



H.M. King Ghazi I

THE GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF 'IRAQ:
A STUDY IN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT.

PHILIP WILLARD IRELAND.

1935

LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS
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THE GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF
A STUDY IN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

PHILIP WILKINSON
1955

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" The Government and Administration of 'Iraq."

The aim of the thesis is to examine the forces which ,since 1914 ,have operated in bringing 'Iraq from a neglected and maladministered portion of the Ottoman Empire to its present position as a political unit among the nations. The establishment and development of its political institutions are traced and evaluated from the standpoint of their contribution to this evolution and in their relation to British policy: the safeguarding of the frontiers of and the routes to India. This policy is conceived to have remained the same during the period under review , as in the previous 150 years , the history of which is briefly sketched.

The early administration ,1914-1917, characterized by expediency and the application of Indian methods, is shown to have been dominated by military considerations and political motives which envisaged "Mesopotamia as an appendage of India."

The divergence of opinion between the so-called "Indian" and "Sharifian" schools of Arab politics is revealed to have been ,in reality, the more fundamental conflict between the traditional theory of the duty of advanced nations to backwards peoples and the theory of self-determination ,of nationalism and of democratic consent. The influence of this conflict is indicated on the creation of administration, particularly between 1917- 1920, and on the constitutional proposals put forward from Baghdad during that period.

The growth of 'Iraqi nationalism is traced from hitherto unutilized sources. The influence of war-time promises and encouragement by the Allies, of the Arab movement elsewhere and of the impact of Western ideas is analysed. The view that it had no local origins is rejected.

New light from official sources is given on the creation of Arab Government, the Provisional Council of State, the accession of King Faisal, the drafting of the Treaty of 1922 and the Organic^{Law}, which are analysed, and on the passing of the Treaty by the Constituent Assembly. The positions of the King and of the British Advisers are examined. The evolution of King Faisal's position as a tool of British policy to that of a point of balance between the nationalists and the Mandatory Power is indicated.

The development of administration is reviewed, and reasons suggested for the progressive curtailment of British responsibilities. The conclusion is reached that, in spite of the theoretical triumph of nationalism and democratic consent, Great Britain has achieved practical recognition of her special interests. While fundamental indigenous problems will long prevent 'Iraq from becoming the fully modern state she now claims to be, her national existence is assured as long as she facilitates the development of petroleum deposits, maintains the safety of international air communications and safeguards the Middle Eastern approach to India.

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SOURCES.

The work represented in this thesis has been based upon the source materials enumerated below.

1. Official Telegrams, Dispatches, Memoranda and Minutes.

Most of these have been made available for the first time for study by the India Office, the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office, including H. M. Embassy at Baghdad.

2. Official Reports.

These include:

- a- Interdepartmental and other reports of the British Administration of 'Iraq and of the 'Iraq Government.
- b- Official Reports of H. M. Government to the League of Nations.
- c- Reports of Special Commissions to 'Iraq, as those sent by the League of Nations.

The writer believes that he can conscientiously say that he has seen every relevant report issued by the Civil Administration and the 'Iraq Government. Some of these, especially reports of the early days of the Occupation, have been seen in manuscript form through the kindness of H. M. Ambassador at Baghdad. The writer has placed greater reliance on these and on the Interdepartmental Reports, many of which were secret or confidential, than on the reports prepared for general consultation, although many of the latter are storehouses of pertinent facts and statistics concerning 'Iraq, 1917 to 1932.

3. Newspapers.

During his two visits to Baghdad, covering nearly six months, for the purpose of research, the writer has been able to draw, with what he believes to be valuable results, upon the files of the Baghdad Times (now the 'Iraq Times) and of practically all of the vernacular newspapers published in Baghdad from 1921 onwards. He has also drawn upon newspapers and periodicals published in Great Britain, France and elsewhere.

4. Books and Articles.

Although the writer has endeavoured to base his work on original sources wherever possible, he has drawn upon the large number of works of varying value on 'Iraq and the Middle East. These have been used, as a rule, to confirm or to amplify the writer's own impressions or those facts obtained at first hand.

