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THE PLACE OF PERSIA IN WORLD-POLITICS

LORD LAMINGTON presided, and, in introducing the lecturer, said: We are all aware that the great countries of Asia are awakening, but in no country in the East has there been a more remarkable revival of political life than has been exhibited in Persia. Although any political movement in any part of the world must be of interest to the people of a world-wide Empire, this is particularly the case in respect to Persia, a country bordering our Indian Empire. I believe we shall all agree, after hearing Mr. Bernard Temple's paper, that we have learned a great deal of recent events in that country, and of the ideas that are there current. . . . I believe I am right in saying that he spent more than a year in Persia, which he traversed from south to north. He has for many years been resident in India, and has been in a position to absorb and assimilate knowledge obtainable in that vast country. His journalistic training enables him to discriminate between important and unimportant facts. I am quite sure, therefore, we shall have presented to us an interesting and valuable lecture.

The views which I am about to lay before this learned Society, concerning the place of Persia in world-politics, are part of the fruits of fourteen years' residence and travel in India, Persia, and Turkish Arabia.

First I shall explain what, for the purposes of this paper, is the scope of the term 'world-politics.' Afterwards I shall indicate the grounds upon which the place assignable therein to Persia may be considered.

World-politics arise out of the divisions and combinations of the world's populations. The science of ethnology has divided and combined the world's populations into races. Is it not a curious thing, then, that the science of ethnology should have hardly any bearing upon world-politics? Ethnological terms, like 'Caucasian' or 'Indo-Germanic,' carry no practical significance among ordinary men of affairs. Ethnological bonds do not unite; ethnological barriers do not divide. An Aryan in Calcutta, an Aryan in Shiraz and an Aryan in Berlin, as I can personally testify, are sundered

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by antipathies. An Aryan in Madras, a Mongolian in Rangoon, and a Malay in Singapore, as I have often found, are linked by sympathies. On the other hand, non-ethnological terms, like 'European' and 'Asiatic,' have a daily currency and a forceful meaning. This might seem to suggest that geography, not ethnology, determines the political groupings of humanity. But if so, why does a Greek count in popular sentiment as a European, and a Turk as an Asiatic? And why can a Colorado navy, as I was lately informed, claim a higher status in Johannesburg than a Zulu nobleman? That geography does play an important part in clustering and distributing the populations of continents is indisputable. But, clearly, geography is not the supreme arbiter in the matter. There is a still more potent force, whose dominancy is visible all through the course of human history. I mean religion. It is upon religion that the essential divisions and combinations of the human race are permanently founded. When we employ such antithetical expressions as 'white and coloured,' 'Western and Eastern,' 'European and Asiatic,' 'civilized and uncivilized,' we really mean, in nearly every case, 'Christian and non-Christian.' For the last sixteen centuries the fundamental question has been whether Christian or non-Christian peoples should preponderate upon this earth. That will still be the question, perhaps, for centuries to come. Friendships and enmities may appear and disappear among the various Christian nations from time to time; the balance of power in Europe may be preserved or disturbed; wars may be waged or treaties concluded by white Government with white Government; but these are not the things which in themselves constitute 'world-politics.' I shall show, in due course, that these are not the things which Germany (who claims to have invented the term) is understood in Persia to mean by 'world-politics.'

For the last 400 years the non-Christian world has been sunk in somnolence. The supremacy of Christendom all that time has been left unquestioned, or at any rate unchallenged. Europe now imagines that the earth has at last solved its destiny, and after much tribulation delivered itself into Christian keeping for ever. Europe has almost ceased to be interested in so dead a question (as it is thought to be). Even in this new day of new ideas and new forces, though the first flutter of a mighty awakening is stirring all Asia and many parts of Africa, Europe has not the patience to stand watching those sluggish continents rub their eyes and stretch their limbs.

The population of the Christian world numbers 591,000,000. The population of the non-Christian world numbers 1,060,000,000. The proportion is almost 2 to 1 against Christendom. There are evidences that almost every part of the non-Christian world, in some sort of way and with some sort of spirit, is beginning to bestir itself. A thousand million people cannot be kept in permanent subordination unless they be kept in permanent ignorance. Christian principles will not sanction a political course based upon withholding for all time enlightenment and culture from two-thirds of the human race. Even if Christian principles could be accommodated to what might be supposed to be Christian policy, it would no longer be possible, in this age of tireless communications, to bottle up knowledge in privileged Western corners of our great globe. Roads and railways, posts and telegraphs, have penetrated, or are in process of penetrating, every continent. Steamships sail the remotest seas. Commerce drives forth and scatters abroad, in ever-increasing numbers, representatives of even the most backward countries. Nations which only thirty years ago lived the life of thirty centuries ago, to-day read newspapers and go to business in tramcars. Sophistication has spread beyond imagined bounds. The hope may be permitted to Christians that, when what used to be called the uncivilized world comes fully into the pale of civilization, it will also enter the fold of Christianity. But a hope cannot be bartered for an assurance. The fact that, after 1,600 years of sometimes fitful but mostly continuous effort to Christianize the dark continents, there are to-day more Christians in New York than in all native Asia and Africa is hardly fortifying. If, when the thousand million lately slumbering non-Christian people awake, they awake to something other than Christianity, what will be the position in the world of the five hundred million Christians? It is this which forms the primary subject-matter of world-politics.

What is the special concern of Persia with this large question? In Persia there have lately originated three new thought-movements. From Persia those thought-movements have already overflowed into India, Arabia, Turkey, and Egypt. Thence, more slowly, they are extending into other Muhammadan countries. They are charged with incalculable dynamic energies. I shall present these thought-movements to you as Muhammadans in a score of Oriental cities have earnestly, sometimes passionately, presented them to me.

