

by the years of disarmament and economic stringency that it could not risk being brought into the open conflict which severe and legitimate action against Italy's aggression would be bound to entail. Therefore they were opposed to any resolute policy.

Another school of thought argued that to annoy Italy would be—as the phrase went—“to drive her into the arms of Germany”, and saw in this plea reason enough to submit to Mussolini's high-handedness. There were others who saw a practical political escape-ladder in what came to be known as the Hoare-Laval arrangements.

In Geneva there was a deep and widespread resentment and sense of humiliation at the easy success which apparently attended this shameless policy of aggression, on *condotteori* lines, with a twentieth-century technique in international relations and propaganda.

I saw my friend Mr. Eden and I said to him: “If you want international politics to have a foundation of justice, if you want the League really to be what it is supposed to be, if you want to give it a chance to grow into a real society of nations, deciding matters of right and wrong among themselves, then here is an outstanding case which must be tackled. Here there is no valid excuse of any kind. There is no large Italian minority in Ethiopia deprived of their independence or their civic and economic rights. Here is a case of open and inexcusable aggression. And the remedy is in our hands. *All we need do is shut the Suez Canal.* Or if we must have sanctions, let them be applied to oil as well, and thus make them a reality and put some teeth into them. But I still think the best solution is a simple, unanimous resolution by the League to close the Canal.”

Instead we found ourselves passing resolutions in favour of sanctions, which I found silly and futile. Yet ineffective as we knew them to be we had to vote in support of them; for if we did not, we would seem to be condoning Italy's aggression, but the only sanction which would have achieved anything—the sanction of withholding petrol—was barred. I could foresee that it was inevitable from that moment onwards, that there would come a bitter day when those of us who had once held such high hopes for the League would have to go to the Assembly and, with misery in our hearts, ask for the removal of sanctions. I saw

too—and I have no hesitation in admitting it—that, once the moment came for us to submit to the Italian conquest of Ethiopia, it would be much better for us to swallow our pride and our anger and do it with a good grace.

Here, then, was an important phase in the development of the policy and practice of appeasement. Here was an instance in which appeasement and conciliation of the aggressor were morally wrong; but once the Great Powers had appeased on this issue—a thoroughly bad and unjustified issue—there would follow the inevitable consequence that sooner or later we should have to stomach a new dose of appeasement, either in the matter of Japan in China, where there were loopholes both historical and juridical, or in the matter of some sort of German aggression, where there would be the pleas of oppressed minorities, of plebiscites demanding reunion, and a whole specious façade of legality and morality.

Was it, however, entirely specious? This was the grave and conscientious doubt that complicated relations with Germany both for individual nations and for the collective Assembly of the League—almost as soon as the Versailles Treaty was signed. Earlier in this chapter I have referred to the inevitable changes in mood and outlook towards Germany which occurred in opinion-forming and influential circles among the victorious Powers, most notably in Britain and to a lesser extent in the United States and Italy.

Now in general I greatly admire Britain and the British people, but my deepest admiration and respect I reserve for one abiding characteristic which they possess—the existence in a substantial and usually influential part of the population of an acutely sensitive conscience, which prevents them accepting as a national responsibility any unjust or violent act or policy, however advantageous it may seem to the country's material welfare. No doubt in British history there have been phases of ruthlessness, violence, and conquest; but has any healthy and virile race not passed through such phases in its long national life? But it is fundamental to the British character and the British way of life that this voice of conscience is always heard; it may at the outset be still and small, and belong only to a few, but in the end by it the majority has been persuaded. The naked code of the harsh struggle for existence, with its assertion that life is only maintained by the survival of the fittest, must

in the British view be ameliorated—as the great Victorian scientist, Professor T. H. Huxley, said in a famous speech towards the end of his life—by a still higher and nobler instinct. This quality of conscience has been far more persistently manifested among the British people and their cousins in the United States than among any other great nation that I know.

Among most of the human race this scrupulous conscience about external events is a personal and individual matter. In England it has long been a national possession; and this is true also of the United States. The cause of this phenomenon lies, I believe, in the influence of the Quakers; always numerically a fairly small minority, they have from the nineteenth century onwards exerted a moral and spiritual influence out of all relation to their numbers. Through their connections with other nonconformist groups this influence, even in the era of Britain's greatest industrial and commercial expansion at home and overseas, was diffused throughout the whole population, and the persistence and strength of its effect on British policy and actions have been remarkable.

During the 1920s the man who voiced these conscientious scruples about Germany most frequently and forcefully was Lloyd George. In the Press the campaign gathered strength and influence over the years, and it focused especially on the way in which Germany had been deprived of her colonies. J. L. Garvin and others made eloquent pleas for the return to Germany of one or more of the lost colonies. The British mind was never closed to the practical possibilities, as well as the abstract virtue, of such a step.

Now, if in Britain there were these conscientious doubts about the wisdom of maintaining the *status quo* which had been imposed by the Peace Treaty, Germany's view of Versailles from the beginning was that it was a *Diktat*, which must be circumvented, challenged, and finally overthrown by every means available to the German people. Germans in general neither believed that they alone had made the war, nor that they were in fact defeated. As soon, therefore, as Germany returned to the comity of civilized nations—long before the rise of Hitler—her attitude on all major questions should have been warning enough. Even the terms of the Locarno Treaty, for all the fervour and optimism with which they were acclaimed, were explicit only about the renunciation

of war as a means of settling disputes in the West; German claims *vis-à-vis* Poland were left expressly undefined.

Not long after Locarno, Lord D'Abernon, the great British Ambassador in Berlin, who with his beautiful wife had long been among my dearest and closest friends, was staying in Monte Carlo when Stresemann came there. Lord D'Abernon asked me to meet Stresemann at a luncheon at the Hotel Metropole, at which besides the three of us the only other person present was Stresemann's secretary. Stresemann did not beat about the bush. He held that the post-war period had witnessed the establishment of certain general principles: the freedom of all European peoples to unite if they so desired, and the right to self-determination of "colonies", racial minorities separated from their mother countries. He said that these principles had been applied to Yugoslavia, Italy, and Czechoslovakia; and now, he argued, the implication of Locarno was that they must be extended to Germany by peaceful means. Locarno had fully and finally rectified the injustice of Germany's annexation of Alsace-Lorraine in 1871; henceforth Germany had no further claims in the West of Europe. Stresemann made no threats, and his arguments were based on grounds of justice and fair play.

"Rectification" was indeed the idea which obsessed Germany's statesmen and diplomats for years. At Geneva they canvassed it in and out of season. I recall from my own experience at least one instance of its being pushed forward regardless of the appropriateness of either time or place: a big official reception, with everyone in full evening dress, a stiffly formal occasion, when M. Tardieu, then leader of the French delegation to the Assembly was, in full public view, relentlessly tackled by his opposite number on the German side.

The failure of the Disarmament Conference was an opportunity which the Germans exploited. In the thesis that the Versailles Treaty had been intended to be a step towards general and progressive disarmament among the nations, and that the Allies had broken the undertakings which they had then given, they found an excuse to rearm.

From 1933 onwards Hitler merely shouted what his democratic and non-revolutionary predecessors had often said before, not in shy whispers but in ordinary conversational tones. There was

nothing particularly new in the substance of his demands; what was novel was the arrogant, aggressive, and violent way in which he made them. His claims were as vague and as menacingly undefined as theirs had been; but he also made certain quite specific pronouncements. The last thing he wanted, he said, was another war. He would shed no more German blood. The German people had not recovered from the appalling bloodshed from the First World War. Such claims as he made, he said, were humble and reasonable. In the autumn of 1937 I myself went to Berlin and saw him, not at the suggestion of the British Foreign Office, but with their full knowledge of what I was doing. By this time he had a fairly detailed list of demands: that an Austro-German Anschluss should be permitted, if a plebiscite of the Austrian people showed a majority to be in favour of such a union; that the relations between the Czechs and the German-speaking community in the Sudetenland should be similar to those between Great Britain and the Irish Free State; and that Germany should have the right to a Colonial Empire, if not in the same territories as before then in their equivalent elsewhere. He held that Germany had a moral claim to Tanganyika because African soldiers had fought valiantly on the German side, and therefore German rule must have been popular with them. He made no threat of going to war on this issue.

Six months later the whole picture had changed sharply. The Nazis had marched into Austria, and Hitler had been rapturously acclaimed in his native town of Linz and in Vienna. The Sudeten problem was no longer remote or academic. In the early summer of 1938 a major crisis occurred; Europe buzzed with rumours of a large-scale German mobilization along the Czechoslovak frontier; over a tense week-end statesmen and officials were anxiously at work in embassies and foreign ministries. The crisis passed without a decisive flare-up, but it had indicated the depth and the malignancy of the disease from which Europe was suffering. Mr. Eden had resigned from the Foreign Office, and had been succeeded by Lord Halifax, the former Viceroy. However, the Prime Minister, Mr. Neville Chamberlain, exercised a vigilant eye over foreign affairs; he who—quite justly—had described the League's policy of sanctions against Italy as "midsummer madness", strove now with energy and sincerity to effect a practical easement of the

difficulties and the dangers which beset Europe. He sought, by finding specific solutions to specific problems, to build anew, if necessarily brick by brick, a new structure of peace. The grievances of the Sudeten Germans were one such specific problem.

Konrad Henlein, the Nazi leader and spokesman in the Sudetenland, visited England that summer and put his case to leading British statesmen. At Mr. Chamberlain's request and with the agreement of the Prague Government, Lord Runciman, a leading member of the Liberal Party, an ex-Cabinet Minister of unblemished reputation and with a long record of success as a negotiator on both the political and economic front, headed a small mission to Czechoslovakia in order to investigate the whole problem of the Sudeten Germans' future, and if possible to recommend a solution. Apart altogether from any military threat, Lord Runciman's mission was in no doubt as to what the result of a plebiscite in the Sudetenland would be.