5. Interviews.

These have included an audience with His Majesty King Ghazi, who has given the writer every possible encouragement for his study; interviews with practically every 'Iraqi statesman and dignitary who has taken part in the creation of modern 'Iraq, a list of whom would form a Who's Who of 'Iraq; interviews with the former High Commissioners of His Britannic Majesty in 'Iraq, and with many of those British officials who from 1915 to 1932 participated in the affairs of government and of administration in 'Iraq. In many cases the writer has had more than one interview. To all of those who have permitted him to draw so extensively on their time and knowledge, the writer is deeply indebted.

CHAPTER I.

GREAT BRITAIN GOES TO WAR IN TURKISH ARABIA.

Late in the day of 6 November, 1914, a detachment of the 16th Infantry Brigade under the command of Brig.-General W. S. Delamain disembarked under the guns of H.M.S. Odin at Fao, the southernmost point of Turkish Arabia. The guns of the fort had been already silenced by the Odin and there was no further resistance. Within a few minutes the Union Jack replaced the Osmanli Crescent at the flagstaff.⁽¹⁾

Thus began the campaign which eventually was to wrest from the Ottoman Empire the whole of Turkish Arabia, as the Turkish wilayets or provinces of Basra, Baghdad and Mosul were then known in British official circles,⁽²⁾ and to lay the foundations of the Kingdom of 'Iraq.

In this engagement at Fao stands revealed, in brief, British policy in the Middle East: the control, direct or indirect, of the Persian Gulf and its natural extensions, the Tigris and Euphrates valleys, as the outpost of India, which, if jeopardized, must be safeguarded by force of arms when

(1) Dispatch of Brig.-Gen. W. S. Delamain to Chief of General Staff, 16 November, 1914. See also, Moberly, Brig.-Gen. F.J., (History of the Great War based on Official Documents) The Campaign in Mesopotamia, 1914-1918 (London, 1923-7), vol. I, p. 107. Hereafter referred to as O.H. (Official History).

(2) See bibliographical note, infra, p. 12.

peaceful means had failed. When, therefore, from August, 1914, Turkey had given almost unmistakable indication that she would join the Central Powers against the Allies, the significance of her potential menace in Turkish Arabia could not be ignored. Her obvious military preparations: the general mobilization, the movement of an unprecedented number of troops to Basra and below, ostensibly directed against Kuwait and against Arab uprisings, the seizing of coal and supplies at Baghdad and Basra, the fortification of the Shatt al-'Arab below Basra and Mohammerah could scarcely be dismissed as attempts, in time of universal war-fever, to set her house in order, as the Sublime Porte repeatedly assured Sir Louis Mallet, H. M. Ambassador in Constantinople. (1)

The possibility of war with Turkey alone or allied with Germany in the Middle East had been anticipated by General Haig, when Commander-in-Chief in India in 1911, in a memorandum in which he proposed the reorganization of the Indian Army to meet such a contingency. The occupation of Fao and Basra was no new project. It had been formally proposed by a special committee, composed of Admiral Sir E. Slade, Naval Commander-in-Chief, East Indies; Lieut.-General Sir Percy Lake, Chief of Staff, India; Lieut.-Colonel Sir H. McMahon, Foreign Secretary, India; and Sir Percy Cox, Political Resident, Persian Gulf, on 15 January, 1912, as a measure whereby the British position in

(1) See Correspondence respecting events leading to the rupture of relations with Turkey, Accounts and Papers, 1914-1916. (Cd. 7628) LXXXIV, 179, especially Dispatches, Nos. 3, 6, 14, 18, 64, 84, 87, 94, 118, 121 and 164.

Turkish Arabia might be established in the face of unfriendly Turkish officials. The Government of India had not then approved of the plan except as part of widespread hostilities. The project had been revived again in January, 1914, in connection with the defense of the Anglo-Persian oilfields, but the reply of the Government of India, to whom the matter had been referred, was not received until 30 July, 1914. ⁽¹⁾ Movements and particulars of Turkish troops in the Tigris and Euphrates valleys had been carefully recorded by H. M. Consuls at Baghdad, Mosul and Basra. Military handbooks on Turkish Arabia had been published; ⁽²⁾ map and geographical surveys had been carried out over a considerable period. ⁽³⁾

The hesitation which attended the final decision to send an expeditionary force to the head of the Gulf in anticipation of the outbreak of war should be attributed, not to any failure to recognize the importance of the threatened Imperial interests, but rather to a reluctance, in the face of the existing circumstances, to take the inevitable plunge.

