PRESENTED TO THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDY, SIMLA

BY

UNREST IN NORTHERN INDIA DURING THE VICEROYALTY OF LORD MAYO, 1869-72; THE BACKGROUND TO LORD NORTHBROOK'S POLICY OF INACTIVITY

By G. R. G. HAMBLY

THE principles which had guided Indian administration during the Viceroyalties of Sir John Lawrence and Lord Mayo, the staunch belief in the need for the rapid westernization and material development of India, came to an abrupt end after the interregnum of Lord Napier and Ettrick with the arrival of Lord Northbrook in Calcutta in May, 1872. The new Governor-General immediately inaugurated a régime which, in the eyes of opponents, seemed to be characterized by lassitude and reaction. In fact, it was distinguished by much steady progress. Northbrook was one among many, both in India and England, who believed that the administrative pressure in India had been too great in recent years. Shrewd and cautious from long experience of public life and an old-style Whig by inclination, Northbrook's instinctive reaction to the immediate problems of Indian government was conditioned by the peculiar degree of "unrest" which had prevailed during Lord Mayo's administration.

Ever since William Wilson Hunter published his biography of the Earl of Mayo this striking characteristic of the years 1869-72 has been overlooked, yet Mayo's private papers show clearly the extent to which contemporaries in India sensed an undefinable restlessness and uneasiness within the Raj.*

The memory of the Mutiny in 1857 remained hideously vivid. Many who survived that event believed that it had been directly due to the failure on the part of the Company's Government to appreciate the mechanics of Indian society and to a consequent neglect of the natural pillars of English supremacy, the wealthy and landed classes who had an interest in the maintenance of law and order but who had been, immediately prior to the outbreak, the victims of the levelling Utilitarianism of the Marquis of Dalhousie and, in the North-Western Provinces, of the harsh Evangelicalism of James Thomason's school. Hence, despite the contribution of the Punjab authorities to the relief of Delhi in 1857, it was the vigorous, intolerant tradition of the North-West, indissolubly associated in the popular mind with John Lawrence, which incurred the strongest hostility from the post-Mutiny generation. The tide of this "aristocratic reaction," as it was called, reached its fullest extent under Canning and Elgin, and it

* Mayo's Indian papers are in the possession of the University Library, Cambridge.

was strikingly illustrated in the resettlement of Oudh. But it was temporarily stemmed by the return of Sir John Lawrence to India as Governor-General in 1864.

Lawrence's guiding principles were the exacting ideals of duty of the Punjab Tradition, but in practice his principles were modified partly by his feeble health and his personal limitations as Governor-General, partly by his lack of political "connections" at home to strengthen his hand, but, above all, by the sheer strength of the "aristocratic reaction" among Anglo-Indians, which even permeated the Executive Council in the formidable and persistent opposition of the Military Member, Major-General Sir Henry Durand, and of William Grey, later Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

Lawrence's successor in 1869, Lord Mayo, was relatively inexperienced in administration.* A Tory with an almost Radical temperament, he was energetic and masterful, whilst his enthusiasm for his task enabled him to apply a dynamic quality to the policy of "material and moral progress" which had hitherto been denied by the frailty of Lawrence's last years of office. To these personal qualities was added the advantage of an unusually vigorous Council to which much of the success and most of the failure of Mayo's viceroyalty must be ascribed.

Inevitably, in view of his background, the laborious details of Indian administration and the exacting intricacy of its problems eluded him. Although he possessed, like Lord Lytton, an imaginative grasp of principles, he lacked Northbrook's powers of patient application and thus, also like Lytton, he tended to be placed at the mercy of experts. His principal advisers were the Strachey brothers.

Sir John Strachey, in particular, was said to be his *eminence grise*. By 1870 he had become senior Ordinary Member of Council and had charge of the Home Department. He was perhaps the ablest amongst that able generation of civilians which succeeded the Mutiny and blossomed forth in the late Eighteen-sixties. His personality, though rich and complicated, was outwardly harsh, and he was known to be exacting and ruthless, impatient of the failings of the men around him and visibly contemptuous of the mediocrities in the Service. A devoted and conscientious public servant, he felt little affection for Indians or for India. As was natural in such a man, he made enemies swiftly and with carelessness. So did his peppery brother, Colonel Richard Strachey, at that time Inspector-General of Irrigation, Acting Secretary of the Department of Public Works and a member of the Legislative Council. He was an expert on railway construction and thereby came into constant contact with a Governor-General whose principal concern was finance and Public Works.

Durand continued in Council until 1870 as an obstinate but unavailing champion of the "aristocratic reaction", ungraciously wearing the discarded mantle of Sir Henry Lawrence. Thereafter he went to the Punjab as Lieutenant-Governor and was replaced in Council by a more pliable Military Member, Sir Henry Norman. In the Legislative Department, James Stephen brought his massive integrity and energy to bear upon an

* He had been a Conservative M.P. from 1847 to 1867 and Chief Secretary for Ireland in 1852, and again in 1858 and 1866.

immense programme of codification. Finance was in the charge of the most vigorous and colourful of John Lawrence's old lieutenants in the Punjab, Sir Richard Temple.*

These men were able, high-minded and prodigiously industrious. All of them in different ways enhanced the unpopularity of the régime. The character which they gave to the Government was progressive, bustling and inconsiderate. Their intentions were acknowledged to be good in principle but, in the view of articulate public opinion, both Indian and Anglo-Indian, their specific measures were odious. Over-government or "Stracheyism, which had driven the country into discontent and must have ended in rebellion,"† implied excessive legislation and government interference, enhancement of Land Revenue, increased local cesses and imposts, and above all, Income Tax. The latter was resented in equal measure by the European and Indian commercial communities and by the Zamindars of Bengal, who claimed that direct taxation was an infringement of the terms of the Permanent Settlement of 1793. They were supported in this view by their Lieutenant-Governor, Grey.

The appointment in 1871 of Grey's successor, Sir George Campbell, one of the most violent products of the Punjab milieu, stressed the cleavage between the progressive administration and the conservative forces, European and Indian, in opposition to it. Campbell was a man of great executive ability and generous imagination, but when he attempted a radical reconstruction of the Bengal administrative system he seriously underestimated the obstructive powers of the Zamindars, the commercial classes and his own service. His reforming programme, commendable in itself and supported by both Mayo and John Strachey, raised up all the vested interests of the province against him and, through him, against the Supreme Government.