A strong and influential current of opinion was running in England in favour of a radical but peaceful, just, and permanent settlement of Germany's demands. Among those most closely concerned in the effort to achieve such a settlement was an old and intimate friend of my own. By a coincidence, two of Britain's outstanding Ambassadors in Berlin have been my dear and valued friends. I have already referred to Lord D'Abernon, whom I had known well since the early 1900s. Now the British Ambassador was Sir Nevile Henderson. He and I had first met, and had struck up a warm and lasting friendship, when he was a comparatively junior official in the British Embassy in St. Petersburg in 1912. In Paris a few years later he and I were both members of the small, well-to-do, predominantly American, set of agreeable, literary, artistic, sporting, and cultured folk, whom I have mentioned earlier; and later again we had been in touch in Egypt. A quarter of a century after our first encounter he had reached the peak of his career as a diplomat, charged—as his own frank autobiographical record¹ has disclosed—with what could have been a uniquely important responsibility. He and I met several times after he had gone to Berlin. He assured me that—having seen for himself, on a visit to Carlsbad and Marienbad, that sentiment there was overwhelmingly pro-German—he was convinced that a fair

¹ *Failure of a Mission*, by Sir Nevile Henderson.

plebiscite would reveal a large majority in favour of unity with Germany.

Almost all the advice to which the British Cabinet hearkened was on similar lines. The bulk of the Conservative Party supported the Cabinet. So did the City. In the Press, the most powerful and influential support for a just and equitable settlement of Germany's demands—and of the demands of the people in the Sudetenland themselves—came from *The Times*. This great newspaper, in its recently published history of itself, has revealed with remarkable candour and forthrightness the part which it played in the whole Munich crisis. Contrary to a belief that has been widely held in Britain and abroad there was no prompting by the Government of the attitude that *The Times* adopted. Geoffrey Dawson, the Editor, and Robin Barrington-Ward, his assistant and eventual successor—both of whom are now dead—had themselves, by utterly independent processes of reasoning and judgment, come to the conclusion that it was not only politic, but just and fair, to seek to secure, if necessary by far-reaching concessions, a settlement with Germany, and they hoped that such a settlement would prevent the outbreak of a war.

There has of late been a curious shift of emphasis among those who defend Munich. It is fashionable to argue (as a correspondence in the *Daily Telegraph* in the summer of 1953 demonstrated) that Munich was justified not on moral grounds, but on military grounds, as a strategic and logistic necessity imposed by Britain's weakness on land and sea and most of all in the air. This, I think, can be summed up as the "Munich-bought-much-needed-time" school of thought. This is a *post hoc* thesis shaped to fit the pattern of subsequent events. It was not the argument which was employed at the time. Then the case for Munich as I heard it stated, by members of the Government and by other champions of the settlement, and with all sincerity by myself, was propounded as a moral question and ran as follows: would Great Britain be justified in going to war to prevent the Germans of Czechoslovakia from declaring their choice by plebiscite, and in consequence to compel them to remain under Czech rule?

Looking back on it all now, I suppose that I was subconsciously influenced in favour of the idea of separating the Germans from the Czechs in the regions in which they were in a majority, by my

close personal connection with and understanding of the Muslim-Hindu issue in India, which afforded, on a much larger scale, an almost incredibly exact analogy. Here in miniature was what was to happen nearly a decade later in India. Konrad Henlein played at the time (though history was later to submerge him entirely) the decisive role which, in the Pakistan-Bharat issue, was Jinnah's.

Whatever the subconscious background to my conscious thought then, I had no doubt where I stood. At Geoffrey Dawson's invitation I wrote a *Times* leader-page article in unstinted praise of the agreement with which Mr. Chamberlain returned—in triumph and to a rapturous welcome, let it be remembered—from his last visit to Germany. I stand before history therefore as a strong, avowed supporter of Munich. And now, all these years later, after all the violent and troublous happenings since then, I say without hesitation that I thank God that we did not go to war in 1938. Apart altogether from any highly debatable question of military preparedness or the lack of it, if Great Britain had gone to war in 1938, the doubt about the moral justification of the decision would have remained for ever, and doubt would have bred moral uncertainty about the conduct and the conclusion of the war. In the perspective of history Britain would be seen to have gone to war, not on a clear-cut, honourable, and utterly unavoidable issue, but in order to maintain the *status quo* and to prevent a plebiscite by which a regional racial majority might seek to be united with their brothers by blood, language, and culture.

An easy haze of forgetfulness enfolds many of the details of that period. An important, but frequently ignored, part of the Munich settlement as it was negotiated by Mr. Chamberlain was that there should be a plebiscite in doubtful areas in Czechoslovakia where the two races were mixed. In the subsequent turmoil of events this important provision was forgotten, and the plebiscite never happened; perhaps it can be argued that its result would any way have been a foregone conclusion.

Perhaps; but I merely know now that I, like many others in that autumn of 1938, had the illusion that we were indeed going to have "peace in our time". Neville Chamberlain, who had brought this about, was our hero, and for a short time he was adulated as few statesmen have ever been before or since.

It was a tragically brief period. Hitherto Hitler had—whatever methods he had used to attain his ends—based his claims on the principle of self-determination as laid down in the Peace Treaties and in the constitution of the League of Nations. In the spring of 1939 however he ripped off the veil of respectability. His forces entered what remained of Czechoslovakia, and the country was termed a “protectorate” of the Reich, and Baron von Neurath—a survivor from the pre-Nazi era—was sent to Prague to rule as Protector a country which had indeed been annexed and totally subjugated.

This destroyed in a single stroke the whole moral basis of Germany's case before history, and it united in a common resolution many who, in 1937-8, had held very different views. There was now no doubt, there were now no questionings. It was perfectly obvious to everyone—even to those who, a year before, had been the stoutest supporters of Munich—that Hitler's war in 1939 was a deliberate act of aggression. However, it was not only Hitler's war. The terrible fact is that it was the German people's war. This time the allocation of blame is correct. In the vast majority the German people were with Hitler in his attempt either to impose his “New Order”, which was to last for a thousand years, or to bring all European civilization crashing down in ruin with him in a final Wagnerian climax.

It is true that there were attempts to assassinate Hitler. But the only one that got beyond vague talk was the *coup* of 20th July 1944, which was the work of a group of senior Army officers, and which very nearly succeeded. Even this effort—despite the sincere patriotism, the dignity, and the courage under torture of the men involved—was not made until the Nazis' defeat was a certainty. Not one of the generals raised a finger in 1939, nor in 1940 or 1941 when the Axis straddled the world. It needed the imminence of total defeat to convert them. If a genuine and consistent sense of responsibility had animated them, they would have plotted not to avert the consequences of the war in 1944-5, but to have prevented the war breaking out in 1939.

Someone may say: “A *coup* by a handful of soldiers would not have helped in 1939; the German people would have gone to war all the same.”

If that is so—if offered all they demanded, the German people

deliberately chose war instead of peace, aggressive conquest instead of shared prosperity—it is the most complete condemnation of Germany, the most complete justification of every act of retribution inflicted on her—the cutting off from the East, the loss of territory, the destruction of her cities.

The argument may be continued a stage further: “What about Danzig? That was a German city—why wasn't the principle of the plebiscite applied there?”

The answer is that Germany never wanted, never asked for an honest plebiscite in raising the Danzig issue or in any of her claims on Poland. When Ribbentrop, Hitler's Foreign Minister, made his formal statement of those claims, how did he do it? Instead of taking any of the normal steps by which negotiations are ordinarily initiated, he summoned my friend, Sir Neville Henderson, to witness a scene as tragic as it was futile. Rapidly and harshly, in German, he read his ultimatum to the Ambassador, in the neurotic yet reckless way in which a criminal tries to arrange an alibi. He turned away abruptly without even handing Henderson the document to let him read it. It was therefore as a criminal's alibi that Henderson interpreted it. The German mood in 1939 was a mood of criminal folly and gambler's pride. To allege now that this was Hitler's war, the Nazis' war, the generals' war, the war of a handful, is an evasion of the truth. This was a war of the German people, for which the overwhelming majority of them must be held responsible, particularly the governing classes.

Is there a moral? Is there an explanation? I have come to believe this about the Germans: that in spite of all their great qualities, their ability, their capacity for hard work, their discipline, their intelligence, and their passion for education, they are afflicted with a romantic, self-immolatory streak in their character which is never satisfied with mere success. Perhaps the Second World War was fought because other nations forgot about Wagner.

After 1870 Bismarck said again and again, “We are satisfied.” Surely after 1938 that is what, in realistic terms, the German leaders and people should have said. Thinking in those terms, Neville Chamberlain believed that he had bought peace in our time. Instead, less than a year later, he was saying in a sad, grave voice: “It is the evil things we fight against.” Why? Was it not that Wagnerian, death-desiring streak which drove an allegedly

civilized race into the most blatantly aggressive war ever launched? At least now no one on the Allied side can have a single twinge of conscience, a single doubt that we were justified in fighting. This was a righteous war.

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My years of work at Geneva did not, I am glad to think, go unrecognized. In 1937 I was unanimously elected President of the League of Nations. When that year's session concluded I was asked to continue to hold the Presidency for another year, until just before the opening of the 1938 session. This was a rare honour and a responsibility, for mine would have been the duty of summoning a special session and presiding over it, had one been found necessary.

My work in this international field, and its crown and climax in my year as President of the League, had especially delighted my beloved mother. When I first went to Geneva she was over eighty, and she followed my work there with unflagging interest. Each year that I went to India we talked together as fully and as frankly about this as we had throughout my life shared our interests, our joys and our sorrows. For a very long time she retained her health, all her faculties, her keen zest for life and all its concerns, whether public and political or family and domestic. When the 1937 session of the Assembly ended I went to my home in the South of France, with no reason to believe that my mother's health—she was by then in her eighty-eighth year—was causing any serious anxiety. Nor indeed was it, for she was maintaining her accustomed tranquil and happy way of life.

She had seen both my sons, Aly and Sadruddin, the latter of whom, as a little boy, was a special joy and comfort to her, both when she came to Europe, and during a summer which he and his mother spent with her in the Lebanon. Sadruddin, too, bore the name of my elder brother who had died in infancy, and this particularly rejoiced my mother's heart. She did not see her great-grandchildren, Aly's two boys, Karim and Aryn, but she knew all about them and she chose both their names, the younger bearing that of her brother who died as a young man in the 1880s. She had, as I have recorded, been present at my first Jubilee, and had been made especially happy by the congratulatory telegram

sent by Lord Wigram, on behalf of King George V, just before the news of the King's death cut short our celebrations. Eager, affectionate, pious, alert to every new happening and new interest, my mother in her last years was someone who radiated a sense of joy and goodness among all who knew her.

It was at the end of 1937 that I had a cable from India saying that she had been taken seriously ill and bidding me hasten to come and see her. I flew to India at once, in the fastest aircraft of those times, which took three and a half days to reach Bombay.