The Government of India, fearing that its internal strength had already been seriously weakened by the withdrawal of troops overseas, felt unwilling to spare further forces for the proposed expedition. It also feared the disastrous effects which

(1) O.H., vol. I, pp. 72 ff.

(2) Military Reports on Eastern Turkey in Asia (Secret), War Office, in progress from 1904.

(3) Notably Lorimer's Geographical and Statistical Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf.

the initiation of hostilities against Turkey and the 'Commander of the Faithful' might have on the Indian Muslims. (1) To appear blameless in the eyes of Islam became of greater importance, for the moment, than the gaining of immediate military and political advantages at the head of the Persian Gulf.

H. M. Government, on their part, although fully appreciating the proposals of the India Office and the Admiralty, formulated after numerous conferences, hesitated to dissipate men and energy on so distant a venture while every effort was being made to stem the German advance in France and Flanders, and while there was even a remote possibility that Turkey might not declare war.

By the middle of September, however, it became apparent to the Foreign Office, to the Naval authorities of the Admiralty and to the Military and Political staffs of the India Office that precautionary action at the head of the Gulf could no longer be delayed. The belief that war was imminent, a matter, even, of a few days, and that immediate action should be taken, was expressed by General Barrow, Military Secretary to the Secretary of State for India, in an appreciation of the situation, dated 26 September, in which he declared that troops should be sent at once to the Shatt al-'Arab and landed on Persian soil, 'ostensibly to protect the oil installation, but in reality to notify the Turks we mean business and to the Arabs we are ready to

(1) For a critical view of the attitude of the Government of India to the Mesopotamia Expedition, see Minority Report by Cmdr. Wedgwood, in Report of the Commissioners ...to enquire into the operations of War in Mesopotamia, Cd. 8616

support them.'⁽¹⁾

On the basis of this appreciation, Lord Crewe, the Secretary of State for India, with the concurrence of Lord Kitchener, warned the Viceroy, on the same day: 'Situation as regards Turkey most menacing and it may be necessary to demonstrate at the head of the Gulf.' He further indicated that a secret expedition to Abadan was probable. On 2 October, with cabinet approval, the diversion of an infantry brigade, two mountain batteries, a company of sappers, and necessary medical and transport units was ordered to Abadan. In secret instructions, it was stated that the whole of the 6th Division would follow as quickly as possible, in the event of hostilities with Turkey.⁽²⁾ The destination was later changed to Bahrain, where the expedition was to await further orders, in deference to the continued protests of the Viceroy and of the Government of India, as expressed in telegrams from the latter, deprecating the dispatch of troops to Abadan as furthering Germany's desire to create the impression that Turkey was being attacked, and maintaining that such action would be regarded as direct provocation and pretext for Turkey declaring war.⁽³⁾

The necessity of safeguarding Persian oil supplies for British consumption has been the usual reason given for the

(1) O.H., vol. I, p. 86 ff.

(2) Ibid., p. 99.

(3) Government of India to Secretary of State (hereafter S/S) for India, O.H., vol. I, p. 93 ff. Viceroy of India to S/S for India, ibid., p. 93 ff.

consent of H. M. Government to the dispatch of the expeditionary force to Basra. ⁽¹⁾ It cannot be overlooked that protection of the oil refineries and of the pipelines in Persia was a powerful consideration. Oil supplies under British control in 1914, while enormous, as a result of Lord Fisher's 'oil policy', were by no means adequate for a long drawn-out struggle. Furthermore, H. M. Government had acquired, as recently as 10 August, 1914, £2,000,000 in shares and control of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. The loss of control over supplies representing so recent and so important an investment could not be viewed with equanimity by either H. M. Government or the British taxpayers.