Thus, despite the personal popularity of Mayo, his government enjoyed the concerted hostility of the Press, English and Vernacular, and of the British Indian Association, the vehicle for Zamindari agitation. This hostility crystallized into opposition to the Income Tax. For a time there was even talk of boycotting Viceregal functions, whilst Temple as Finance Minister became the best-hated man in India.‡

The Government reacted very slowly to its growing unpopularity which was clearly expressed in the capital. Neither Temple nor John Strachey, the two most staunch supporters of the tax, cared much for public opinion and both grossly minimized the extent of the discontent.§ On one occasion Strachey wrote with bureaucratic unconcern:

> "There have been within the last two or three months public meetings of natives to protest against the Income Tax in several places—Allahabad, Lucknow, Umballa, Delhi, Jubbulpore, etc.—

* The Temple Papers are in the possession of the India Office Library, Commonwealth Relations Office, Whitehall. The Indian correspondence of Sir James Fitzjames Stephen is in the University Library, Cambridge.

† *Friend of India*, November 21, 1873.

‡ J. Routledge: *English Rule and Native Opinion in India*, London, 1878, p. 33. R. Temple: *The Story of My Life*, London, 1896, Vol. I, pp. 205-10.

§ *Calcutta Review*, 1872, Vol LIV, No. CVII, "The Income Tax in India."

and I read in a newspaper a few days ago that other meetings were talked of. The case of Calcutta is quite different, but I am sure that in these parts of India no natives would ever think of holding public meetings to protest against measures taken by the Government unless they felt sure that the Local Authorities either sympathised with their objects, or would at least make no objection. There can be no doubt that in all such cases the slightest hint given by the Magistrate of the District would be sufficient to prevent any such demonstrations, without anyone knowing that any interference had taken place. I do not remember any such meetings as these before, and I think they ought to be quietly discouraged."*

Campbell suspected that much of the discontent arose from genuine grievances resulting from abuses in collection and assessment,† but it was the Government of the North-Western Provinces, then in the charge of the distinguished orientalist, Sir William Muir, which revealed the extent of the abuses and the consequent disaffection towards the Government. To Muir one of his own collectors wrote:

> "You can have, I think, no idea Sir William, not having been personally able to watch the working of the Income Tax Act, what a monstrous and disgusting tax it is. And it is no wonder that it has given rise to deep and widespread discontent which we may never perhaps be able to root out. The harm which has been done and is being done by the tax is incalculable."‡

It was largely the warnings of Muir, for whom Mayo personally had the warmest regard, and of J. F. D. Inglis, the Senior Member of the Board of Revenue of the North-Western Provinces, which forced the Government of India to take heed of the situation so that, by 1871, the Governor-General was writing to Temple:

> "I care very little as to whether the Income Tax is permanent or not. I think it unsuited to India and consider that Mr. Wilson made a great mistake in touching it at all."§

Temple disagreed, but the decision to remove the tax was one of Northbrook's earliest actions in India, though direct taxation was reimposed in a different form by John Strachey in 1877-8 when he became Lytton's Finance Minister.

It would be tempting to link the Income Tax agitation with that forward-looking movement of protest which, gaining strength in the time of Northbrook, Lytton and Ripon, took an institutionalized form in the

* J. Strachey to Lord Mayo, July 24, 1870, Mayo Papers.

† Minute of G. Campbell, August 8, 1871, and Resolution of Revenue Department, Bengal Government, December 20, 1871, in *Accounts and Papers East India*, 1872, Vol. XLIV, Income Tax, pp. 13-14 and 34-7.

‡ E. G. Jenkinson, Magistrate and Collector, Saharunpur, to W. Muir, July 24, 1870, Mayo Papers. See also M. H. Court, Commissioner of Meerut, to W. Muir, July 6, 1870, Mayo Papers.

§ Lord Mayo to R. Temple, March 24, 1871, Temple Papers. James Wilson, the first Financial Member of the Governor-General's Council and an early patron of Temple, had first introduced Income Tax in 1860. It was allowed to expire in 1865 but was revived by Temple in 1869.

Congress Movement after 1885. The two movements cannot be entirely divorced, but to associate them too closely would remove the Income Tax agitation from its rightful place as part of an essentially retrogressive and reactionary protest to excessive government in the form of increased taxation, legislation and State interference. For together with hatred of a form of taxation which, at least in India, then involved a degree of personal enquiry capable of maximum abuse and extortion, went the fear, by no means unjustified, particularly in regions under the Permanent Settlement, that the Government sought to avoid its obligations to the landed classes and to the sanctity of private property. This fear seemed to be confirmed in 1870 by the relations of the Bengal Government with the Maharaja of Susang at a time when a thoroughly "Whig" Lieutenant-Governor, Grey, was at the head of the province.*

As agitation, the discontent engendered by the Income Tax would scarcely have seemed formidable had it not coincided with a recent intensification of Wahabi propaganda and intrigue throughout the Ganges valley and especially in the North-Western Provinces, only twelve years earlier the centre of the Mutiny, though Wahabi missionaries were also active in the Punjab, the Central Provinces and Bengal.† The cause of this intensification must be sought, not in the Wahabi camp at Sitana beyond the North-West Frontier, which had become more a symptom than a cause, but in the reaction of some Indian Muslims both to the increased administrative pressure of the Government, noted above, and to their own declining status. The position of Islam in India had never seemed so precarious as in the two decades following the Mutiny, and it was in the psychological setting created by the realization of this precariousness that the apparently academic argument as to whether or not India had ceased to be *Dar-ul-Islam* and had become *Dar-ul-Harb* came into prominence.

In certain areas it was never difficult for Wahabi preachers to arouse the fanaticism of Muslim agriculturists who already had real or supposed economic grievances against the Government. But in the eighteen-sixties and early eighteen-seventies the Muslim landed, trading and professional classes, deprived of employment in the administration and the army, discontented with the Income Tax and irate at the removal of their own law-officers from the courts, also had good reasons for supporting the movement, and Muslim landowners were certainly willing to express their displeasure with the Government's policies by turning a blind eye to Wahabi activities on their estates. The historical grievances of the Muslim communities in India was a familiar topic among perceptive officials throughout this period. So was the remarkable career of the founder of the Indian "Wahabi" movement, Sayyid Ahmad Shah of Rae Bareli in Oudh who, having abandoned the life of a Pindari free-booter early in the nineteenth century, became a disciple of Shah Abdul Aziz of Delhi and performed the *Hajj* before returning to India to lead his devoted following of Hindustanis beyond the limits of Sikh power in Hazara, from

* *Accounts and Papers, East India*, 1872, Vol. XLIV. Report exhibiting material and moral progress . . . 1870-1871, pp. 10-11.