My mother had retained all her life the habit of a Turkish bath. In each of our houses in India we had a regularly equipped Turkish bath, with dry, properly heated alcoves, with the correct water system, and with as its climax a hot pool and a small and very cold pool. My mother had a regular bath once a week, with all its traditional accompaniments of Turkish and Persian massage; she had a manicure and a pedicure, and in the Eastern fashion she had her hair dyed with henna. Coming from her bath one day in November she had a stroke; she recovered consciousness but thereafter her mental faculties were impaired and her memory lost, except for brief periods of clarity and vision.

She was at our house at Malabar Hill. Her doctor—incidentally a descendant of one of my grandfather's original followers from Iran, who had become a member of the Indian Medical Service—warned me that I must expect to find a great change in her. I was surprised to find that her physical health seemed excellent, but the mental breakdown—except for the moments of lucidity which I have just mentioned—was almost complete. I spent almost all my time with her; and it was a great joy when occasionally she fully recognized me and talked to me.

All her long life my mother had been animated by one simple, sincere desire; that, when the time came, she should die and be buried on Muslim soil, by which she meant a land ruled by a free, independent, and sovereign Muslim government. To this was knit one more longing, that in death she should lie beside my father, whom she had dearly and deeply loved, and for whom her mourning from the moment of his death more than fifty years before, had been as profound, as durable, and as touching as Queen Victoria's for her beloved Prince Albert.

As soon as I could, therefore, I made preparations to have my

mother taken to Iraq, where an independent Muslim government ruled, and where my father's body rested at Nejef near Kerbela. There were obviously considerable difficulties and problems about her journey thither. Medical advice ruled out air travel, though I have always believed that my mother, in spite of the various stops that the two-day journey to Baghdad would have involved, would have stood it better than the sea trip. However, it was by boat that she went to Basra and thence by train to Baghdad. I had been to Cairo in the meantime, and I flew back to Baghdad to find her at the house of a cousin of mine, Aga Mustafa Khan, close by the holy shrine of Kadhamin.

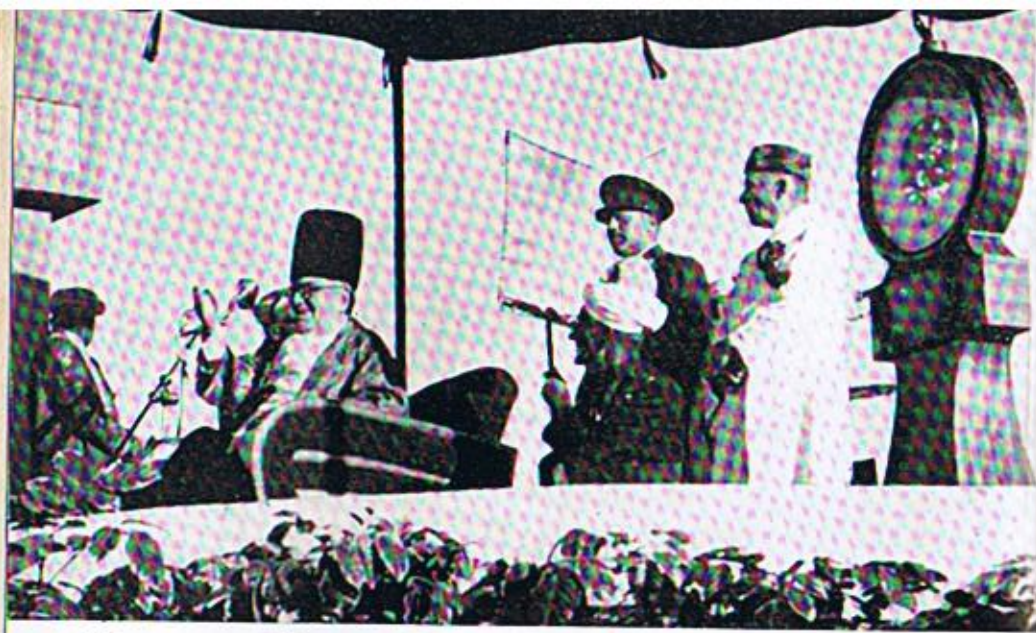
A few minutes after I reached her bedside, her eyes opened, and she recognized me. Then in the way that all true Muslims would ask, who seek to follow the Prophet's example and attain a safe and quiet journey from the midst of the living, she achieved peace and happiness and that final "Companionship-on-High" for which all yearn. In accordance with Ismaili tradition I did not accompany her body to its last resting place, but certain nephews and cousins laid her lovingly beside my father, and they were—as she had long and ardently desired—finally reunited.



The Aga Khan and Mr. Charles Chaplin meet at the 1953 Cannes Film Festival

Mr. Oliver Lyttelton, the Colonial Secretary, chats with the Aga Khan during a party given to several hundred Ismaili Muslims in London in July 1953





February 1954. The Aga Khan is weighed against platinum during the celebrations at Karachi marking his 70 years as Imam

On safari in East Africa with the Begum Aga Khan



CHAPTER XII

THE WAR YEARS. THE PARTITION OF INDIA

THE outbreak of the Second World War meant for me the shattering of the hopes of a lifetime. The great Palace of the League of Nations at Geneva, which I had opened, was deserted and shuttered. Its emptiness and its silence were sharply symbolic. However, it was in Switzerland that I found myself in those late summer and early autumn days of 1939 when Hitler's armies swept over Poland, and Britain and France, for the second time in a generation, went to war against an aggressive and conquest-hungry Germany.

Although later in the war, when I was permanently resident in Switzerland, the Swiss Government—in the difficult and delicate conditions of the time—had to ask me to refrain from political activity of any kind, that provision was not in force in September 1939. I was able, therefore, to address manifestoes to my followers everywhere bidding them give all the support and help of which they were capable to Britain and the British cause. There was, however, no occasion for diplomatic or political activity on my part such as I had undertaken in the First World War. No great Muslim Power was involved, as the Ottoman Empire had been involved. There was no Caliph; there was no proclamation of a *jihad*. My duties and my responsibilities were no more and no less than those of any other private citizen.

I had at that time a considerable number of horses in training and at stud. In the belligerent countries racing on any scale was obviously off for the duration of the war and probably for a long time afterwards. However, in 1939 Italy was not a belligerent. It occurred to me that I might be able to negotiate a deal which would not be unhelpful to the Italian Government and—if I

made a profit as I hoped to do—would supply me with a considerable sum to invest in British War Loans. With my wife, therefore, I went to Florence, and offered to sell all my horses to the Italian Government. I found that my offer had considerable support among people of standing, particularly those who wanted Italy to stay out of the war; Ciano himself, I have since discovered, was in favour of it. However, at the highest level, and on the edge of completion, the deal was forbidden by Mussolini himself.

To me this was a clear indication of Mussolini's intentions, for in addition to the large sum which I asked, I imposed two conditions, the money was to be paid immediately, but the horses were not to be delivered in Italy until after the end of hostilities.

Before I made this approach to the Italian Government, I had offered my stallions and mares to the British National Stud. In those days, I ought perhaps to point out, my son Aly had no share in the ownership of my stables, and I was therefore at liberty to do exactly what I liked without consulting anyone else. My terms in this offer were, however, very different from those which I later proposed to the Italian Government. For my whole stable, including Bahram, Mahmoud, and every racehorse I had, I asked not one-tenth of their real value, and less than a fifth of the price which I was on the verge of getting from the Italian Government. The Ministry of Agriculture, however, for reasons best known to themselves, rejected an offer which I believe to have been unique, which would, too, have been of enormous benefit to agriculture, one of Britain's most vital industries in peace and in war. To this day I have never understood this decision. They did not even bother to look in the gift horse's mouth.

In the winter of 1939-40 I went to India, spending some months there, and seeing and staying in Delhi with the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow. I gave him an account of the failure of my negotiations with the Italian Government. In April I went with my wife and my young son to my villa at Antibes in the South of France, as I had been accustomed to do for years. The cataclysmic events of May and June 1940 took me, like so many others, utterly by surprise. During my years at Geneva I had come to know many French statesmen, and all along their confidence in the French Army's strength was so supreme and so unshakable that when

French resistance collapsed along almost the whole front from the Rhine to the Channel, and the Nazi motorized divisions swept south and west across France, I was shocked and appalled beyond belief. When Italy declared war on the Allies, and the French Government, abandoning Paris as an open city, took refuge in Bordeaux, I saw that we were in peril of being trapped in a totally vanquished country. With my wife and my son I made my way as quickly as I could to Switzerland, by almost the last remaining door out of France before the end. My elder son Aly had taken a commission in a British Yeomanry Regiment and with official approval had been attached to the French, and he was at this time with their forces in Syria. My daughter-in-law, with her small boys, was in Cairo.

Neutral Switzerland was a haven, but for several years it was an isolated and solitary haven. I was barred from political activity; I was cut off from most of my contacts with the outside world; and these years saw the beginning of my series of grave illnesses. From the British Consul-General in Geneva, Mr. Henry Livingston, and from his colleague in Zurich, I received a great deal of kindness and help, in times that were difficult and trying enough for us all.

The origins of my illness lay several years back. From about 1935 I had been aware of certain troublesome internal symptoms, but various doctors whom I consulted did not take a particularly serious view of them. In Switzerland in 1940 I took the advice of a number of eminent surgeons; I underwent examination after examination, and the doctors' view grew graver and graver, with more than a hint that the tumour, which was the cause of the trouble, might be malignant. Its position was such, however, that they considered it dangerous to operate. Hæmorrhages were an almost daily experience, and I lost strength steadily, and in consequence was greatly depressed. Only after the war, when I was able to go to Paris, did the great French surgeon, Professor François de Gaudard d'Allaines, operate on me and, removing the tumour, discover that it was non-malignant. This however did not entirely end my trouble; of my subsequent bouts of illness I shall have something to say later.

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Meanwhile, during my enforced stay in Switzerland, there was one profoundly important change in my private life. I have referred before to the differences between the Christian and the Muslim view of marriage, and to the misunderstandings which arise. While those brought up in the Christian tradition, with its sacramental concept of marriage, find it hard to understand the practical and contractual basis of the Islamic idea of marriage, for Muslims it is just as difficult to comprehend the laws in the West which compel the continuance of an unhappy marriage, and insist on the artificial and arranged sin of adultery in order to bring to an end an association that has become insupportable and to permit both partners to make a fresh start in life.