Muhammadans, as everyone knows, reverence the Old and New Testaments as inspired precursors of the holy Quran. They regard the Book of Genesis as an historical document of unquestionable

validity. They accept Biblical narratives, not as allegories, but as literally accurate records of fact, corroborated in many cases by the Quran. One of these Biblical narratives tells that a deluge destroyed all mankind except Noah and his family. It would follow that all mankind to-day is descended from Noah. It would also follow that every living man and woman is specifically a descendant in the male line of either Shem or Ham or Japheth. This triune doctrine of the descent of man is, in Muhammadan estimation, not an abstraction, but an operative political law. The population of the world, in spite of many permutations, is held to be actually divisible into Shem-ites (or Semites), Ham-ites, and Japheth-ites. Muhammadans will admit, of course, that other divisions of the human family, not consonant with the original tripartite plan, are known to history and to ourselves. But throughout the seeming flux of ethnological entities there has been, they contend, no real fusion of the three basic elements. This need not be taken to imply that flesh-and-blood pedigrees back to one of Noah's three sons are individually provable. The virtues of great genealogies are spiritual. In the main, doubtless, there has been constancy of corporeal breed also, but the argument is not dependent on its physical basis. For what are the true lines of ethnological cleavage as thus viewed? Shem is the father of Muhammadanism; Japheth is the father of Christendom; Ham is the father of the rest of the world, commonly called Pagan. Japheth is the White; Shem is the Middle; Ham is the East. Japheth is the White; Shem is the Brown; Ham is the Yellow. 'Yellow' is here a loose designation, to be employed only as a terminological convention. 'Yellow' for this purpose embraces the true Yellow or Mongolian population of China, the Mongoloid and Buddhistic populations of Central Asia, Burma, and Siam, the people of Japan, the Hindu or Brahmanic population of India, the various Malay races, and also the Black or indigenous races of Africa, as well as the Red or indigenous races of America. Muhammadans would have us note how, in the main, geography gives an aspect of solidarity to this peculiar plan for massing the millions. The two continents of America, being now practically all-Christian, may be regarded from the larger view as adjuncts of Christian Europe. America thus out of the way, the rest of the populous land area of the globe may be contemplated in two extensions, one running east and west from Portugal to Japan, the other running north and south from Lapland to Cape Colony. In the east-and-west extension, looking at the map, we have Japheth lumped compactly on the left, Shem elongated in the

centre, and Ham outspreading on the right. In the north-and-south extension, we have again Japheth in dense formation on the top, which is Europe; Shem drawn out in the centre, which is Turkey and Northern Africa; and Ham expanding at the bottom, which is Central and Southern Africa. In either case Japheth and Ham cannot meet, whether as friends or as enemies, except by way of Shem. Shem, or Muhammadanism, is the ethnic centre of the inhabited world. We are further required to note that the plan is stationary. It has even an appearance of immutability. The various religious propaganda of our times produce no appreciable effects upon it. For fully 500 years this broad grouping of humanity has stood as a fixed verity. Such is the bearing of the first of the three thought-movements which have gone forth from Persia. Considered scientifically, the postulate upon which it rests, if without proof, is not altogether without reason. Some sort of ethnological authority can be cited for the view that somewhere in the region of the mountains of Ararat the main streams of early migratory humanity had a common source; that the first outpourings from this Armenian fount were those of the Hamitic families, who wandered southwards into Mesopotamia; that these were followed by the Semitic families, who, operating like a wedge upon the Hamitic Mesopotamians, drove one part of them first into Canaan, next into Egypt and Ethiopia, and lastly into Central Africa, and the other part through Persia into India, Further India, China and Japan, themselves occupying South-Western Asia; that finally there issued forth the Japhetic families, who on one side penetrated Europe by way of the Caucasus and Asia Minor, and on the other side shot out branches into Persia and India. Be that as it may, this Noachian theory of racial origins would, of course, count for but little in practical affairs if it were no more than an ingenious flight of individual speculation. The point is that in the minds of millions of Muhammadans it is coming to stand for a spiritual principle and a religious belief. Persia is now bent on indoctrinating all Islam with it.

The second of the three thought-movements emanating from Persia, and suffusing the Muhammadan world, arises logically out of the first. If Islam, or the Semitic branch of the human race, be a fixed element, what is its destiny? When only the Japhetic world was awake and doing, and the Semitic and Hamitic worlds lay wrapt in slumber, such a question was not asked. Nowadays, when civilization is carrying torches to the ends of the earth, and all humanity is astir, the question is not only asked, but answered.

The destiny of the Semites, it is declared, is to revive the glories of their past. 'Blessed be the Lord God of Shem,' exclaimed the patriarch Noah, in a benedictory transport, as recorded in Genesis ix. 26. Why did the medieval glories of Islam fade? Because the organized strength of Islam was only spiritual, not at all temporal. The Moslem genius, by its fire and ferocity, could conquer the world, and could found an inter-continental empire, but it could not acquire the tame arts of peace. Industrial discipline, scientific culture, political progress—these the Semitic spirit did not inculcate; they had to be learnt from Japhetic teachers. Subjection is a necessary preliminary to tuition—hence the overthrow of the Saracenic Empire. Islam was subdued that Islam might be instructed. This is what the Prophet Noah foresaw in his blessing to Japheth: 'God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem' (Genesis ix. 27). But the age of tents—that is to say, the age of savagery, of nomadism, of internecine strife—is passing away. A new day is dawning for Shem. A new day, however, is also dawning for Ham. The Hamitic world is also coming to self-consciousness; is also cherishing hopes and pondering how to realize them. The Semitic world is not to have the field to itself, even in the Orient. Shem, then, must have a policy as well as a purpose. Shem enters an arena where one redoubtable gladiator, Japheth, has preceded him, and another, Ham, follows close behind. A combination between any two of those gladiators would be serious, and might be fatal to the third. Presently Shem and Ham, as rivals, will be competing for the friendship of mighty Japheth. Already a great Hamitic nation, Japan, has made a league with a great Japhetic nation, England. A great Semitic nation, Turkey, has failed in an effort to do likewise. The portent is serious for Shem. A master endeavour must be made. Only the strong are admitted into alliance with the strong. The weak are a danger to their friends even more than to themselves. Shem, then, it is held, must be strong. Every Islamic country must be regenerated. Through every Muhammadan land must sweep great religious, social, and economic reforms. Turkey and Persia have lately inaugurated successful political revolutions, but these are only the first means to a distant end. When each Muhammadan country has independently made itself efficient, a union or coalition of Muhammadan States must follow. This confederacy will then have at its command for all the purposes of world-politics the massed influence, power and

resource of the Islamic universe. Preachers and teachers must go forth from Persia to all parts to spread this new Muhammadan gospel of 'kingdom come.'