† In India the term "Wahabi" was used, inaccurately, to describe the followers of Sayyid Ahmad Shah.

whence, in combination with the Pathan tribesmen, he harassed the local Sikh authorities in the name of Islam and even captured and temporarily occupied Peshawar. He was not a true Wahabi, but a strict reforming Hanufi, though undoubtedly the moral fervour of the Arabian movement stimulated his own moral convictions. He was killed in battle against the Sikhs at Balakot in May, 1831, and his posthumous reputation rapidly attained legendary proportions amongst his followers.*

Two facts in the Sayyid's career are relevant to this discussion of unrest in British India. First, in 1820, during a triumphal procession down the Ganges valley *en route* for Mecca, he formed a permanent colony of his followers at Patna and appointed there four *Khalifas* and an *Imam* to superintend them. The organization which he provided proved efficient and durable. Henceforward Patna became the chief centre of the Wahabis in the Company's territories. Secondly, when he founded his community at Panjtar, west of the Black Mountain and the Indus, in 1827, he was joined by the grandsons of Zamin Shah, a notable *pir* of Sitana. One grandson subsequently became Akhund of Swat, and from 1831 until his death in 1857 was the patron of the *mujahidin* of Panjtar, who by that time had moved to Sitana. Thus the community came under the protection of the rulers of Swat.

The British, as heirs to the Sikh rulers of the Punjab, were brought into frequent contact with the *mujahidin* across the border and their agents in India, whom Anglo-Indians termed "the Hindustani fanatics," and Wahabi activities gave Lord Dalhousie's government considerable anxiety, though he himself believed that the wisest policy would be to leave them undisturbed.† But raids from across the border made such a policy of inactivity intolerable and the British attempted a series of reprisals, costly and ineffective, which reached a disastrous climax in the futile Ambela campaign of 1863 under Neville Chamberlain.‡ Thereafter there was a change of policy. Whilst in India itself there followed a marked intensification of Wahabi propaganda and the preaching of rebellion, which ultimately forced both Shiah and Sunni communities to disavow publicly any connection with the movement, the British authorities began a persecution of known or suspected Wahabis in a series of State Trials extending from 1864 to 1871.

The futility of the Ambela campaign had forced the Government to realize that it was the recruits and the remittances of cash from India

* A brief account of Sayyid Ahmad Shah may be found in Olaf Caroe: *The Pathans,* London, 1958, pp. 301-306. See also W. Hunter: *The Indian Musalmans,* London, 1871, and the *Calcutta Review,* 1870, Vols. L and LI, Nos. C, CI and CII. An account of some of the beliefs of Indian Wahabis may be found in Mir Shahamat Ali, Translation of the Takwiyat-ul-Imam, preceded by a notice of the author, Maulavi Isma'il Hajji, in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,* 1852, Vol. XIII, pp. 310-72.

† *Accounts and Papers, East India,* 1872, Vol. XLIV; Minutes of Lord Dalhousie, August 26, 1852, September 7, 1852, and November 11, 1852. The early relations of the Government of India with the Indian Wahabis were described by F. D. Chauntrell, Solicitor to the Government of India, in a paper drawn up on May 12, 1871, for the State Trials of that year. See Mayo Papers (Wahabis).

‡ See Mahmud Husain, "The Ambela Campaign, 1863," in the *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society,* April, 1953, Vol. I, Part II, pp. 105-117.

which constituted the life-blood of Sitana and that the colony on the frontier and the excesses which it provoked would survive so long as it received assistance from inside British territory.* Thus the Wahabi trials were part of a concerted policy to destroy what was held to be a real danger to the security of the Empire. They were the result of a genuine nervousness as to the influence and ramifications of Wahabi intrigues inside India.†

In 1868, the last year of Sir John Lawrence's viceroyalty, the Government believed that a great Wahabi plot was afoot and the proclamation of a *jihad* imminent. A year later, in 1869, arrests were made of some of the suspected ringleaders and their accomplices who were believed to be sending funds up to the frontier,‡ but the Government met with the greatest difficulty in obtaining sufficient proof for conviction. Ashley Eden, the Secretary to the Bengal Government, recommended the erection of a specially constituted tribunal to deal with Wahabi cases, but Mayo considered the proposal improper and it was dropped.§

Nevertheless, in its arrest of suspects under Act III of 1818 and in their subsequent trials, especially those of 1870 and 1871, the Government's actions were, in the words of the Law Member, "muddled and mismanaged."‖ Some of these actions were held to be of dubious legality by members of the legal profession, and tended to bring the Government into disrepute.¶ Chisholm Anstey, one of the leading Counsel for the Defence in the trial of Ameer Khan, went so far as to describe the circumstances of the case as "one of the most tyrannical and oppressive instances of the contest between an illegal prerogative and the liberty of the subject to be found in the books for the last three hundred years."**

Inevitably the policy of the Government was very unpopular and was sharply criticized by Indians, but it is significant that neither Durand, who became Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab in 1870, nor Aitchison, the Foreign Secretary, approved of the manner or the number of the arrests.††

Apparently the Bengal Government itself was for a long time quite sceptical of the danger of Wahari plots,‡‡ but in some departments, and

* E. C. Bayley, Secretary, Government of India, Home Department, to O. T. Burne, Private Secretary to Lord Mayo, August 13, 1870, Mayo Papers. See also F. D. Chauntrell's paper noted above.

† It is interesting to note that Alfred Lyall's "A Sermon in Lower Bengal" was written in 1864 and describes a Wahabi preacher. The second part of his poem "Studies in Delhi, 1876," was originally called "The Wahabee." See J. F. Stephen's Papers.

‡ *Accounts and Papers, East India,* 1871, Vol. L, "Statement exhibiting material and moral progress . . . 1869-70," pp. 3-4.

§ Note by Lord Mayo, May 31, 1870, Mayo Papers.

‖ F. J. Stephen to Lord Mayo, May 31, 1870, Mayo Papers.

¶ For example, T. Dunbar Ingram: Two letters on some recent proceedings of the Indian Government, London, 1871; and C. C. Macrae: Report of the Proceedings in the cases of Ameer Khan and Hashmadad Khan, Calcutta, 1870.

** This was in the Calcutta High Court, August 1, 1870. See C. C. Macrae: Report of the Proceedings, etc., p. 1.

†† C. U. Aitchison to O. T. Burne, August 21, 1870, Mayo Papers.

