he eventually got his way. The independent chiefs were divided into seven ranks or classes, each with clearly defined jurisdiction, civil and criminal, from which there was, as a rule, no appeal, except on the presumption of mal-administration. The authority of the British Political Agents and assistants was made magisterial and direct, instead of, as hitherto, merely diplomatic. The whole system was controlled by the Political Agent. Major Keatinge's government and the reforms he instituted were eminently successful. The improvement in the condition of Kattywar dates from the administrative system introduced by him.

Another act of Frere's Government, which, strange to say, called down censure from Sir Charles Wood, was the issue of Enfield rifles to a Bombay Native Infantry Rifle Regiment. Sir Charles Wood sums up his view of the matter by saying—

"September 12, 1864.

"Whether, then, I look at the exercise of your own discretion, or the regard which you ought to pay to what might be wise elsewhere in India, and the possible opinion of the Government of India, or, lastly, to the deference which you are bound to have for the orders of the Home Government, I am sorry to say that you are equally wrong; and when in one and the same case you sin in all these three respects, I cannot see any justification for you."

Still stronger expressions of censure, though expressed in a kindly tone, followed.

The facts were these:—

The 4th Native Infantry was a regiment armed with old-fashioned Brunswick two-grooved rifles. Many of them were worn out, and at the suggestion of the Commander-in-Chief, Sir W. Mansfield, instead of getting out a fresh supply of the obsolete weapons, Enfields, of which

there were plenty in store, were issued, and thus an exceptional and inconvenient pattern was got rid of. As to the issue being indiscreet, on the ground that the use of the cartridges might offend caste prejudice and be made the occasion of mutiny, the supposition was absurd. The Enfield cartridges were now not made of the objectionable grease, and when used were now not bitten but torn open. As to paying "regard to what might be wise elsewhere in India," Frere pointed out that hitherto it had been the practice for each Presidency to arm its army independently of the other Presidencies. Lastly, as to the order of the Board of Directors, in 1857, prohibiting the use of the Enfield cartridges, it was a prohibition referring to an exceptional crisis and to a different cartridge to be used in a different way, and could not reasonably be supposed to be valid and applicable for all time. As a matter of fact, so far from being dangerous, it was of the utmost importance to the good feeling of the native regiments that they should not be armed with inferior weapons, which would prevent their fighting on equal terms side by side with the English regiments. Already, in the last frontier fighting about Umbeyla, our difficulties had been aggravated by the inability of the native regiments, armed only with smooth-bores, to take their share of the fighting. The men armed with old muskets knew perfectly well that they were handicapped and could not stand against inferior troops with better arms; and they were getting demoralized and discontented in consequence. It was the exact opposite of the spirit and system by which Jacob gave his men the best arms he could procure, and by making them feel that they were trusted, did so much to secure their fidelity.

Never surely was a change more expedient. Sir Charles Wood, however, adhered to his opinion that Frere was

wrong and unregardful of orders. But he mentioned in a subsequent letter—what was by itself an almost sufficient justification of the issue of the Enfields—that he had since discovered that there was already a Bombay Native Infantry Regiment armed with Enfields. It had been so armed by Jacob early in 1857, at the very time of the cartridge disturbances in Bengal; so that, after all, what had been done, so far from being a perilous experiment, was not an innovation at all.

At the beginning of the year 1865, the prosperity of the trading classes and cultivators, the great rise of prices and in the cost of labour, and the consequent need of raising the salaries of public servants, and also the call for increased expenditure on necessary public works, all pointed to the expediency of increasing, rather than diminishing taxation. Therefore when Sir Charles Trevelyan, in his Budget statement in April, 1865, proposed the discontinuance of the Income-tax, and in its place the imposition of export duties and a loan for public works, the announcement was received with general surprise. Sir John Lawrence, who had been strongly opposed to the Income-tax when it was first introduced, had by this time come round to approving of it; and now he was the only one of the members of his Council in favour of retaining it.* He might, indeed, have overruled his Council; but this he would not do.

Frere writes to Sir Charles Wood :—

"April 10, 1865.

"I could scarcely believe my eyes when I read that the Income-tax was to be allowed to lapse, and that we were to substitute for it borrowing and taxes on exports. I had very recently heard from Sir J. Lawrence himself that he did not see how we were to do without the Income-tax, and one way or another this view of the case had been

* Lawrence to Frere, April 15, 1865.

made generally known as the conclusion at which the Government of India had arrived, and it had been acquiesced in by the public. The press everywhere assumed that at least another year of Income-tax was inevitable—some approved, some excused, but, as far as I can learn, none wholly condemned what all were ready to accept as a matter of necessity. Here in Bombay the tone of the native press was quite remarkable. In many native papers the Income-tax was defended on the obvious ground that it was a wise and just tax, sparing the poor and falling mainly on the rich, who pay taxes very inadequately in any other shape. This tone was the more remarkable, because the native press is almost exclusively the organ of the prosperous and educated natives, and we have nothing answering to your democratic press in Europe.

"That I was not mistaken in my impression of the views of the Government of India up to a very late date, I gather from the surprise which Sir Hugh Rose expressed when he heard on landing here that the Income-tax had been given up. The measure had evidently been decided on since he left Calcutta.

"Neither Sir C. Trevelyan's printed Financial Statement, nor the debate, nor any reflection on our financial position, had enabled me to discover any worthy reason for this act of financial suicide."

Sir Charles Wood expressed himself even more strongly about the Budget. He writes to Frere, May 17, 1865 :—

"The Budget is as bad as can be. Lawrence stood alone in support of maintaining the Income-tax, which would have been the right thing ; and was, I think, equally right in refusing to agree to shifting the load from the shoulders of the rich to those of the poor, by raising the salt-tax. The export duties are as foolish as anything can be, and the loan is worse. Heaven help us from such selfish and short-sighted statesmanship !"

Sir Charles Wood disallowed the export duties, but it was impossible for him to save the Income-tax. Trevelyan shortly afterwards returned to England, leaving a heavy

deficit as the result of a policy of cutting down expenditure, when and where it was especially necessary and likely to be reproductive, and of remitting taxation at a time when it was more easily borne than ever before.

Sir C. Trevelyan was succeeded by Mr. Massey, who produced his first Budget in March, 1866. In order to get rid of the deficit, the Budget contained a suggestion to transfer to local funds certain charges which had hitherto been borne by the Government of India, those, namely, for education, police, district jails, public works, and maintenance of roads and bridges. To meet these charges a certain discretion in the method of taxation was to be allowed to local administrations, but the taxes recommended were a licence-tax of trades and professions, house-tax, octroi duties, and succession duty on lands paying no revenue. This drew from Frere a minute on local taxation (November 15, 1866), and on the financial condition of India generally. In the course of it, he points out that though he would welcome a proposal to hand over to the local Governments certain taxes, together with a corresponding liability to meet local charges, as Wilson and Laing had proposed, it was quite another thing if the liability transferred was to be heavier than the corresponding tax had hitherto been, and would in fact involve a breach of faith with the tax-payer.

As regarded the four taxes suggested by Mr. Massey, Frere expressed approval of all except the octroi duties.

"To these I must express a very strong objection. They are generally popular with the larger traders, as favouring monopoly and keeping down petty trade; with men of property, who do not much feel them . . . and with officials who find them productive and easy of collecting, and do not see the mischief they do. But they are oppressive to the poor, especially to the small trader, and form a serious check to the natural growth of commerce.

They are better than no source of public income at all, and this, I believe, is the best that can be said of them."

He goes on to say that to supply the urgent need of money for repairing roads in the Presidency, tolls had been imposed wherever the nature of the country permitted, by which more than seven lakhs (£72,000) had been raised in a year. Tolls, however, had been resorted to, not because he thought this the best mode of providing for road-mending, but as the only means to which sanction could be obtained. He would prefer a cart or wheel-tax, leaving tolls to be levied on made roads over mountain passes or on bridges. The one-anna cess, originally suggested by Sir George Wingate and Colonel Davidson, had also been resorted to, which was paid with the land-tax at the rate of one anna for every rupee of Government land revenue, to form a local fund for making and repairing roads, and for maintaining primary schools. There was some doubt as to its being compatible with the terms on which the cultivators in some districts held their land, and therefore it had not been generally introduced, but as it was, it brought in thirteen lakhs in the Presidency, and would bring in more as the old settlements fell in.

The army expenditure could not, he considered, be put at less than sixteen millions out of a total expenditure of forty-six, without including the cost of barrack improvements, and he thought the existing condition of the army very unsatisfactory, many portions being obviously and notoriously inefficient.

Upon the question of the revenue from opium, he says:—

"Under this head we spend one and three-quarter millions to obtain from opium a revenue of six and three-

quarter millions sterling. Every year's observation confirms me in the belief, which I have often before expressed, that the disregard of all sound maxims of political economy, which is shown by our maintenance of the Government monopoly and manufacture in Bengal, joined to our neglect of the plainest dictates of prudence in keeping up the present price of Malwa opium-passes in Western India, must rapidly ensure the decline and final extinction of this branch of revenue. . . .

"We have in India two opposite systems of taxing opium—one the fee or passport system, in force in Western India, which is not at variance with the laws of political economy, and which promises to afford the largest possible revenue for the longest possible time, provided we do not stimulate production in other countries by pitching the tax or passports too high. It involves little expenditure for establishment, and is not obnoxious to the moral objections which are urged against the system of Government manufacture in Bengal.