Maritally my third wife, Princess Andrée, and I drifted apart, although our affection, our respect, and our true friendship for each other were in no way impaired. We realized that it would be better for us to change our marital to purely affectionate relations, and in these circumstances and by mutual consent we were divorced in a civil court in Geneva in 1943.

Thirteen months later I married my present wife, whom I had first met in Cairo and whom I had known for many years. I can only say that if a perfectly happy marriage be one in which there is a genuine and complete union and understanding, on the spiritual, mental, and emotional planes, ours is such.

As a good Muslim I have never asked a Christian to change her religion in order to marry me; for the Islamic belief is that Christians and Jews—and, according to some tenets, Zoroastrians and reformed Hindu unitarians—may marry Muslims and retain their own religion. With no attempt on my part at influencing her mind, my present wife had already been converted to Islam while she lived in Cairo. Perhaps each of several motives and impulses played its part in her conversion: the quiet fervour of Muslim believers in their Friday prayers; the complete absence of snobbery, prejudice, and racial pride that is fundamental to Islam's practice and preaching; and also no doubt the serene, consolatory beauty—a beauty that seems spiritual as well as physical—of a mosque like that of Sultan Hassan in Cairo.

Our marriage came then at a time when I badly needed my wife's support and understanding. She has been my strong and gentle help and comforter through all my serious illnesses of

recent years. I have at last been granted the real and wonderful haven of finding in and with my wife a true union of mind and soul.

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My only political activity of any importance in the war years concerned the Allies' entry into Persia in 1941, with the double intention of opening up a less vulnerable line of communication with the Soviet Union than the route taken by the Arctic convoys to Murmansk and Archangel, and of preventing Persia being used as a base for Axis intrigue and espionage against the Allies' position in the Middle East. This action, strategically necessary as it doubtless was, involved the deposition of that remarkable monarch, Reza Shah, and precipitated a long period of unrest, resentment, and frustration in relations between Persia and the West which only reached (let us hope) its end in the events of August 1953.

It may be timely, therefore, if I give a brief character sketch of Reza Shah, whom I knew well, before I describe the steps by which I attempted to ameliorate, on his behalf, the Allies' action in respect of his country. Reza Shah, although he had had his military education and training under Russian officers, was of pure Iranian descent, from the north of the country, a region whose peoples have not mingled their blood with the tribes of the south, nor with the Turkish tribes that settled in Persia in the epoch of the great migrations. The family name which he took, Pahlevi, itself indicates that he fully realized that his origin was pure Aryan Iranian.

I myself, as I have said, am closely related on both sides of my family to the preceding Kajar dynasty, whose beginnings were Turkish but whose blood, through the generations, had of course mingled extensively with that of the Iranians whom members of the dynasty married.

Reza Shah Pahlevi was a man of great stature, whose strength in his prime was moral as well as physical. A cavalryman by training, he rose rapidly—like Nadir Shah before him—by sheer ability, strength of character, and superior intelligence, and became at length Minister of War under Ahmed Shah, the last Kajar emperor. With Ahmed Shah's encouragement he became Prime Minister and virtual dictator of Iran. His ambition was to

make Iran a truly independent country, free of all *de facto* if not *de jure* suzerainty imposed from without, and free of constant Russian and British pressure and of the clash of interests of these two countries. From all that I know of him I have long been convinced that he would have had no desire to seize the throne had Ahmed Shah shown even an ordinary interest in his country and in his duties as its sovereign.

Ahmed Shah's story was sad and not unfamiliar. He was an extremely intelligent young man, highly educated, with a wide knowledge of both Eastern and Western culture, and well read in history, politics, and economic theory. But his intellect and his talents were corroded by a profound and pervasive pessimism. He did not believe that, by effort, by intelligence, and application—all qualities which he possessed—he could make his throne and his dynasty prosperous and stable. An indication of his strange indifference to the normal impulses of life was that, although he had children, he allowed his brother to remain heir apparent to his throne. I knew him well, both as a near relative and as a friend. We were on excellent terms and we met often. It was obvious, however, that he did not care much about his crown, or rather he lacked any belief that he could achieve anything constructive with his destiny, or do anything to improve conditions in his own country. He concentrated on providing for his children and his mother, and to a certain extent for his brother; he made shrewd investments in the United States, and carefully and steadily built up his private fortune. Adroit as he was in administering his personal affairs, he was equally despondent about his duties as Shah.

His end was untimely. He was enormously fat, and he determined to reduce his weight. He went to extremes, however, cut his weight down by half, and did his health irreparable harm. He was still quite a young man when he died in the American Hospital in Paris. But before that he had lost his throne. Again and again he was urged to go back to Persia; he disregarded every summons from his government and ignored the anxious advice of friends such as myself, and flatly refused to resume his duties. In these circumstances Reza Shah Pahlevi was fully justified, historically and constitutionally, in assuming the crown and the responsibilities which had been abandoned by the man in whose

charge they had been set. And I, therefore, was one of the first to send him my homage and my prayers for a felicitous and prosperous reign.

Reza Shah was an able ruler, a patriot who suffered real torture to see his country perhaps the most backward of all the world's independent and sovereign nations. He was a shrewd and courageous modernizer. First he set out to free Islam, as it was practised in Iran, from the many superstitions and from the many semi-idolatrous ideas and practices which—contrary to the true tenets of our faith—had been fostered in Iran by the ecclesiastical lawyers, who thus kept the people ignorant, their own interests secure and their power supreme. The Kajar dynasty, in order to conserve its own position, had allied itself with this bigoted semi-priesthood, and together they had discouraged the younger generation in Persia from going to Europe and America in order to equip themselves intellectually and technically in all that the industrial and scientific revolution had brought about. Reza Shah broke away from this, opened the doors of his country to the study of modern science, and sent large numbers of Persian students to universities in Europe and America. He encouraged the education and emancipation of women and ended the horrible custom of *pardah*. He strove to foster national industries, especially carpet making which he restored to a high standard equal to the best traditions of the Saffavi period. In fact, he was Iran's equivalent of Kemal Ataturk. But the long, deliberate obscurity, which had been the work of the Kajar dynasty and of their allies, made his task far more difficult than Ataturk's.

He passionately resented any attempt at interference in the internal affairs of his country by any foreign Power. No doubt in his dealings with both Britain and Russia he was helped by a number of factors: that the First World War had gravely weakened them both; that Britain's imperialist and expansionist ambitions and policies had dwindled almost to the vanishing point; and that Russia, absorbed in the consolidation of the new régime, in the Five-Year Plan and the vast tasks of reconstruction allied to it, had no desire, for the moment, to resume the Tsarist policy of expansion in Western Asia.

Therefore, when the Second World War broke out Reza Shah sought, as did the rulers of other countries absorbed in their own

internal problems, to keep Persia out of the conflict to the end. However, man proposes, but God disposes.

Until Germany attacked Russia in the summer of 1941, neutrality was not impossible for Persia. Thereafter, however, her position became increasingly vulnerable as its strategic importance grew. Even before the outbreak of war in the Far East and America's full-scale participation in the conflict, United States aid to the Allies was constantly growing in volume, and Lend-Lease released a vast source of vital military and other supplies, a proportion of which it was agreed to divert as soon as possible to Russia.

Access to Russia by any European route was, however, impossible. The Germans straddled every sea and land route. A certain number of ocean convoys were sent by the Arctic route, at an enormous sacrifice of British and American lives, and the cargo they gave so much to bring was received by the Russians grudgingly and without a word of thanks. The Chiefs of Staff were therefore determined to open up a less menaced and less costly road through Persia.

Reza Shah, proudly jealous of his country's hard-held independence, misled by the hitherto placatory attitude which he had encountered in both British and Russians, and by the apparent depth and magnitude of Germany's military success, was totally unco-operative about offering to the Allies the facilities for which they asked. In his view, they implied the abandonment of Iranian neutrality.

The Allies at this juncture in the war were extremely hard-pressed. They could and did, however, assemble a sufficient show of military strength to overpower any Persian chance of effective resistance to their demands. A small force, sent from India, entered Persia; and I, far away in Switzerland, at once appreciated how gravely Reza Shah had jeopardized his own position. Through His Majesty's Consul-General in Geneva I therefore sought the Foreign Office's permission to communicate with him. I had some hope that, since our relations had always been very friendly, not only at the time of his accession but consistently thereafter, he might listen to my advice. In a long telegram I implored him to realize that his throne was in danger, and that if he persisted in this attitude of non-co-operation his own abdication would be compelled and Iran, instead of entering the war as an honoured ally,

would be forced in as a satellite. Alas, I do not know if my telegram reached him soon enough to give him any time to reflect. I had had to wait for Foreign Office permission to send it. The pace of events in this crisis was rapid, and I fear that in all probability my telegram reached him too late, and his abdication had by then become inevitable. However, there is some consolation in the fact that—as I have subsequently been told by the man who was then his Court Minister, wielding great power—the second part of my cable, in which I begged him to come into the war on the side of the Allies, did have some effect. With the departure of the Shah, the people of Iran themselves could speak, the dynasty was saved and the present Emperor, Reza Shah's son, acceded peacefully. Reza Shah was sent into exile, first to Mauritius and thence to Johannesburg, where very soon afterwards he died—doubtless of a broken heart.

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The war years passed. Facilities for communication between Switzerland and the outside world were extremely restricted for a long time. I was able to send a rare telegram by courtesy of the Ambassador on great occasions, such as the substitute Derby, for example. Private telegrams to England took a fortnight or longer, and were often never received at all. I managed to hear that two of my horses had finished second and third in the Derby; and I also got the news that Tehran, which my son Aly had leased to me, was second in the 1944 Derby. Later in 1944, with the liberation of the greater part of France, news came through much more easily, and I heard at once of Tehran's victory in the St. Leger. Throughout the war these interests of mine had been in efficient hands; the father of my present agent, Mr. Nesbit Waddington, looked after my stud, and all my racing interests were supervised by Mr. Frank Butters in Newmarket. Gradually after the war I resumed my own day-to-day control of my stud and my race-horses in training, and by 1947 the administration of them all was back in my hands.

Early in 1945 my long seclusion ended. The British Ambassador in Paris, Sir Duff Cooper,¹ secured special French police protection for me; and my wife and I—in spite of the fact that a large part of

¹ Later Lord Norwich.

the countryside was still fairly lawless, with German soldiers at large and armed bands marauding—got through to Marseilles without mishap. In Marseilles we were for a time the guests of the U.S. Army, and of its senior officers there. From Marseilles we made our way in a British military aircraft to Cairo.