‡‡ E. C. Bayley to O. T. Burne, June 8, 1870, Mayo Papers.

notably amongst the police, Wahabis were becoming an obsession, and the police officers who specialized in this field kept the Government in a constant state of alarm by their reports. When the communities at Patna and Dinapore were broken up the police reported that they had dispersed into the Ghazipur district and Buxar.* Besides the Patna country, Meerut, Ambala, Amritsar, Lahore and Peshawar were named as Wahabi strongholds.†

Undaunted by criticism and the very partial success of its measures, the Government continued its policy of persecution. In 1871 twenty-six suspected conspirators were tried at Patna. Though their judges were scrupulously fair, it was unfortunate that they happened to be Civilians. Despite an eloquent defence by Chisholm Anstey and some attempted intimidation of the judges, seven of the prisoners were convicted and sentenced to transportation for life with forfeiture of property; one was acquitted; and the rest were discharged conditionally.‡ The seven found guilty appealed to the Calcutta High Court. It was known that the appeals would be heard by the Officiating Chief Justice, Mr. J. P. Norman, who was believed to be hostile to Wahabi suspects. As already stated, the arrests and earlier judicial proceedings had received highly unfavourable comment from Indians and, in particular, from the Muslim community. Then, on September 20, 1871, Norman was stabbed to death by a Pathan as he entered his court.

The murderer was believed to be a native of Kabul. Though his previous history was obscure, his story, as subsequently pieced together by the police, revealed a typical "budmash" drawn to the Wahabi movement. He was said to be a relative of the Akhund of Swat and at one time to have been a sowar of Maharaja Sindhia who had dismissed him from his service for his persistent soliciting of a Hindu widow in Gwalior. The widow fled to Benares to escape her persecutor, who followed her there and assaulted her, for which offence he served a six-month prison sentence. In jail he became surly, silent and pious. After his release he would go out at night and break idols.§ Though no evidence of any value was forthcoming from him prior to his execution, and though it was disputed whether he was a true Wahabi at all, there was little doubt that he was linked with the Wahabi movement and that the murder was intended as a warning to the Government to curtail its persecution of the sect.‖ One is reminded of the similar object of the Ismailian Assassins in disrupting Seljuk government in the twelfth century, and, by a remark-

* J. H. Reily, District Superintendent of Police, to Inspector-General of Police, Lower Provinces, July 11, 1870, Mayo Papers. Reily had the reputation of being an expert in Wahabi cases.

† Report on Native Feeling in the Punjab, initialled F. B., October, 1871, Mayo Papers.

‡ *Accounts and Papers, East India,* 1872, Vol. XLIV, "Statement exhibiting material and moral progress . . . 1870-71, p. 14.

§ Memo of A. H. Giles, Officiating Deputy Commissioner of Police, November 28, 1871, Mayo Papers (Wahabis).

‖ R. Temple: *Men and Events of My Time in India,* London, 1882, pp. 386-7. O. T. Burne: *Memories,* London, 1907, pp. 123-4. Sir George Campbell, however, dissented from this view. See his *Memoirs of My Indian Career,* London, 1893, Vol. II, p. 216.

able coincidence, the *Calcutta Review* made an implicit comparison in a series of articles on the early history of Ismailism published in 1872 and 1873. In fairness to them, it is certainly arguable that if the Wahabis had become by this time a threat to the maintenance of good government, they were merely reacting to continuous persecution by the Government.

Norman's murder horrified Calcutta. "The sad business has made a profound sensation everywhere," wrote Burne,* "and for some time to come we shall all probably have to go through the threatening letter business, panics, and precautions." In fact, for some time the European community in Northern India had been in a suspicious and nervous mood, at times bordering on hysteria. For the last two or three years there had been signs of unrest and whispers of plotting throughout the North-Western Provinces and especially around Aligarh, Allahabad, Benares, Meerut, Muzaffarnagar, and Roorkee. At Allahabad and Roorkee in the summer of 1870 there were cases of extreme panic among Europeans, particularly non-officials. It is significant that both these towns were in the heart of the Mutiny country. These spasmodic panics on the part of Europeans in India indicated the extent to which the events of 1857 were branded on the Anglo-Indian mind. In 1870 it was said that the mysterious chupatties of 1857 were again being carried at night from village to village!

The rumours at Roorkee were based on the report of an Indian Christian who had declared to the magistrate that some intrigue was being concocted, that Muslims of all classes were assembling regularly in a garden outside the city, that there were collections for a secret fund, and that a "fat fakir" was frequenting the district under mysterious circumstances. The Commissioner of Roorkee took prompt and ostentatious precautions which were later deemed to be excessive by the Lieutenant-Governor.

In Allahabad, where there was a large colony of European tradespeople and railway employees, the rumours began with bazaar gossip and the evidence of a frightened Englishwoman against her servants. These quickly swelled and spread until it was said that the 9th Native Infantry Regiment, stationed nearby, was about to mutiny. The situation was greatly exacerbated by the fact that Allahabad was at that time denuded of European troops and that the Commissioner of the Allahabad Division, F. O. Mayne, was up at Naini Tal attending a conference with the Provincial Government. The Joint-Magistrate and Deputy Collector, J. C. Robertson, who knew the district well, took a serious view of the situation. So did the Commanding Officer of the cantonment, Major-General J. L. Vaughan, but both men acted with indiscretion. Two companies of European troops were ordered down from Cawnpore immediately, but in the meantime local orders were given which seriously aggravated the panic: ammunition and gun-spikes were issued to the European garrison, which was ordered to sleep dressed for duty; the non-official Europeans

* O. T. Burne to C. Bernard, Secretary to the Bengal Government, September 28, 1871, Mayo Papers. See also C. Bernard to O. T. Burne, October 5, 1871, Mayo Papers, and W. W. Hunter: *The Indian Musalmans,* London, 2nd edition, 1872, p. 106.

assembled nightly at the railway station; and an emergency rendezvous was appointed for women and children. Most dangerous of all, the sepoys were mustered in the middle of the night without even their own officers receiving previous warning.

Sir William Muir deplored these incidents and refused to be alarmed by will-o'-the-wisps in which he entirely disbelieved. He had been trained in that famous school of Thomason's and the rhythm of his administration, like that of his beloved master's, was smooth and imperturbable. To Mayo he wrote: "The whole thing is most provoking."* But the Governor-General was unwilling to criticize too harshly the actions of officers under such trying circumstances, though he wholly agreed with Muir in disbelieving the rumours of a concerted uprising.† On the other hand, Lord Napier of Magdala, the Commander-in-Chief, believed that Major-General Vaughan had done no more than his plain duty.‡

Perhaps nothing in the whole business irritated Mayo and Muir more than the speed with which the rumours reached the Press in England, where it was said that there was disaffection in the Sepoy regiments.§ The *Spectator* for September 10, 1870, under the heading "The Indian Rumours," attributed the unrest in the North-Western Provinces to the acute dissatisfaction felt by the upper classes with the administration of the Income Tax. If this had been merely the random guess of journalists in London, or even Calcutta, it might have been disregarded, but in fact it was an opinion shared by many District Officers in Northern India. M. H. Court, for example, the Commissioner of Meerut, wrote to Muir regarding the Muslims in his jurisdiction:

> "It is very likely that sedition is preached—in fact amongst the faithful it is rarely that it is not.
>
> "The Income Tax last year, as you saw, caused a good deal of disaffection and this showed itself most amongst the Mahomedan population and in the Mahomedan towns."||

Muir himself believed that there would always be some restlessness among Indian Muslims, and he suspected that in the Aligarh district, in particular, there was some sympathy among the Muslim landowners for the Wahabis on the Frontier.¶ Court made a careful tour in that direction, but he returned satisfied that conditions were reasonably normal, though he stressed what many of his colleagues were stressing, the general uneasiness among the Muslim community and the great prevalence of millenium literature.** At the same time, Jenkinson, in Saharunpur, was emphasizing the widening gulf between rulers and ruled, begun by the events of the Mutiny and now, he supposed, greatly extended by the unpopularity of the Income Tax Act.††

* W. Muir to Lord Mayo, September 12, 1870, Mayo Papers.
† Memorandum of Lord Mayo, September 18, 1870, Mayo Papers.
‡ Note of Lord Napier of Magdala, September 11, 1870, Mayo Papers.
§ Considerable energy was employed to discover the origins of the Reuters' telegrams of September 1 and 3, 1870, from Allahabad. See Mayo Papers (Wahabis).
|| M. H. Court to W. Muir, June 5, 1870, Mayo Papers.
¶ W. Muir to M. H. Court, July 8, 1870, Mayo Papers.
** M. H. Court to W. Muir, July 14 and 17, 1870, Mayo Papers.
†† E. G. Jenkinson to W. Muir, July 24, 1870, Mayo Papers.

In that same year of 1870 the proximity of Muslim and Hindu religious festivals threatened to cause serious communal disturbances. These were temporarily averted, but in the following year there was communal rioting with heavy casualties in Bareilly and Pilibhit, and again in 1872 at Moradabad, when the Mohurrum and Holi festivals coincided.* In September, 1871, there was a riot in Bareilly jail, where the Superintendent, Dr. Eades, who, unlike most of his countrymen in India, appears to have been unversed in Mutiny literature, had ordered the removal of the Brahminical threads.† There was some bloodshed, and Muir immediately suspended him. Another furore was created at this time by the discovery of Liakut Ali, who, in 1857, had proclaimed himself the representative of Bahadur Shah II in Allahabad.‡ His trial, together with persistent rumours of the whereabouts of Nana Sahib, helped to keep Mutiny recollections burning brightly.

With the tension mounting throughout 1871 the Government grew more apprehensive and watchful. Bayley, the Home Secretary, proceeded to make enquiries from local officers as to the extent of the unrest. The replies which he received were a revealing indication of the state of Northern India in 1871. The Commissioner of Rohilkhand, for instance, wrote of his area:

> ". . . there is no doubt a great deal of religious excitement throughout the country . . . there is a good deal of preaching going on, and the Moulvees are buzzing about like wasps, and the Hindoos are not much better. The severe orders about Infanticide, though morally right, came at a most unfortunate time. . . ."§

At Etawah a Hindu festival was celebrated in advance of the usual date for no apparent reason, and a Muslim proclamation was circulated announcing the coming of the *Imam Mahdi* and the end of the world amidst much unpleasantness in 1872. This proclamation originated in Bundelkhand in the south and, taken by itself, the Local Government did not view it very seriously. Bayley was informed that "It is a mere *rechauffé* of stale Mahomedan matter which is always more or less in circulation and tends to keep the Mahomedan mind in a ferment."‖

Though this was probably true the proclamation took its place with the other evidence of widespread restlessness and uncertainty. Nor were the Muslims alone affected. From Jhansi, where there was a general uneasiness among the poorer classes, came the report of the birth of a Hindu child under miraculous circumstances who was later spirited away on the banks of the Jumna. Religious almanacs were being consulted by

* *Accounts and Papers, East India,* 1873, Vol. L, "Statement concerning material and moral progress . . . 1871-72, pp. 133-4.

† E. C. Bayley to O. T. Burne, September 13, 1871, Mayo Papers.

‡ J. Routledge: *English Rule and Native Opinion in India,* London, 1878, pp. 76-7.

§ The Hon'ble R. A. J. Drummond, Commissioner, Rohilkhand, to E. C. Bayley, October 6, 1871, Mayo Papers. The reference is to the Infanticide Act of March, 1870.

‖ C. A. Elliott, Secretary to the Government, North-Western Provinces, to E. C. Bayley, September 9, 1871, Mayo Papers.

Hindus to an unusual extent.* They originated in Benares and were believed to contain much seditious matter. Reports of the attention with which they were being read extended to Seoni in the Central Provinces.† Seoni itself was a peculiarly restless district which contained many Muslim landowners and many Wahabis. Keatinge, the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, was in agreement with his subordinates that there was an undefinable uneasiness prevalent everywhere, though he believed that the rumours and prophecies would disappear with a good harvest. Inglis, of the Board of Revenue of the North-Western Provinces, thought the same and wrote to Muir of the "expectation of some coming trouble prevalent throughout the country just now."‡ In Bengal, the Santals were the principal cause for apprehension for they were in a state of the greatest excitement over grievances against their Zamindars and *banias* and, in fact, they broke out in rioting early in 1872.

In the Punjab the activities of the Wahabis were obscured by intense communal tension and bitter hostility towards the Government.§ The Kukas, a reforming Sikh sect founded in the eighteen-forties, were the chief threat to the peace of the province. So long as the Sikhs had been the ruling minority in the Punjab the Kukas had been concerned solely with religious and social reform, but the reversal of Sikh fortunes and the British annexation of 1849, which had the inevitable result of lowering the status of the Sikhs, had given a political colouring to the movement. The sect had consequently acquired an evil reputation for murders and outrages connected with its agitation against cow-killing, and for a time its leader, Ram Singh, a carpenter from the Ludhiana District, had been under police surveillance. If it was true, as some officials claimed, that he aspired to restore the old Sikh sovereignty in the Punjab, it may have been significant that he claimed to be an incarnation of Guru Govind Singh, but until more precise evidence is forthcoming it may be reasonably assumed that the movement was primarily a religious one whose tenets inevitably led its members into acts of communal violence against Muslims once Sikh political hegemony had ceased. Ram Singh himself was a man of considerable intellectual ability and under his direction the Kukas flourished, making many converts in the army and the police as well as among women and lower-class Muslims. Their numbers in 1871 were estimated at between 300,000 and 400,000.‖

Throughout 1870 they had become increasingly aggressive, and in June, 1871, they had raided a slaughter-house near the Golden Temple in

* R. M. Edwards, Officiating Commissioner, Jhansi, to C. A. Elliott, June 16, 1871, Mayo Papers; and E. C. Bayley to W. Muir, July 28, 1871, Mayo Papers.