There are two reasons, one practical and the other sentimental, why Shem would prefer to be allied with Japheth rather than with Ham. The practical reason rests on the fact that the Hamitic peoples number roughly five-ninths of the total population of the globe, the Japhetic peoples three-ninths, and the Semitic peoples one-ninth. Other things being equal, an alliance between the two numerically weaker groups—namely, Japheth and Shem—would establish an equipoise; whereas an alliance between Shem and Ham would throw odds of 2 to 1 against Japheth. Incidentally it is to be remarked that an alliance between Japheth and Ham would practically obliterate Shem with adverse odds of 8 to 1. The figures, roundly, are—

Shem	...	...	175,000,000 people.
Ham	...	...	885,000,000 "
Japheth	...	...	591,000,000 "

The sentimental reason for a Semitic alliance with Japheth rather than with Ham lies in the sympathy which exists between Muhammadanism and Christianity, both of which are monotheistic, and in the antipathy which exists between Muhammadanism and Paganism. Mohamet regarded Jesus as a prophet of God, and taught outward respect for the Christian faith and for its followers.

The last of the three thought-movements proceeding from Persia has to do with Persia's own place in this Muhammadan scheme of world-politics. I have difficulty in reducing my presentment of this essential part of the subject to convenient compass. I must, however, make the attempt. The Muhammadan world, it is argued, is geographically continuous, stretching almost from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Beginning in the East, in China, it comprises Turkestan and the Russian Khanates of Central Asia, Northern and North-Western India, Afghanistan, Baluchistan, Persia, the Caucasus, Mesopotamia, Arabia, Asia Minor, Syria, Turkey, Egypt, the Soudan, Somaliland, British East Africa, Zanzibar, Nyasaland, Tripoli, Tunis, Algeria, Morocco. If Muhammadan aspirations are in due season to be realized, this territorial cohesion must be preserved. Persia is the most precious pearl in the long necklace. Persia is at once the geographical, political, intellectual, and strategical centre of Islam. Persia promises also to become in the not distant future the religious centre of Islam. A keystone is not more necessary to an arch than Persia is to Pan-Islamic aggran-

dizement. Some people will, perhaps, be for dismissing this claim as a rhetorical extravagance. But the grounds upon which it rests are worth examining. First comes the geographical pretension. Persia lies in the exact centre of the Muhammadan area. More than that, if we exclude frigid lands to the north of the St. Petersburg and Kamchatka latitude, and torrid lands to the south of the Soudan and Siam latitude, Persia is also the centre of the earth. Tehran stands exactly midway between the Pacific and the Atlantic. The population of Asia, considered in its mass, is compressed within a belt or zone lying between the fiftieth and the tenth parallels. Athwart the western confines of that zone stretch the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf with its continuations. The consequent conformation of land areas is peculiar. Persia, lying between the Caspian and the Gulf, becomes an isthmus, affording the sole convenient terrestrial communication between all the dense populations of inhabited Asia on the east and all those other dense populations which occupy the European, Asiatic and African littoral of the Mediterranean on the west.

Persia's claim to political ascendancy in the proposed Muhammadan confederation is grounded in history. Mankind in the past has looked upon but four world-empires. Hermit China was not one of them. Neither was dreamy India nor esoteric Egypt. Even tumultuous Assyria and luxurious Babylonia were not of the number, being but morbid swellings that burst as soon as pricked. The four world-empires to count were : Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome and the Saracens. Of these, the first, and in a certain sense the last, pertain to Persia. From Persia first went forth world-power in the time of the Book of Ezra ; to Persia it was brought back in the time of the 'Arabian Nights,' when Baghdad was still a Persian city. It was the hereditary political genius of the Persians which thus enabled them at a very early period to take the lead in civilization. Then, as now, the Persians were Aryans. No other branch of the human family has ever risen to the political height attained by Aryans. The Aryans alone have been the persistent pioneers and the propagandists of civilization. Practically all progressive Europe to-day is Aryan. Practically all non-progressive Asia, except Persia, is non-Aryan, because the Hindus, whose ancestors were Aryan, have darkened their blood almost beyond identification in the turbid streams of indigenous Tartarism and Dravidianism. What has been called the White Man's Burden might, with an extended outlook, be called the Aryan Man's Burden. In the remote past, 500 years before the birth of

Christ, it was Aryan Persia which alone could assemble, organize and energize the diffident constituents of the Semitic Orient. Later, it was Aryan Persia which took administrative possession of the empire of the Semitic Saracens, and gave to it, by means of Persian Ministers under the Caliphs, all it had of governmental consistency, stability and method. It is Aryan Persia which to-day is filling the mind of non-Aryan Asia with thoughts and hopes of a sort that shall make lethargic nationalities quiver.

The claim of Persia to intellectual as distinct from political supremacy in the Muhammadan domain starts with the pretension that Persia has Aryanized the Muhammadan religion. The Shia faith is held to be a Christian metamorphosis of the Sunni faith. The martyrdom of Hussein is made to parallel, both in its circumstances and in its significances, the martyrdom of Jesus. Except Hussein had been sacrificed, Muhammadans could not be saved. Except Muhammadans acknowledge the sacrifice, it avails them nothing. There was no compulsion on Hussein to suffer the pangs of death; he voluntarily endured them to save sinners. In the blood of Hussein the soiled souls of Muhammadans will be washed white. The Shias have their Lenten period, their Good Friday equivalent, their Passion play, and their Messianic hope. These doctrines and rites are peculiar to the Shias; that is to say, they are peculiar to the Aryan Muhammadans. But Shiaism has influenced Sunniism, which is Semitic Muhammadanism, in many impalpable ways. It has softened its savagery and intellectualized its emotionalism. The new Persian religious movement called Bahaism will, many believe, unite Shias and Sunnis in a strong bond of brotherhood, and will regenerate both sects in concert. Outside religion, Persia claims intellectual superiority on account of its language, which is the richest, the most expressive and the most musical in modern Asia; and on account of its literature, which stands alone in appealing with almost equal charm to the East and to the West. Persian was the Court language of the Mogul Emperors at Delhi, and subsequently the official language of India under British rule. It is still, more than any other, the polite, the ceremonial and the diplomatic language of the Muhammadan world. I found when I was in Northern India that I could not pay a more delicate or graceful compliment to my friends in the ancient Muhammadan aristocracy than to address them in Persian. The Persian poets are world-classics. Häfiz and Sâdi are not more appreciated in Damascus, Lahore and Bokhara, than in Paris, Berlin and Chicago.