"The other system in force in Bengal is not only obnoxious to all the objections, economical or moral, which do not apply to the Western mode of taxation, but is certain, sooner or later, to be ruined by the often-proved impossibility of conducting any manufacture by Government monopoly on such sound commercial principles as to compete with commercial success in a free, foreign market which has other sources of supply.

"Second in the list" (the Minute continues), "as regards the extent of the charge, come Public Works, the large aggregate amount of which is a frequent source of congratulation, when we speak of the good deeds of the Indian Government, while the comparative smallness of the result, when looked at in detail, is the theme of almost universal complaint and disappointment. . . .

"A fixed sum should be assigned annually to each Administration, and the local Government should be left to spend this sum to the best advantage, with no further condition than, perhaps, a stipulation that a certain proportion should be devoted to certain great heads of really Imperial importance; such, for instance, as military shelter or defence. Each Administration should state annually, as soon as possible after the close of the working season, what it had done with its assignment, how many

miles of road had been made, and where and what permanent buildings had been erected; but as to all details, the Government of India should take it for granted that the professional advisers and executive officers of the local governments are competent to decide every ordinary point regarding common roads, buildings, and other works; and the Government of India should content itself with the assurance that if something might be gained in point of ultimate perfection by sending the plans many hundreds or thousands of miles to be revised by officers under the Government of India, much more would assuredly be lost in delays and in a diminution of the work ultimately done.

"At present all the preliminary details regarding any costly work, however simple, are gone over twice, or oftener, and the expenditure on the establishments necessary for this repeated examination of details must be something enormous. In place of these establishments, the Government of India should employ the best officers in every department as travelling inspectors to report, in the first instance, to the local governments, and ultimately to the Government of India, on the comparative merits of every kind of public work in every part of the Empire.

"Every province has some peculiar excellence of its own—the barracks of one, the roads, the bridges, the anicuts, the canals, the architecture, the masonry of others, are the best of their kind in India; and a frequent personal inspection and criticism of all by selected officers, who did not confine their observations to one province, but who saw and personally examined all they discussed, would speedily do more to raise the general standard of public works, and to ensure better results for the expenditure, than ages of paper-sifting by accomplished clerks in a central office.

"I would, once for all, disclaim anything like a personal application of the opinions I have ventured to submit. I know no more accomplished or high-minded body of public servants than are to be found in the Indian Public Works officers. The Government of India has, as it ought to have, under its immediate orders some of the ablest and best, and, speaking generally, no faulty system was ever worked with greater consideration and courtesy,

or with a more single eye to the good of the public service. But the system is radically bad, and can be no more redeemed by an exemplary body of officials than that which has just centralized Austria into political paralysis. Let us remember that Bengal is larger and more populous than either France or the old Austrian Empire, and probably not poorer than Austria; that Madras is much bigger and twice as populous as European Turkey; and that probably the most ardent centralizer in a French bureau would shrink from any proposal to manage the roads and bridges of the Ottoman Empire from Paris as a centre, though that would be a light task compared with what is now attempted in India."

CHAPTER XII.

THE REBUILDING OF BOMBAY.

Sanitary state of Bombay—Census—The City rebuilt—Its defences—The *Thule*—Railways—Education—Address to Deccan Sirdars.

THE filth of an Indian city is, or was at that time, not to be imagined by any one with an experience limited to Western Europe, much less to be described here. The old town of Bombay was ill-built, ill-drained, or rather not drained at all, very dirty, and very unhealthy. Land for building was urgently required by the rapidly increasing population, and space for more airy streets and houses.

There had never yet been any census taken of any large city in India, and the populations could be only very roughly estimated. As a preliminary to extensive draining and building operations for the improvement of the sanitary condition of Bombay, it was expedient to ascertain what the population really was. A Bill for taking the census passed the Bombay Council in April, 1863. In August Lord Elgin's assent was given, and it was understood to have become law. In December, therefore, a notification was put forth at Bombay that the census would be taken on February 2, 1864. Forms were arranged, enumerators drilled, and the people generally

prepared to aid, and not to resist or be alarmed. A week before the day fixed, when all was ready, without any previous hint of disapproval, a telegraphic message was received from England that the Act had been disallowed by the India Office, no reasons being given. To have suspended the work at the last moment without explanation would have caused misunderstanding, and perhaps alarm and danger. So, after consultation with the Commissioner of Police, and with the natives who had assisted in the arrangements, Frere determined to proceed with the census without the aid of the Act, as a voluntary enumeration. His decision was not approved by the India Office, but the result was a complete success. "I feel sure," he writes to Sir Charles Wood, "when you have the result before you, with Dr. Leith's report on the sanitary condition of the more densely populated quarters, you will say I did right to get the best census we could without waiting for a compulsory Act."

"I admit that you make out a fair case on the census," Sir Charles Wood replies (May 17); "my Councillors were all against it, and I had not an opinion sufficiently strong to warrant me in differing."

Frere was a keen and ardent sanitary reformer, abreast of all the latest knowledge on the subject. He had obtained a report on the condition of the city from Dr. Leith, President of the Bombay Sanitary Commission; and he called to his assistance Dr. Hewlett, then recently returned from England, where he had been making a special study of sanitation.

He would often take his daily ride, sometimes accompanied by Dr. Hewlett, through the purlieus of the native quarter, to examine its condition for himself. It happened that he had noticed a house which had been raised at

different times to an unusual height. One day, seeing that a sixth or a seventh story was being added to it, he asked the owner, a native, whether he had a very large or increasing family to need so unusual an addition to his house. The man answered, "No, he had had several children, but they had been all very feeble and sickly. He had added a story to his house from time to time, as his means permitted, hoping that by living higher up, where the air was purer and the breeze fresher, their lives might have been saved. But one after another they had sickened and died—all but one. He was building this new and highest story as the last hope to save the last child that was left to him."

The Europeans were even more straitened for house-room than the natives. The quarter of the city chiefly inhabited by them was enclosed by the ramparts of the old fort, and could not be enlarged till they were removed. House-rent had gone up to an extravagant price. An English surgeon writes, "The house I am now in, with another of the same size, were bought by my present landlord in 1848 for forty thousand rupees. They are now being sold together for six hundred thousand rupees, or fifteen times as much. This is no speculative purchase, but a *bonâ fide* operation." Nor was it possible for Europeans to migrate to any less expensive quarter. The peculiarities and habits of the natives of an Indian city make it impossible for Englishmen to live in their streets. It is not a question of pride or fashion; the dwellings are altogether unfitted for Europeans. On the other hand, the rich natives had begun to buy up houses hitherto occupied by Englishmen, so that there was now no exclusively European quarter.*

* Colonel Marriott to the Secretary to the Government of India, January 21, 1865.

A considerable amount of space was obtained by clearing away obsolete fortifications and useless public buildings and factories, and laying out the ground afresh, using part of it for new public buildings and for recreation ground, and selling the rest as sites for building. The principal Government properties offered for sale were—

The gunpowder and gun-carriage factories, both very large in extent, with an excellent harbour-frontage, but in localities now utterly unsuited to their purpose.

The old European General Hospital, which was in too confined a space and unhealthy.

The old ramparts of Bombay. These were useless for defence, and occupied a great space between the two busiest portions of the town. The high walls interfered with the circulation of air, and the ditches contained stagnant water. They were accordingly levelled, and part of the space laid out in roads, open spaces, and sites for public buildings. A considerable area remained, which was sold under conditions arranged so as to secure the interests of the public, and for a sum which was sufficient to cover the whole expense of the work done.

Many were the plans propounded and discussed for the drainage of Bombay. As far as the surface water was concerned, it was eventually thoroughly done. But it was ultimately found to be impossible, owing to difficulties of level, the set of the tide, and other causes, to construct a system of sewers and house drainage, and it was therefore necessary to organize a complete and elaborate system of house-to-house scavenging.

By Frere's strenuous efforts the Bombay Municipal Act was passed in 1865 to provide for the management of these and other kindred matters. It was a carefully considered and comprehensive measure—the first of the kind passed in India. It provided for the appointment

of a Municipal Commissioner for a term of three years, in whom was vested the entire executive power, and of an executive engineer, a consulting officer of health, and a controller of municipal accounts. These officers were paid by and under the financial control of the bench of justices, to whom they reported at their meetings four times a year. The Commissioner was empowered to enact bye-laws, subject to confirmation—first by the justices, and secondly by the Governor in Council.

How high an importance Frere attached to the promotion of the health and cleanliness, and the improvement of the private dwellings and public buildings of Bombay, and how near these things were to his heart, may be gathered from the following passage in a letter to Colonel Merewether, then commanding at Aden, and justly valued by Frere as one of the ablest and most distinguished officers in all India.

"February 15, 1865.

"I sometimes wish I had you here, to act as Lord Mayor of this town. Did it ever occur to you as a task as glorious, and quite as difficult, as conquering Cabul? I only ask to learn your views, and not because I am able now or feel sure I shall be able hereafter, to offer it. But I should like to know how you would view the offer, if made."

Mr. Arthur Crawfurd was the first Municipal Commissioner, and Dr. Hewlett the first Officer of Health. Their work was carefully designed, planned, and executed. An immense improvement in the health of the city was effected, and became apparent by the diminution, ultimately, in the death-rate from thirty-five to twenty-three per thousand.* Twelve new public buildings were designed and

* Miss Nightingale writes to Frere some years afterwards :—

"November 13, 1869.