Nevertheless, the necessity of protecting Persian oil supplies was rather the reason which kept the expeditionary force in Turkish Arabia, than that which originally sent it there. Whatever part Persian oil eventually played in 'floating the Allies to victory on a wave of oil', to recall Lord Curzon's famous remark, ⁽²⁾ there appears to be little evidence to indicate that the necessity of its protection occupied so great a part in the final decision as has since been assigned to it. The immediate importance of the oil supplies was discounted by the Admiralty itself. Mr. Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, wrote, on 1 September, in a minute on a memorandum by Admiral Slade urging the dispatch of an expedition: 'There is little likelihood of troops being available

(1) Parliamentary Debates, H. of L., 5th Series, vol. 40 (1920), p. 887.

(2) Speech made to the Inter-Allied Petroleum Council, 21 November, 1918.

for this purpose. Indian troops must be used at the decisive point. We shall have to buy our oil from elsewhere.'⁽¹⁾

Nor did the India Office take the view that oil was the chief objective to be gained in sending the expedition. In his appreciation of 26 September,⁽²⁾ General Barrow placed oil as the last of five objectives to be thus gained. The Secretary of State for India, writing in a private letter to the Viceroy, after the expedition had been ordered to proceed, stated: 'Of the various objects to be attained by sending a force up the Gulf, I have always regarded the moral effect on the Arab chiefs as the primary and the protection of the oil stores as the secondary.'⁽³⁾ The Government of India also held that oil was not so valuable as to outweigh the consequences of an attack on Persia.⁽⁴⁾

The menace of Basra as a fortified enemy port from which enemy ships, or even submarines transported piecemeal over the disjointed sections of the Baghdad Railway, would strike at Imperial communications in the Indian Ocean, might have carried more weight in the decision to send the expedition had the Baghdad Railway been completed, or had Turkey, with the aid of

(1) Quoted O.H., vol. I, p. 82.

(2) Supra., pp. 4-5.

(3) Letter (private), Lord Crewe to Viceroy, 9 October, 1914, quoted in evidence before the Mesopotamia Commission. Also in O.H., vol. I, p.95.

(4) Telegram to S/S for India, 7 October, 1914, cited O.H., vol. I, p. 94.

Germany, had the opportunity before the outbreak of war to establish an adequate naval base and force in the Persian Gulf. Information that the Emden might take refuge in the Gulf was discounted by the Admiralty. Any attack on India from Basra was, under the circumstances, regarded as unfeasible.

The paramount danger, in the opinion of H. M. Government, from hostile powers in Turkish Arabia, athwart lines of communication to Persia, Afghanistan and beyond, and to eastern Arabia via Zubair and Kuwait, was not merely the military or naval action which the Central Powers might take there. It was rather the power of Turkey as the principal Islamic state, influenced and supported by German funds, and by German officers who never wearied of proclaiming the pro-Islamic sympathies of the German Emperor, to utilize the latent forces of religion, of political discontent and of unrest in the Near and Middle East, to undermine and probably destroy the position and the prestige on which much of that position rested, which Great Britain had created and had maintained in the previous three hundred years.

In a memorandum of 2 September, Sir Arthur Hirtzel, Political Secretary to the Secretary of State for India, wrote:

The Political effect in the Persian Gulf and in India of leaving the head of the Gulf derelict will be disastrous, and we cannot afford politically, to acquiesce in such a thing for an indefinite period while the main issues are being settled elsewhere. From the military point of view a Turkish diversion in that region is doubtless negligible, though under German officers it may not be wholly ineffective; but it will be worked for all it is worth for the sake of the political effect which the Turks and Germans hope to produce through it on Muslim feelings on India.

Moreover we cannot begin by sacrificing the Shaikh of Kuwait.(1)

The views of General Barrow were stated no less succinctly in a minute on the above memorandum. He declared, that in the event of hostilities:

The oil tanks and installation on Abadan island and the pipe-line from the oil-fields are exposed to instant destruction. British interests at Baghdad and Basra will be swept out of existence. Our Allies, the Shaikhs of Mohammerah and Kuwait will be threatened and may consequently be attacked or seduced, in which case all our prestige and all our labours of years will vanish into air and our position in the Gulf itself will become precarious. Can we avert this? (2)