Persia's claim to strategical pre-eminence among Muhammadan States has both a political and an economic aspect. It is considered that, were Persia to fall into the hands of a non-Muhammadan Power, there would be an instant end of the Moslem dream of political resurrection. That proposed federation of Islamic kingdoms and principalities which is to combine and vivify the disparate elements of modern Muhammadanism would sink into the limbo of abandoned projects. To realize the magnitude of such a disaster in Muhammadan estimation, Christendom must try to imagine a non-Christian Power, say Turkey, taking possession of Austria and Germany, or at any rate of a broad belt of land across Central Europe extending from Hamburg to Venice. What the Suez Canal is to the aqueous regions of the globe, Persia is to the terrestrial regions. From Alexander to Napoleon, great militarists have acknowledged Persia's strategical importance in Asia. Even to-day there are soldiers and statesmen who think it possible that the Indian Empire, the Turkish Empire, the Russian Empire, and even to some extent the Chinese Empire, may shape their destinies, or may have their destinies shaped for them, on the plateau of Iran. Economically there is the consideration that history seems to move in cycles and to repeat itself; that Persia was the commercial highway of the antique world, affording the sole means of land-communication between Macedonia, Lydia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and Mesopotamia, on the one hand, and Bactriana, Turkestan, China, India, and Malay, on the other; that Persia began to lose her commercial importance when men began to go down to the sea in ships and to navigate the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea; that marine carriage was as fast as land carriage in the olden times of camels, but is not as fast in the modern times of locomotives; that the comparative cheapness of waterways has not prevented maritime Europe from being heavily seamed with railways, and will not in the long-run keep iron roads out of undeveloped Asia; that every great scheme or dream of railway exploitation in Western Asia is concerned either immediately or ultimately with the practicableness of girdling Persia with broad-gauge lines; that whether the future railway systems of Persia assume in the main a north-and-south trend or an east-and-west trend, or both, they will affect materially, and even profoundly, the commercial fortunes of many lands besides Persia.

It all comes to this, then: World-politics, as viewed by the

political leaders of 175 million Muhammadans, resolve themselves into a struggle—not necessarily a bloody struggle, but still an intense and vital struggle—for place and power between the three great divisions of mankind. The Muhammadan mind is deeply stirred by the prospect. Every Muhammadan country is in communication with every other Muhammadan country: directly, by means of special emissaries, pilgrims, travellers, traders and postal exchanges; indirectly, by means of Muhammadan newspapers, books, pamphlets, leaflets and periodicals. I have met with Cairo newspapers in Baghdad, Tehran and Peshawar; Constantinople newspapers in Busra and Bombay; Calcutta newspapers in Mohamera, Kerbela and Port Saïd. Everywhere, and by everyone, it is held that Persia is and must be the foundation-stone of Muhammadan endeavour. Persia injured is Islam assailed. Persia demolished is Islam overthrown.

Let us pass, in conclusion, to the practical outcome of all these considerations. Of the 175 million Muhammadans in the world, no less than 142 millions, or four-fifths of the whole, are under non-Muhammadan sovereignty, control, or protection. Of these 142 millions, 112 millions, or five-sixths, are in Christian keeping, and 30 millions, or one-sixth, are in Pagan keeping. The great Muhammadan Powers of the world number seven, of whom only three profess Muhammadanism. In order of statistical magnitude these seven Muhammadan Powers are:

Britain	...	...	...	...	78,000,000	Muhammadans.
China	...	...	...	...	30,000,000	"
Turkey	...	...	...	...	17,000,000	"
Russia	...	...	...	...	16,000,000	"
France	...	...	...	...	15,000,000	"
Persia	...	...	...	...	10,000,000	"
Afghanistan	...	...	...	...	5,000,000	"
Others	...	...	...	...	4,000,000	"
Total	...	...	...	...	175,000,000	"

Britain is thus by far the greatest of all Muhammadan Powers, in virtue of having authority over exactly half the total Muhammadan population of the world. The distribution of Britain's Muhammadan interests is no less remarkable for its expansiveness and diversity of area. Here is a rough census, parts of which are necessarily conjectural:

ASIA—					
India	...	...	...	62,458,077	Muhammadans.
Baluchistan	...	...	...	765,368	"
Laccadive Islands	...	...	...	10,274	"
Ceylon... ..	...	...	...	248,140	"
British Borneo	...	...	...	50,000	"
Bahrein Islands	...	...	...	75,000	"
Oman	...	...	...	800,000	"
Aden and Perim	...	...	...	41,222	"
Kuria Muria Isles and Sokotra	...	...	...	12,000	"
Cyprus	...	...	...	51,309	"
AFRICA—					
Egypt	...	...	...	10,431,265	"
Soudan	...	...	...	2,000,000	"
Somaliland	...	...	...	300,000	"
British East Africa	...	...	...	200,000	"
Zanzibar Protectorate	...	...	...	236,000	"
Nyasaland	...	...	...	947,168	"
Natal	...	...	...	10,000	"
Mauritius	...	...	...	41,208	"
Northern Nigeria	...	...	...	6,000	"
Southern Nigeria	...	...	...	5,000	"
Gold Coast	...	...	...	5,000	"
Sierra Leone	...	...	...	7,396	"
Gambia	...	...	...	1,000	"
AUSTRALIA (mostly Indian emigrants)...				20,768	"
Total	...	...	...	78,722,195	"