"Bombay has had a lower death-rate on the last two years than London—the healthiest city in Europe. This is entirely your doing.

most of them begun during Frere's term of office, the twelfth being completed only in 1891. Rarely has a municipality had a greater opportunity. Seldom have there occurred financial delays and difficulties more formidable than those which it had to encounter in the first years of its existence. And never, perhaps, as those testify who saw the old city and have also seen the new one, has a transformation —spreading though it did over a quarter of a century from its commencement to its completion—been more magnificently successful.*

The old fortifications of Bombay had long been useless and were now demolished, but as yet they had not been replaced by new ones; and the long range of modern guns and changed conditions of naval warfare, made it necessary to look to the defence of this the greatest and most exposed of the sea-port towns of India.

Frere writes to Lord Cranborne, the new Secretary for India :—

"October 2, 1866.

"The American man-of-war *Shenandoah* has arrived in Bombay, bringing the first intelligence we have received of an American vessel of that class being in these seas, and reminding us rather vividly of the fact that she might have dropped upon us quite as unexpectedly in time of war as of peace; that we have nothing to meet her nearer than

If we do not take care Bombay will outstrip us in the sanitary race. People will be ordered for the benefit of their health to Bombay or to Calcutta, which is already healthier than Liverpool or Manchester."

* As these pages are being written, a letter comes to Lady Frere, from the wife of a Member of Council at Bombay, dated April 13, 1892, which contains the following :—

"We can never forget the time when you and Sir Bartle were here, or Sir Bartle's great kindness during the time my husband was serving under him, a time which we often think of and look back to as one of the happiest periods in our Indian life. Everywhere around us now in Bombay we see proofs of Sir Bartle's wisdom and forethought, and even yet all his plans for the improvement of the city are only in process of development."

Trincomalee, a thousand miles distant and not in telegraphic communication with us. Depressed as commerce still is in Bombay, a vessel like this could in twenty-four hours extort a ransom of many millions sterling. The American Consul or any man in business in Bombay could tell the captain that the mint and the bank alone could yield him three or four millions in silver, and the captain could have no difficulty in dropping a shell into either building as a hint to hasten payment. . . .

"When the question comes before you, I am confident you will not allow the fortification and defence of vital points like Bombay, to be left to the chances of a surplus in a local fund. But no land defences will suffice without powerful floating defences, and I do not see how they are to be maintained in this or other harbours without a local Indian Navy.

"I would not restore the old Indian Navy, which had incurable vices of constitution, nor attempt to improve the present Bombay marine, which will never be more than a costly and not very efficient transport service.

"But I would borrow from the Royal Navy a selected Port Captain and pay him well, with local rank as a Commodore for five years, and give him command of all local transports, harbour defence, and Government Dockyard services, and give him officers and men from the Royal Naval Volunteers, serving for five years at a time, with a suitable increase of pay and pension so as to make the service popular. . . ."

Early in 1864 Captain Sherard Osborne had reached Bombay with four gun-boats, with which he had been putting down piracy in the China seas. The operations were at an end, and three of the vessels with their stores were made over to the Government; the fourth, the *Thule*, was advertised for sale by Captain Osborne's agent Mr. Cruickshank, as a "yacht." She was unarmed, but very fast, and capable of being converted into a second and a more formidable *Alabama*. Frere at once stopped the sale, and on February 28 wrote to Sir Charles Wood to say he had done so, and suggested that the Government should buy her. Sir

Charles Wood's reply is interesting, as showing what the English Government's opinion on this question, afterwards so much debated, then was.

"April 4, 1864.

"I brought the question of the gun-boats before the Government, and I can now give you directions to some extent.

"You were quite right to take charge of the gun-boat's stores, etc. That is a clear case.

"With regard to the *Thule*, which you describe as a yacht, and not fitted for an armament, you have, I am afraid, gone beyond legal measures. I do not at all blame you for having stopped the sale; but you had in fact *no right* to do so. Therefore you had better let Mr. Cruickshank sell her as he pleases; but you must take good care that she is not fitted for war purposes in your territory. You should, I think, warn Mr. Cruickshank that nothing of this kind can be permitted. We have, I am inclined to think, pushed our practice here beyond the law. The decision has so far been against us in the *Alexandra* case, and I do not much believe that we shall succeed in convicting even the rams. I have no doubt of their being intended for the Confederates, but I suspect that we shall not be able to prove it on legal evidence. So mind what you do, and have the best legal advice before you take any step. I should think that a warning from you to any purchaser would probably be effectual in stopping any proceeding which would be contrary to law."

Frere replied—

"April 28, 1864.

"I have been over the *Thule*. She is called a yacht; but yachting in China, with Malays and Manilla men as crew, and in waters where pirates are quite as plentiful as fishermen, is not a very peaceful occupation, and the *Thule* could certainly be equipped outside our harbour so as to make her a very formidable rover. A man calling himself 'Captain Lowe, Agent for the Southern States,' has lately been here, offering to buy any of the four vessels, and to pay ready money for them.

"I at first thought of letting her be sold to any respectable local firm which would give security that she should not

fall into the hands of either of the belligerents; but I found that respectable firms were shy of buying a vessel the exact ownership of which seems a little mysterious. . . . So I thought it only safe, in order to avoid all risks of American remonstrance, to take charge of her with the other vessels.

"She is exactly the kind of vessel to station in the Persian Gulf or at Zanzibar or Aden, at the disposal of the Resident. The Admiralty steadily refuse permission to their vessels to remain at Aden, or in the Red Sea, or Persian Gulf, except during the cool months, and it is absolutely necessary that the Resident should have a despatch-boat at his disposal. The *Thule* is admirably adapted for such service, and would be worked much more cheaply than our old vessels of the Indian Navy."

It was fortunate, as the issue of the *Alabama* case showed, that Frere's suggestion was adopted, and the *Thule* purchased by Government. She was afterwards given as a present to the Sultan of Zanzibar, who, Livingstone writes, was greatly pleased with her.

About the same time the question was raised whether the Indian Army could not be still further reduced, and troops spared, if necessary, for service elsewhere. Frere gave his opinion that the Native Army — and in this Lawrence agreed with him—was already quite as much reduced as it ought to be. The Bombay Native Army numbered, in 1848, 35,049; in 1856, 28,620; and at that time, though the territory of the Presidency was larger, 20,872. The Bombay Government Despatch states that—

"April 21, 1864.

"Barely two-thirds of the Native (Bombay) Army has as much as four nights in bed at a time of profound peace when there are no troops in the field. With only two regiments of native troops on foreign service in China, we are left without any reserve of Native Infantry immediately available, or any means of giving rest to regiments which, from sickness or other cause, may have become disabled."

But with his habitual confidence in native troops, when

well disciplined and commanded, he suggested the reduction of the European troops in the Presidency by one Infantry and one Cavalry regiment, and by three batteries of Artillery.

The pushing on of railways was the most important thing of all, he considered, for strengthening our military position in India, as well as on all other accounts. Over and over again in his letters to the Government of India and to the Secretary of State, he urges the extreme importance of completing the railway connection between the Punjab and the sea at Kurrachee by continuing the railway from Kotree to Mooltan. Apart from the great commercial benefits it would confer, being by eight hundred miles the nearest route to the sea for twenty millions of people, it was the one thing wanted to assist the defence of the North-West Frontier on its whole line, by making it easily accessible to troops from Kurrachee. "The Russian advance on Bokhara causes great excitement even at this distance," he writes, in 1866, to Captain Eastwick. "Why do you delay to connect Mooltan and Kotree, and Guzerat and Delhi by railway? If anything happens to us, the verdict of history will be *felo de se*." And he writes to Lord John Hay:—

"May 3, 1866.

"There are no two measures so important in a military, political, or commercial point of view as the completion of the railway lines up the valley of the Indus, and from Guzerat to Delhi. There are existing guaranteed Railway Companies ready to make both, by extending their own completed lines onwards from Kotree in Sind to Mooltan, and from Baroda in Guzerat to Neemuch and Delhi, but the Government of India refuses to let the Companies make the surveys, a work which, properly done, will take two or three quiet seasons; and the Secretary of State's Council supports the refusal, and, after two ineffectual remonstrances, a third peremptory order has come to us to recall survey parties actually in the field."

To Lord Cranborne he writes as to the railway from Kurrachee to Kotree, and the need to extend it along the valley of the Indus:—

"The present line has cost quite double the original estimate, and one of the arguments against any extension is the presumed high cost of any addition. I therefore took particular pains to ascertain the causes of the high cost of the existing line, and feel convinced that it is mainly due to bad engineering as regards both the lining out and the designs for the bridges, etc., across the drainage, and to reckless extravagance, if not worse, in the execution. As far as I could learn, two-fifths of the actual expenditure would have been ample, even at present enhanced prices, on good designs and a well-laid-out line. All concerned, Government officials as well as all the railway people in Sind and in England, must have their share of the blame, and I traced many mistakes and omissions to my own time when the work began; some of those concerned will, it may be hoped, be more honest and all wiser and more experienced next time.

"One main cause of all the mischief has been the hurry in which everything was done at the last, under pressure of the Mutiny, and my great objection to the repressive policy of the Government of India, refusing leave to survey and inquire in anticipation of a concession of a line, is that I am confident the Indus valley and many other lines will be hurriedly ordered some day, under panic at hearing that a Russian envoy has arrived at Cabool, or a French or American squadron in the Persian Gulf."

