fiery; the honour and integrity of Islam were at stake; and we should urge the Turks to hold on, to face every risk and accept every sacrifice, and to carry the war on to the utmost end.

Fine sentiments, but I demurred from them. I pointed out that it was not really in our power to help the Turks; great and

generous as our emotions doubtless were, we were quite incapable at that time of turning our feelings into action. To call on the Turks to stand, fight, and die for the cause of Islam, to the last piastre and the last Turk, while we survived, was unfair and unjust to the Turks. Far from helping them, it was actually worsening their plight.

I did not mince my words. I gave an interview along these lines to the *Times of India*, the most widely-read and most responsible newspaper in the subcontinent. I observed that it was all very well sending heartening telegrams to the Turks "Go on, fight on! Do not accept defeat, whatever the sacrifice!" but that we who had sent the telegram could then go home and sleep soundly in our peaceful beds. These were not popular comments, and they evoked a storm of protest from Muslims all over India. However, as such storms will, it passed, and soon enough this controversy was forgotten in the whirlwind of perils and problems of the First World War.

CHAPTER VI

THE FIRST WORLD WAR

THE early months of 1914 found me on another visit to Burma. I then took a step of some importance in respect of my Ismaili followers. I advised them to undertake a considerable measure of social and cultural assimilation. Burma, although annexed to the British Empire, and at this time under the control of the India Office, was a country in which national, patriotic sentiment was strong, and nationalism a spontaneous, natural, and continuous growth. I was convinced that the only prudent and proper policy for my followers was to identify themselves as closely as possible with the life of Burma socially and politically, to give up their Indo-Saracenic names, habits, and customs, and to adopt, permanently and naturally, those of the people alongside whom they lived, and whose destiny they shared.

From Burma I made a brief trip to Europe in that last spring and early summer of the old epoch; and thence I went to East Africa. Somewhat to my surprise and greatly to the distress and indignation of my followers there, the authorities in German East Africa requested me not to visit their territory. While I was on my way to Africa, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife were assassinated in the little Bosnian border town of Sarajevo; and the *casus belli* had been provided. By the time I reached Zanzibar the situation had become critical; in the last days of July and the first days of August there was an exchange of ever graver and graver telegrams. Russia and Germany were at war; the Germans invaded Belgium; and on August 4th Britain declared war on Germany.

I had no hesitations, no irresolution. Ambitions, aspirations, hopes, and interests narrowed down to one or two intensely personal, solitary decisions. I had one overruling emotion—to go to England as fast as I could, and offer my services in whatever

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capacity they could best be used. I was in good health; I was still young and strong; my place was with the British. I returned immediately and without comment the insignia of the Prussian Order of the Crown, First Class, which the Kaiser had conferred on me. I telegraphed instructions to my followers in and on the borders of all British territories that they were to render all possible help and support to the British authorities in their area. I offered my personal services to the British Resident in Zanzibar, and I took the first steps in organizing, from among members of the Indian community, a transport corps to assist in maintaining communications from the coast to the interior. Then I made haste to get to England. There were rumours—well-founded as it proved—of a German sea-raider at large in the Indian Ocean, and the authorities in Zanzibar asked me not to go to Mombasa as I had intended and thence to England by the first available ship, but to proceed by way of South Africa. From the Union I got a passage to England, and I was in London by mid-September.

I had had no practical military experience, so it seemed to me that my immediate contribution to the war effort was likely to be humble. I volunteered for service in the ranks in any unit in the British or Indian Army. I called on Lord Kitchener, the Secretary of State for War, whom I had known well in India and with whom I had served on the Viceroy's Legislative Council more than a decade earlier; I urged that I should be enlisted as a private in the Indian contingent then on its way to the Western Front.

Kitchener, however, whose knowledge and experience of the East were massive and profound, had other views as to the sort of service I could render. He was fully cognizant of both the perils and the possibilities latent in the involvement of Eastern, predominantly Islamic, peoples in a conflict of these dimensions. Germany's intrigues and influence in Constantinople had greatly increased in recent years; the great dream of a German hegemony extending from Berlin to Baghdad was one of the many fantasies on which German imperialist thinkers and teachers had dwelt eagerly and lovingly. The Turkish Government seemed deeply disrupted and drained of the capacity to take independent and effective decisions of its own. For Britain it was essential to retain control over the then vital artery of Empire: the seaway through

the Mediterranean, the Suez Canal, the Red Sea, and the Indian Ocean, which led not only to India but to Australia and New Zealand and to the Colonial territories of South-east Asia. In all this complex of political and strategic needs and obligations it seemed to the British Government that I held a position of considerable importance. Soldiering in the ranks was not, Kitchener gave me firmly to understand, for me.

Most significant of all, it had not passed unnoticed by the British Government that I had won and held the respect and trust of many important Turks. Lord Kitchener requested me to use all my influence with the Turks to persuade them not to join the Central Powers, and to preserve their neutrality. I discovered that Kitchener was by no means alone in his idea of the sort of employment to which I could best be put. His opinion was shared and supported by the Secretary of State for India, by the Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, and by the Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith. Indeed even the King, when I had the honour of lunching with him, referred to it.

Therefore, while overtly I busied myself with rallying young Indians in England—of whom there were considerable numbers—to volunteer for the Indian Field Ambulance Corps, and in raising a comforts fund for them, discreetly and urgently I got in touch with the Turkish Ambassador, Tewfiq Pasha. At my request he sent an invitation to the Young Turks, who had assumed power in Turkey's revolution of 1908, to send a ministerial delegation to London to enter into direct negotiations with His Majesty's Government. Britain was prepared, on her own behalf and on behalf of Russia and her other allies, to give Turkey full guarantees and assurances for the future.

We had high hopes of bringing off what would have been, from every point of view, a diplomatic victory of first-rate importance. I was quite aware that my own emotions were deeply involved. As a Muslim I was most anxious that Turkey should be spared the trials and the horrors of renewed war, not against a ramshackle alliance of small Balkan States but against the mighty combination of some of the greatest industrial and military nations in the world. The Turks had but lately emerged from their earlier ordeal; they were in desperate need of a breathing space; it seemed impossible that they could enter a new struggle and not

face almost illimitable catastrophe. It had to be admitted that the Turks were justifiably suspicious of "guarantees", however specific, offered by the Western Powers; they had had too recent and too rueful experience of similar guarantees, which seemed to them promises made only to be broken. Yet even allowing for the most cynically realistic appreciation of the situation, as it existed in the last months of 1914, neutrality (which was all the Western Powers asked of Turkey) would have given the Young Turks the time they needed in which to carry out their programme of social, economic, and military reform.

Tewfiq Pasha was a key figure in our approaches. He had been for many years the Sultan Abdul Hamid's Foreign Minister. The Young Turk Revolution had displaced him from that office, nevertheless the new régime maintained their trust in a most experienced and capable statesman. In London and other Western capitals he was held in the highest esteem. Venerable, sage, and shrewd, he was a good friend of my own; he and I trusted each other implicitly. What was even more important, he was in full agreement with my attitude in this business.

He took occasion, however, immediately to warn me that our negotiations would have had a much greater chance of success if the Allies had asked Turkey to come in on their side rather than proposed mere neutrality, for which at the end of the conflict nobody would thank her. He went on to say that he was convinced also that Russia would never agree to Turkey joining the Allies, as such a step would put an end to all Russia's hopes of expansion at Turkey's expense, either in the North East, around Erzerum, or southwards from the Black Sea. In confidence I communicated these observations to Lord Kitchener. Within a few hours he told me that the Allies had no desire to bring Turkey into the war on their side. In view of this preliminary exchange, we entered negotiations under a considerable handicap. Nevertheless I was an optimist for several days, and my optimism seemed far from groundless.