The population of the United Kingdom is 41 millions. The total Christian population of the whole of the British Empire is 62 millions. Britain's Muhammadan peoples (*i.e.*, subjects, dependents, tributaries, etc.) thus outnumber her Christian peoples by 16 millions. If we could imagine ourselves here as knowing nothing of the circumstances of the British Empire except what these bare statistics disclose, we should still feel that we were on safely platitudinous ground in opining that Muhammadan goodwill is an important factor of Britain's stability as an empire. But we know a good deal more than any statistics can demonstrate. We know that in India, where 62 millions of our 78 million Muhammadan fellow-liegemens are concentrated, there has arisen of late a political crisis of uncommon magnitude. We know that everyone in India, from the Viceroy downwards, regards the position and the prospect there with gravity. We know that, while it would be

unjust to generalize too widely, it is correct and fair to say that the elements of sedition and anarchy in India are found practically entirely among non-Muhammadan classes of the population. We know, because it has been universally acknowledged, that in these difficult and perhaps dangerous times in India the loyalty of Indian Muhammadans has been, and still is, a source of immense strength and encouragement to us. No doubt world-politics, like home-politics, on the 'give-and-take' principle, must often demand sacrifices in exchange for gains, but it would be hard to imagine a political object the attainment of which might justify us in forfeiting Muhammadan attachment. Is there any risk of such a forfeiture?

Only a few years ago Britain was regarded by the Persians with feelings of friendliness, admiration and trustfulness. I have lately returned from a year's tour of Persia, and everywhere on my way, from the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea, I found that the feelings with which Britain is now regarded by the Persians are those of suspicion, dislike and apprehension. I set myself to study both the causes and the consequences of this surprising revulsion of sentiment. I gained, with difficulty and after tireless persistence, the cautious confidences of Persians of almost all classes. I interviewed Muhammadans, Armenians, Parsees, Jews, Babis, Bahais and Europeans. I communed with merchants, artisans and priests, with Provincial Governors, tribal chieftains and army Generals, with Cabinet Ministers, Members of Parliament and permanent officials. I discussed Persian politics and Muhammadan politics with at least 300 representative men. I was a reader also of the now comparatively ably edited and cleanly printed Persian newspapers. Almost unanimously Persians heaped upon me the opinion that Russia is the irreconcilable and eternal enemy of Persia, and that Britain, by going over to Russia since 1907, has broken with immemorial Anglo-Indian traditions and has betrayed Persia. Persia, under the heel of Russian intervention, has in her extremity appealed in vain to Britain for succour. Britain's reply throughout, as Persia understands it, has been to endorse, actively or tacitly, Russia's every proceeding. Persia is now transferring her invocations to the Muhammadan nations, and particularly to Turkey and India. This is Persia's last effort and last hope. To state the alleged grounds upon which anti-British sentiment rests would be to relate at length and in detail the tangled history of the recent revolution in Persia, and the still more tangled course of administrative and diplomatic affairs since the Nationalist Government

overthrew the Royalist Government and inaugurated a constitutional régime. Such a narrative, full of the romance and mystery of European and Asiatic statecraft as practised in the East, I may yet have to give to the public, but the limits of the present paper will not endure it. My immediate purpose goes no farther than to show in broad outline how Muhammadan thought is moving.

I come to the culminating point in these studies. I had been seeking, during my long rambles in Persia, to understand how astute Persian politicians, who credit British diplomacy with acumen if with nothing else, could reconcile their accusation of British perfidy with their knowledge of British interest. I shall summarize in the briefest compass the import of the many astounding answers I got, and then I shall have finished.

The argument runs as follows: Of the three great divisions of the human race, the Christian or Japhetic division is at present in the ascendant. It wishes to remain so. It desires the political growth or progress of neither of the other divisions. It will not ally itself with either, except perhaps temporarily, as a distasteful expedient, to maintain its own supremacy against the third. At present Christendom holds in subjection three-fifths of the Muhammadan world and one-half of the Pagan world (roughly). It will not consent to diminish its sway; rather, it will seek to expand it. This is plainly to be seen in contemporary history. Only the mutual jealousies of the individual Christian Powers saved Pagan China more than once from dismemberment. Only the rivalries of Christian England and Russia in the past averted a like disaster from Muhammadan Persia. In the case of China, which is still backward and conservative, Christendom conceives that it can afford to hold its repressive hand awhile, though Japan has cleverly taken advantage of Europe's inattention. But in the case of Persia the recent revolution and the intellectual and religious awakening of the people have appeared in too dramatic a fashion to escape notice. They indicate warningly to Europe that Islam is preparing to imitate Japan. Islam must be checked. Especially Persia, the head and heart of Islam, must be checked. Hence outstanding Anglo-Russian differences are hastily composed, and a joint policy of suppression in Persia is espoused. In all these doings an exceptional position is occupied by Germany. Germany (according to this view) has attained her present greatness among the nations in virtue of possessing the finest army in the world. Germany cannot extend, or even perhaps maintain, her advantages unless she also possess the finest navy in the world. The finances

of no country can conceivably bear the double burden of invincibility by land and by sea. Germany must therefore either forego her dream of amphibious supremacy or procure an ally who will supply either an army or a navy. The great naval and military Powers of the world are for the most part averse from alliances with Germany. They have, in fact, erected a hostile ring-fence of alliances round Germany. A potential ally for Germany, feeble and unorganized at present, but capable under proper direction of developing almost unlimited military strength, is discernible in the group of Muhammadan countries. No one doubts that some of the Muhammadan countries, like Turkey and Afghanistan, contain the finest raw material for an army that the world can show. If the various Moslem States and principalities could be regenerated under the guidance of German statesmen, reorganized by German administrators, drilled, disciplined, armed and led by German generals, and consolidated by German diplomatists, Germany with such an ally could venture to disband more than half her present army, and devote the savings to building up a navy that would overawe Europe. The sincerity of Germany's friendship for Islam, it is further argued, is evidenced by the fact that not a single Mussulman anywhere in the world has been brought under German rule, though no less than 15 million Pagans have been subjugated by the 'Mailed Fist.' It was Germany, in her friendship for Shem and her dread and dislike of Ham, who started and for a long time sustained in Europe the cry of the 'Yellow Peril.' It was Germany who alone perceived the necessity for maintaining and strengthening the Semitic world as a buffer between the Hamitic and the Japhetic worlds. Almost all Germany's quarrels with Europe have been in defence of ill-used and unprotected Muhammadan States. Witness the diplomatic troubles in the Balkans, in Morocco, in Crete, in Mesopotamia, and now in Persia. On the other hand, who are Germany's arch-opponents in this great field of world-politics? England, Russia and France: England, lord of 78 million Muhammadans; Russia, lord of 16 million Muhammadans; and France, lord of 15 million Muhammadans. Germany has sought to promote the development of backward Muhammadan areas by projects of railway construction, as in Asia Minor, Syria, and Turkish Arabia. Anglo-Russian hostility has had to be encountered all the way along. The so-called railway concessions, or monopolies, extorted by England and Russia from the Persian Government, were not designed to facilitate railway development in Persia: held tenaciously, as they have been, for years, they have not resulted in the

laying of a single mile of railway; they serve only to exclude German engineers and German capitalists who might be willing to extend their enterprise from the Mesopotamian plain to the Iranian plateau.