† Captain Brooke, Deputy Commissioner, Seoni, to R. H. Keatinge, June 13, 1871, Mayo Papers.

‡ J. F. D. Inglis to W. Muir, June 20, 1871, Mayo Papers.

§ Report on Native Feeling in the Punjab, initialled F. B., October, 1871, Mayo Papers (Wahabis).

‖ *Ibid.* Short notices of the Kukas may be found in Khuswant Singh, *The Sikhs*, London, 1953, pp. 90-7; in Syad Muhammad Latif, *History of the Panjab*, Calcutta, 1891, pp. 594-5; and in Sir Denzil Ibbotson, *A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province*, Lahore, 1911, Vol. II, pp. 560-1.

Amritsar, where they had killed four butchers and wounded three more. A month later, in July, they murdered three butchers and wounded a further thirteen in the small town of Raikot in the Ludhiana district. For this outrage five Kukas were hanged.

Amidst this increasing unrest in Northern India, and in a growing atmosphere of suspicion and uncertainty among Europeans, particularly towards the Muslims, Hunter published his *Indian Musalmans*, which, while stressing the wrongs suffered by Indian Muslims under the British Government, described in melodramatic language the past history of the Wahabis and the ambiguous role which he believed Muslims must play in a non-Islamic State.* His views were publicly refuted a year later by Syed Ahmed Khan and Alfred Lyall,† but so infectious had Anglo-Indian apprehensions become that the debate moved to England, where the *Spectator*, reviewing Hunter's book, declared hysterically that in the Wahabis " we have found the most dangerous foes who ever faced us; that our dominion hangs even now, today, by a hair; that at any moment in any year a Mussulman Cromwell may take the field, and the Empire be temporarily overwhelmed in universal massacre."‡

Against this background of mounting racial tension and unrest, the climax to the succession of rumours, plots and violence was reached on February 8, 1872, when the Governor-General was assassinated at Port Blair in the Andamans by a Pathan convict.

The murderer was personally questioned by both Aitchison and Eden, and although a full investigation was made at the time, no conspiracy was revealed and the Government concluded that the crime had no political significance but was a personal act of vengeance, stimulated perhaps by the example of Norman's murder five months earlier.§ Burne, Mayo's secretary, however, always believed that it was the result of Wahabi propaganda,|| and this must have been the popular belief at the time. Certainly the general security arrangements had recently been very lax. Sometime before Lord Mayo's murder a lunatic was discovered in the Throne Room of Government House, and shortly after it Sir George Campbell awoke one night to find an idiot capering in his bedroom.¶

In the event of the death in office of a Governor-General, the Governor of Madras automatically took his place as Acting Governor-General. In the temporary absence of the Governor of Madras, the Government of India was headed by the senior Member of Council, at this time Sir John Strachey. On such an occasion, and in view of the recent disturbances, the lack of a properly constituted Governor-General with the necessary prestige and influence might have been a cause of considerable embarrass-

* W. H. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans*, London, 1871. A second edition came out in 1872, demand being stimulated by Norman's murder.

† Syed Ahmen Khan, *Review of Dr. Hunter's Indian Musalmans*, Benares, 1872; and A. C. Lyall, " Islam in India," in the *Theological Review*, April, 1872.

‡ *The Spectator*, August 19, 1871.

§ *Accounts and Papers, East India*, 1873, Vol. L, " Statement exhibiting material and moral progress . . . 1871-72, p. 1.

|| O. T. Burne: *Memories*, London, 1907, p. 134.

¶ J. H. Rivett-Carnac, *Many Memories*, Edinburgh, 1910, p. 233; and G. Campbell, *Memoirs*, London, 1893, Vol. II, p. 244.

ment to the Government, but both Strachey and Lord Napier and Ettrick, who promptly sailed from Madras to Calcutta, kept a very firm control over events and the late Governor-General's policy of "Stracheyism" continued unabated.*

Nevertheless, despite the customary sang-froid of the Government, there was intense nervousness, coupled with aggressive indignation, amongst the European community throughout the country. The atmosphere in Calcutta in the days immediately following the announcement of Mayo's death is strikingly illustrated in a letter from Stephen, the Law Member, to his wife in England, describing the funeral procession from Prinsep's Ghat to Government House.

> "There was nothing at all to have prevented any fanatic there might be from repeating the crime of the other two, upon any of us. I pointed this out in Council, but nobody seemed much to care for what I said, till we got to the place, when Temple began chattering in his usual idiotic way and John Strachey said, with the sort of melancholy indifference you can imagine, 'There is no reason why anyone should not stab us who has a mind. The police are worthless, and have taken no precautions.' As we walked I kept my hand close to the hilt of my dress sword, and kept my eye on the crowd with a firm resolution to run any man through who made a rush."†

The police did not believe that there was any general conspiracy, and neither did Stephen, who considered the two sensational murders pure coincidence, though he felt forced to add, to his wife:

> "It is my belief that if they have any more, the whole English community will get one of their sanguinary panics, and if they do, there will be no holding them. We might have a massacre or Heaven knows what. . . . We nearly had a scandal with the High Court, which was within an ace of letting off the miserable assassin on a beggarly quibble; however I cobbled it up for them, and he is to be hung in the regular way. We had made up our minds (i.e. Strachey and I had) that he should be hung in an irregular way if the High Court made a fool of itself. We had resolved to run all risks, and take all consequences, rather than let him escape. People are greatly excited and alarmed, as you may suppose. We have rumours (all false) every day, that Sir George Couper has been assassinated at Lucknow, and another officer at Patna, that the Sikh regiments have mutinied, etc., etc."‡

It was in this hysterical atmosphere that the Supreme Government was called upon to decide a case which involved the principles of conduct governing its officers in just such an emergency. This was the so-called "Maler Kotla affair."

* J. Routledge: *English Rule and Native Opinion in India*, London, 1878, p. 112.
† J. F. Stephen to M. R. Stephen, February 21, 1872, Stephen Papers.
‡ *Ibid.*

The activities of the Kukas have already been mentioned. On January 14, 1872, a band of Kukas attacked the small town of Malaudh in the Ludhiana district, but was repulsed by the local Sirdar, a distant relative of the Maharaja of Patiala. On the following morning the gang attacked Maler Kotla, with the object of capturing the treasury there, but was driven off by the Nawab's soldiers and fled into Patiala. The size of the gang was uncertain. At first it was believed to have consisted of between 200 and 500 men, but later 150 was reckoned as the maximum figure. The motive for the attack was also uncertain. The local officers attributed it to the need for arms and cash prior to a larger uprising, but it may have been simply an act of vengeance for the Kuka prosecutions of the previous year or a further attempt to intimidate local butchers. It is interesting to recall, however, that it was in this same area in 1794 that Bedi Sahib Singh, who was a lineal descendant of Baba Nanak, proclaimed a religious war of extirpation against the Afghans of Maler Kotla.