Suddenly it became known that two German warships, the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*, had evaded Allied naval vigilance and were lying at anchor off Constantinople. Their presence drastically altered the whole situation. The Turks accorded them hospitality and protection. They were a visible sign of German naval

vigour and capacity. Combined with the remarkable moral ascendancy which had been established in Constantinople by the German Military Mission, under its extremely able and resolute commander, General Liman von Sanders, the ships presented the gravest possible menace to our hopes—lately so high—of maintaining Turkish neutrality. By the close of 1914 the Central Powers were confident of a quick victory on their own terms; an elderly Prussian general named von Hindenberg had inflicted a crushing defeat on the immensely gallant but incompetently led Russian armies in the marshes of Tannenberg in East Prussia; in the west, the German armies, held almost within sight of Paris, had stabilized themselves along that 600-mile front which, with pitifully little variation and at appalling cost of life on both sides, was to be maintained until August 1918; a solitary cruiser, the *Emden*, at large in the Indian Ocean, had inflicted spectacular shipping losses on the Allies, and turned up impudently in Madras Roads. Tragically misled by all these signs and portents dangled before their eyes by the exultant Germans, the Turkish Government took the irrevocable step of declaring war on Russia. This automatically involved the Ottoman Empire in war with Great Britain and France.

To a strategist like Churchill this decision offered an opportunity (which was never fully seized) of ending the slaughterous deadlock on the Western Front, and of striking at Germany and Austria from the South-east. To myself at that moment it was a shattering blow. Its sharpness and severity were mortifying in the extreme; and when the Turkish Government, striving to put a respectable and popular façade on what was in fact unprovoked, inexcusable aggression, proclaimed this a *jihad*, a holy war against Christendom, my distress and disappointment crystallized into bitter resentment against the irreligious folly of Turkey's rulers. My resentment was given a razor edge by my knowledge of how near we had been to success in our negotiations. The fruit was just about to be plucked from the tree when not merely the tree but the whole garden was blown to pieces.

I reacted strongly. I joined with other Muslim leaders in an earnest appeal to the whole Islamic world to disregard the so-called *jihad*, to do their duty and stand loyally with and beside the Western Allies—especially Britain and France in whose overseas

possessions the Muslim population could be counted in many millions. On my own responsibility I published a manifesto setting out my view of the grievous error committed by Turkey. I pointed out that the Ottoman Government and such forces as it would dispose of were bound to be regarded as pawns in Germany's aggressive, imperialist strategy; that in declaring war on Britain and the Allies the Turks were acting under the orders of their German masters; and that the Sultan and his advisers had been compelled to take this step by German officers and other non-Muslims. I stressed the fact that neither Turkey in particular nor Islam in general need have any apprehension about the purely defensive actions of the Western Powers.

The British and Russian Empires and the French Republic [I said] have offered to guarantee Turkey all her territories in complete independence on the sole condition that she remain neutral. Turkey is the trustee of Islam, and the whole world is content to let her hold the holy cities in her keeping. All men must see that Turkey's position was not imperilled in any way and that she has not gone to war for the cause of Islam or in defence of her independence. Thus our only duty as Muslims is to remain loyal, faithful, and obedient to our temporal and secular allegiance.

It is not, I think, an unjustifiable claim that these words of mine, coming when they did and whence they did, had a genuine and steadying effect when it was needed. The vast majority of Muslim subjects of the Western Powers faithfully preserved their allegiance; Muslim soldiers fought and died alongside their Christian comrades in battlefields all over the world. The whole ugly idea of a *jihad*, manufactured and exploited by the Kaiser and his advisers for their own purposes, collapsed, and little more was heard of it after the early months of 1915.

However, I do still regard the failure of our attempt to open my negotiations with the Sublime Porte in the last months of 1914 as a tragic turning-point in modern history. Had Turkey remained neutral the history of the Near East, and of the whole Islamic world, in the past forty years, might have been profoundly different. What had been Islam's natural centre and rallying point for hundreds of years, the Sultanate in Constantinople, was destroyed. Turkey, as we shall see later, emerged from her tribulations under the inspiring leadership of Mustafa Kemal,

restored and purified in spirit, but shorn of her Empire. Millions of Arabs, who had lived for centuries under the tolerant suzerainty of the Turks discovered, not only on the high plateau of central Arabia but in the lands of the fertile crescent, the joys and sorrows, the difficulties and the ardours of nationalism. And the British Empire, in the years from 1918 onwards, fell heir—by accident rather than by intention—to that Near and Middle Eastern hegemony so long exercised by the Ottoman Empire; and to *vilayet* and *pashalik* succeeded mandatory government. French involvement in Syria, the Greek adventures and disasters in Asia Minor, the clash of Zionism and Arab aspirations, Ibn Saud's carving of a new kingdom in Arabia, the emergence of the Sharifi family from a local chieftainship in Mecca to the foundation of ruling dynasties in two kingdoms—all these complex consequences and many more were to flow from the Young Turks' rejection, under German pressure, of the advances made to them at the end of 1914.

Kitchener, whatever doubts may have begun to make themselves felt in early 1915 as to his capacity to organize and conduct Britain's war effort in the West, was certainly alert to every contingency in the East. It was not long before he sent for me with another proposal, for a diplomatic or quasi-diplomatic task, which had Cabinet backing, and indeed the personal approval and interest of King George V. This concerned Egypt, where the political situation was confused and delicate. Kitchener himself had been peremptorily recalled to take up his duties at the War Office, when he was about to board the cross-Channel steamer on his way back to his post as British Representative in Cairo. Egypt was nominally part of the domains of the Ottoman Emperor, the Khedive was nominally his viceroy. This status had been preserved—in name, though in nothing else—after the British Occupation in 1882. As every Egyptian statesman and politician, for many years past, has had occasion to point out times without number, the British Occupation of Egypt was always said—by the British—to be purely temporary. Yet somehow in defiance of logic and in defiance of promises and undertakings, it remained, until in the early years of this century Egypt looked, as I have recorded in an earlier chapter, to all intents and purposes like a British colony.

In the First World War, as in the Second World War, Egypt was a military base for Britain and her allies of the highest strategic and logistical importance. By the beginning of 1915 the number of British, Indian, and Dominion troops stationed in Egypt was large and was growing steadily. Alexandria was a great naval harbour and dockyard. The Suez Canal was a vital strategic waterway. On its Sinai banks, however, although Sinai was theoretically part of Egypt, were units of the Turkish Army, whose role at this time was purely static and defensive. But British strategic thinking had not cast Egypt for any quiescent, non-active role. It was to be the base whence every offensive against Turkey was to be launched. Already in their thousands the transports were bringing to Alexandria, Port Said, Kantara, and Ismailia, the men from Britain, from Australia and New Zealand and India, who were to fight and die, with unforgettable heroism and to no avail, on a barren, rocky little peninsula that guarded the European shore of the Dardanelles Straits leading to Constantinople. As great a degree of certainty and stability as possible in Egypt's internal political situation was, from the military point of view, a prerequisite if this huge operational base was to be preserved in good order.

The confusion began at the top. There was no Egyptian political leader of any calibre, and the Khedive himself, Abbas Hilmi, was absent—in, of all places, Constantinople. Since he had not returned to Egypt when called, it was perhaps inevitable that Allied opinion should believe him to be pro-German, and that Allied propaganda should portray him as such in the crudest terms. However, I came to know Abbas Hilmi well in later years during his long exile in Europe, and I am convinced that he was wronged and misjudged. I developed a real affection for him, and a real admiration for the clarity and brilliance of his intellect. He told me what, I am convinced, was the true story of his "defection". Shortly before the Turkish declaration of war, he was attacked by a would-be assassin and wounded in the face and jaw. For the rest of his life he carried the heavy scar which was the effect of this attack.

From 1920 until his sudden death at the end of World War II, I saw a great deal of Abbas Hilmi and we became very firm friends. He had a beautiful yacht called *Nimat Ullah* which was

more or less his home on the Riviera during the winter months and the early spring; and he usually spent the late spring and summer in Paris and Switzerland. I often lunched with him aboard the *Nimat Ullah* and in Switzerland I saw a great deal of him. Of one thing I am convinced; he was never anti-British, and he had the greatest affection for his English friends. Naturally when he was Khedive he greatly resented the fact that, without any legal right or authority and no moral claim to power and prestige, the British Occupation authorities were treating his country as a colony and he himself more or less as a glorified maharajah. This brought him constantly into conflict with Lord Cromer, who was in fact, though not in name, the absolute ruler of Egypt. However, he always told me that Cromer was a great gentleman, that his word was his bond and that however bitter their personal relations became on account of their political differences, he for his part never lost his respect for Lord Cromer. But with Lord Kitchener the personal differences had led to bitterness; and he never forgave Lord Kitchener for the strife between them. He told me that he thought it most unfortunate that Lord Kitchener was never grateful to him for having helped him to become Sirdar of the Egyptian Army at the beginning. When Kitchener's predecessor retired there were two or three candidates for the post; and Abbas Hilmi maintained that he himself sent a telegram to Queen Victoria particularly asking for Kitchener's appointment.