Such are the new thought-movements which are agitating the public mind in Persia, and by overflow from Persia are likely to permeate the whole of the Muhammadan world. Wild and wonderful they may, perhaps, be deemed, but I think it will be felt by this learned Society that they afford some justification for considering afresh the place of Persia in world-politics.

DISCUSSION

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think that, as a Society, we have often listened to a paper showing such evidence of close observation, careful thought, remarkable judgment, and great power of detachment, as that Mr. Temple has read to us. I take it that he was pressing on our notice facts as he saw them, rather than making bold assertions of opinion. In the first place he pointed out that geography, and not ethnology, determines the political groupings of humanity; and, if I remember rightly, I read a leading article in the *Times* not long since to the same effect. It follows that, when people talk about racial feeling, it is really an improper term to use. There is no such thing as distinct racial feeling, as all countries are a combination of different races. It is geographical influence that produces in time what is called racial feeling, and I think that was really Mr. Bernard Temple's argument. But he went on to talk of religion as being the main important factor in determining the character of countries, and from this he proceeded to show the mighty forces there are at work at the present time in the Moslem world. As a people belonging to a world-wide Empire, we have to consider our own interests in regard to any of these deeply significant movements that are taking place. I noticed his passing allusion to the state of feeling in India. He has been in that country more recently than myself, and his observations on that subject must be held to be those of an authority. I was, therefore, the more sorry to hear the dark view he took of the state of feeling in that Empire. I sincerely trust that that feeling is passing away, and that, under careful guidance, and with the new methods of government that have been instituted, there will be a better feeling.

Mr. Temple told us that we had offended public opinion in Persia. From the position we hold in that country, and from the very fact that all great occurrences in Persia affect our Imperial interests, the state of feeling he reports cannot be disregarded. I do believe and hope we

shall re-establish ourselves in the favour of the Persian people by the sincerity of our support of their independence. I always have held that such independence is an essential factor in safeguarding our Indian and general Imperial interests.

Mr. H. F. B. LYNCH: I rise, at your invitation, sir, with great diffidence to discuss a subject which I do not feel qualified to pronounce opinions upon with any definiteness—for the lecturer has taken us over the very wide field of world-politics as seen by the eyes of Persians. I would like to know positively his source of inspiration. I am pretty sure it was a combination of Persian sources: the lecture had the true Persian ring about it. It is a most interesting presentment of how Persians look upon their own country as a factor in world-politics at the present day. Upon the picture thus presented I would like to say this: I do not think that the Persians, in estimating the circumstances, have sufficiently taken account of the position which their nation occupies amongst Muhammadan peoples on purely religious grounds. All those of us who know Persia—and there are many of us in this room—will agree that an outstanding feature of our observations in Persia and adjacent countries has been the intense hatred between the Sunni and the Shia. As a witness on the spot of the events accompanying the recent Turkish revolution, I am bound to say I found very little support of a practical kind for the Persian movement amongst the Young Turks. In the very critical times when Russian troops advanced across Persia towards the Turkish border, and when many of us feared they would overrun Persia altogether, the movements on the side of Turkey were not very pronounced. That may be accounted for to some extent, no doubt, by the consideration that Turkey, being in a delicate diplomatic position, did not want to impair her relations with Russia. But I think that want of action on the part of Turkey may also be attributed, at least in part, to want of sympathy between the Sunnis of Turkey and the Shias of Persia. I hope the lecturer will let us know how far he thinks the Persians have duly estimated that factor in their general survey of world-politics with Persia lying at the centre of the problem.

I was greatly disappointed to hear that the Persians regard England with some disfavour. I am surprised at that statement. I have been in very close contact with the Persian reformers during the past two years, including the men who led the revolution; I am bound to say that I have not found a shadow of that feeling amongst them. We have heard some of them here in this room, including Taghi Zadeh, one of the principal leaders of the revolution, and it will be recalled that he made a speech most sympathetic towards Great Britain. Surely none of those who were behind the revolution can fail to realize and appreciate how great was the measure of sympathy they had from the

British people—I do not now speak of the Government—and that but for this sympathy the revolution which dethroned Mahomed Ali would never have been successfully accomplished. Russia had to face the fact that there was in this country a considerable wave of public opinion in favour of the Persian constitutional party, and she was made to feel that she ran the risk of rupturing her good relations with Great Britain if she went too far in her attitude towards Persia. There are among us many critics of the Anglo-Russian Agreement, and in this very room we bitterly criticized some of its provisions. But, at all events, let us admit this: that under the shadow of that Agreement, and in view of the friendly feelings between England and Russia which are consequent upon the results of that Agreement, it is now possible for Persia to regenerate herself. If Persia now makes a serious effort to put her own house in order, and if she gives evidence that she is determined not to be led away from that purpose, I feel certain that neither England nor Russia will seek to overthrow the present system of Constitutional Government, and still less that they will have designs of partitioning the country. I feel strongly that the political future of Persia now lies in the hands of the Persians themselves. The very worst thing they could do would be to alienate their two great neighbours, England and Russia, by coquetting with Germany. This would tend to bring about the very catastrophe which, from their national point of view, they must be most anxious to avert—namely, that of robbing them of the fruits of the Constitutional changes effected under circumstances of British sympathy and with British support.