Even more serious was the prospect of Turco-Arab co-operation, and of a Jihad or Holy War which might be directed against the Suez Canal and Egypt and which might spread by means of Turkish and German encouragement through Persia and Afghanistan to India, where, combined with latent sedition and rebellion, it might spread like wildfire at a time when India would be least able to cope with it. The conviction that these threats were real and were most potent reasons why the expedition should be sent was recorded by General Barrow in his memorandum of 26 September:

Such a contingency (immediate war with Turkey) need not alarm us unless the Turks succeed in drawing the Arabs to their side. In that case they will proclaim a Jihad and endeavour to raise Afghanistan and the frontier tribes against us, which might be a serious danger to India and would most certainly add enormously to our difficulties and responsibilities. This shows how important it is to us to avert a Turco-Arab coalition. It is known that Turkey has been intriguing right and left to win over the Arabs, and it is even said that Ibn Sa'ud, the leading Arab Chief, has been induced to join the Turks. If this is true(3) we may

(1) O.H., vol. I, p. 80.

(2) Ibid., pp. 80-1.

(3) Later found to be untrue. O.H., vol. I, p. 86.

expect serious trouble in Mesopotamia and in Egypt. (1)

Although events after the outbreak of the war were to prove that effective Arab co-operation had been greatly overstressed in London, the fear of German and Turkish propaganda and subversive activities had not been without foundation. A German mission composed of 32 members was known to be on its way in September, 1914, to Afghanistan by way of Aleppo and Kerman. (2) Other missions, sent to stir up the Muslims in India, in the Yemen and in Egypt, had been reported. (3) Attempts were being made to alienate the loyalty of the Shaikh of Mohammerah (4) and to induce Ibn Sa'ud, Amir of the Najd, to take up arms for Turkey. (5) In early October, Enver Pasha admitted that efforts were being made to enlist Bedouin sympathies for the Ottoman Empire. (6) Confirmation of this and other efforts to stir up

(1) O.H., vol. I, pp. 86 ff.

(2) Accts. and Papers, 1914-1916 (Cd. 7628) LXXXIV, 179: Dispatch No. 100, Sir E. Grey to Sir Louis Mallet, 29 September, 1914.

(3) Ibid.: Dispatch No. 44, Mr. Cheetham to Sir E. Grey, 28 August, 1914; No. 59, Sir L. Mallet to Sir E. Grey, 5 September, 1914; No. 127, Sir L. Mallet to Sir E. Grey, 14 October, 1914; No. 150, Mr. Cheetham to Sir E. Grey, 19 October, 1914.

(4) Wilson, Sir A. T., Loyalties, Mesopotamia, 1914-1917, p. 7 (Hereafter Mesopotamia, 1914-1917).

(5) Accts. and Papers, 1914-1916 (Cd. 7628) LXXXIV, 179, Dispatch No. 100, Sir E. Grey to Sir L. Mallet, 29 September, 1914.

(6) Ibid.: Dispatch No. 107, Sir L. Mallet to Sir E. Grey, 6 October, 1914.

anti-British and anti-Russian feeling among the Arabs had also
been reported from all sections of Turkey's Arab dominions. (1)

A mission had been reported as destined for Persia, (2) where
the future revelation of the activities of Wassmus, Neidermayer,
Zugmayer and others was to confirm the pre-war suspicion that
every effort was being made not only to embarrass the British
and Russians by sporadic hostilities, but also to force Persia,
as the second Islamic state, into war against the Allies, and
thus prove Germany's contention that Islam itself was on the
side of the Central Powers. (3)

A British expedition into Turkish Arabia would not only
negative such threats against British prestige and position but
would have even a more positive result. The occupation of Basra
and its hinterland would consolidate Great Britain's position at
the head of the Persian Gulf. It would enable her to convert
her special privileges in Turkish Arabia, laboriously won from
the Sublime Porte and as tenaciously held, into rights by con-
quest, as had been proposed in 1912. It was an opportunity too
tempting to be allowed to slip, as earlier and more subtle
opportunities had been allowed to pass, of settling in her
favour, once and for all, the international rivalries which had,

(1) Ibid.: No. 129, Sir L. Mallet to Sir E. Grey, 15 October, 1914; No. 163, Sir L. Mallet to Sir E. Grey, 23 October, 1914; No. 173, Mr. Cheetham to Sir E. Grey, 28 October, 1914.