He told me that had he not been wounded he would certainly have escaped from Constantinople. He had no wish nor desire to remain, and as soon as he got better he wanted to go to Egypt; but the British authorities were by no means keen to have him there. It was his opinion that while he was shown that he was not wanted, he was at the same time made the scapegoat. However, there was no bitterness towards the English either as a people or as individuals. He accepted the whole episode as a game of cricket in which he had been the loser; and as a good sportsman he said, "The game is over and done with—now let's have a drink together."

Though he was a good Muslim, a real believer who said his prayers regularly, he also had a great admiration for the Catholic hierarchy and was in touch with them in Paris; and I believe that his donations to their charities and good works were on a large

scale. He always told me that the Church of Rome could do far more than any freemasonry for their friends when they were in trouble. He was a brilliant financier; he made a large fortune for himself even after he had lost the greater part of his original capital in Egypt. He had, however, a curious trait. After his death it became apparent that he had often put his money on the wrong horse. Shrewdly suspicious of all respectable bankers, high-class *agents-de-change* on the Continent, or stockbrokers in England, he was yet capable of being taken in by a lot of fourth-rate intriguers, and he would hand over large sums of money to them for all kinds of wild-goose projects. Apart from this, he had some extremely doubtful characters in his entourage—hangers-on who won his confidence, goodness knows how. I believe that after his death his heirs found that he was nothing like as rich as he had been, and that a considerable proportion of his fortune had disappeared. I think I can explain how this must have happened. Before and during the Second World War, he often told me that in view of the uncertainty of the future and the possible difficulties of movement, or even of getting control of his investments in America or Canada, or for that matter in South America, during periods of war (though he knew all the tricks of forming holding companies in harmless places such as Cuba or Tangiers, and transferring large blocks of stocks and securities to them), he felt that he might be stranded in wartime without getting the benefits of his investments. He dreaded the possibility of years of want and difficulty in which, like Midas, he might be full of gold and yet die of hunger.

In telling me these things he was really advising me to follow his example. I asked him, therefore, how he got around it. Was it by having a considerable part of his fortune with him in safes and vaults? Naturally I pointed out that bank notes in such numbers in wartime would be a real hindrance, while gold in the quantities that he wanted would be too heavy and not practicable except for comparatively small sums. Ah, he said, but the finest type of jewellery—that which is the very best and free from taint—like gold maintains its value. If it is perfect—large or small—jewellery can always find a purchaser; and it has the advantage that its possessor has a large fortune at his disposal wherever he happens to be. I naturally concluded from this argument that

he had vast sums invested in jewellery, particularly since he frequently urged me to do likewise.

He died of heart failure suddenly about three o'clock one morning in an apartment in Geneva; and it was not until much later, about mid-morning, that people came and opened his various boxes and vaults. I informed his son and his heir of what he had told me about having large amounts of jewellery with him, but to my surprise and rather to my distress his son told me that they found nothing except small amounts of cash. There are two possible solutions—first that if he had had the jewellery he had sold it at the end of the Second World War when he thought there was no immediate possibility of a third, or that it had vanished during the hours between his death and the official opening of his personal effects.

To return to his miscalculations in 1914-15, in the fog of war the Allies could not be expected to have any accurate knowledge either of Abbas Hilmi's real views or intentions, or of the way in which those intentions were frustrated. The result in Egypt, however, was something near chaos; the confusion was deepest about Muslim opinion; and for the reasons which I have outlined it was essential to maintain the internal security of Egypt.

My mission, therefore, was to clarify and stabilize opinion. I was asked to take a colleague with me, and I therefore turned to an old and dear friend, Sir Abbas Ali Baig, who was then the Indian member of the permanent Council which advised the Secretary of State for India in London. We set off for Cairo as soon as we could; and we were received there with almost royal honours. We were there as the official guests of the British Commander-in-Chief; and we addressed ourselves forthwith to a delicate and difficult task, with many ramifications into many levels of Egyptian society.

First there was the palace to be won over, or rather the principal personages in the Egyptian ruling dynasty. There was the Sultan who had been nominated in Abbas Hilmi's absence; there was his brother, Prince Fuad, who later became King Fuad I, who had both German and Italian affiliations; there were several other influential princes, and most important of all the Sultan's son who was married to the Khedive's sister. There were the Ulema, the Muslim divines who were the heads of Al Azhar University, the

great, intensely conservative and traditional theological school which is a centre of religious life not only in Egypt but for the whole of Islam. And there were the ordinary people of Egypt—the literate who sit in their cafés endlessly and eagerly discussing every edition of every newspaper, and the villagers and peasants, the *fellahin* who from time immemorial have been the real source of Egypt's strength.

We conceived our task as one of explanation and exhortation. We had to convince those to whom we spoke, in private as well as in public, that not only their interest but their duty, as good Muslims, lay in supporting and sustaining the cause of the Allies. I could, of course, speak with authority, from recent and personal knowledge; I pointed out that the Turks had had every possible chance of fair terms from the Allies, that Great Britain and France were willing to exert all their influence on Russia to safeguard Turkey's interests for the future, and most important of all, that neutrality would have given Turkey that breathing space she needed; while Europe was engaged on its grim process of self-destruction, Turkey would have had time to reorganize the whole loose, vast system of provincial administration, to conciliate the increasing discontent of the Arab nationalists, and to carry out all those social, political, and economic reforms which would have strengthened and unified the Empire. All these advantages had been lost in a single gambler's throw; gamblers, after all, are not winners, and history shows that political punters have as little chance of success as punters on the race course or at the casino.

Our mission produced the effects for which we had hoped. The internal stability of Egypt throughout the First World War, and the assistance that this tranquillity gave to the Allies, were factors of notable and continuing importance right up to the time of General Allenby's final victorious advance across Palestine and Syria to Aleppo and the foothills of the Anatolian mountains.

From Egypt I made my way to India, having visited the Indian forces, already of considerable strength, who were encamped in the Canal Zone, having encouraged them (many, of course, were Muslims) and having exhorted them to do their duty, to fight loyally for the King-Emperor, the sovereign to whose service they were bound by oath. In India I realized—by the volume of

enthusiastic praise and thanks that greeted me, from the Viceroy downwards—that we had done a good job. One particularly agreeable personal consequence of this mission to Egypt was the strengthening of my affection for Sir Abbas Ali Baig, who became and thenceforward remained one of my closest, lifelong friends. In a new generation his sons, by the by, are no less distinguished public servants than he was; one is now Pakistan's Minister in Moscow and the other, formerly permanent head of the Foreign Office in Karachi, is now High Commissioner in Ottawa.

Later in the year I went back to London, and once more was heartened by the sense of success in our mission in Egypt. The King himself, the Prime Minister, and other members of the Cabinet thanked me warmly, and I was genuinely gratified to feel that I had been of real service.

In April 1916 His Majesty accorded me an honour of very special personal significance. He sanctioned the grant to me of a salute of eleven guns and the rank and precedence of a First-Class Ruling Prince of the Bombay Presidency. The end of the Indian Empire, and the vast political and social changes consequent on that passing, have deprived this gesture of any contemporary meaning, but in the circumstances and conditions of 1916 it was a high honour and a most generous and thoughtful action on the part of the King. The salute granted to a ruling prince, and the number of guns in it, was an important matter of precedence and prestige; there was only one previous instance of such a salute being granted to anyone who was not a territorial prince, and that was to Sir Salar Jung, the Prime Minister of Hyderabad, who in 1857 was chiefly responsible for keeping Central India and the Deccan loyal to British authority. *The Times*, commenting on this honour in a leader observed: "It has fallen to the Aga Khan to serve in vastly wider fields than Sir Salar Jung and to exert much more than local or provincial influence in a crisis of British rule even greater than that of the mutiny."