Public works and education were the two matters Frere meant chiefly to press—so he told his private secretary, Mr. John Arthur—when he took up the Government of Bombay. If with the former he had to encounter storms and to make way against a head-wind, with the latter he was in comparatively smooth water; for he was not at every step impeded by the need of obtaining the sanction of the Government of India. Nor was it necessary to make new departures so much as to accelerate progress on the lines already laid down.

These were the years, preceding the settlement of 1870, during which the question of the extent to which religious teaching was to form an integral part of national education was being hotly contested in England. The waves of the controversy did not fail to reach the shores of India; and it was sought to impugn the principle of the Education Despatch of 1854, which laid down neutrality in matters of religion as the attitude to be observed by the Government.

In the spring of 1864 a deputation from the Church Missionary Society came to Sir Charles Wood to complain of the course taken by the Bombay Government as to religious teaching in schools.* And subsequently Sir Charles Wood suggested that sanction should be given to Government schoolmasters 'giving instruction in the Bible or Christian religion at other times than school hours.' †

To this Frere replied—

" September 27, 1864.

" I trust you will let all who are most responsible for the peace as well as for the education of the country, be heard before you formally give any orders on the subject of Government schoolmasters giving instruction to their pupils in Christianity out of school hours. I know nothing in this Presidency to prevent any sincere inquirer learning all he can desire to know on the subject of Christianity from any Government schoolmaster who is willing to inform him. But it would be difficult to frame any order on the subject, which should not be taken as an incentive to mix up Missionary teaching with Government education, which would, I am sure, be most disastrous for both, but especially to true Missionary work, for I am convinced that any general suspicion that we were to enter on an Orange policy in India would not only be quite as dangerous as in Ireland, but quite as ineffectual towards any result of true conversion."

* Sir Charles Wood to Sir B. Frere, June 17, 1864.
† Same to same, September 1, 1864.

On the same subject, with reference to a complaint made against an official in the Education Department, he writes :—

"July 22, 1864.

"I am sanguine that you will have little trouble in the Education Department from the Missionaries in this Presidency, unless they are urged on by 'Parent Societies' and gentlemen travelling as 'deputations from Parent Societies,' who, in cases of this kind, are very apt to play the firebrand.

"Our difficulties have been of the same sort as those Government meets with in Ireland, and the faults found with us are very like what you hear charged there. But little fault is found by our own Missionaries on the spot. They seem to me to be doing much more in their own way among the natives than either their friends or their enemies suppose; often, I am certain, much more than they are themselves aware of. And their success is, I am sure, partly owing to the really fair and impartial course pursued by this Government on all questions of religion and education, and to the confidence and absence of bitter feeling among the natives which this course has inspired."

Anxious as he was lest the teaching of Christianity should be endangered by its being taken up by Government officials, he did his utmost to encourage it in the hands of the Missionaries, and of the colleges and schools of the different religious bodies, and to foster their efforts to teach not only their native members, but Europeans of the lower class, the neglect of whom and of whose children at that time brought so much discredit on English Christianity in India.

The following passage occurs in a pencil note of his for a speech at a meeting of the Free Kirk General Assembly's Institute :—

"You, as independent religious communities, do that which Government cannot properly or safely attempt to do—you render it impossible for any native of India to

say to us as a nation that 'you teach us everything but that which the great teachers among yourselves believe to be the most important of all knowledge.' This can be said by no one within reach of this institution."

The following letter to the Rev. Charles Merivale gives his impression of the extent to which Christianity was spreading and influencing the natives of India at that time:—

"February 7, 1865

"I have to thank you very much for a copy of your admirable sketch of the conversion of the Roman Empire, one of the very few books I have met with which I wished expanded to any number of times its present size without any alteration in the relative proportions of its several parts.

"The subject has a special interest for us just now in India, where the various forms of Indian belief are undergoing the same process which you so well describe; but it seems to me that in our modern case the process is going on much more rapidly than of old—for I do not suppose that any one generation of Romans ever witnessed such extensive and important changes of belief in the mass of the people as I have witnessed during my thirty years in India. I think this is only what might be expected from the superior temporal advantages of the proselytizing nations of modern days. Of the fact I think there can be no doubt, though it is at variance with the generally received opinions regarding the results of modern Missionary effort.

"I send you a Maharatti newspaper, in which you will find an article on 'Sinceritism,' as the writer cals it, which expresses what is, I think, the general form of belief among our young educated natives. You will see it is Deism with a strong tinge of Christianity, and a code of morals almost entirely Christian, and approaching much more closely to Christian teaching in many most important points than some of the modern fashionable European creeds. The men who think with the writer have no sympathy with the old Hindooism, and so far from being hostile to Christianity, are very apt to receive it when their hearts are touched by any of the various accidents

which show them the very unsatisfactory character of such half-way houses as 'Sinceritism.'"

Frere sought to give the fullest possible effect to the principle of Government grants-in-aid, originally laid down in the Despatch of 1854, and freely sanctioned Government assistance being given to educational establishments of all denominations which could show they were doing good work. By these means a great impetus was given to primary instruction. But the great impulse given to education under his rule at Bombay—education in the widest sense of the word, of men and women, as well as of boys and girls—was due to his personal encouragement more than to any legislation promoted by him. It was owing mainly to his influence that so much of the overflow of wealth which came into the possession of the Bombay native merchants during the American Civil War was applied to the building and endowment of schools, colleges, museums, and other institutions, instead of being squandered in idle luxury and display. Keeping himself well informed of all that was going on in England in politics, literature, science, and art, he was competent to give good counsel on all educational matters.

He encouraged the growth of the School of Art at Bombay, and also took a keen interest in the preservation of the ancient arts—such as textile and pottery work in Sind—and in Indian antiquities, starting a committee which made a study of the ancient buildings of Western India.

In fostering art in India—where there exists so much manual dexterity and delicacy of workmanship—the problem is to get beyond the reiteration and reproduction of old forms and patterns, and to introduce new life and new

ideas which may grow and develop. Writing to Mr. E. J. Howard, Director of Public Instruction, Frere makes the following suggestion :—

"January 3, 1864.

"The only way in which, as far as I can at present see, imported artists could come out to teach usefully would be by coming out to execute some specified commission, teaching native pupils the while, as Vandyke taught whilst painting for Charles I. and his Court. Rustunjee might say, 'I will give a sum of money to any artist you select to come out and paint for me family portraits and oil pictures on historical subjects, and frescoes for my new house,' with liberty to take home and exhibit what is portable, and with a promise to teach what he could to whom he could. If an enthusiast with any teaching mania in him, he would soon find pupils. If not, he would still, in the course of executing his commissions, give many an intelligent youth a basis and hints which might end in the wish to be an artist. It would be something that our Parsee youths should see practically that pictures are painted, and not woven or stamped. If nothing else came of it, Rustunjee would get his pictures for his money."

He had a deep sense of the importance of female education and did all he could to encourage it.

In a letter to a Parsee gentleman, Mr. Manockjee Cursetjee, he offers suggestions in respect of his intention to start a school for native girls :—

"July 27, 1863.

"Your success will much depend on keeping it as a movement among yourselves for your own improvement, managed and supported by those for whose welfare it is designed.

"Don't call it an 'Institute.' How would 'Alexandra Native Ladies' School' do?

"I would avoid a European ladies' committee. Ask ladies to visit without responsibility or authority, and by all means give the Miss Manockjees and any ladies, if you can find any similarly accomplished, the fullest power to visit and suggest; but let no one manage save the mistress —she should be educationally supreme.

"Financially, let all be in the hands of native gentlemen—yourself and others who feel with you.

"All will depend on your choice of a mistress. Put it in the hands of a man like F. D. Maurice, who from the Ladies' College could doubtless send a lady devoted to the work for the work's sake. She should be allowed to choose a companion lady as her second in command, and should be quite supreme.

"I write in great haste. May God be with you, and help and direct you aright!"

With Miss Mary Carpenter, best known for her work in connection with Reformatories, who visited Bombay, he had much communication as to Native Girls' Schools, and also upon Prison Discipline. Writing to him after his return to England, she says:—

"March 10, 1868.

"I value your *personal* appreciation of my work more than anything which could be expressed on a *very* large sheet of official paper. I must not, however, be ungrateful for official help, since that which you gave me at Bombay was *the* means of doing what I did in India respecting Prison Discipline."

He would look in, without previous intimation of his coming, with an apology for intruding, and asking as a favour for information, upon unpretending private schools or orphanages, cheering lonely workers—it might be men or women, far from home and friends, who had little pleasure left but in their work, by his bright presence and warm sympathy. It was thus that he came to know and to befriend Miss Prescott, who had devoted her life and her slender means to the education of a number of friendless girls, chiefly native or Eurasian.

He was always ready to take his part at the meetings of the Council of the Bombay University, of which he was Chancellor, or on a speech-day of a college or school. Not naturally fluent, with a slow and deliberate articulation,

and cautious of dropping a word that could be misunderstood, or could not be fully substantiated, he would begin his speech so slowly as almost to threaten tediousness; but as he went on, his vigorous grasp of his subject —always carefully thought out and arranged beforehand, as the pencil notes in his handwriting testify—his wide and accurate knowledge, his incisive, well-chosen words, his high thoughts and the deep conviction expressed in the tones of his clear, silvery voice, and in the play of his open countenance, moved his hearers, not to noisy plaudits, but to a fixed and sympathetic attention, and left upon them a deep and lasting impression.

At a Durbar of the Deccan chiefs and Sirdars held at Poona, on September 4, 1865, he addressed them, as usual, in their native Marathi language. His speech is so clear and simple an expression, as far as it goes, of the spirit and ideas which inspired his government of the natives, that it is inserted here almost entire.