Douglas Forsyth, the Commissioner of the Ambala Division, was at that time in camp at Delhi with the Commander-in-Chief, but Cowan, the Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana and Forsyth's immediate subordinate, at once proceeded to Maler Kotla. Cowan was an uncovenanted officer of twenty-three years standing in the service who, from long experience of the Ludhiana district, was held to be familiar with Kuka activities, and he had dealt with the Raikot murders of the previous year.

He arrived in Maler Kotla on January 16 and summarily tried seventy Kukas who had surrendered in Patiala on the previous evening. On the 17th, despite orders from Forsyth to reserve the prisoners for further legal proceedings, he ordered forty-nine to be blown away from guns, whilst a fiftieth, breaking loose, was cut down by one of the Nawab's officers. On the 18th Forsyth wrote to Cowan commending him for his vigilance, and on the 19th, having arrived in the district, he hanged a further sixteen. On the 20th he reported to the Punjab Government, "Perfect tranquillity. Cowan's action deserves praise." On the same day Lord Mayo telegraphed Sir Henry Davies, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, "Stop any summary execution of Kukas without your express orders." On the 24th Bayley instructed the Punjab Government to suspend Cowan pending investigation.*

Both Forsyth and Cowan believed that they had saved the province from greater bloodshed by their prompt action. Forsyth wrote to a colleague: : "... unquestionably we were very nearly in for a great outbreak,"† and Cowan reported that "a rebellion which might have attained large dimensions was nipped in the bud, and a terrible and prompt vengeance was in my opinion absolutely necessary to prevent the recurrence of similar rising."‡

* For the official details of the Maler Kotla affair, see *Accounts and Papers, East India,* 1872, Vol. XLV, Correspondence relating to Kooka Outbreak.

† T. D. Forsyth to G. R. Elsmie, January 21, 1872, quoted in Elsmie's *Thirty-Five Years in the Punjab,* 1858-93, Edinburgh, 1908, p. 163. See also *The Autobiography and Reminiscences of Sir Douglas Forsyth,* London, 1887, pp. 34-5.

‡ L. Cowan to T. D. Forsyth, January 17, 1872, para. 4, in Correspondence relating to Kooka Outbreak.

At the first sign of trouble Forsyth had arrested Ram Singh and sent him secretly to Allahabad with a warrant under Act III of 1818, though two days before the raid Ram Singh had informed the police of his followers' intentions and of his inability to control them.* This action, however, received the approval of the Supreme Government, and the Kuka leader with twelve of his principal lieutenants was sent to Rangoon. Even before the raid Temple had urged Ram Singh's arrest, but, though Mayo supported him, he was overruled in Council.† Whether the severity with which Forsyth and Cowan acted was justified or not, the summary executions and the arrest of the Kuka leaders undoubtedly brought to a close the more violent activities of the sect.

Forsyth was one of those Punjab civilians who found the details of administrative routine irksome and frustrating. As a young Deputy Commissioner of Ambala in 1857 he had acted with speed and vigour and had later been made a Special Commissioner for punishing rebels.‡ He had little love for India or for Indian officialdom, and his true forte lay in exploration and Oriental diplomacy. He had led the 1870 expedition to Yarkand to negotiate with the Amir, Atalik Ghazee, and he later led another mission to Yarkand and Kashgar in 1873-4. Personally he found the Kashgaris and their methods of government admirable for nineteenth century Asia, and far more stimulating than the tedium of the Anglo-Indian bureaucratic machinery! But by the eighteen-seventies such men as Forsyth were becoming anachronistic in the I.C.S.

Forsyth was amazed to find that he and Cowan, instead of being praised for their vigour, were being denounced for their brutality. Sir Henry Davies forgot the Punjab Tradition and failed to support his subordinates.§ Mayo likewise disapproved and thought that the executions had been carried out "in an exceptional and highly objectionable manner."‖

Mayo's murder followed close upon the Maler Kotla affair, and it was left to Lord Napier and Ettrick's caretaker government to decide what further course should be taken. In view of the panic prevailing at the time it was greatly to the Government's credit that it condemned the incident in unambiguous terms.

> "To administer justice with mercy is the fixed and settled policy of the Government of India: but it is absolutely essential to this great object that justice should be administered according to known rules, with due deliberation, and with discrimination between degrees of guilt. . . . His Excellency in Council cannot consent to

* L. Cowan to T. D. Forsyth, January 15, 1872, and T. D. Forsyth to Secretary, Punjab Government, January 20, 1872.

† R. Temple to Lord Northbrook, July 30, 1874, Temple Papers.

‡ It is significant that in his report of the Maler Kotla trials sent to the Secretary, Punjab Government, January 19, 1872, he justified his severity and the method of execution with precedents of 1857. See Correspondence relating to Kooka Outbreak.

§ Davies' prevarication is clearly shown in two letters from Lepel Griffin, Secretary, Punjab Government, to E. C. Bayley, January 19 and 26, 1872, in Correspondence relating to Kooka Outbreak.

‖ E. C. Bayley to Secretary, Punjab Government, February 8, 1872, Correspondence relating to Kooka Outbreak.

be forced by the crime of a few fanatics into the sanction of acts repugnant to the whole spirit of British rule."*

Cowan was removed from the service, though he was allowed to retain his pension on account of his past record. Forsyth was transferred from the Punjab and was forbidden to exercise ever again power of life and death over the subjects of a Native State. The Government's Resolution was written by Stephen, and it was almost his last official task in India.† The principles at stake were by no means new to him, for in 1865 he had been concerned in the notorious case of Governor Eyre of Jamaica.‡ Stephen had been a firm paternalist in Indian affairs and he was proud of his lack of sentimentality, but his reaction to the executions, as expressed in letters to his wife, was humane and practical. He described Cowan's precipitate action as:

> "... a needless piece of brutality as ever was. ... Cowan's performance was both a blunder and a crime, and may do immense harm, though there are excuses of an obvious kind to be made for him ... there was no cause to have a massacre, especially as the poor brutes were wounded and fugitives, and had committed no specially heinous atrocities, and particularly, above all, as they might have been put to death in a perfectly legal and quiet way in a couple of days or so, at the farthest."§

After obtaining further information, he returned to the subject in letters home, declaring "That Kooka business was a frightful piece of butcherly cruelty, and both Cowan and Forsyth are immensely to blame for it." Forsyth's part in it he found particularly distasteful:

> "He actually hung 16 men, whom there was no particular occasion to hang, for the sake of supporting Cowan, who had blown away from guns 49 men, whom there was no real occasion to blow away."||

Reaction to the executions in India and England was sharply divided, as it was later to be divided over the Fuller case of 1876 and the so-called Ilbert Bill of 1884. Most Europeans in India, and the Anglo-Indian Press, with the notable exception of the *Calcutta Review*, tended to support what they termed a policy of "vigour."¶ The Indian Press and liberals at home warmly supported the Government's Resolution, though Henry Cotton, who rose to be Chief Commissioner of Assam before becoming

* E. C. Bayley to Secretary, Punjab Government, April 30, 1872, Home Department—Judicial, No. 857, paras. 11 and 13, in Correspondence relating to Kooka Outbreak.