Although British G.H.Q. for all the Middle East campaigns from 1940 onwards, had been established in Cairo, and although a vast assemblage of British troops was in and around the city, it had been hardly scarred by the war. Its social life as always was diverse, polyglot, and many-sided. At the British Embassy there presided the last of the pro-consuls, Lord Killern, formerly Sir Miles Lampson, the man who earlier in his career had been primarily responsible for the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936. In and around the big houses, the hotels, the great new blocks of apartments in Gezira and the Garden City, a busy and exuberant social life ebbed and flowed. Anglo-Egyptian relations were in a phase of superficial correctness and amiability, overlying an increasing tension.

In Egyptian Court and political circles I had countless friends and acquaintances, including many members of the Royal Family. Three at least deserve, in my view, more than passing mention: King Farouk, whom I now met for the first time as a grown man; his Prime Minister, Nahas Pasha, and his Heir Apparent, Prince Mohammed Ali.

Prince Mohammed Ali and I have been friends for fifty-five years. When I first went to London in 1898 he and I stayed at the same hotel, the old Albemarle in Piccadilly. He dined at Windsor Castle as Queen Victoria's guest either shortly before or after I had the same honour. By a curious and delightful coincidence, fifty-five years later, in Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation Year, he and I who had been Queen Victoria's guests at dinner were in the same summer her young great-great-granddaughter's guests at tea. Across this great stretch of time Prince Mohammed Ali and I have been firm and fast friends.

His is a fascinating and many-sided personality. A younger brother of the Khedive, he exerted for long a quiet, soothing but very powerful influence, largely behind the scenes, in Egyptian life and politics. He never married, since his view is (it has always been said) that his health has not been robust enough for him to

feel justified in founding a family. Yet his energy and vivacity are as great as his spirit is sensitive and his intellect powerful. All his life he has been a devout Muslim; he has made the pilgrimage to Mecca; he is steeped in Islamic culture. Not long ago he wrote a series of pamphlets on Islam, its meaning, and its spiritual message for mankind, many copies of which he asked me to circulate in Europe. He speaks several languages, ranging from Arabic and Turkish, through English, French, and German and one or two more. His detailed historical knowledge of Egypt, whether in the time of the Mamelukes or in the era of his own great-grandfather, the conqueror Mohammed Ali, is truly phenomenal. His friends and admirers are legion, not only among his fellow-countrymen and co-religionists, but in Egypt's numerous foreign colonies and minority communities—British, French, Jews, Greeks, and Copts. Outside Egypt he has earned respect throughout the Muslim East, in Europe, and in the United States. All his life he has been a great admirer of Britain, and of the British character and way of life, and a staunch supporter of Anglo-Egyptian friendship and understanding through many vicissitudes and disappointments. With the end of the monarchy and the establishment of the new régime in Egypt, he went into voluntary exile, without bitterness or resentment, wishing Egypt and her people under their new rulers continued and increasing prosperity, but feeling that he himself—being far advanced in years—lacked the strength to contribute his share. His palace, his famed and beautiful botanical gardens, and his princely collection of *objets d'art* he has left in trust, to become after his death a national museum. Now in a green and tranquil old age he spends his summers in Switzerland and his winters on the French or the Italian Riviera. Long may he enjoy a peaceful retirement.

Nahas Pasha I first met when Egypt entered the League of Nations; he came to Geneva, and I, as India's representative, entertained him. Much of his long-established success as a politician was due to his powers of oratory, to the spell of authority which he could exert over the masses of his fellow-countrymen; these qualities, however, are hardly visible when you first encounter him. By an odd irony, while he is likely to be remembered in history as a statesman who came into serious conflict with the sovereign whom he served, he is in fact an out-and-out monarchist.

Madame Nahas has told me of the depth of the devotion which her husband felt for King Farouk, and with that devotion a strong conviction that the King would be best served by being constantly reminded of the limitations which hedged his power as a constitutional monarch. Now this is without doubt one of the legitimate duties of a Minister; but even in Britain—as Mr. Gladstone found in his long but severely formal association with Queen Victoria—an adviser who is for ever telling a monarch what he or she must not do is hardly likely to be as popular with his sovereign as those who do not take quite so rigid or comfortless a view of their responsibilities. In Nahas Pasha this was not merely a superficial trait, but a fundamental principle on which he acted resolutely and without deviation. I myself have heard him say more than once: “Le roi règne, mais il ne gouverne pas.”

Doubtless to a young and energetic sovereign like King Farouk it must have been irksome to have to accept advice so frequently. The King extended to his Prime Minister all the accustomed courtesies—I have often, for example, seen the two of them sitting side by side in the Royal Box at the opera—but always one felt that behind the polite formalities there was a gulf which could not be bridged, with the King on his side nourishing a deep but unspoken resentment, and Nahas Pasha, on his, a regret that his loyalty and his devotion were not appreciated.

And King Farouk himself? To me as to many others there will always, I think, be something enigmatic in this sad yet remarkable man's character. There are many baffling contradictions about him, yet at the back of them all there is great charm and a genuine and compelling simplicity. His father died when he was still a boy. His mother went abroad almost immediately and the young Farouk was deprived of the influence and the love of both parents. He was sent to England to be educated; yet he lived to all intents and purposes a prisoner in a vast country house, forbidden to go out and about and mingle freely with the people among whom he lived, under orders given by his father in the jealous fear that the boy might not grow up along the lines which he had laid down. He had no proper schooling, never went to a University, and spent only a few months attending the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich. There can, however, be no doubt as to his natural abilities. Like his uncle, Prince Mohammed Ali, he is an excellent

and versatile linguist. But he has, I think, always felt hampered by the lack of the education which both his station and his talents merited. This may well have developed in him an inferiority complex when he constantly found himself, as he was bound to do, in the company of highly educated as well as accomplished men of all nationalities.

In this unfortunate background lie, I believe, the real reasons for the habits which have earned him criticism at home and notoriety abroad, for the gambling that has been so harshly reprobated and for the long, aimless hours wasted in seeking distraction in cabarets and night clubs. That they were wasted it is, alas, impossible to deny. Their sad and purposeless vacuity can however be explained, if not excused, by his lack of discipline in childhood, and by the fact that nobody bothered to teach him that a man's chief capital is time, and that if he wastes time he wastes his greatest asset which can never be recouped.

Against his defects I prefer to set his good qualities: his piety, as a good Muslim his aversion from alcohol (and this in spite of all that hostile critics have said of him), his courtesy and kindness especially to the poor, to humble *fellahin* and servants; and his patriotism and his pride in his country. This last I know to be a major trait in his personality. He is an Egyptian from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet; resenting hotly any suggestion, from any source, that Egypt and the Egyptians are or ever have been inferior to any country or people in the world; longing to recapture his nation's greatness at the time of Mohammed Ali and Ibrahim Pasha; and intensely proud of the far-sighted ideals and achievements of his grandfather, the Khedive Ismail.

Each of us, it is said, is composed of many diverse and conflicting elements; seldom in one human being has the mingling been more complex and more contradictory than in this ill-starred yet amiable and talented king. Until late in his reign, when the worst of the damage had already been done, the uncertainties about the possibilities of the succession created in and around his Court an unhealthy atmosphere of stealthiness, intrigue, and suspicion. His father occupied a throne left vacant because his cousin, the Khedive Abbas Hilmi, had been barred from it, and because the other obvious claimant, the Sultan Hossein's eldest son, was not considered suitable by the Protecting Powers. He himself was an

only son; until his second marriage, he had no son. There was a guarded uneasiness about the safety of his person, which in its way was just as insidious as direct and open fear of assassination.

His contests with his Ministers were protracted and stubborn. He himself believed, as his father had done before him, that Egypt's prime need was for firm and authoritative rule and guidance from the King. The Wafd, by far the biggest and most influential political party, strongly nationalist in sentiment but representative of big vested capitalist and industrialist interests, wanted to make him a rubber-stamp sovereign. They came into conflict again and again on numerous issues. There grew up as the King's instrument, or instruments, a group of politicians who looked to the King for their power and their promotion. At the times when the King and the Wafd could not get along together, it was one or another from this group, the King's Free Political Party—as it was known—who would be called in to form a government which would last until the next major crisis. In the Army too, it was said, the King used the same tactics, giving his favourites promotion, and thus incurring the unforgiving resentment of the officer class.

The Wafd's last sweeping electoral victory brought Nahas and his friends back into office, when the last possible permutation of politicians had been shuffled together against them and had failed. The King was deeply discouraged and took refuge in a sad and shoulder-shrugging pessimism. I met him on his last visit to Europe before his abdication, and I was immediately aware of a great change in him. He was enveloped in a mood of depressed fatalism, an atmosphere of "I cannot do what I wish—very well, let them do what they want," which in the long run was bound to contribute to his defeat and downfall. He had tried in his own way to help his people and improve their lot, and now he felt that he had failed. I was strongly reminded of Ahmed Shah, the last of the Kajar dynasty in Iran. King Farouk, like Ahmed Shah, had embraced a profound and defeatist resignation and had lost faith in his power to fulfil his duties and serve his people. Like the House of Kajar, the dynasty established by Mohammed Ali fell; and in both countries the power passed, not to the politicians, but to the military.

There is a forlorn sadness about King Farouk now. Unlike his

uncle and former heir, Prince Mohammed Ali, he must in the course of nature face a long life. What are to be his occupations? Where and how will he be able to build for himself a new existence in which he can find some self-respect and some usefulness to his fellow men? At present it is most distressing to see him on his course from European city to European city, rootless and without purpose; and the distress is sharpened by the knowledge that he had it in him—if he had had proper guidance in his youth—to be a good and patriotic—perhaps a great—King of Egypt.

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The sixtieth anniversary of my inheriting my Imamatus, and ascending the *gadi*, fell in 1945. But in the troubled conditions at the end of the Second World War it was neither possible nor suitable to arrange any elaborate celebrations of my Diamond Jubilee. We decided to have two ceremonies: one, including the weighing against diamonds, in Bombay in March 1946; and another five months later, in Dar-es-Salaam, using the same diamonds.

When the time was reached world conditions were only just beginning to improve, and travel hardly less difficult than it had been in the last month of the war. However, a magnificently representative assemblage of my followers gathered for a wonderful and—to me at least—quite unforgettable occasion. There were Ismailis present from all over the Near and Middle East; from Central Asia and China; from Syria and Egypt; and from Burma and Malaya; as well as thousands of my Indian followers. Many of the ruling princes of India honoured me with their presence, as did senior British officials in this stormy twilight of the Raj. Telegrams and letters of congratulation showered in on me from all over the Islamic world, from the heads of all the independent Muslim nations, and from the Viceroy. I was a proud and happy man to be thus reunited with those for whom across the years my affection and my responsibility have been so deep and so constant.