Inevitably sorrow and loss came, as the result of war, to myself and to my family, as to so many other families across the width of the world in those harsh times. My cousin, Aga Farrokh Shah, while engaged at my request on a political mission to the tribes and my own Ismaili followers in Kerman, was assassinated at the

With Mahatma Gandhi and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu in London during the Round Table Conference of 1931



Leaving the House of Lords with the Maharajah of Alwar (left) and Lieut.-Col. Stewart Patterson, Political A.D.C. to the Secretary of State for India, after the inaugural session of the 1930 Round Table Conference



instigation of German agents. India's losses on the battlefield in Flanders and in Mesopotamia were grievous. I myself was laid low with a difficult, painful, and protracted illness. Early in 1916 I began to be aware of considerable ocular distress and difficulty; my pulse was extremely irregular, and although I was on no diet but was eating well I began to lose weight rapidly. A physician in Paris diagnosed my malady as Graves' Disease, of which the symptoms were protruding eyes and a small goitre in the throat. I went to Switzerland to the famous Dr. Kocher at Berne, who was the greatest contemporary authority on all forms of goitre, to see if my case was operable. After I had been under observation in a Swiss sanatorium for several weeks, I was told that it was inoperable. Frankly I seemed to be going downhill fast. For eighteen months and more I stayed in Switzerland, making no progress at all but rather deteriorating steadily.

Suddenly the British Government took urgent and alarmed cognizance of what subsequently became known, in Swiss legal history, as the affair of the Lucerne bomb. The German Secret Service did not believe that I was really ill. They thought, however, that their country's cause would be well served were I put out of the way for good. They arranged to have a bomb thrown at me; and to make the operation certain of success they also arranged, with typical German thoroughness, to have my breakfast coffee poisoned. The bomb did not go off; I did not drink the coffee. For years after the war ended the Swiss painstakingly investigated the whole episode and the inquiry attained a good deal of notoriety at the time. In 1917, however, all that the British Government saw fit to do was to request me to leave Switzerland. So I returned to Paris.

My host of friends there, including those of the American colony, to whom I have referred elsewhere, were thoroughly shocked and alarmed; I was (so they told me later) in their view a lost case. For myself, I still kept hope—though it flickered feebly enough. It seemed to me that so many famous doctors had seen me in Switzerland and in France. All kinds of treatments, batteries of drugs, had been tried on me, to no avail. Then a Professor Pierremarie examined me, and produced a startlingly novel diagnosis. I had not been suffering from goitre at all. He began a fresh line of treatment, and within a year I was thoroughly

The Aga Khan in full regalia

on the mend. One effect remained, however, in that my eyes never quite resumed their normal position.

However, this long illness meant that I was of necessity withdrawn from all public activity for more than three years, until the summer of 1919.

It was a long seclusion which I ameliorated slightly in its later stages by writing a book, called *India in Transition*, which set forth my views on the future of India and of all South-east Asia, and to which I shall have occasion to refer subsequently.

CHAPTER VII

POST-WAR PROBLEMS IN INDIA,
TURKEY, AND EAST AFRICA

THE world to which I, restored at last to health and eager to get back into harness again, emerged in that summer of 1919, had undergone vast and far-reaching changes in the three years of my seclusion; the collapse of the Tsarist régime in Russia, and the passage granted by the Germans to Lenin and his fellow-conspirators to let them loose in their native land; the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk; the complete defeat of the Central Powers on all fronts in 1918; the abdication of the Kaiser and the end of the Austro-Hungarian Empire; the emergence of the militant Socialist revolutions in sundry European countries; in the Near and Middle East the end of the Ottoman Empire. President Wilson seemed in those months an almost apocalyptic figure of deliverance, with his doctrine of "self-determination" for all peoples. Everywhere the war had unleashed huge tides of political feeling which were not to be smoothed or subdued.

The peacemakers assembled in Paris to contemplate with profoundly mingled and complicated emotions, a world scene bristling with difficulties and dangers, an awe-inspiring chaos which the people of many nations looked to them to resolve immediately and tidily into an ordered millennium. Relief at the end of the long, bloodstained nightmare of the war mingled with a naïve but vigorous optimism. Peace was to usher in an epoch of unmarred political, social, and economic tranquillity. Even so august a figure as my old friend, Lord Curzon, then Leader of the House of Lords, was affected by the prevailing mood, and in his speech in the House of Lords, in November 1918, announcing the Armistice, intoned with fervour Shelley's lines which begin: "The world's great age begins anew."

India was far from unaffected by all that had happened. In 1917

when the conflict was at its sternest, there was a general feeling in Britain, official and unofficial, that India's contribution to the Empire's war effort, the valour of her soldiers, the staunchness of her leaders and people, earned more than formal recognition. On the strong recommendation, therefore, of the Viceroy and of the Secretary of State for India, Edwin Montagu, the Government on 20th August, 1917 published a statement of its aims in respect to India.

"The policy of His Majesty's Government," said this statement, "is that of increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire."

This was a momentous pronouncement. It marked the explicit commitment of the then British Government and its successors to a radical departure from what, in conflict with the principles of the Act of 1833, had grown to be the basic and accepted purposes of British rule in India. In the earlier schemes of administrative reform, the Cross-Lansdowne proposals of the 1890s and the Morley-Minto reforms of the early 1900s, there had been no hint of any intention to transfer fundamental power and responsibility from British to Indian hands; self-government in India had never been mentioned. Now there it was in words that all could read. I have been told that in the original draft which went to the Cabinet the words "self-government" were used; Lord Curzon—of all people—changed them to "responsible government". He thus made it inevitable that, when the constitutional reforms to implement the declaration were introduced, they took the pattern which came to be known as "dyarchy"; for the word "responsible" implies in those who exercise it, responsibility to someone—to whom? To Governor or Viceroy, and thus to Britain and British Parliament, or to the Indian electorate and people? Dyarchy, workable compromise though it was sometimes made, was bound to present this dilemma to ministers, both in the provinces and at the centre. It was the expression, in terms of practical and day-to-day administration, of that almost schizophrenic duality of outlook—that split between ideal intention and workaday application—which henceforth characterized

the British attitude to India. Schizophrenia is not a basis for happy relations; in it however is to be found much of the explanation of the estrangement, deepening to embittered hostility, which ended only, and then with miraculous swiftness and completeness, with the final and total withdrawal of British rule in India.

In 1919 all this lay in the future, and I for my part was taken up with a wider, bolder vision in which—formulated first in my book, *India in Transition*—I sought to interest everyone who had any responsibility for Indo-British relations, principally, of course, Edwin Montagu, the Secretary of State. Edwin Montagu was a Jew, totally assimilated into the British pattern and way of life, brilliant and lovable, a member of that interlocked Montagu-Samuel-Isaacs Anglo-Jewish group of families which has made so notable a contribution to British life in the past half-century.

I was eager in 1919 that under British inspiration and guidance there should be built up a South Asian federation of self-governing States extending from the Malayan peninsula to the confines of Egypt—a federation on what may loosely be termed Commonwealth lines, and within the framework of the British Empire (Commonwealth, of course, was a word which had not come into use in 1919). It seemed to me then—it still seems to me now—that this was *then* a feasible scheme and a better solution to world troubles than that adopted. Had the British Government accepted it, and had it been executed resolutely, I am certain that there would have developed in southern Asia a strong power—an association of powers—in which healthy democratic institutions would have evolved naturally and easily, which would have provided effective support for Britain and (as it turned out) the United States and the Southern Dominions in an hour of grave need, and a permanent bulwark against aggression.

In a measure, these proposals of mine were a fulfilment of and an extension of ideas and hopes which had been implanted in my mind during my years of close association with Gokhale. In the autumn of 1914 when I hastened back to London from Africa to make as effective a contribution as I could to the war effort, I was met by Gokhale, who, though extremely ill at the time with diabetes and constitutionally averse to London's mild, foggy climate, had prolonged his stay there in order to see me. Amid the pressure of a great deal of other work, we saw much of each

other and discussed freely and frankly all our hopes and fears for India. We strove to compose a draft memorandum which we intended to address to the Government embodying the very large measure of agreement which we had hammered out in our conversations.

Early in 1915 Gokhale was dead. But before he died he completed his political testament which he addressed to me, with the request that I should make it public in two years' time, when (as he hoped) the war might be over and India capable of facing the supreme task of working out her own destiny.

In due course I published Gokhale's testament as he bade; and on my own behalf I added a memorandum pleading that after the war East Africa might be reserved for Indian colonization and development in recognition of India's war services.