† J. F. Stephen to Emily Cunningham, April 20, 1872, Stephen Papers. Emily Cunningham later married Sir Robert Egerton.

‡ Leslie Stephen: *Life of Sir James Fitzjames Stephen*, London, 1895, pp. 227-31.

§ J. F. Stephen to M. R. Stephen, January 22, 1872, Stephen Papers.

|| J. F. Stephen to M. R. Stephen, February 9, 1872, Stephen Papers. Forsyth undoubtedly executed the further sixteen to support Cowan. See T. D. Forsyth to G. R. Elsmie, January 21, 1872, in G. R. Elsmie, *Thirty-Five Years in the Punjab*, p. 163.

¶ *Calcutta Review*, 1872, Vol. LIV, No. CVIII, and Vol. LV, No. CIX, "Vigorous Government."

President of the Indian National Congress in 1904, wrote long afterwards in his memoirs:

> "For my part I can recall nothing during my service in India more revolting and shocking than these executions, and there were many who thought, as I did and still think, that the final orders of the Government of India were lamentably inadequate."*

In the Commons, Grant Duff was asked to lay the official correspondence before the House,† whilst at least one retired Anglo-Indian who had known the almost unendurable strain of 1857 wrathfully denounced the conduct of the officers at Maler Kotla. To Temple, in India, Lawrence wrote:

> "I quite concur in the view the Government of India appear to have taken of the wholesale destruction of the wretched Kookas. . . . It appears to me that there was no justification for such severity. . . . In the Mutiny the case was quite different. Then ruin was staring us in the face, and we had literally to kill or be killed. . . . I believe that unless a serious example is made of those two officers fresh evils will assuredly arise."‡

His tone was echoed in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which condemned the affair on the day the Government resolution was published. Forsyth believed that the article had been written or inspired by a member of the Governor-General's Council, and always maintained that Cowan and he, in doing their duty, had been sacrificed to sentimentalists at home.§

The controversy had subsided by the time Lord Northbrook reached Calcutta, but he found restlessness and suspicion of the Government prevalent over much of India, whilst the Press, both English and vernacular, was critical and cantankerous. Even before he arrived it was believed that he had resolved upon a change of policy, but if this was true, his preconceptions were certainly strengthened by his immediate impressions. Thus, as soon as possible, he abolished the Income Tax, the source of so much discontent, and arbitrarily vetoed Campbell's Bengal Municipalities Bill which, he believed, must inevitably enhance local taxation and thereby increase the resentment of the Zamindars towards the Government.‖

His policy of easing the administrative pressure at the summit of the hierarchy was greatly assisted by certain Service changes in personnel over which he had little or no control but which worked in favour of the new policy. He had new Governors in Madras and Bombay. In Council there was a change of Law Members. Stephen had decided to return to England and was replaced by Arthur Hobhouse, a Liberal who was averse to excessive activity in the Legislative Department and who was better suited by temperament than Stephen to work with the new Governor-General. Both Strachey's and Temple's terms of office in Council were

* H. Cotton: *Indian and Home Memories*, London, 1911, p. 113.
† Hansard: February 29, 1872, and May 7, 1872.
‡ J. Lawrence to R. Temple, March 22, 1872, Temple Papers.
§ T. D. Forsyth: *Autobiography and Reminiscences of Sir Douglas Forsyth*, London, 1887, p. 42.
‖ G. Campbell: *Memoirs of My Indian Career*, London, 1893, Vol. II, pp. 286-8.

due to expire. Strachey, after furlough, was sent as Lieutenant-Governor to the North-Western Provinces, where his powerful intellect could find less scope for determining Government policy. Muir replaced Temple as Finance Minister. He had no special financial experience, but Northbrook took the actual direction of this vital department into his own experienced hands. Campbell retired prematurely from Bengal on account of failing health. He had been deeply mortified by the tone of the new régime, the antithesis of all his own ideals of Indian government, but he had become a very sick man, which gave him a genuine pretext to depart. He was replaced in Bengal by Temple, who, having restored his tarnished reputation by a brilliant record in the Bihar famine of 1874, proceeded to cultivate a more discreet attitude towards the diverse but vociferous "interests" of his province.

Northbrook was probably more absolute in his Council than either his two immediate predecessors or his two successors. The Members of Council who remained from the previous régime, and the men who gradually replaced them, either lacked the dominant stature of their predecessors like Durand and Strachey, or else took their cue from the Governor-General and exercised a less vigorous superintendence than Mayo's had done.* In contrast to his feeble Council, Northbrook kept a strict personal control over every department. He relied on no experienced Anglo-Indian official for guidance in the way Mayo before him, and Lytton after him, relied on John Strachey. Temple was frequently plied for information, for he was a mine of erudition on all Indian subjects, but he was kept on a very short rein in Bengal. Northbrook's sole confidant and mentor—to the intense jealousy of the Civil Service—was his cousin and private secretary, Captain Evelyn Baring, afterwards Earl of Cromer.

The only real check to his authority came, after February, 1874, from the new Secretary of State, Lord Salisbury. This check was felt increasingly until it became impossible for Northbrook to govern in the way he deemed essential for the peace and well-being of India. But until that point was reached his period of office had a distinctive character reflecting the personality of the man, shrewd, businesslike, firm and unostentatiously thorough. After his departure, many Anglo-Indian officials and many more Indians learnt to regret the reversal, by his successor, of a policy which seemed to suit the mood and instincts of the Indian people so much better than the conscientious over-government of Mayo's time.

* After Stephen, Strachey and Temple retired from the Council, the Councillors, in order of seniority, throughout the viceroyalty were—Lord Napier of Magdala, B. H. Ellis, Sir Henry Norman, Arthur Hobhouse, E. C. Bayley, Sir William Muir, Sir Andrew Clarke and Sir Alexander Arbuthnot.