"Chiefs and Sirdars,—I am glad to welcome you to Poona; to hear from you of the welfare of yourselves, of your families and your ryots. . . .

"Among other topics, there is much which I should be glad to say on the subject of Education.

"By 'education' I do not mean mere reading and writing. Without these elementary means of acquiring knowledge, there can be no perfect education; but much may be learnt from travel, from seeing other countries, and conversing with men of wide experience and more knowledge than can be met with at any one place. There is much to be learnt in a visit to Bombay or Poona, Ahmedabad or Benares, or in any distant city or country.

"I know that the expense of travelling with a great retinue is a serious obstacle to such journeys, and I wish you would imitate the excellent example of His Highness Maharaja Scindia and His Highness Maharaja Holkar, who had visited many countries with no larger retinue than was absolutely necessary for seeing with advantage all

that was worthy of a visit. I would gladly write more than can be said orally on this subject of Education. But I find from the reports of Political officers that a very large proportion of the Maratha Sirdars are unable to read and write their own language, and there are very few indeed who know the language of the English Government and of our gracious Sovereign, sufficiently well to understand what I might say or write to them in my own tongue. . . .

"I would earnestly beg you to consider whether this is creditable to yourselves, or consistent with your duty to yourselves, to your families, or to your subjects.

"To yourselves, because without such knowledge you cannot efficiently fill the high station to which you were born; you cannot fulfil your duty nor deserve the respect of your people, nor the sympathy of your Government. You know that it is the earnest desire of Her Majesty the Queen and of the Government of India, to maintain the class of nobles to which you belong with undiminished hereditary property and influence, and to see them act as leaders of the people in the moral and physical advancement which it is the eminent desire of the British nation to encourage in this country. But this is simply impossible if you neglect all opportunities of learning.

"I would ask you if one of the princes, the sons of Queen Victoria, came amongst us, how many of you would be able to converse with His Royal Highness in his own language? How many of you can read the laws of the country in the language in which they are enacted? or the correspondence of our Government regarding yourselves and your own rights? Nay, more, how many of you could tell a traveller, even if he spoke your own language, anything of the history or geography, or of the politics of any part of your own country beyond the immediate neighbourhood of your own territory?

"The Government of England has of late years decreed that an active share in the government of this country shall be given to the people of this country as far as they are worthy of it. You have good reason to know that this is no mere figure of speech. For we have done our best to promote worthy men among the native community to the highest seats in our Council, and to the Bench of our great Courts of Justice. We would gladly

select for such officers, men illustrious for their birth and descent, and influential from their rank and family position. How is it, then, that we have been able to find among the Sirdars of the Deccan, so few who possess such a knowledge even of their own people and their own public affairs, as to be fitted for such a trust? There are honourable exceptions sufficient to show how easy it would be for you to avail yourselves of this great opportunity....

"I know well that there is no natural impediment to prevent the majority of the Sirdars of the Deccan from being fit to take part in the government of the country if they would but make use of the advantages of education which are within their reach. There was a time when a Deccan Sirdar could afford to neglect these things. When, if he attended his Prince at Court or in war, he could leave to hireling subalterns and scribes all active concern in drilling his troops, in collecting his revenues, and in administering justice to his retainers. But the times when it was possible so to delegate all his most important duties are gone; you must all feel assured they can never return. You must know that it is owing to this habit of delegating important duties to others, and to the consequent incapacity of discharging them in person, the opportunity of having such duties to perform has passed away from so many. A powerful nation now protects each and all of you in the enjoyment of your property and rights. It is not possible now for a man with a few more retainers, or with better equipment than your own, or even for any one who wields the whole power of Government, unjustly to deprive the weakest of you of his rightful possessions. But there is one enemy against which even the powerful English Government cannot protect you, and that enemy you will find among yourselves. Everything in this world must either grow or decay, and you and your families can be no exception to this great law of nature. Two roads are now before you. By following one of these roads, it is in the power of every one of you to improve his own estate, to make his ryots contented and happy, to make himself respected by high and low, by his own countrymen as well as by the English Government, and to take a large share in the administration and improvement of the country—a greater share when measured by its capacity for doing good than any minister of former sovereigns could boast.

All this power you may command by simply availing yourselves of those advantages of education and position which are within the reach of you all. But there is also a second road, and, by neglecting those advantages I have mentioned, it is also within your power to become in each generation smaller and less important men than your forefathers were; to see your lands and revenues slip from your grasp, or remain yours only in name; to see your power and influence usurped by others; to live unhonoured and die unlamented. If this be your lot, do not blame the Government under which you live, or any blind Fate, for be assured it is entirely your own fault for neglecting the great opportunities before you. I have spoken plainly and truthfully to you as became an old friend, whose life has been spent in the public service of this country, who earnestly desires your welfare, who may not again have an opportunity of speaking to you."

He had, however, one more opportunity. A year later he met the chiefs and Sirdars at a farewell Durbar, at which they presented his portrait to the Poona Town Hall. Amongst other topics, he pressed upon them the importance of the education and influence of their women.

"As you all know, the actual performance of a young chief rarely comes up to the wishes of his ministers and real friends, and the reason of this, as you also well know, is the almost entire absence of any education among the mothers and wives of the Sirdar's class.

"There are, I know, honourable exceptions, which are yearly becoming more numerous; but, as a body, you are well aware that the ladies of Sirdars are secluded—not according to your own ancient Hindoo usage, but according to a comparatively modern fashion, derived from the Mahomedans; and thus there is hardly a Sirdar's mother or wife who can do more than read or write, and but few who can even do that.

"A poor man's poverty may often force him to learn and to improve himself, but the son of a great or rich man has little chance of learning if his mother be ignorant or insensible to the value of education; and this is the reason why I would urge on you most strongly the education of

your wives and daughters, not only for the same reasons which apply to all female education, but as a matter of paramount importance to your order.

"There are many among you sufficiently well-informed to press forcibly on your less enlightened brethren a truth naturally distasteful to an unlettered military aristocracy. You can tell them how among the nations which now bear rule in every part of the earth, there is no instance of a class of nobles retaining its position without being superior in intelligence and education to the mass of the people, nor any instance of an educated nobility, the ladies of which are allowed to remain uneducated. Few men who have not been in Europe or America can fully estimate the influence which educated women possess in these continents. But you are all more or less aware of the great influence which many noble ladies, besides her Majesty the Queen, possess in England; and by these and many examples, you may satisfy your untravelled or unlettered fellow-Sirdars that they need not fear the influence of ladies educated as are the wives and mothers of our statesmen and soldiers."

CHAPTER XIII.

MASTERLY INACTIVITY.

The two Pensioners of the Bramshill Lodges—Relations with Affghanistan—Death of Dost Mahomed—Letter to Sir John Kaye—The Wahabees—Colonel Pelly in the Persian Gulf—Sir W. Merewether at Aden.

ON a Hampshire heath, one on each side of the entrance to a venerable park, and remote from any other habitations, stand two lodges, each tenanted by an old pensioner. A Crimean General, living in the neighbourhood, with a kindly feeling for old soldiers, had made the acquaintance of one of them, and used to leave his newspaper for him to read. One day the other pensioner presented himself and asked if he too might have a paper. The General suggested that the same paper might be passed on from one to the other; but the man seeming dissatisfied, he asked if they were on bad terms. "No, Sir William," was the answer, "we never had a difference; but living so near each other, and having no other neighbours, we avoid communicating or speaking for fear we should happen to fall out!"

The attitude of these two old soldiers towards each other is an exact parallel of that which, for a quarter of a century since the first Affghan War, had been pronounced by the dominant majority of the leading men in India to

be the right one to maintain towards their neighbours on the northern and north-western frontier. It sprang originally from a reaction against the policy of Lord Auckland's unfortunate intervention in Affghanistan in 1838, which had brought such fatal consequences. According to this school of Indian statesmanship, the ideal British empire in India should have a sharply defined boundary, enclosing annexed territory, within which the Government should be administered with the utmost attainable uniformity, and with the countries beyond which all intercourse was to be as much restricted as possible. An imaginary frontier-wall was to separate British territory from that of the outer barbarian, the Highlander or Central Asiatic, in whose friendships, quarrels, commerce, and behaviour generally we were to abstain as far as possible from taking part or concerning ourselves.

In an article in the *Edinburgh Review* * on Sir John Lawrence's foreign policy, known to be written by a prominent member of his Government, these views were advocated, and his foreign policy summed up and expressed by the words "masterly inactivity." The phrase was taken up by Lawrence's followers, and afterwards adopted, as far as it was understood, as an article of faith by the Liberal party in England. It was only natural that Sir Charles Wood's leaning should be in the same direction—that a Secretary of State for India, already overwhelmed and bewildered by the vast extent of his responsibilities, should be inclined to catch at any plausible generality, such as the "fickleness and faithlessness of most Orientals," † as a reason for checking the natural extension of British influence, in the illusory hope that to do so would diminish or prevent the increase of the

* *Edinburgh Review*, January, 1867.

† Sir Charles Wood to Sir B. Frere, April 18, 1863.

difficulties and responsibilities and expense of Indian Government.