COLONEL C. E. YATE: With reference to what Mr. Lynch has said regarding the ancient feud between Sunnis and Shias, I think there is a growing tendency for these two rival sects to amalgamate more than they would have done a few years back. I cannot say how far this amalgamation has gone in Constantinople and Teheran, but certainly in India we have seen a great fusion of the two sects in the All India Moslem League, under the leadership of His Highness the Agha Khan, and it seems to be an acknowledged fact that the two sects there have resolved to work together to further the interests of Muhammadans as a whole. A limited Islamic movement is, therefore, a force to be reckoned with.

The lecturer has given us to-day so much to think about, that it is difficult to speak on the spur of the moment, but it will not surprise any of us here who know the Persian character to learn from him that the Persians consider Persia to be the hub of the universe, whether reckoned, as the lecturer pointed out, from north to south, or from east to west. The inflated ideas of the Persian mind as to their own importance are well known. Every Persian goose is a swan to a Persian. What we have to consider is whether Persia has the power

or the strength to maintain itself as the hub of the universe. The immediate task before the Persian people, as Mr. Lynch has said, is to maintain their own independence, and by themselves they cannot do this.

It is to England and Russia that Persia owes her independence, and if the Persians try to bring in a third Power into Persia between England and Russia, as the lecturer tells us they are inclined to do, the question is, Will Persia be able to maintain the independence of her country, or will this be the first step towards its disintegration?

The friendship of England and Russia is greatly to Persia's advantage, and I agree with Mr. Lynch that they will make a great mistake if they bring in a third party.

Mr. E. R. P. MOON asked the lecturer whether the thought-movements he had outlined prevailed in the remoter portions of the Islamic world, and whether, too, they prevailed in such intellectual Muhammadan centres as the El Azhar, near Cairo, or the Aligarh College in India. He thought that Mr. Temple had been conveying the views of Persians more than those of the Muhammadan world in general, or of the Sunni section in particular. He wished to express his appreciation of the treat the lecturer had given them by a paper so marked by striking phrases and impressive antitheses.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL A. C. YATE said that he had been struck by the elaborate word-painting of Mr. Temple's lecture, and by the originality and power with which he had handled the several problems raised. His own personal knowledge of Persia was a quarter of a century old. He recalled the fact that, when near Herat in 1885, Sir West Ridgeway handed to him, for the purpose of translation into English, a Persian missive in which the Mahdi called upon the Imam-i-Jum'ah of Mashhad to unite with him in fomenting a general uprising throughout Islam. The Mahdi's aim was to reassert the predominance of Muhammadan power as in the seventh and eighth centuries after Christ. Mr. Temple had just told them that such dreams were still entertained. Doubtless they were. Colonel Yate was unable at the moment to express an opinion as to the probability of an attempt being made to realize the dream, but he thought that the time was far distant, and that Mr. Temple had been looking far ahead.

One of the main reasons for the existence of the Anglo-Russian Convention was, he believed, the recognition by both England and Russia of the possibilities opened up by German ambition and enterprise in the regions of the Middle East. From day to day evidence was given of the efforts Germany was making to establish her rights and influence in the leading Muhammadan countries both of the mid-East and North-African littoral. If Persian opinion was tending in the direction which Mr. Temple indicated, then it seemed to him that the



Convention was thoroughly justified. The Convention had its weak and strong points. On the one hand it freed the Indian Government from incessant military activity and watchful anxiety, and strengthened the British position on the Baluchistan border and in the Persian Gulf. On the other hand, this calm assignment of spheres of influence and interest, regardless of the feelings of the country and people thus arbitrarily partitioned, was calculated to tempt the victim to call in the good offices of a third Power. This is what Persia seemed to have done. While Russia and England were deliberating what concessions each should have, Germany steps in as the concessionaire favoured by the Constitutional Government, which owes its existence and stability to the policy of the Governments of their Majesties King Edward VII. and Czar Nicholas II. So much for *Persica fides*. The Amir of Afghanistan again had committed himself to nothing. He simply ignored the Convention. A copy was sent to him; he did not even acknowledge it. He treated it as the Czar and the Duma treat the representations of British busy-bodies on the treatment of the Jew and the Constitution of Finland, only even more cavalierly. None the less, Colonel Yate considered that, at a very critical juncture in the affairs of Persia, the Anglo-Russian Convention had proved itself to be an instrument of value; and we may yet live to see it enforce the maintenance of the *status quo* in Afghanistan.

Mr. E. EDWARDS said that he could well understand that there was some amount of misgiving on the part of the Persians as to the attitude of Russia and England in the last few months, more particularly since the revolution. If the statements made in the Press were true, the conditions imposed in respect to the proposed loan were very onerous, and he thought the misgivings of the Persians were justifiable. The terms almost seemed designed to put the control of the finances of Persia into the hands of the two Powers. He trusted the two Powers would afford this ancient people sufficient grounds for the renewal of their confidence and trust in them. It was recognized everywhere that England had been the best friend of Persia in the past, and it was still the case that England had every interest in maintaining the independence of Persia, if only as a buffer State. Personally, he thanked Mr. Temple for his excellent and most comprehensive paper.

The CHAIRMAN: Before I call on Mr. Temple to reply, I wish to refer to Mr. Lynch's observation that the people of Persia are now in a position to put their own house in order, and that it lies with them to make good their claim to maintain independence. In this view I cannot agree with Mr. Lynch, for the reason that, as is well known, they have not the material means whereby they can maintain their independence. They have reason to feel aggrieved, not that we

entered into the Convention, but that we have not taken adequate means to give the Convention vitality. The preamble of the instrument stated distinctly that its purpose was to maintain the independence of Persia. The country cannot get on with an empty Exchequer, and it fell to the two countries who declared this independence to be their aim for Persia to try and remedy that defect. But as the last speaker indicated, terms were insisted upon for the loan of half a million sterling that were too onerous for any self-respecting people for one moment to submit themselves to. I feel that in the interests of the world at large an independent Persia is required. It is to the interest of our Indian Empire, and I believe it is to the interest of Russia too, though of course that is not our business.