(2) Ibid.: No. 59, Sir L. Mallet to Sir E. Grey, 8 September, 1914.

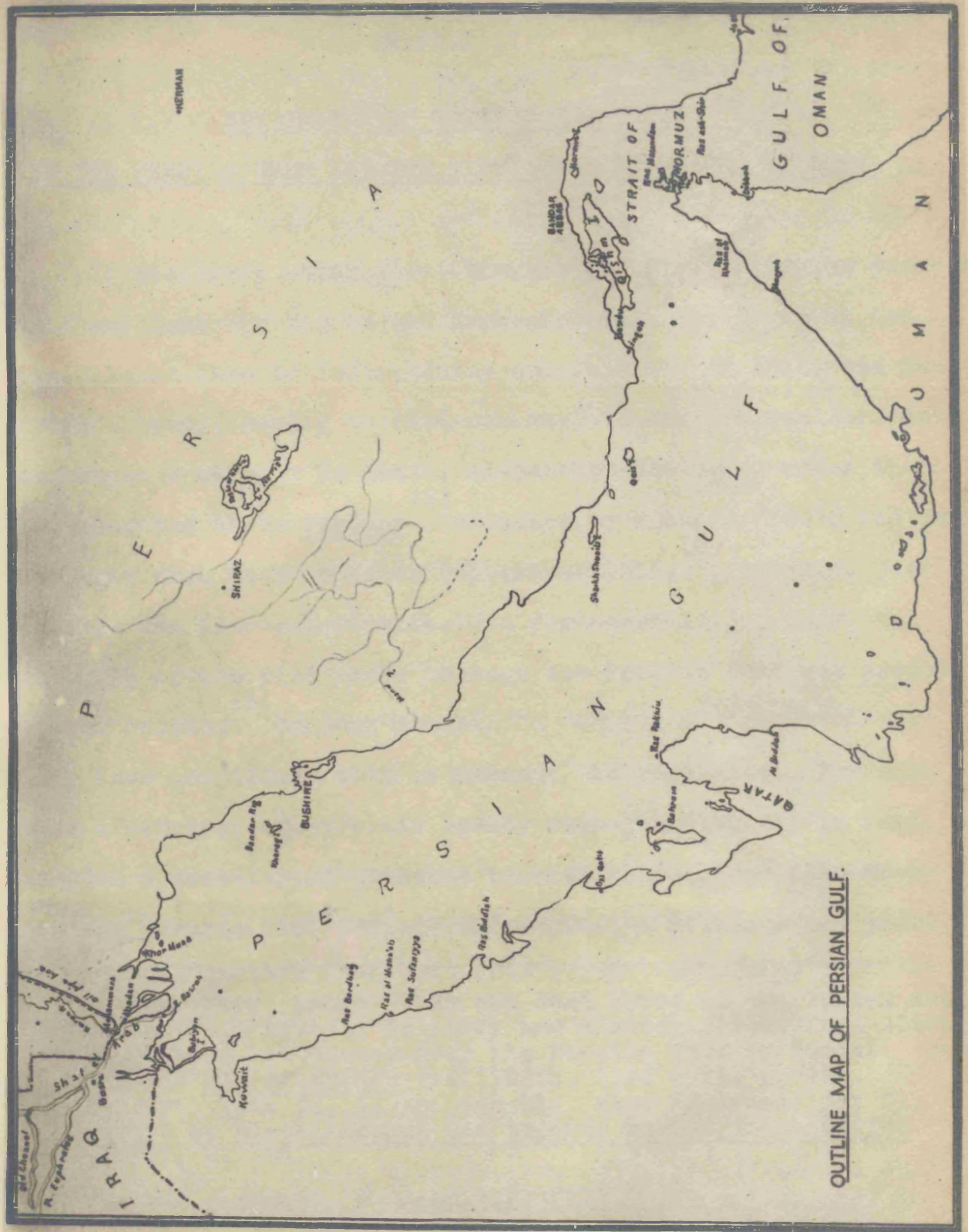
(3) Sykes, Sir Percy, History of Persia (2 vols., 1930, 3rd. Ed.) vol. II, pp. 442-50. For extracts from the Diary of Zugmayer, see O.H., vol. I, App. I, pp. 344-5.