However, these were and are dreams of what might have been. History has taken a different road. The final scheme of reform, as it was promulgated in the Government of India Act of 1919, was very different, on a far smaller scale, and limited only to India. And, alas, it produced not the peaceful, gradual evolution, slow step by step, towards responsible government that had been hoped for, but instead a phase of extreme unrest and violent political turbulence. Moderate, constitutional-minded leaders in Indian politics, such as my friends Sir Pherozeshah Mehta and Gokhale, were dead. A new generation sought for new methods of achieving much more far-reaching aims—and in a hurry.

Even before Parliament considered the Government of India Bill, the situation in India had taken several turns for the worse. A committee set up under the chairmanship of Lord Justice Rowlatt to consider the juridical aspects of political agitation, issued its report which recommended the establishment of special courts to deal with acts of sedition. The report had a hostile reception. The example of Ireland was not lost on India. Extremism on both sides took charge. The Rowlatt Committee's recommendations were accepted by Parliament; and as soon as the Bill embodying them became law Congress declared a *hartal*, a general strike, in protest. As more than once during these harsh and distressing months, I urged restraint, not only on the part of my followers but of the Muslim community in general; less than a fortnight later, however, occurred the dreadful "Amritsar

Incident"¹ which set back by many years any hope of constructive and abiding amity between Britain and India.

The shock of this episode and the bitter memories it left behind poisoned relations for years. I suppose that if I had been the sort of person to despair, I should have despaired then. But I was so actively engaged in seeking from the British Government a clear and honourable line of conduct on a matter involving the highest political principles, that despair was a luxury for which I had neither the will nor the time.

One effect of dyarchy was that it involved the transference of a good deal of authority in internal matters in India from the centre to responsible officials in the provinces. The effects of a centralized bureaucracy were as notable in the India Office in London as they were in Simla or New Delhi. I was asked, therefore, to be a member of a committee in London charged with the task of decentralizing and reorganizing the work of the India Office. It was mainly a matter of clearing some of the channels by which the Secretary of State got his information and defended his department and himself in the eyes of those to whom he was ultimately responsible, the elected members of the British House of Commons. It was hard work, but it gave me a clear picture from the inside of the workings of the great administrative machine by which a modern State is conducted.

It coincided, however, as I have indicated, with a period of strenuous political activity, in which I directed my efforts mainly to trying to prevent the complete dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, and to establishing a peace settlement in the Near and Middle East which would not only be just and equitable but would be practical.

I must, therefore, describe in some detail the background to the swirl of political and diplomatic work in which I was caught up. One of the countless major questions which faced the victorious Powers in the immediate post-war period was: What was to be done about the Ottoman Empire, over vast regions of which the Allies were, by the end of 1918, in military Occupation? It was true that the Turks retained control of their own homeland, Anatolia, and of the historic, ancient capital, Constantinople, but

¹ On 13th April 1919, 379 Indians were killed when shots were fired to disperse an unlawful gathering in the Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar.

from Tripolitania in the west to Kurdistan in the east, from north of Aleppo to Wadi Halfa, in enormous territories whose populations, in a great diversity of races and culture but predominantly Muslim, had once owed allegiance to the Sultan of Turkey, the controlling authority was now an Allied Military Governor.

In the heat of war many promises of spoils in the hour of victory—spoils to be torn off the vanquished body of Turkey—had been made; few were by the beginning of 1919 capable of fulfilment, nearly all were irreconcilable one with another. The MacMahon letters, addressed by the acting High Commissioner in Egypt in 1915 to the Sharif Husain in Mecca, could not possibly be reconciled with the Balfour Declaration issued in 1917; both conflicted sharply with the Sykes-Picot agreement, by which Britain and France shared out huge areas of the Ottoman Empire as "spheres of influence". The most flagrantly impossible undertaking of all was that Constantinople (since Tsarist Russia had retained an historic interest in what had once been the Graeco-Roman city of Byzantium) should be given to Russia. This at least could be ignored, since the Bolshevik leaders had made their own peace arrangements with the Germans in the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, and since the Soviet régime and the Western Allies were in a state of undisguised hostility. But for Turkey as a whole the hopes of a tolerable peace settlement looked slender.

Almost all the British political leaders who were to have any influence over the peace discussions were markedly anti-Turkish. Lloyd George, the Prime Minister, was a friend and admirer of Venizelos, the Greek leader; he saw certain similarities in historical experience and outlook between Greece and his own Wales; he was therefore enthusiastically pro-Greek, and though not actively anti-Turkish he was quite indifferent to the fate of the Ottoman Empire. Arthur Balfour, the signatory of the letter to Lord Rothschild announcing that it was Britain's intention to establish a National Home in Palestine for the Jews, was openly and actively pro-Zionist, and was also extremely prejudiced against the Turks historically and racially.

Now Zionism, I may say in passing, was something of which I had had long and by no means unsympathetic experience. My friend of early and strenuous days in Bombay, Professor Haffkine, was a Zionist—as were many other brilliant and talented

Russian Jews of his generation who escaped into Western Europe from the harsh and cruel conditions imposed upon them by Tsarist Russia. Haffkine, like many of the earlier Zionists, hoped that some arrangement could be made with the Turkish Sultan whereby peaceful Jewish settlement could be progressively undertaken in the Holy Land—a settlement of a limited number of Jews from Europe (mainly from the densely populated areas then under Russian rule) in agricultural and peasant holdings; the capital was to be provided by wealthier members of the Jewish community, and the land would be obtained by purchase from the Sultan's subjects. As Haffkine propounded it, I thought this sort of Zionism useful and practical. It contained no hint, of course, of the establishment of a Jewish National State, and it seemed to me worth putting before the Turkish authorities. There were, after all, precedents for population resettlement of this kind within the Ottoman Empire, notably the Circassians—of Muslim faith, but of purely European blood—who were established with excellent results by Abdul Hamid in villages in what is today the Kingdom of Jordan. Abdul Hamid could well have done with the friendship and alliance of world Jewry, and on the broader ground of principle, there is every natural reason for the Jews and the Arabs, two Semitic peoples with a great deal in common, to be close friends rather than the bitter enemies which unfortunately for both sides the events of the past thirty years or so have made them. In furtherance of what was then a shared interest in Zionism, when I first went to Paris in 1898, Haffkine gave me letters of introduction to a number of his Jewish friends including the *savant* and Rabbi Zadek Kahn,¹ and through him I met the famous Baron Edmond de Rothschild. Baron Edmond was a princely benefactor of the early Zionist experiments; many of the first settlements in Palestine were financed by him and owed their ultimate prosperity to his generous support and interest. When I called on him I was introduced to his two sons, James, then an undergraduate at Cambridge, and

¹ There are sometimes complications in nomenclature. Long afterwards in London I was introduced to a well-known American society woman by a friend of mine simply as "Aga Khan" with no titles and no further explanation. Brightly smiling, the lady said that she was a great friend of my brother, Otto Kahn of New York's Metropolitan Opera House!

Maurice, a boy in the uniform of a naval cadet. Baron Edmond remained my friend until his death; and for well over fifty years now both James Rothschild and Baron Maurice de Rothschild have been good and close friends of mine.

Rabbi Kahn prepared a statement of his and his friends' ideas on Jewish settlement in Palestine. It was an elaborate plan for colonization on a scale and in a manner which would have helped and strengthened Turkey; and one of its most logical claims to consideration was that the Ottoman Empire was not a national State but was multi-national and multi-racial. With the Rabbi's proposal I made my approaches to Abdul Hamid through Munir Pasha, the Turkish Ambassador in Paris, and through Izzet Bey, the Sultan's confidential secretary. However, the scheme, good or bad as it may have been, was turned down by the Sultan, and I heard no more of it. I must say its rejection has always seemed to me one of Abdul Hamid's greatest blunders.