Mr. TEMPLE, in replying to the discussion, said he fully appreciated the kindly tone of the criticism his humble efforts had called forth. He would at once say that his position in regard to the subject-matter of this paper was that of a photographer. He had not come there to give them his ideas about Persian politics and British policy in Persia; he had been giving them pictures of the thought-movements in the Muhammadan world. Of course, it was fairly open to opinion whether as a camera he was altogether a competent instrument, whether his lens was properly adjusted, or whether he had developed his plates correctly. All these points were open to fair question, but he could at least say that he had been very painstaking in the investigation. (Hear, hear.) He had had long experience of the East and of Eastern manners to fortify him in his explorations of the Moslem mind. Mr. Lynch had said in the way of kindly praise that the paper covered a wide ground. But the discussion had covered a still wider ground. If he was unable in the few minutes at his disposal to enter these further paths with the fulness of reply that they deserved, it was from no want of consciousness of the importance of the issues raised.

There was no doubt that, as Mr. Lynch had said, the feeling of animosity between the Sunnis and the Shias had in the past been intense. He had himself seen riots between the two sects in India. But there had been in recent times distinct evidence of many tendencies of a coming together of these previously hostile divisions of the Moslem world. But more than that there was the new religious movement called Bahaism in Persia, of which he had spoken, which was promising to attract into a common fold many different sects, races and creeds. He would be giving a lecture on the subject towards the end of the month at the Royal Society of Arts, when it would be found that this new religious movement was probably destined to produce remarkable consequences in the non-Moslem as well as the Moslem world, and that it would almost certainly bring together upon terms of workable amity, in a way that had never been seen before, the two

great divisions of Islam. It might be fairly predicted that this conjunction would be early and striking, and that its results would be even more conspicuous in their political power than in their religious aspects. We should hear of events in consequence of this coming together that would astonish that part of the world which was only conscious of the historical hostility of Shia and Sunni and regarded the difference as impossible of reconciliation.

As to Mr. Lynch's observation that other Muhammadan peoples, Sunnis, had not taken a very practical interest in the revolution in Persia, and generally in the fate of Persia, that was no doubt true. But the explanation was also obvious. At the time the revolution came to a head in Persia, and for long years before that time, Britain was regarded as the true friend, because the disinterested friend, of Persia, and it was felt by Turkey and by India (as he could personally vouch) and by other Muhammadan countries, that the interests of Persia, as against the encroachments of Russia, were perfectly safe in Britain's hands. It was only because in the past two or three years the course of politics had shattered that opinion that the Sunni countries were coming to see that the interests of Persia were not safe in Britain's keeping, and that now was the time to do things (whether encouraging German advances or organizing Moslem forces) which would avert the ill-effects it was supposed might in these circumstances ultimately accrue under the Anglo-Russian Convention. He thought if Mr. Lynch, or any other experienced observer, were now in Constantinople, or in Cairo, and certainly in India, there would be no want of evidence of the almost strained state of Muhammadan feeling in regard to what was looked upon as Britain's betrayal of Persia. This attitude did not arise from the signing of the Anglo-Russian Convention; but from the fact so pertinently brought out by Lord Lamington that the agreement to preserve the integrity of Persia was not being adequately kept. Persia asked no more from Russia and England than to be left alone to work out her own destinies; at the same time, being given the facility a loan on reasonable terms would connote. The whole of the facts respecting the proposed loan, and the quartering on Persia of Russian troops, would justify any impartial observer in saying that the Agreement, in so far as it provided for maintaining the independence of Persia, had not been kept, and not only so, but that everything had been done to prevent Persia working out her destinies on the lines they all there that afternoon wished her to proceed along. Against England there was no accusation of active animosity. The complaint was that England had been a decidedly consenting party to all Russia's proceedings. He did not think that the charge against England went further than that, even in the mind of the most intense pro-Persian. There was still in the Persian and Muhammadan mind

generally a lingering feeling of goodwill and respect towards England, which only wanted some display of goodwill on the part of England to revive feelings as warm and grateful as ever before. The Persian appeal was that, instead of being a consenting party to putting every difficulty in the way of the new Nationalist Government, England should give any help and succour she reasonably could, and should leave the Persian Government undisturbed and unhampered by foreign intrigues and interference. They believed that very soon after this was done they would be able to prove their competency. England, by giving her moral support, would be rendering a service of enormous value, and would thereby be retaining the affection of the Muhammadan world—at any rate, of that part of the Muhammadan world which in the present stage of history was of most importance. He was afraid one could not be too sanguine as to that hope being realized; but, at any rate, that was the substance of Persia's attitude so far as the Agreement was concerned.

The question had been asked whether the thought-movements he had outlined were current at such intellectual centres outside Persia as El Azhar or Aligarh. His personal inquiries had not extended into Egypt, but in regard to Aligarh the answer was certainly in the affirmative. Indeed, curiously enough, he first heard of these thought-movements when he was at Aligarh College, in connection with the visit there of the Ameer of Afghanistan—in other words, when a Sunni monarch was visiting what was then in the main a Sunni college. What he heard during that visit led him into the long course of inquiry the results of which he had communicated to them that evening. From Aligarh he traced this moving of the Moslem mind all over Northern India, and then some time afterwards he went to Persia, and found that to be the true originating region of these ideas.

Mr. Lynch had said that Persia was in a position to work out her own destiny, but the present state of affairs there was opposed to that idea. Persia, so far from being free to go ahead, was tied and bound in every possible way, and found Russia setting bounds for her plans and checkmating her every course. No doubt, as had been said, English public opinion was on the side of Persia, and there was a feeling of gratitude towards those who had actively espoused her cause. Most admirable sentiments had been expressed, but the desire was that they should be translated into practice by the Government. Notwithstanding the efforts made, our official policy in Persia remained for the most part unchanged. The need for change of policy was pressing, for in a very few years it might become impossible for Persia to organize her forces and carry on her Government without foreign intervention. This would mean, not only the end of Persian national

aspirations, but the end of the Muhammadan aspirations he had outlined. He earnestly hoped that something might be done, perhaps in a very short time, to bring about such a change of policy as to give effect to the declared intention to promote Persian independence, for on such a change very great issues in the history of the world depended. (Cheers.)

A vote of thanks to Mr. Temple, proposed from the chair, having been passed, the proceedings closed.