I hope and believe that this ceremony, in its timing and setting, was in itself a completely effective refutation of a mischievous and trouble-making but minor story which has recently been put in circulation. Some busybodies have ferreted out the fact that in the 1930s I approached the Government of India and suggested that I

might be given a territorial State and join the company of ruling princes. From the refusal of this request they have drawn the quite erroneous and absurd conclusion that I was offended, and that in resentment I abandoned all the principles and ideals which I had cherished throughout my life. Nothing could be further from the truth.

This is what really happened: it had long been felt among the Ismaili community that it would be desirable to possess a national home—not a big, powerful State, but something on the lines of Tangier or the Vatican—a scrap of earth of their own which all Ismailis, all over the world, could call theirs in perpetuity, where they could practise all their customs, establish their own laws, and (on the material side) build up their own financial centre, with its own banks, investment trusts, insurance schemes, and welfare and provident arrangements. The idea of a territorial State made no particular appeal to me; but in view of the strength of Ismaili sentiment on the matter I made my approach to the Government of India. For reasons which I am sure were perfectly just and fair, the Government of India could not see their way to granting our request. The idea that they disapproved of me for having made it, or that I was hurt and disappointed by their refusal, is fantastic.

So far as I was concerned, the practical proof of this surely lay in the support, financial as well as in every other way open to me, that I gave to Britain's war effort from 1939 onwards; every penny that I could save or raise in London was invested in various war loans; and I know that neither the Bank of England nor the Treasury was unaware of the extent of such help as I was able to give.

So far as Britain and the British authorities in India were concerned, their help, their kindness, and their consideration at the time of my Diamond Jubilee were unstinted. I am certain that we could never have held the celebrations at all if it had not been for the assistance and interest of Sir Stafford Cripps, then Chancellor of the Exchequer. All the authorities, from the Chancellor down, gave us every possible facility for the transport of the diamonds—accompanied as it had to be with vigilant security precautions—first to India and then from India to Africa. The Viceroy's personal message of congratulation was notable among the hundreds that I received, and it was exactly the same story a few

months later in East Africa. There the weighing ceremony was honoured by the presence of the Resident of Zanzibar, the Governors of Tanganyika, Kenya, and Uganda, and no less important a person than the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Creech-Jones, himself; and the whole time that I was in Africa I was most hospitably and graciously received and entertained by the Governors and by all senior British officials with whom I came in contact. I trust that this disposes of a canard.

To the celebrations in India there was an extremely serious side. An amount equal to the value of the diamonds—more than half a million pounds—had been collected and was offered to me as an unconditional gift. I wanted this enormous amount to be used for the welfare of the Ismaili community throughout what was then undivided India. The specific scheme which I had in mind was a trust, along the lines which Ismailis have built up in Africa, of which I have already given some account, which is in essence not unlike the Friendly Societies that have made so valuable a contribution to British life. I hold that for a trading and agricultural community such as the great majority of Ismailis are, an organization of this character, combining welfare with prudent financial advice, assistance, loans, mortgages, and so forth, is much more important and much more suitable than an ordinary charity fund.

However, other opinions prevailed in India. I—having handed back the money, with my advice as to its disposal, to the representatives of those who had subscribed it—did not like to use my authority as Imam to make my advice mandatory. It was decided to set up a conventional charitable trust—a decision, I must emphasize, in which I had no share and no responsibility—and there was the outcome which I had feared and foreseen, for it is not unfamiliar in the East. Before the trust could get into its stride there was protracted and disastrously costly litigation between various parties among the Ismailis in Bombay. I still hope, however, that when the suits are settled at least half the original sum subscribed will not have been spent on costs and will be available for charity among the Ismailis.

I myself have sometimes been criticized for not supporting and encouraging ordinary charities on a large scale—hospitals and dispensaries, schools and scholarships, and the usual run of charitable institutions and organizations. I am convinced that the Ismaili

communities compose a special case. Many Ismailis are traders and middlemen; others are yeomen farmers, of the order of society known in Russian history as kulaks. Theirs is an intensely individualist outlook, acquired and fostered over many centuries. Welfare imposed from without is not in the pattern of their society. I am convinced that their first need is to learn to co-operate in their thrift and self-help, to extend what they practise in their families and as individuals to the community as a whole. This will not be achieved by the ordinary so-called charitable and welfare systems that are part of the fabric of existence in many European countries. Co-operation in banking and commerce, in the raising and lending of money, in building and in farming, is—I sincerely believe—their path towards economic, social, and cultural uplift, towards that better life for themselves and for their children which their talents and their virtues can secure.

The foundations have been well and truly laid in British East Africa and in Madagascar, and it is my earnest hope that by 1960 at least we shall have reached fruition in what I may call my worldly and material effort on behalf of my followers. In Egypt and Syria, in Pakistan, India, Malaya, and Portuguese East Africa the task will be more difficult. I am still at it, however, and my Platinum Jubilee—celebrated in 1954-5—offers in my opinion a superb opportunity to repeat in these areas the efforts which we have so successfully inaugurated in British East Africa.

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India in 1946 demonstrated every symptom—in a critical and advanced stage—of that malady whose course it had been possible to foresee from the day of the promulgation of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms almost thirty years earlier.

That sense of spiritual unity and of continuity, which in my youth and long before had sustained British rule in India and had given it its moral fibre and backbone as well as its outward manifestations of efficiency and thoroughness, was now finally sapped. That almost schizophrenic contradiction, which from 1917 onwards had eaten into the solidity and firmness of Britain's moral and practical position in India, was now exacting its inevitable and final toll. "Quit India", those two words so often chalked on walls in Calcutta, in Delhi and Bombay and every

other big city, were no longer an agitator's scrawl; they now expressed a desire and intention. The British were going from India. Now the chief problem was of the rate of departure—fast or slow. The only questions were when and how. Only a handful of Englishmen—well under 2,000 in all—were now left in the Indian Civil Service; but power was still concentrated in their hands; and so long as they were responsible not to the people of India but to the Parliament and people of the United Kingdom, India was not free and self-governing.

The Second World War affected India far more closely and far more profoundly than its predecessor. The whole of South-east Asia, including Burma, fell to Japanese conquest in the first six months of 1942; the tide of invasion lapped at India's borders; and Japanese bombers appeared—with remarkably little effect—over Calcutta. India raised and sent into battle on the Allied side forces numbering some two million, the largest volunteer army in history. The curious and false British theory about the martial and non-martial races of India broke down utterly, and men from many regions in Bengal and the south served gallantly in combatant units. In the Middle East, East Africa, and Italy, Indian divisions were for years an integral part of the fighting forces of Britain and the Commonwealth. The enormous value of their contribution to ultimate victory, from the Battle of Keren to Marshal Kesselring's final withdrawal in Northern Italy four years later, is written imperishably into the military history of the war. Indian officers, holding the King's commission, had demonstrated again and again their gallantry, their sagacity, their leadership, and their capacity to exercise high command. In the later phases of the war India was the essential base for the South-east Asian campaigns of 1944-5, under Lord Mountbatten's supreme command, which drove the Japanese in disastrous retreat down the length of Burma and were a major contributory factor in Japan's ultimate defeat.

Yet in the whole conduct and strategy of the war India, as India, had no say at all. Many of her most distinguished political leaders languished long years in political detention. At the height of the war, in the spring of 1942, Sir Stafford Cripps headed a British mission to India to try to work out—against the background of the titanic problems of the time—a feasible scheme for

realizing India's aspirations. The Cripps Mission failed, breaking itself against the hardest rock of all—the fact that, while British and Hindu representatives alike hoped to preserve the unity of the subcontinent (not least so far as the British were concerned, in the conditions of 1942, the unity of the Indian Defence Forces) the price of achieving that unity was one which no Muslim could accept, and Muslim opinion by now had consolidated itself formidably under the leadership of Mr. M. A. Jinnah, the Quaid-i-Azam. He made it perfectly clear to Cripps that no constitution for a united India which did not satisfy nearly a hundred million Muslims would be accepted, and that their opposition to it would be broken only by killing them; when they said "Death or Freedom" that was what they meant.

After the failure of the Cripps Mission there followed more than three years of political stalemate. The Bengal famine of 1943 revealed how slender and how fragile were the bases of India's economy. Lord Linlithgow was succeeded as Viceroy by Field-Marshal Lord Wavell. With the end of the war the political temperature soared swiftly all over India. Throughout the whole of Asia there was a surging tide of nationalist sentiment, an eager and insistent desire to throw off the shackles of colonialism. Japan's conquests, however detestable many of their military and social effects, had achieved one momentous result: they had demonstrated, to millions all over South-east Asia, that their European masters were far from invincible. Millions had seen an Asiatic nation challenge and hold at bay for more than three years—in a huge area extending from Korea to New Guinea and from the Assam border to the Central Pacific—the combined might of the United States, Britain and the Commonwealth, France, and Holland. The lesson was too glaring and too emphatic to be missed.

In India there was no talk now of a five- or ten-year period of transition. The struggle would be real, immediate, and bloody unless self-government were granted, not in the future and on terms laid down by Britain, but at once and on conditions largely imposed by the people of India themselves. The most obvious symptom of the depth and magnitude of this feeling, visible to someone like myself returning after years abroad, was the hostility that had developed, not simply to Britain's political suzerainty, but to everything British—to the English language, to English

habits and customs, to pipes and whisky-and-soda, to European suits and collars and ties, so that even Indians who had adopted these habits were in some areas in real danger. As the saying goes, this brought the situation home to one.

Britain, for her part, had no longer either the desire or the capacity to hold India against her will. Vastly weakened by the long strain of the war, her overseas investments expended, Britain, once the creditor nation of the world, seemed now to be in almost everyone's debt. Victory had been secured, but at the price of world leadership lost. At home her people faced a long period of economic stringency, of shortages, austerity, and rationing; and even before the end of the Far Eastern conflict the Coalition Government, which had led the nation to victory, had broken up, and the Labour Party had—for the first time in its history—attained power with a big Parliamentary majority. Mr. Attlee, the new Prime Minister, had taken a close interest in India's problems since his membership of the Simon Commission fifteen or sixteen years earlier. In addition to its programme of social and economic reform at home, the Labour Party had pledged itself to end British imperialism overseas wherever it was able to do so. Independence for India had been one of the main planks in its platform for years. Where the wartime Coalition Government had failed, its successor, in the flush of vigorous optimism of its earlier years of office was determined to succeed. A Cabinet Mission, headed by Lord Pethick-Lawrence, the Secretary of State for India, and Mr. A. V. Alexander,¹ the Minister of Defence, set out for Delhi, to consult with the Viceroy, the Commander-in-Chief, and the Indian political leaders, on the way in which power should be transferred.