But just as the defeated Turkey of 1917-18 was a different country from the Ottoman Empire of the nineties, so the Zionism of 1917-18 and onwards was, of course, a very different matter. And the Zionists were only one group among many, anxious to extract all they could from the carve-up of Turkey. Arab nationalism was hardly less strongly in the ascendant, and it possessed many powerful friends and zealous advocates in and near the British Government. Sir Gilbert Clayton, T. E. Lawrence, and many other so-called "political officers" who had served in the Middle East had—I must say, from my own knowledge—encouraged Arab nationalism in and out of season, sometimes openly and sometimes secretly, long before the fall of Turkey. The British had already established a military administration in Palestine. The French advanced the remarkable claim that they had an historic right to protect the Holy Places in Jerusalem. The Greeks, encouraged by another group of romantic, philhellene Englishmen, were in a mood of dangerous expansionism. And at the very heart of real power in the Peace Conference, Clemenceau had no love for the Turks; and President Wilson, in the one interview which I had with him, frankly admitted that he really knew very little about the whole problem.

Almost the only support, therefore, on the side of the victors that Turkey could muster was Indian. The greater part of Muslim

interest in India in the fate of Turkey was natural and spontaneous and there was a considerable element of sincere non-Muslim agitation, the object of which, apart from the natural revolt of any organized Asiatic body against the idea of European imperialism, was further to consolidate and strengthen Indian nationalism in its struggle against the British.

The reasons for Muslim concern were profound and historic. Turkey stood almost alone in the world of that time as the sole surviving independent Muslim nation, with all its shortcomings, the imperial régime in Constantinople was a visible and enduring reminder of the temporal greatness of Islam's achievements. In the Caliphate there was, too, for all of the Sunni sect or persuasion, a spiritual link of the utmost significance. As the war drew to its close anxiety had intensified in India in regard to the safety of the Holy Places of Islam and the future of the Caliphate. Gandhi, who had succeeded my old and dear friend, Gokhale, as leader of Congress political movement and organization, shrewdly seized what he saw to be a chance of maintaining and heightening anti-British sentiment throughout the whole subcontinent. The storm of agitation that swept India on this issue was formidable. The Indian delegates at the Peace Conference, the Maharajah of Bikaner and Lord Sinha, heartily and sincerely supported by Edwin Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, made an emphatic protest against the various proposals for the partition of Turkey and the practical dissolution of the Caliphate that were being eagerly canvassed around and about the Conference.

It had been decided to settle the fate of defeated Germany first. This thorny task was accomplished in considerable haste, and the Treaty of Versailles was signed on 28th June, 1919. Thereafter, protracted discussions continued about the treatment of the other vanquished nations. My friend Syed Amir Ali and I began an energetic campaign to put the real issues, so far as Turkey was concerned, before British, and indeed world public opinion. I had private interviews with numerous influential statesmen, together we wrote long letters to *The Times*; on every possible public and private occasion we made our views known.

We drew vigorous attention to certain specific pledges given by the Prime Minister, and in a letter to *The Times* quoted these pledges *verbatim*:

We are not fighting [Lloyd George had said] to deprive Turkey of its capital or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace. While we do not challenge the maintenance of the Turkish Empire in the homelands of the Turkish race with its capital at Constantinople, the passage between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea being internationalized and neutralized, Arabia, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine are in our judgment entitled to a recognition of their separate national condition.

We tried to sum up the outlook of those for whom we knew we had a right to speak.

What do the Muslims want? What do we plead for? Neither they nor we ask for any new status for Turkey. We consider it, however, our duty to urge, for the fair name of England, nay of the British Empire, that the pledge the Prime Minister in the name of England gave to the world, and in particular to the world of Islam, should be maintained; and that the Turkish sovereign, as the Caliph of the vast Sunni congregation, should be left in absolute possession of Constantinople, Thrace, and Asia Minor stretching from the north of Syria proper along the Aegean coast to the Black Sea—a region predominantly Turkish in race. It would in our opinion be a cruel act of injustice to wrench any portion of this tract from Turkish sovereignty to satisfy the ambitions of any other people. Instead of bringing peace to Western Asia, such a settlement will sow the seeds of constant wars, the effect of which cannot be expected to remain confined to the country where they happen to be waged. For the defection of the adventurers who dragged their stricken people, who had already undergone great misery, into the world war, Turkey has been sufficiently punished by the secular expropriation of some of her richest provinces. But we submit that the maintenance of the Ottoman sovereign's spiritual suzerainty in these countries, whilst maintaining his prestige and thus conciliating Muslim feeling, would be the means of making the position of the Muslim rulers or governors of those countries unimpugnable. But so far as Thrace, Constantinople, and the homelands of the Turkish race are concerned, Muslim feeling is absolutely opposed to any interference under any shape with the Sultan's sovereignty.

In India itself, as the months wore on, and as the time came near for signing a Treaty with Turkey, the agitation grew to such proportions and was of so unanimous a character as gravely to worry the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, and the Secretary of

State, Edwin Montagu (whose personal sympathies, as I well knew, were warmly engaged on the Turkish or Asiatic side). Most of all they were disturbed at the thought that the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, on which such high hopes had been pinned, were to be launched in practice into this atmosphere of turbulence and hostility.

In the Viceroy's Legislative Council it was proposed that I should be sent to London as the leader of a deputation to the Prime Minister, representing the views, not only of Muslims but of the whole articulate population of India.

The other members of the deputation were: the President of the Khilafat movement, Mr. Chatani; one of India's most eminent advocates, Hassan Imam; and Dr. Ansari, a leading member of Congress. Lloyd George saw us, but we realized that our mission was doomed to failure, for meanwhile the Turkish Treaty, known to history as the Treaty of Sèvres, was being prepared, with strangely little regard for the realities which, within a few years, were to shape the Near East anew. The unfortunate Sultan was under rigorous supervision, a solitary and helpless prisoner in Constantinople. Turkish, Arab, and Greek deputations were hurrying backwards and forwards between the Mediterranean and London. Sometimes their arguments were listened to; often they were not. The Treaty of Sèvres was to be imposed, not a negotiated, treaty.

Constantinople was at first promised to the Greeks, then this promise was taken back. It was at last decided that Thrace and Adrianople in European Turkey should be Greek, and Smyrna in Asia Minor. Turkey was reduced to a sort of "rump" State in the highlands of Asia Minor, with a strip of coastline along the Black Sea. There was even talk of an independent, sovereign State of Armenia in the far North-east—if the Russians could be persuaded to stomach it. Some sort of order was hacked out of all these conflicting claims. In August 1920 the hapless Turkish representatives appended their signatures to the document which embodied them all.

This concluded in a sense the first phase of my own campaign for a just treatment of defeated Turkey. Before I record the events of the second phase which rapidly followed, it may be proper to consider what was the effect of the decisions which the

peacemaking politicians took in 1919-20, in stubborn and bland disregard of the advice which we proffered to them.

Muslim opposition to the break-up of the Turkish Empire had a basis—however much misunderstood it may have been—of true statesmanship and of understanding of the absorbing political realities of the Middle East. First, we felt that the separation of the Arabs from the Turks (hailed at the time as emancipation from a tyranny, although within a few years all Arab nationalists were singing a very different tune) would not lead to the emergence of a single strong Arab nation extending from Egypt to Persia and from Alexandretta to Aden and the Indian Ocean. We foresaw in large measure what actually happened; the formation of a number of small Arab nations, for many years of little more than colonial status, under British and French overlordship. We predicted that the Arabs would in fact merely be changing masters, and where these masters had been Muslim Turks they would now be Christians, or (as ultimately happened in a large part of Palestine) Jews. Even now, after the lapse of thirty years or more, the Arab States that succeeded the Ottoman Empire—though the ignominious protectorate and mandated status has been abolished—are nothing but an aggregation of small kingdoms and republics, not one of them capable of standing up alone in the face of any powerful opposition and, despite the Arab League, incapable of maintaining either individually or collectively real resistance to the influence either of Soviet Russia or the Western Democracies. Neutrality in any conflict between these two is a forlorn dream.

Consider for a moment how different matters might have been had there emerged after the First World War a federal union of Turkey, the Arab States of the Middle East, and Egypt, with a single defence force and a united foreign policy. Our instinctive Muslim faith in the idea of the continuance of Turkey as a Great Power had wisdom in it, for it would have achieved practical results, in the security and the stability of the Middle East, far transcending anything that the makeshift, haphazard policies of the years since the end of the Second World War—piecemeal withdrawal of political suzerainty by Britain, piecemeal financial, economic, and military aid by the United States have been able to effect. Consider the disruption and the political *malaise* which

have been the lot of the Middle East in recent years; consider all the unavailing effort that has gone into the attempt to build up a Middle East Defence Organization, in any degree paralleling N.A.T.O., and ponder how easily, how honourably all this might have been avoided.