Frere was by nature and creed incapable of accepting as proved a general and sweeping indictment for faithlessness and incapacity for friendship against any people or race on earth. He recoiled instinctively from a doctrine which implied and accepted a permanent attitude of suspicion and estrangement; it was diametrically opposed to his social, religious, and political faith. To proffer friendly offices, public or private, whenever need and occasion called for them, was the daily habit and occupation of his life; and his intense belief in the power for good of British influence and authority and civilization, led him to repudiate any attempt to assign hard and fast limits to their scope and exercise. His experience in Sind had convinced him that in dealing with frontier tribes there was in the long run no middle course between friendship and hostility. He and Jacob and Edwardes had proved that an alliance with them could be a real defence and a tower of strength in time of peril.

In a letter to Mr. J. W. Kaye, on the subject of his then recently published history, Frere writes:—

"August 20, 1865.

"The mistakes made by the Government of India in dealing with Dost Mahomed are still bearing bitter fruits; they are still persisted in in our dealings with his successors, and will yet work us woe in India.

"I believe the first advance of any kind made by the Affghans towards friendly intercourse with us subsequent to the annexation of the Punjab, was when one of the Candahar Sirdars asked for a safe conduct through Sind on his way to Mecca. I was then Commissioner in Sind, and John Jacob referred to me, inquiring what answer should he send? I applied through Lord Elphinstone for instructions from the Governor-General, pointing out the valuable opening thus afforded for a renewal of

neighbourly relations with the Affghans, and desiring Jacob, if the Sirdar appeared on the frontier before an answer arrived from Calcutta, to receive the Sirdar as he would any other gentleman of rank, and to tell him that all strangers were free to pass through Sind, or any other portion of British India, as long as they complied with the laws.

"This gave great offence to Lord Dalhousie; he asked if I had forgotten the misbehaviour of Dost Mahomed during the Punjab War, recounted at length his grounds of quarrel with the Dost, and directed that if the Sirdar made his appearance he should be detained, pending further orders. Luckily for us all, the Sirdar delayed his visit; and I had time to reply, pointing out that Candahar and Cabul were in effect at that time separate, if not hostile powers; that none of our causes of quarrel with the Dost ought in fairness to affect our relations with his brothers; and I dwelt on the inconveniences of our then condition of estrangement from our Affghan neighbours, and on the value of a good neighbourly understanding with them. Lord Dalhousie replied he had no doubt I meant well, but he adhered to the opinions he had already expressed. However, not long after, he authorized a different policy toward the old Ameer; but neither in the Dost's time, nor subsequently, have our dealings with the Affghans been such as the laws of really good neighbourhood would dictate, and you may rely on it, that we shall at no distant period pay heavily for our selfish and short-sighted policy." . . .

Towards the close of 1860 Captain Pelly arrived at Calcutta, having come from Teheran in Persia by way of Herat, Furrah, Kandahar, and Kelat, at that time a most perilous journey, and which he performed, without assuming any disguise, in his British uniform. He brought very important information, which, in Frere's opinion, proved it to be practicable to enter into closer relations with Affghanistan, and he hoped Pelly would have been sent on a mission thither with that object. But Lord Canning did not, Frere thought, give Pelly the credit he deserved for his enterprise, nor did he desire to employ him in the

matter. It was one of the few occasions on which Lord Canning's action, or inaction, was a matter of lasting regret to Frere.

Again, early in 1863, when war was impending between Dost Mahomed and his son-in-law Sultan Jan, supported by Persia, and the Dost was preparing for the siege of Herat, Frere thought mediation might have been offered with a fair chance of success.

He writes to Sir Charles Wood:—

"March 12, 1863.

"I quite agree with you about Herat as far as relates to the question of active interference, but I think we might have prevented some trouble to ourselves and much to our neighbours had we early in the day added the weight of our advice to the opinion of the Dost's sons and old servants and dissuaded him from the expedition. No one but the old man himself wanted to undertake it, for all thought it must hasten his end, and all who were waiting for the scramble, consequent on his death, felt they should be at a disadvantage if it occurred while he was away at Herat. A strong remonstrance from our Vakeel, backing the reluctance of his own people to see him committed to the siege, would any time before he passed Furrah have probably turned the scale. It is quite true that everything in Affghanistan is so unstable as to make it most unwise to meddle by any active interference; but this seems to me only to increase the necessity for a wise and temperate exercise of the influence which our proximity and immense power give to our advice and wishes. So exercised, the moral weight of the opinions expressed by the Governor-General of India would be very great; if, as they generally would be, conservative in their tendency, it would soon be felt that the man who quietly kept and enjoyed what he had got was the friend of the British, and that he who disturbed the public peace was their enemy. This is, I think, one of the few practical antidotes to the general insecurity and instability of everything Affghan, and not, I think, by any means a weak one, for every year of quiet would add to its power, till by degrees something like regular rules of succession and public right took the place of the present

reign of force. This is every way a matter of importance to us, for on the quiet of Affghanistan depend, in some degree, the peace, and in a greater degree the commerce of its neighbours, including Sind and the Punjab. You need not fear that the utmost freedom in expressing our opinions will either weaken their effect or involve us in any more active interference. I am convinced that the reverse is the case, and that as long as our principles were simply and honestly conservative, to keep things as they are, without trying to pull down one man or set up another, we might exercise a very great influence on the Affghans, with the best results to them and to us, and be much more secure against temptation to interfere actively than we can ever be while we affect a reserve and indifference which the Affghans do not believe to be real, and are sure to misinterpret. I would not now trouble you with all this, but similar occasions are always recurring, and I have always felt that we threw away great advantages and incurred great dangers by our reserve in dealing with the Affghans, and I pointed this out at great length to Lord Canning when Sir H. Rawlinson sent Colonel Pelly to Herat, and afforded an opportunity for putting the relations between Herat and the Dost on a footing which would have prevented this expedition."

He writes again to Sir Charles Wood :—

"May 22, 1863.

"With all my great respect for Sir J. Lawrence's opinion, I cannot agree with him about Herat. I advocate, as strongly as he does, 'absolute non-interference, unless we have reasons for doing so of our own.' But it seems to me we have such reasons in the present case—for at least offering advice and mediation, which is all I proposed. I would attempt no arrangements or engagements of any kind. I would simply give the weight of our influence and advice to the cause of peace, which seems clearly the best for Affghans and Persians, as well as indirectly for us. A continuation of hostilities can only serve the purposes of those powers who wish to see Persia and Affghanistan weakened, which is certainly not our interest.

"I would say to Persia, 'you have behaved very badly in this matter. You brought on hostilities by meddling and intriguing at Herat; you have no sort of claim on us

for our good offices, still, we will not refuse them, and as far as advising the Dost goes, for what seems to us his good, as well as yours, we will do so, and thus give you a fresh proof of the falsehood of the charge against us, that for our own selfish purposes we stir up strife and seek to make you weaken each other.'

"To the Dost I would hold just the same language as his old advisers and family have from the first held to him, and which is, in fact, the language of Affghan common sense. 'All this fighting with Herat is patricidal warfare. Victory or defeat will be equally disastrous to your family and nation. Sultan Jan is your son-in-law; his children are your grandchildren; he has been severely punished, and is now willing to submit and to hold Herat as your gift; accept his submission and pardon him.'

"All accounts agree that Sultan Jan would make any nominal formal submission which would save the Dost's honour and induce him to retire, leaving Sultan Jan in possession. The expedition has always been unpopular with all classes, and has been forced on by the old man's obstinacy, against the advice of all, even that of sons who hope to succeed him, and dread Sultan Jan as a formidable future rival. For they know the Dost may die any day, and that their own chances of succeeding him will be materially lessened by absence from Cabul or Candahar, which may, in such case, be seized by some one on the spot.

"I cannot think that we should stand badly if he neglected our advice. If he did so and failed to take Herat, his failure must strengthen our influence. If he succeeded we should be no worse off than all his sons and most trusted influential Sirdars, who have held the same language to him ever since he passed Furrah." . . .

A few days after this was written, Dost Mahomed took Herat by storm; and within a fortnight afterwards, on June 9th, 1863, he died. He left sixteen sons, no less than twelve of whom aspired to rule the whole or a part of their father's territory. Shere Ali had been named by the Dost as his successor, to the exclusion of his elder brothers Afzul and Azim Khan, and he was at first acknowledged by all the brothers Ameer of Affghanistan, and was recognized

as such by the British Government. But by the next spring Afzul and Azim were in revolt. For two years fighting went on with more or less intermission between the brothers, till in May, 1866, Shere Ali sustained a heavy defeat near Ghuznee. A report reached Calcutta that he had fled for refuge to Kelat, and Lawrence wrote to Malcolm Green as to the reception to be accorded to him. But the Kelat in question proved to be Kelat-y-Ghilzai in Affghanistan, not Kelat in Beloochistan. Shere Ali had no intention of quitting the country and giving up the game.

Frere writes to Lawrence three years after Dost Mahomed's death, on the same subject:—

"June 15, 1866.

"I am very glad you have allowed Malcolm Green to write to you. He is one of the stoutest-hearted, soundest-judging men I know, and thoroughly reliable in every way. . . .

"I wish I could agree with you that it is 'of very little importance to us who is ruler of Cabul and Candahar.' I confess that to me it seems a very vital question, and I would spare no pains to be on the best of terms with him, whoever he may be. I quite agree with you that we ought not to interfere in any way. But I hold it quite possible to have very intimate relations with such neighbours as the Affghans, and yet to give them the fullest assurance that we do not intend to meddle in any way in their affairs. Why should that which is perfectly easy in our dealings with France and with every European power be impossible with the Affghans? I mean, that they should feel we take the liveliest interest in their affairs, while they are assured that nothing can be further from our intentions than interfering in their domestic affairs, or attempting to influence their home politics." . . .