The political leaders, with whom ultimately decision and authority rested, were four in number: on the Congress-Hindu side, Mahatma Gandhi, Mr. Nehru, and Sardar Patel; on the Muslim side, Mr. Jinnah—the Quaid-i-Azam. On their agreement or disagreement, translated into economic and political facts, depended the future of the subcontinent.

The Quaid-i-Azam's brilliant and epoch-making career, so untimely ended, reached its summit in these momentous years of 1946 and 1947. Now he belongs to history; and his memory, I

¹ Now Lord Alexander of Hillsborough.

am certain, is imperishable. Of all the statesmen that I have known in my life—Clemenceau, Lloyd George, Churchill, Curzon, Mussolini, Mahatma Gandhi—Jinnah is the most remarkable. None of these men in my view outshone him in strength of character, and in that almost uncanny combination of prescience and resolution which is statecraft. It may be argued that he was luckier than some—far luckier for example, than Mussolini, who perished miserably in utter failure and disgrace. But was Jinnah's success all good luck, and was Mussolini's failure all bad luck? What about the factors of good and bad judgment?

I knew Jinnah for years, from the time he came back from England to Bombay to build up his legal practice there, until his death. Mussolini, I met once only; and a memorable occasion it was—an afternoon in his box at the race course in Rome, when he harangued me for the best part of three hours, in very good English, and curiously, for one who was such a "loudspeaker" in public, in a soft and gentle voice, but never once looking at the races or the people in the stands or on the course, and never allowing me either to watch a race or open my mouth to argue with him. Yet between these two I detect one important similarity.

Each of them between his youth and his prime, travelled from one pole of political opinion to the other. Mussolini made his pilgrimage from a Socialism that was near-Communism to the creation of Fascism, from Marx to Nietzsche and Sorel. Jinnah in his earlier phases was the strongest supporter, among all Muslim political leaders, of Indian nationalism along Congress lines, with as its goal a unified Indian state; yet, he, in the final analysis, was the man primarily responsible for the partition of the Indian Empire into the separate states of Pakistan and Bharat. He who had so long championed Indian unity was the man who, in full accordance with international law, cut every possible link between India's two halves, and—in the teeth of bitter British opposition—divided the Indian Army.

Different in many superficial characteristics, different (above all) in the success which attended the one and the failure the other, these two, Mussolini and Jinnah, both apparently inconsistent in many things, shared one impressive, lifelong quality of consistency. Each had one guiding light; whatever the policy, whatever the political philosophy underlying it, it would be successful

and it would be morally justified, so long as he was at the head of it and directing it. In neither of them can this be dismissed as mere ambition; each had a profound and unshakable conviction that he was superior to other men, and that if the conduct of affairs were in his hands, and the last word on all matters his, everything would be all right, regardless of any abstract theory (or lack of it) behind political action.

This belief was not pretentious conceit; it was not self-glorification or shallow vanity. In each man its root was an absolute certainty of his own merit, an absolute certainty that, being endowed with greater wisdom than others, he owed it to his people, indeed to all mankind, to be free to do what he thought best on others' behalf. Was this not the same sort of supremely confident faith which guided and upheld the prophets of Israel and reformers like Luther and Calvin? In our epoch we have seen at least two other men who were animated by the same dynamic faith which shakes the nations, and each—one for good and one for terrible evil—was conscious of a cause outside himself: Hitler who dreamed of a German-imposed New Order that was to last a thousand years; and Mahatma Gandhi whose vision was of an India whose society, economy, and whole life would be based on certain pacifist, moral principles, the objective existence of which meant much more to the Mahatma than anything in himself. Britain's two leaders in the two World Wars were also men sustained by an irresistible and buoyant self-confidence, but both Lloyd George and Churchill were incapable of transgressing the limitations on the exercise of executive authority which are set by British life, and by British civic, parliamentary, ethical, and religious traditions and beliefs.

In the view of both Mussolini and Jinnah, opposition was not an opinion to be conciliated by compromise or negotiation; it was a challenge to be obliterated by their superior strength and sagacity. Each seemed opportunist, because his self-confidence and his inflexible will made him believe, at every new turn he took, that he alone was right and supremely right. Neither bothered to confide in others or to be explicit.

Mussolini travelled the long road from Marxism not because of doctrinal doubts and disagreements, but because, in the world of Socialist politicians and theorists in which he spent his stormy

youth as an exile in Lausanne, doctrines and theories were constant obstacles across the only path of practical achievement which mattered to him—practical achievement in which Benito Mussolini was the leader. When Fascism first emerged as a political force in Italy nobody knew what it was, nobody could define its principles or its programme, for it had none. Mussolini simply said: "Let us have a Party, let us call it Fascist"—which meant anything or nothing. The Party's only principle, its sole duty, was to do what its leader told it to do. And its leader believed implicitly—and went on so believing for a long time—that everything the Party did would be excellent, because everything was conceived and executed by Mussolini.

Jinnah throughout his career displayed a similar characteristic. He would admit no superior to himself in intellect, authority, or moral stature. He knew no limitations of theory or doctrine. The determined and able young barrister, who—against all the omens, without influence, and without inherited wealth—triumphed within a few years despite entrenched opposition, became an Indian nationalist when he turned to politics. He joined Congress because he, like the Congress politicians, wanted to liberate India from British colonial and imperialist domination, and because he believed that he himself could do it if he had a free hand.

Yet in association with Congress Jinnah was a fish out of water. He worked to be the champion of Indian liberty, but his ideas of championship differed sharply from those of Congress's other leaders. He came back and rejoined those to whom he was linked by ties of race and religion. Nominally in the Muslim League of those days he was one leader among others, but he was unable to impose his beliefs and his policy, for the general tenor of Muslim thought ran strongly contrary to the convictions which he had held when he was in the Congress camp. He had worked hard and energetically for Congress; but, from his point of view, he was dogged by failure after failure. There was too deep a gulf between his concept of the duties and responsibilities of a political leader in a free society and those of the people with whom he worked. The instruments which he took up broke every time in his hands, because it was impossible to reconcile policy as he conceived it with policy hammered out by compromise and negotiation in the committees and the councils of which he found himself a member.

He met barrier after barrier and his frustration and his dissatisfaction deepened. His "point of no return" was, of course, the critical Congress meeting in Calcutta in December 1928, dominated by the Nehrus, father and son. His disillusionment and disappointment there led him to the conviction that Muslims had no chance of fair and equitable treatment in a United India.

I here reaffirm that at the Round Table Conferences Jinnah played a loyal and honourable part throughout, as a member of the Muslim delegation. His work there, however, had not shaken his faith in his own means to his own end. The Muslims' sense of their own political needs and aspirations had been fortified and developed by years of discussion and negotiation with British officials and Congress representatives, and the Muslims very rightly followed and gave their full confidence to Jinnah.

In an era in which "no compromise" was coming to be the mood of something like a hundred million Muslims, Jinnah, the man who did not know the meaning of the word "compromise", was there to seize—not only on his own behalf, but on behalf of those whom he was destined to lead—the chance of a lifetime, the chance perhaps of centuries. He embodied, as no one else could do, the beliefs and sentiments of the overwhelming majority of Muslims all over India.

Boldly, therefore, he came out and said: "We want a Muslim party. We want a unified Muslim organization, every member of which is ready to lay down his life for the survival of his race, his faith and his civilization."

But what programme this organization should have, what specific and detailed proposals it should lay before its supporters, how its campaign should be timed and what form it should take he would never say. What he intended, though he never said so publicly, was that all these matters he reserved for his own decision when the time came—or rather, when he thought the time came.

The Muslim League, as it emerged under Jinnah's leadership, was an organization whose members were pledged to instant resistance—to the point of death—if Indian independence came about without full and proper safeguards for Muslim individuality or unity, or without due regard for all the differences between Islamic culture, society, faith, and civilization and their Hindu counterparts.

Jinnah gave always the same order to his Muslim followers: "Organize yourselves on the lines I have laid down. Follow me, be ready—if need be—to die at the supreme moment. And I will tell you when the time comes."

A few intellectuals who could not sustain this unwavering faith in Jinnah fell away, and their criticisms of him were a reiteration of the cry, "What, how, where, and when?"

I myself am convinced that even as late as 1946 Jinnah had no clear and final idea of his goal, no awareness that he would, within a twelvemonth, be the founder of a new nation, a Muslim Great Power such as the world has not seen for centuries. Neither he nor anyone else could have imagined that fate was to put so magnificent, so incredible an opportunity into his hands as that which occurred in the crucial phases of the negotiations with the British Cabinet Mission, and gave him the initiative when Lord Mountbatten arrived. Pakistan was born: a new nation, with the fifth largest population in the world, of whom ninety per cent are Muslims. And it was the creation of an organization which had only one guiding principle: "Follow the leader."

Jinnah, as I shall shortly relate, made the right choice at the right moment. How different might Mussolini's end have been, had he, when the supreme moment came, chosen right instead of wrong. For him there waited a criminal's end, humiliation and ignominy. Jinnah on the other hand attained immortal fame as the man who, without an army, navy, or air force, created, by a lifetime's faith in himself crystallized into a single bold decision, a great empire of upwards of a hundred million people.

* * * * *

When I reached India in 1946 these mighty events were in train. However, while the principle of conceding to India immediate and total independence had now won universal acceptance in Britain, there still remained the great questions: was it to be a united India, with a single army, navy, and air force, or was the subcontinent to be divided, and how complete was the division to be? There was still a faint hope, too, that some sort of understanding might yet be possible between the Muslim League and Congress, or—in terms of personalities—between the Quaid-i-Azam

and the Mahatma. In such an understanding lay, of course, the answers to the questions which I have just enumerated.

The Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, my old and dear friend, the Nawab of Bhopal, went with me to see Mahatma Gandhi, to explore the possibilities of reaching an understanding. There were also one or two other outstanding problems to discuss: for the Nawab, the future of the ruling princes and their States in a free India; for myself, the question of the Indian community in South Africa. In our two long conversations with him (the second of which terminated with the Mahatma's remarks on Communism which I have quoted elsewhere) we came to the conclusion that there was no hope of a settlement between him and Jinnah. The Mahatma still firmly believed in a uni-national India; Jinnah even more firmly held that there were two nations. I pointed out to the Mahatma that, having accepted the principle of the separation of Burma from India, he ought really to see that there was no reason why the Muslim lands of the North-west and the North-east should not be similarly separated, since they—like Burma—had only become part of a United India as a result of British conquest, and therefore the idea of their union with the rest of India was artificial and transient. However, I made no impression on the Mahatma; and I went away, leaving Bhopal to tackle the problem of the princes.

From Poona I went to New Delhi. I had conversations both with the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, and the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Claude Auchinleck. Both were fully convinced of the justice, as well as the necessity, of conceding Indian independence at once. Both, however, held firmly to the idea of Indian unity, doubtless because the military facts meant, in the end, more to them than the political facts. And the major military fact of 1946, in the vast region extending from the Persian Gulf to Java and Sumatra, was the existence of the Indian defence forces, above all of the Indian Army. It happened that both Lord Wavell and General Auchinleck¹ had had a great part, as Commanders-in-Chief in succession to—indeed in alternation with—each other, in building up the Indian Army, the Royal Indian Navy, and the Indian Air Force, to their magnificent and powerful condition at the end of the Second World War. They were especially aware of the value

¹Now Field-Marshal.

to Britain and the Commonwealth, to the Western Allies, and to the United Nations, of the continued and unified existence of these superbly disciplined and well-equipped forces. They appreciated, too, the dangers that would loom if the Indian Army were divided. Not merely might the two armies of the successor-States watch each other across the frontier with jealousy and suspicion, but a perilous strategic vacuum would be created in a huge and important part of the world's surface. They endeavoured, therefore, to find some solution which would preserve unimpaired the unity of the Indian Army. That they failed, and that all who strove with the same end in view failed, is a measure of the magnitude and resolution of the Muslims' determination, against every argument however powerful, every obstacle however stubborn, to achieve their just rights and full political, religious, and cultural independence and sovereignty.

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My Diamond Jubilee celebrations accomplished, I returned to Europe. Physically, however, I was now in poor shape; my health broke down badly and put me out of action for many months. The successful operation carried out in Paris by Professor François de Gaudard d'Allaines relieved me of at least one cause of great anxiety; but it was many months before I was even partially able to resume my ordinary activities.

Meanwhile 1947 was India's year of destiny. The British Cabinet Mission made what turned out to be Britain's final offer and final proposal for a unified India. It was ingenious and—had unity on any terms been possible—it was constructive. It was a three-tiered constitution, combining the highest possible degree of sovereignty in the three great regions into which British India would have been divided—the North-west and North-eastern areas predominantly Hindu—with an extremely limited concentration of essential power at the centre, covering foreign affairs, defence, and major communications.

Now Jinnah saw his chance and took it resolutely and unerringly. He announced his unconditional acceptance of the British scheme. In that one decision, combining as it did sagacity, shrewdness, and unequalled political *flair*, he justified—I am convinced—my claim that he was the most remarkable of all the

great statesmen that I have known. It puts him on a level with Bismarck.

At this critical juncture when Jinnah stood rocklike, the Congress leaders wavered. With incredible folly they rejected the British proposals; or rather they put forward dubious and equivocal alternative suggestions, which so watered the scheme down that it would have lost its meaning and effectiveness.

However in Britain, as more than once at high moments in her history, there was found statesmanship of the highest quality to respond to Jinnah's statesmanship. Mr. Attlee had from the outset closely interested himself in the efforts to achieve a solution of India's problems. Now with a boldness almost equalling Jinnah's own he accepted the basic principles for which we Muslims had striven so long. The long-ignored yet fundamental difference between the two Indias was recognized, and the recognition acted upon, quickly and resolutely. It was decided that India should be partitioned. One swift stroke of the pen, and two different but great nations were born. Lord Wavell, who had borne the heat of the day with modesty and magnanimity, resigned. The brilliant, still youthful, energetic, and supremely self-confident Lord Mountbatten of Burma was appointed to succeed him, with a clear directive to accomplish, within a strictly limited period of time, the end of British rule and responsibility in India and the handing over of authority to the two successor-States of Pakistan and Bharat.

Lord Mountbatten himself shortened the period of demission and devolution. The 15th of August 1947 was set as the date for the final and total transference of power. On every senior official's desk in New Delhi and Simla the calendars stood, in those last months, with the fateful day warningly marked. And on that day power was transferred; the two new nations took over the functions of government, and stood forth as independent, sovereign members of the Commonwealth.

The birth pangs which accompanied this tremendous process were, some of them, grim and painful. On these it is not my desire nor my purpose to dwell, nor on some of the consequent inevitable problems. About one great and far-reaching effect of the British withdrawal, however, I must make some comment.

Rapid and virtually unconditional as the transference of power was, it left one major problem, one bad debt for Britain, for Bharat, and—in a smaller degree—for Pakistan. Although the whole subcontinent of India, from the Northwest Frontier to Cape Comorin, used to be coloured red in any ordinary little atlas, by no means the whole of this vast area was in fact British. Dotted about it were scores and scores of independent and individual States, governed by hereditary ruling princes, ranging in size from big countries like Kashmir, Hyderabad, or Travancore, to a few square miles and a township.

With the consolidation of the British Raj the relations of these States with it had been settled by treaty, under which Britain, as the Paramount Power, guaranteed their independent and autonomous status. An elaborate and carefully constructed protocol had been worked out between the princes and the Raj. In the long and splendid reign of Queen Victoria and in its aftermath in the opening years of this century, these complex and delicate arrangements had their own fittingness. In Britain and in India alike, a century ago, society was hierarchic. In the view of generations of able British administrators in India, the Princely Order corresponded not inexactly with the higher nobility in Britain. If in Britain the landowning and titled aristocracy had learned that their privileges and their possessions conferred on them special duties and responsibilities a similar lesson and the practice that flowed from it were not impossible in India. Democracy on a basis of universal suffrage was only beginning to develop in Britain in those days; in India it was hardly the glimmer of a distant dream. In the vigorous moral climate of Victorian opinion, who could seem better suited to bear responsibility than those who were by inheritance endowed with privilege and power? In the high noon of Victorian liberalism, therefore, the relations between British officials and administrators and the Princely Order stood on a comprehensible and healthy foundation, and had about them much that was good and valuable.

Now that the whole remarkable phenomenon—illogical and anachronistic as it appeared in its later years—has vanished, and is a part of history, it is both agreeable and salutary to recall some of its best facets, and some of its greater personalities. In my youth I was inevitably brought into contact with many ruling princes,

and several of them—over and above those whose names have occurred from time to time in this narrative—became my lifelong friends.

The most eminent by far was the Maharajah Gaekwar of Baroda. I first met him in my earliest childhood, when my father was still alive; and during my adolescence I saw him whenever he came to Bombay. When I reached manhood we formed a friendship which lasted until his death, and was extended to his remarkable and talented Maharani, who, happily, is still alive.¹

He possessed a sturdy independence of character, and the awareness that the honour and the dignity which he had inherited were not only his own personal right but were attributes indissociable from the race and nation to which he belonged. For him India always came first. Neither family nor class nor creed mattered more than this simple, spontaneous, and all-embracing loyalty.

A little over forty-five years ago, in the summer of 1908, he and I were the guests of the then Governor of Bombay, Sir George Clark, in Poona. One night, when everyone else had gone to bed, the Maharajah and I sat up talking to a very late hour. I have the clearest recollection of all that he said.

"British rule in India," he said, "will never be ended merely by the struggle of the Indian people. But world conditions are bound to change so fundamentally that nothing will then be able to prevent its total disappearance."

Then he added something very striking, "The first thing you'll have to do when the English are gone, is to get rid of all these rubbishy States. I tell you, there'll never be an Indian nation until this so-called Princely Order disappears. Its disappearance will be the best thing that can happen to India—the best possible thing. There'll never be an Indian nation so long as there's a Princely Order. If Lord Dalhousie hadn't taken over half India, abolishing or diminishing the sovereignty or territorial authority of scores of principalities, then perhaps something could have evolved along the lines of the German Empire, with considerable decentralization and local courts and capitals. But Dalhousie destroyed the

¹ Vivid portraits of them both, thinly disguised as fiction, are to be found in Louis Bromfield's novel *The Rains Came*.

possibility of the principalities ever becoming useful, federal, constitutional monarchies."

In view of what subsequently happened, was my old friend not as farsighted as he was eloquent?

Another of my good friends among the princes was the great Maharajah of Kapurthala. His outstanding quality was his magnanimity. During his minority an uncle of his had been an active rival claimant to his titles and estates. When he came of age and was fully confirmed in his inheritance, the Maharajah was reconciled with this formidable opponent, not merely superficially or formally, but with the utmost warmth and sincerity, inviting him frequently to his capital and entertaining him with as much affection as deference.

I recall one cheerful little anecdote which he told me about himself. In 1893 when he was quite a young man, first visiting Europe, he stayed for a time in Rome. One day King Umberto of Italy called on him, unannounced. The King's manners were bluff, abrupt, and soldierly. As they entered the Maharajah's sitting-room, the King saw a number of photographs of beautiful women displayed about the room.

The King barked gruffly, "Who are these women?"

"They, Sir, are my wives."

The King swung round at him. "Well, I too have got as many women as you. But there's this difference between us. I don't keep 'em together. I keep 'em in different houses. You keep all yours in your palace."

Taken all in all, with his culture, his impeccable taste, his sane and balanced judgment, his vigorous and colourful personality, I believe that the Maharajah of Kapurthala was, next to the Maharajah of Baroda, the outstanding ruling prince of my generation. They both, I think, possessed the political vision to have appreciated the historical reasons for the disappearance of the Princely Order, and to have accepted it without bitterness or rancour. I do not think that this would have been so easy for two other friends of mine, both in their way admirable, talented, and distinguished men: Ranjitsinhji, the Maharajah of Jamnagar, that magnificent and lovable sportsman, one of the greatest cricketers of all time, a superb and generous host, but a man very conscious of his inherited rights and duties; and the Maharajah of Bikaner,



The Aga Khan at home at Yakymour, near Cannes