It is, however, no use crying over spilt milk. The victors of World War I, unlike the victors of World War II, were intoxicated with their triumph and the sense of their own victory, and believed that they could build a brave new world according to their hearts' desire. History was as tragically as categorically to give the lie to that belief.

The Treaty of Sèvres, harsh though it was, was practically still-born. Even by the following spring of 1921 events had overtaken it, and it was obvious that it must be urgently reconsidered. A new conference was called in London. At the Viceroy's request I put the Muslim point of view to this gathering. Its sittings, however, proved abortive. For what everyone in West and East alike had ignored was the emergence—from the ruin of Turkey—of a soldier and statesman of genius, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, who in the time of their deepest tribulation had rallied his sorely stricken but indomitable people. Denied access to Constantinople, he had set up a provisional capital at Angora—now Ankara—high on the Anatolian plateau; he had rebuilt, re-equipped, and retrained the shattered Turkish Army. Having obtained a secret understanding with Russia, he could arm his troops, and he was assured of protection in his rear. He was thus prepared to defend his country's cause, not around some distant conference table, but in his homeland and on the field of battle. Few were at first aware of the magnitude of this new development.

The Greeks who, being nearest of all to the scene, should have known most, were blinded by their own lust for military victory and territorial expansion. Taking exception to the establishment of the Turkish Provisional Government in Angora, they began an ambitious, grandiose, and, as it proved, utterly disastrous series of military operations in Asia Minor.

To add to the complications, the British Government became restive over their demands for the release of certain British prisoners held in Turkey. Over this, at least, I was able by direct intervention and a direct appeal to the new Turkish authorities,

to secure a certain relief in an increasingly critical situation. The Turks released the prisoners, and this crisis blew over.

By the late summer of 1922, however, the prospect looked blacker than ever. Mustafa Kemal's tattered but valiant armies had stood at bay in their own hill country, had stemmed the tide of Greek invasion, and now were in the full flush of victorious advance. They captured Smyrna, the great Graeco-Levantine port on the coast of Asia Minor, put it to the sack, and before the eyes of the crews of Allied warships lying in the harbour set whole areas of it on fire. It was the Greek army now which was a tattered, defeated remnant in flight. Mustafa Kemal's forces stood at the gates of Constantinople, and demanded the right of free, unimpeded passage to reoccupy Thrace and Adrianople.

The whole situation was both ominous and confused. A mixed Allied military force, under the command of a British general, Sir Charles Harington, held Chanak and the approaches to Constantinople, which the Turks had already renamed Istanbul. A vigilant, cautious but resolute man, Harington awaited orders from London. A single reckless or unconsidered action on his part, even a stray shot developing into a fusillade, might precipitate a general conflict a little less than four years after the cease-fire at the end of the First World War. But the character of the military commander on the spot was not the only factor in this grave and delicate crisis. The British Government were in a curiously unrealistic and bellicose mood. A long, trying period of industrial unrest, with a protracted coal strike and a huge roll of unemployed had been succeeded by the difficult and involved negotiations which ended the worst of the "troubles" in Ireland and were clinched by the signature of the Irish Treaty. But Lloyd George's second coalition Government, returned to power with a huge majority in the "coupon" Election of 1918, had run its course. The Liberals had never really forgiven Lloyd George for his brusque ousting of Asquith in December 1916, in the central political crisis of the war. The Conservatives supplied the bulk of his Parliamentary support, but they were becoming increasingly restive and suspicious of the Prime Minister's incurable political adventurism. Did he think that in the Chanak crisis, as it was called, he perceived an opportunity to end the dissension and dissolution in the ranks of his supporters, to prevent his own

increasing isolation, and to rally Parliament and people behind him in a great united effort? Was it a gambler's throw or was it gross miscalculation?

I was in London when the crisis was at its worst, and I exerted every effort to prevent it culminating in what I knew would be a disastrous as well as an unjust war. This time I was not fighting a solitary battle against an overwhelming tide of contrary opinion. Now I had powerful allies and supporters. The columns of *The Times*, as so often in my public career, were open to me. The first Lord Rothermere, who had just assumed personal control of the group of newspapers built up by his brother, Viscount Northcliffe, was my staunch supporter. And Lord Beaverbrook, the man by whose influence and eager advocacy exercised at the right moment Lloyd George had come to supreme power as Prime Minister in 1916, was now as sincerely convinced that Lloyd George was set on a course that would bring nothing but suffering and hardship. However, the first concern was not to encompass Lloyd George's fall, but to prevent—of all unnecessary wars—the most unnecessary that could ever have been waged.

Early in September the British Government issued a statement on Chanak which was both pugnacious and injudicious, and ended with an appeal to the Dominions for their help in the event of another war with Turkey. The tone of this pronouncement thoroughly alarmed British public opinion, which was in no mood to contemplate all the pain and sacrifice involved in another war in support of what could only be described as Greek intransigence and stubbornness. Protests were loud from all sides. The faction that was pro-Government and philhellene had only one strong card to play, and this was that Turkish forces were already almost in contact with the Allied—predominantly British—Occupying forces in the Straits and Constantinople area. General Harington on his side was quietly determined to avoid any action which might involve his slender forces and commit them to any form of hostilities with the veteran, tough, and resolute forces which Mustafa Kemal had already deployed with skill. On the other hand I, at the earnest request of my friend, Lord Derby,¹ was able to get in touch with the Turkish leaders

¹ We met, I remember, at Newmarket, and Lord Derby asked me to use all the influence which I possessed.

and point out the grave perils inherent in any attack on the Allied forces; and I assured them that, pending a provisional settlement, their troops' strategic position would not in any way be prejudiced if they abstained from any offensive action. I pressed these considerations on my Turkish friends with all the urgency I could command. I am glad to say that sanity prevailed. An important contributory factor was that France had come to a secret understanding with Kemal and his Government; and French influence exerted by Monsieur Raymond Poincaré was all for a peaceful settlement. The decision for war could only have been a rushed one; once British public opinion had time to ponder the issues it could crystallize and express itself, and it was firmly for peace. The very real menace of another war in the Middle East was averted.

A vivid account of the handling of this crisis has been given by Lord Beaverbrook.¹ Throughout it Lord Beaverbrook was as active as he was staunch. Seriously worried by the drift in affairs, he often discussed this matter with me. I was happy to see that we were in full agreement, and that in all my endeavours to assist the Turks I had his moral support. He, too, had reached the eminently sound and practical conclusion that "for Britain to fight Turkey in pursuance of the exploded policy of supporting Greek imperialism was a monstrous error which must be avoided at all costs". Beaverbrook sought the support of his friend and fellow-Canadian, Bonar Law, then leader of the Conservative Party, which supplied the bulk of the Government's voting strength in the House of Commons.

Beaverbrook's words to Bonar Law were blunt. "These men mean war," he said.

Those four words spelled doom for Lloyd George's Coalition Government. A meeting of the Conservative Party was held at the Carlton Club, the Party's great socio-political stronghold; the speech that swayed the meeting and brought about its decision to withdraw support from Lloyd George was made not by Bonar Law, who was already an extremely sick man, but by a comparatively unknown back-bench M.P. named Stanley Baldwin, who less than a year later was to succeed Bonar Law as Prime Minister.

Lord Beaverbrook maintained his onslaught on the pro-Greek,

¹ In *Politicians and the Press*.

anti-Turkish policy of the Coalition Government. On 16th December 1922, the day after the House of Commons had adjourned for the Christmas recess, the *Daily Express* gave a sensationally detailed account of the happenings of the previous September. It said that within ten days of the fall of Smyrna, when the Greek rout had already begun and it had been recognized by the Greek Government in Athens that their military position in Asia Minor was hopeless, Lloyd George encouraged them to continue fighting. Lloyd George (said the *Daily Express*) took this step after having had inquiries made by his principal private secretary, Sir Edward Grigg,¹ of someone attached to the Greek Legation, who had said that the Greek army could not possibly hold out longer without active British assistance in munitions and in credit. On 2nd September, the *Daily Express* went on, when the Athens Government appealed to Lloyd George to arrange an armistice, another of his private secretaries telephoned the Greek Legation advising them that "their government should be very careful to avoid the mistake made by the Germans in 1918 and not conclude an abject armistice in a moment of panic".