But Lawrence did not agree. He answers—

"June 28, 1866.

"When I expressed an indifference as to who might rule in Cabul or Candahar, I intended to convey my impression that such rulers could not be relied on by us; and that they

would not be really friendly towards us; and that they would, in the event of temptation, fall away from us, whatever might be their engagements to the contrary. No doubt it would be very desirable that the case was otherwise. I do not myself see how a truly friendly feeling can be established between the Affghans and the English Government in India, when we bear in mind the character of these people and the history of our connection with them during the last thirty years. So long also as we keep them out of Cashmeer and Peshawur, they will be ready to join any combination against us which may give promise of success."

To Sir George Clerk, Frere writes—

"September 8, 1866.

"Naomull writes to me from Kurrachee that there is great excitement all along the border in consequence of the unsettled state of Affghanistan, and the Russian advances towards Bokhara. He says that Afzul Khan and Shere Ali Khan will soon again try for the mastery, and whichever is worsted will certainly call in Russian aid. Meantime Shah Nawaz, the son of Sultan Jan, the late ruler of Herat, has been sent thither by Afzul Khan to try and regain it, and whether he succeeds or fails, he is likely to seek Persian aid, which stood his father in good stead. . . .

"I have also had two visits and a long letter from old Agha Khan (the Pir of the Khojahs), sure signs of stormy times to the North-West, for I never hear from or see him when all is quiet. He confirms all Naomull's news, and is equally urgent that we should interpose, though after a very different fashion from Naomull's.

"There is no danger of Lawrence interfering, but I see great risk of the present abortive efforts to appear unconcerned when our neighbour's house is on fire leading to some ill-judged, hasty action hereafter, and I wish that, instead of being forced to keep aloof and appear indifferent, our frontier officers were allowed to treat the Affghans with the same spirit of neighbourly frankness with which Jacob and his lieutenants have so entirely won the confidence of the Beloochees and Brahooes."

And to Lord Cranborne:—

"November 28, 1866.

"If we had really good military communications throughout India, and an outpost at Quetta, we might safely leave events to develop themselves. As it is, I fear we shall find, at no distant date, that the Sibylline leaves have been burning faster than we supposed, and that we shall have to do hurriedly and at vast cost, and therefore imperfectly, what we may now do leisurely and well."

And again to Lord Cranborne :—

"February 12, 1867.

"Sir Robert Napier has returned from Sind, greatly pleased with all he saw, and satisfied, I think, as to the soundness of our frontier system. He went with a camp of two thousand men over all the scene of his great namesake's mountain campaign, some sixty miles beyond our frontier, and was everywhere welcomed as a friend.

"I believe that the Government of India and the Punjab frontier officers no longer doubt that the tribes of the Sind frontier can be brought to permit and even like such visits from English officers, nor do they doubt that it would be well if the Affghans would do the same. But they are profoundly convinced that there are natural impediments on the Affghan frontier which do not exist elsewhere, or that human nature changes where the Sind frontier ends, and continues changed as far as the Punjab frontier extends.

"We have just had a reply from the Government of India to a letter we wrote on the subject of Quetta, couched in terms so peremptory, and almost prohibitory of discussion, that I felt further argument was almost precluded. I regretted it the more, because this is the second opportunity we have lately lost of putting our relations with the Affghans on a more neighbourly footing, without risk to ourselves, and with a good prospect of restoring peace and good government to them."

Seven years after this time, in 1874, occurred one of the periodical panics about the advance of Russia in Central Asia, in the direction of India, which drew from Frere, then a Member of the Indian Council, a statement of his views on Frontier Policy, expressed in a letter to Sir John

Kaye, Secretary to the Political Department of the India Office.

This letter was printed for confidential circulation amongst the Members of the Indian Council, upon whom it seems to have made a considerable impression at the time; but it was not made public till October, 1878, when, to the surprise of Frere, who was then in South Africa, it was printed nearly at length in the *Times*, and was most incorrectly taken as recommending the course of action which was then being carried out by Lord Lytton in Affghanistan. Though not written till long after he had left Bombay, it sums up and explains Frere's policy on the question when Governor there, and is therefore summarized and extracted here.

"Official politicians in India," the letter said (June 12, 1874), "seem now at last seriously alarmed, and there is much risk that, like all men, when they at last perceive a danger they have long been unable to recognize, they may rush in the wrong direction." Opinions had been expressed that a boundary must be named in Central Asia beyond which any advance by Russia must be made a *casus belli*.

To do this, Frere pointed out, would be impracticable. The Russians were impelled to advance by causes similar to those which had impelled the British advance from Calcutta to Peshawur. Their conquests in Central Asia, like ours in India, had on the whole been a benefit to the populations of the countries annexed.

Nevertheless the danger was, or might become at any time, very serious to the safety of India.

"Some of our greatest acquisitions were made in our own generation by men who came out sincerely determined to avoid extension of boundary, but the course of conquest was never stayed till we got to the barriers of the mountain regions which surround India on the landside. All this

was in spite of the most constant and positive orders from home, and the most sincere wish on the part of men at the head of affairs in India to obey these orders.

"It is the same with Russia, with this difference, that instead of public opinion at home being, as was the case in England, strongly and sincerely pronounced against further extension of territory, there are in Russia, as I need not tell you, two opposite political parties. Neither of them objects, on any moral ground, to extensions of territory; but one of them, including the Emperor himself and some of the best and most able financiers and enlightened politicians, is strongly opposed to further extension in Asia, on grounds of expediency. The great mercantile party of protectionists, many of the Russianized Germans, who are more Russian than the Russians, most of the military and the ultra-national politicians, on the other hand, are enthusiastic supporters of further schemes of conquest, and this party is by far the more popular and powerful.

"But the Russians have one source of impulse which moves them more powerfully than it does us, though we too feel something of it. I mean the religious crusading element. . . . To a modern religious Russian the prospect of a war with a Mahommedan or an idolatrous prince has the same aspect and excites the same feeling as a crusade did among religious Englishmen in the Middle Ages. I only mention this because I think it is one of the forces impelling Russia onwards, of which we take less account as a political force than it deserves. It is in many ways a great source of strength to her. So is the declared policy of the Russian Government to put down slavery wherever her influence extends, such slavery, I mean, as that prevalent among the Turcomans and throughout Central Asia. Contrast our feelings, or the feelings of intelligent Americans, when they heard that the slave-markets in Khiva and Bokhara were abolished, with what you and I felt when we ineffectually ground our teeth as we read of what poor Stoddart and Conolly were suffering, and we may have some faint idea of the national credit, the sense of duty performed, and the impulse to do more, which patriotic Russians feel when they consider what they are doing in Asia. . . .

"The result of all this is that Russia will go on, whether

her Government wish it or not, till something stops her; and what will stop her? Nothing that I can see except an impassable barrier, such as we found in the mountain chain of the Himalayas, or a political barrier, such as finding herself on a frontier which she cannot pass without fighting an equally powerful nation on the other side, and where that powerful nation is civilized like herself and able and willing to give her honest hearing and reasonable redress with regard to all frontier discussions and to require equal justice from her. . . .

"What, then, is the barrier which I would propose to raise to Russia's advance towards India? . . .

"Our policy hitherto has been not only stationary and nominally—though I think very imperfectly—defensive; it has also been purely negative. We are ready enough to say what we will not do, but all efforts by any of the other Asiatic powers concerned have hitherto failed to elicit from the Government, either here or in India, any declaration of what it will do under any given or conceivable combination of circumstances. This peculiarity in our policy will at once explain to any one who knows Orientals, or, in fact, to any one who knows mankind in general, the inherent weakness of our policy as compared with that of the Russians. . . . Orientals generally misunderstand our present inaction. They suspect some deep design, some secret understanding with Russia. If it is once understood that nothing will move us till the Russians appear on our frontier, we shall certainly hasten that even by a great many years. . . .

"What, then, ought to be the character of our action?

"Nothing, I believe, will be effectual to resist Russian progress towards India till we have British officers stationed on the Indian side of a well-defined frontier, exercising an effective control over the politics of the semi-civilized races on our side of such a border, and in constant frank diplomatic communication with Russian officers on the other side.

"But how is this to be effected without annexation or protectorate almost equivalent to annexation and supported by force?

"We must carry much further, and make more generally understood, the liberal, frank, and independent policy inaugurated by Lord Mayo. . . .

"We must not attempt to impose on the Ameer with any profession of disinterested regard for his welfare; we must let him see that we fully appreciate the danger which threatens ourselves as well as him by the Russian advance, and that we intend to stop all occasion for such advance in his direction, by assisting him so to govern Affghanistan that he shall give Russia no pretence for interference. . . .

"The views held on these subjects by most of our Punjab frontier officers are much sounder now than they were twenty years, or even ten years ago.

"But nothing can make up for the loss of such a noble school of frontier officers as John Jacob founded, and which the Government of India so persistently discouraged and ultimately abolished. . . .

"The active measures which seem to me essential for our present purpose are, first, to place an advanced post of our frontier army in the Khan of Kelat's territory at Quetta, sufficiently strong to prevent the place being carried till reinforcements can arrive from the Indus, between which and Quetta the communication should be improved, as far and as fast as practicable, to the foot of the Bolan, and throughout that pass. This would establish above the passes, and in the territory of a power bound by treaty to act in subordinate co-operation with us, an advanced post in an excellent position for watching Southern Affghanistan, and acting, if necessary, on the flank of whatever might threaten India from the Khyber Pass and Cabul. These measures require no diplomacy nor consultation with any other Power except the Khan of Kelat, and we have treaties and engagements with him which give us all the power we can require. A detachment from Jacobabad has frequently passed the summer in Quetta, and nothing more is necessary than to strengthen and provision such a post, and make it capable of permanent occupation.

"The railway for a hundred and fifty miles, from the Indus to the Bolan, would run over a level plain very similar to that over which, in Northern Bengal, a railway has just been made at the rate of a mile a day. Thence to Quetta the road may be easily and cheaply improved by keeping parties of pioneers at work on it, remembering that nothing more than a practicable road for artillery is needed.

"Secondly, well selected English agents should be placed at Cabul, Herat, and Candahar. I still retain my old predilection for military officers for such service; but they should be picked men, with good training in the scientific branches of their profession, hardy, active, and good linguists, and, above all, men of good temper and disposition, calculated to secure the confidence of the chiefs they have to deal with. Their policy must be strictly laid out for them; it must be one of entire abstinence from all meddling with the internal government of the country, of watchful vigilance as regards all that goes on, and actuated by a sincere desire to support the ruler of the country, actively and efficiently, as long as he maintained friendly relations with us, and dealt frankly and in a friendly spirit with the English Government regarding all matters of foreign policy.

"This need not be a costly proceeding, if we are careful to avoid the mistake of subsidizing the prince, so as to make him rely more on our treasury than on his own thrift and good management.

"But what if the Ameer should object to follow our advice? If the matter did not affect his foreign relations, he might be left to follow his own inclinations, but if it affected such a question as his relations with other powers than ourselves, I would give him clearly to understand that he must not count on our support unless he followed our advice. I would not break with him save in the last extremity, and after all hope of continuing friendly relations had disappeared; but I would clear for action, and give him unequivocally to understand that we held ourselves free to act as might seem best for our own interests, which were to give foreign powers no good ground for interference with him or us.

"If, as we are told, the Ameer already evinces dislike and distrust towards our government, we cannot too soon come to a clear understanding with him as to whether he means peace and effectual alliance or the reverse. If peace, then I would let no small obstacle hinder our placing a British officer, not necessarily in the capital, but in a position to judge for himself, and to report to us all that goes on at Cabul. . . .

"In considering this Central Asian question, it never seems to me that, either those who are for active measures

on our north-west frontier, or their opponents the advocates of 'masterly inactivity,' fairly appreciate the real character of the danger to be guarded against, or the respective kinds of strength of the parties concerned.

"What is our danger in India from Russian advancement? People talk of a Russian invasion of India. If this means an expedition, like the expeditions to Khiva and Bokhara, formally prepared by the Russian Government with Russian forces, and marching from the Russian frontier to attack us, the danger is perhaps a remote one. No Russian statesman in his senses would, as matters now stand, dream of attempting such a thing for a long time to come. . . . So far I quite agree with the 'masterly inactivity' advocates, and I have no doubt whatever of the entire sincerity of all Russian statesmen and soldiers of judgment when they disclaim any idea of such an invasion of India for their own generation. But the danger I apprehend is not of this kind. . . .

"If we suppose Affghanistan only so far Russianized that Russian travellers freely move about the country, that Russian officers and men, not necessarily in the pay of the Russian Government, but deserters, possibly, or vagabonds from Russia, drill the Ameer's troops, cast his cannon, coin his rupees, and physic him and his subjects, what would be the effect in India? Can any man in his senses, who knows anything of India, doubt that the effect now, and for many years to come, must be to disquiet every one in India except that great majority of the cultivators who will go on cultivating without talking politics till the crack of doom? Every Englishman, from the Governor-General downwards, will be disquieted; they will feel that a great foreign power has almost as much to say to the proceedings of all the troublesome classes as the Viceroy and his English officials. Every prince and chief will see in the Russians a possible alternative claimant for empire in India, all the disaffected, dangerous, and criminal classes will be on the *qui vive*, ready to stir at a moment's notice, and all the millions who still have some martial spirit left will furbish their swords, and believe that another era of fighting and fair contest for martial renown and plunder is at hand. All these elements may be stirred into strife any moment by a Russian proclamation issued at Cabul, or even by a false report of one, for it is not necessary

that the report should be true to set some of these restless elements in motion.

"Now this danger, to be reasonably apprehended from a Russian Minister established at Cabul, and Russian subjects quietly permeating Affghanistan, is a danger which is never many weeks removed from the present time. I have no doubt that the good feeling of the existing Government in Russia would prevent their taking any steps towards it if we seriously remonstrated with them at the present moment; but we must recollect that the more material part of such a step may be taken at any moment by a daring Russian frontier commander who chooses to run the risk of formal disavowal and recall, and that once taken, the step would be, or might be said by the Russians to be, irrevocable. . . .

"This, it seems to me, would be the case if a Russian Minister were established either formally or informally at Cabul, and friendly relations prevailed between Russians and Affghans, while we are in the present state of apparent peace in Europe. But how would it be, if we were engaged in any discussions such as have occupied our diplomatists during the last ten years, about Danish or Cuban questions, or Luxemburg questions, or Spanish or Swiss or Italian questions, in which Russia wished us either to support her actively, or in which she desired to neutralize our voice against her? She would then only have to instruct her Minister at Cabul to show his teeth, to hold language insulting or offensive to us, and to get the Ameer to make ostentatious preparations for war. If, subsequently, peace were patched up in Europe, the Minister might be recalled in satisfaction of our remonstrances, but, meantime, what would be the effect on India? Should we be able to withdraw a single regiment or gun? Should we not be probably called on to increase our Indian army, and get ready for war? All this, remember, may be done without our actually breaking with Russia.

"But the case would be far more serious if matters went a little further. I have never seen any difficulty in a Russian agent impelling upon us in India hordes of Asiatic barbarians, more or less disciplined by renegade Russian and Indian soldiers, many of them deserters from our own army, followed by a vast train of undisciplined marauders, such as followed Nadir Shah and Ahmed Shah

almost within living memory. When people doubt the possibility of such a move, and talk of want of commissariat, etc., they speak in entire ignorance of the mode in which an Asiatic marauder, or even a regularly paid soldier of an Asiatic power, habitually travels. Of course such a force would be met as soon as it appeared in India, and we may hope it would be defeated, if not annihilated. But what will take place in the mean time? How much expense will be incurred in repelling them? How many outbreaks will occur in India itself? And who can tell what will happen when once the rolling-stone is put in motion? And all this, it seems to me, may be done without Russia committing herself to a clear *casus belli*, or being in any way actively unfriendly. . . .

"You will naturally ask what is the remedy I propose for this state of things, and I will briefly state the principle on which I would proceed. First of all, I would endeavour to meet the danger, as far as possible, from our own frontier, without placing any hostile power between us and our Indian base. Some of these measures I have already described. They involve the establishment of a perfect Intelligence Department of European officers in Affghanistan, and, if possible, a preponderating influence there, but I would not attempt the subjugation of the country nor its military occupation, because I believe that we can effectually keep out all rivals by supporting a national Government. Hence, I would not attempt to hold Herat by a force of our own troops, at least not until we had tried the effect of such measures as Todd and Pottinger and Rawlinson proved could be so effectual in like cases. I would not attempt to enforce union of the Affghan States under a single ruler; I would not oppose such union if the ruler seemed capable of effecting it; I would give him the best advice I could on the subject, but avoid committing myself to support an unpopular or imbecile candidate for united Affghan Empire. I believe if we dealt candidly and frankly with the Affghans, as Metcalfe and Clark dealt with the Sikhs, we might maintain supreme influence among them as long as we can command a succession of such men. But you must trust them largely, and remember that their expenditure cannot be conducted like that of an overseer of a Union Workhouse under a vigilant Board of Guardians." *

* With the letter Frere printed and confidentially circulated—leaving

Lawrence wrote a Memorandum in reply to this letter, maintaining and defending his foreign policy, in the course of which he says—

"Though I quite admit that the approach of Russia towards our Indian possessions is fraught with future trouble and danger, I do not see that we can do much more than watch events for the present, and be guided by circumstances as they arise. . . .

"The occupation of Quetta seems to me to be an unwise step, both in a political and military point of view."

In another quarter also, the question was now arising whether the British Empire was to maintain an attitude of "masterly inactivity," or to execute its mission and accept its responsibilities outside as well as within its own borders.

At least as long ago as the days of Solomon ships were sailing and trade being carried on between Eastern Africa and South Western Asia. The breath of the steady trade-winds, the conformation of the East African coast, indented with frequent harbours, and the fertility of the land, unbroken by deserts, down to the shore, render the voyage

out the parts personal to himself—a letter from Sir Henry Green, in the course of which he said—

"October 26, 1874.

"Your Paper ought to be printed in gold letters, framed, and placed opposite the chair of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs at the Foreign Office, and at each change of Government the Foreign Secretary for the time being should be compelled to copy it until he knew it by heart. More than this, the whole nation should know it. We should then possess a real Foreign Policy in Central Asian questions, and *there would be no fear of war with Russia.* She would know our Policy, and shape hers accordingly. Russia does not want war any more than we do, but we are both drifting towards one to the delight of the uncivilized world. Every Mahomedan, who is longing for an opportunity to raise the standard of his creed and deluge some of the fairest parts of the world with blood, is praying to see two of the most powerful Christian nations tearing each other to pieces." . . .