Lloyd George never returned to office. In spite of our difference over Turkey, I am glad to think that he and I, even as late as 1940, when he came and lunched with me at Antibes, remained on terms of firm and sincere friendship until the very end of his life. Lloyd George was a man of infinitely compelling charm. His effective career as a politician was short, from 1905 to 1922. Its brevity may be explicable in terms of his personality, which was like a diamond cut in many facets; every facet had a brilliant light to throw out, but their number and their variety were so great that often contradictions occurred. There was only one phase in his life in which these contradictions and conflicts were resolved, and he appeared—and was—wholly consistent; this of course was during his first two years as Prime Minister, from 1916 to 1918—a period of supreme effort and greatness. Then, in spite of all the efforts of his critics to belittle him, he was as much "the man who won the war" as his great successor Churchill was in the Second World War. With the exception of that one triumphant phase, the brilliant and powerful many-sidedness of Lloyd George's character prevented him from influencing the

¹ Now Lord Altrincham.

history of his time to the extent which his talents—his imagination, his practical capabilities, and his intellectual superiority—gave his admirers (such as myself) every hope to expect. As one of the Big Four who formulated the Treaty of Versailles he was convinced—a conviction which I fully shared—that he would have used the power over Germany which under its terms was given to the victorious nations in a very different manner from that employed by his less imaginative and competent successors.

Of all the statesmen of that time whom I knew, Lloyd George alone, I feel sure, was capable of evoking and sustaining in the Weimar Republic in Germany of the late 1920s and early 1930s, that self-respect and that genuine understanding and use of democratic institutions which could have saved it and the world from Adolf Hitler and the Second World War. But, alas, by then the volcano was exhausted, not by its internal weakness but by its brilliance. The views which I have expressed here about Lloyd George and Germany were shared, I know, by Lord D'Abernon with all his profound knowledge and experience of Germany.

For myself an eventful period of close association with the politics and diplomacy of the Middle East in general and Turkey in particular drew to a close. The first abortive Lausanne Conference was followed by a second, more fruitful, during which I held what may be described as a watching brief. Britain's new Conservative Government was represented by Lord Curzon, the Foreign Secretary; the Turks sent a strong and capable delegation. Britain's mood was realistic and sensible. It was decided to accept the facts, to give *de jure* as well as *de facto* recognition to the new Turkey, and to let this revived and vigorous State retain not merely its homeland in Anatolia, and the sea coast of Asia Minor, but also Thrace, Adrianople, and Istanbul. Along these lines agreement was reached, and the Treaty of Lausanne signed. Subsequently the Montreux Convention regularized arrangements for dealing with the passage of international shipping through the Dardanelles.

It might be possible to construe all this as a diplomatic defeat for Britain, but what in fact were its main results? A long period of growing harmony and understanding between Britain and Turkey; and a Brito-Turkish relationship in the Second World War which, despite the severe strain put upon it, was of great

assistance to Britain and her allies. Think, too, what *might* have happened had Turkey been rebuffed once more: Russia would long since have been installed in Istanbul and, if not in Smyrna itself, along the coast to the north, with her ships and aircraft ranging far out into the Mediterranean. The statesmen of the West, heady with the sense of their own political and military power, would have brought about endless complications and misery in an important and sensitive region; destiny and history itself, tugging the other way, gave Asia Minor years of tranquil development and reorganization, social, economic, and spiritual. A complement to and a striking contrast with the new Turkey's experience was that of the Arab States in this same epoch—a story of division and weakness, of active nationalist elements in the various countries in constant conflict with Britain and France, and of a relatively submissive minority, installed in office, and therefore loyal to their British or French masters. Such in brief was the history of the Near East from the rise of Ataturk to the outbreak of the Second World War. Of all that happened in those sad and troublous years I was a spectator—occasionally in the columns of *The Times* a critic—but thenceforward I ceased to be, as I had so long been, an active participant.

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One other political issue of some complexity and importance to which I devoted a good deal of time and interest in those immediate post-war years was the question of Indians in East Africa, especially in the rapidly developing colony of Kenya. As I have narrated in earlier chapters there had long been established Indian settlements along the coastline of East Africa; these settlements contained a considerable and growing number of my own Ismaili followers, who contributed an influential and stabilizing element to the community. In Kenya, where in the 1950s race relations became a political issue of the most crucial significance, there were already clear signs, thirty years ago, of the dangers that were looming ahead. In the so-called "White Highlands" of Kenya there was a rapidly developing area of European—predominantly British—settlement, on the high rolling plateaux which lie between the coastal belt and the Rift Valley and Africa's great lakes, and constitute a temperate region in equatorial latitudes,

fertile, climatically agreeable, and eminently suitable to intensive agricultural development. The whole of Kenya was administered by the British Colonial Office, as a Crown Colony. The British settlers whose unofficial leader was Lord Delamere, a talented and highly individualistic English peer, had of recent years been demanding an increasing measure of self-government for themselves. They differed from the usual British community in a tropical country, in that they were settlers, and that they intended to make—and did make—Kenya their permanent home, bringing up their children there, and not merely living there for short tours of duty, as did (in general) British officials, traders, and planters in India, the Far East, and West Africa. But the Indians, rapidly growing in numbers, saw in the settlers' agitation for self-government the imposition of racial, "white" supremacy, and their own permanent political and social exclusion and subjugation. They in their turn demanded complete political and electoral equality. The Colonial Office officials wavered; and they were not themselves competent to take the effective decisions, which were made in Whitehall and Downing Street. At no time has it been possible for Kenya to settle its own destiny for itself; all Kenya's problems have been subject to outside interference and influence and—in the final analysis—external decision.

The end of the First World War had seen in Kenya as elsewhere a release of pent-up and sharply conflicting political ambitions and emotions. The British electorate and its representatives in the House of Commons were—although theirs was the final say in Kenya's affairs—in the great majority massively ignorant of Kenya's problems. From 1920 onwards a series of decisions was made within the Colonial Office in respect of Kenya; each new decision appeared to cancel its predecessor. Matters were not helped by the fact that there were several Governors of Kenya and several Secretaries of State for the Colonies within a very few years. By the end of 1922 and the beginning of 1923 the situation in Kenya was confused and inflammatory. So strong were the sentiments of the British settlers that they had established a militant, secret organization of their own with which—in the event of the British Government deciding, as they thought, against them—they proposed to take over the administration of the country. Indian opinion, both in Kenya and at home, was greatly

agitated. It is fair to say, however, that even in the period of greatest tension no single incident of violence, involving a European and an Asiatic, was recorded in Kenya; the communities in spite of the deep political gulf between them, remained on good personal terms.

To me the whole situation—had I not in my addendum to my friend Gokhale's political statement suggested that East Africa be set aside for Indian colonization?—was deplorable. I took my customary step of making my views known in a letter to *The Times*. The immediate danger as I saw it was that a few hotheads might commit acts that would affect the mind and imagination of Indians, not only there and then but all over India and far into the future. In particular, I urged that if the settlers really accepted the view that the British Empire of the future (we still had not evolved the concept of the Commonwealth, but we were moving rapidly towards it) was to be a truly co-operative association between men of all races and creeds and customs, then indeed in East Africa more than anywhere else in the Empire they should use their full influence and power to bring about a better general feeling, and wholeheartedly accept the fact that, short-term feelings apart, in the long run their own interests made it necessary that the Indian community in Kenya should be as prosperous and as happy as it was large.

The Government of India was fully alive to the dangers of the whole situation. Lord Reading, the Viceroy, Lord Peel, the Secretary of State, and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, who was one of India's representatives at the Imperial Conference of 1923, urged that there should be a conference—or if necessary a number of conferences—between representatives of India and all concerned with the administration of colonial territories such as Kenya, Uganda, and Fiji where there was any sizeable element of Indian settlement, to establish the political rights and responsibilities of Indians in those regions.

Faced with this cogent and powerful request, faced too with the grim possibility of armed rebellion by British settlers in a Crown Colony, the British Government was by now far from unaware of the urgent need for action that would end the dispute. In this somewhat explosive atmosphere I was asked by the Government of India if I would lead the Indian delegation to a committee