more than once, threatened the status quo in the Persian Gulf, and, in turn, the peace of Europe. Once established at Basra, Great Britain, in the event of a successful outcome of the general struggle, could look forward to the maintenance of her time-honoured policy of keeping guard over India through her supremacy in the Gulf and its extensions, to the possible utilization of these same regions as links in speedier communications with India and to the restoration of her ancient trade and commercial supremacy in the Middle East.

NOTE.

In referring to the regions now known as 'Iraq, the term Turkish Arabia has been employed for the pre-war period when that name was in general though not exclusive use in British official circles. Mesopotamia has likewise been used for the war period. Although in former times, the term 'Iraq was rarely applied to the entire territory now included in the Kingdom of 'Iraq, it came into partial use in official circles in 1918. It was not generally employed, however, until 1920-1.

In the spelling of Arabic place-names, the system adopted by the Royal Geographical Society has been followed, although departures have been made in several cases, as, for example, in Dair uz-Zur and Kut al-'Amara.



CHAPTER II.

THE GROWTH OF BRITISH INTERESTS
IN THE PERSIAN GULF AND THE TIGRIS AND EUPHRATES VALLEYS.

It was trade which first brought the English to the Persian Gulf and into the Tigris and Euphrates valleys, ⁽¹⁾ as it had first taken them to India, China and Japan. In 1616, the East India Company, hoping to find new markets for its woollen cloth, no longer a novelty in India, dispatched the James under the terms of the three farmans ⁽²⁾ obtained by Richard Steele and John Crowther from Shah Abbas in September, 1615, ⁽³⁾ to Jask, just outside the Clarence Straits. A few years later, 1619, the monopoly of the silk trade through the Persian Gulf was granted ⁽⁴⁾ to the Company by Shah Abbas.

From the island city of Hormuz, the Portuguese, for more than a century, after their treaty with Shah Isma'il in 1515, adopted a dictatorial attitude towards trade other than their own and towards the Persians themselves. Within a few years,

(1) John Newbery, Ralph Fitch and John Elred of the Turkey and Levant Co., founded in 1581, had already passed from Aleppo to Baghdad and thence down the Persian Gulf to India. See: Purchas His Pilgrimes (ed. 1625), lib. viii, p. 449. Hakluyt, Tome II, 1, pp. 245-71; also Birdwood, Sir G., Report on Miscellaneous Old Records at the India Office (1890), p. 196.

(2) Farman, following the Persian

فرمان

(3) Purchas His Pilgrimes, lib. iv, cap. xiii, p. 524. For an account of the opening of trade with Persia by the Moscow Co., see Early Voyages in Russia and Persia (Hakluyt Society), edited by Morgan, E. D. and Coote, C. H., (2 vols., 1886).

(4) State Papers (East Indies) No. 753.

however, after the capture of Hormuz, in 1622, by the combined forces of English and Persians,⁽¹⁾ they speedily lost the ascendancy in the Persian Gulf.

The mastery of trade, however, passed not to the English, who had been allowed to set up their chief factory at Bunder Abbas (literally, the custom house of Abbas), as Gombrun on the mainland was renamed, but to the Dutch. Not until 1766, when the Dutch factory on Kharag Island was destroyed by the Persians, and the Dutch threats to sweep the English from the seas had come to nothing in Europe, were the English able to gain the ascendancy in trade in the Middle East. This supremacy they have retained to the present day, notwithstanding the acute rivalry of other powers, notably Germany and Japan in the twentieth century.

From the first, the East India Company had been obliged to undertake more than purely commercial activities. The pioneering nature of their ventures and the distance from the home government made it essential that they, in common with other trading companies of that age, should maintain their own armies and navies, provide their own charts and conduct most of their own political negotiations, activities which, in the end, were to overshadow the commercial origins of the companies. One condition of the Agreement of 1622 with Shah Abbas had been that the company should maintain two ships of war on the Gulf

(1) Low, C. R., History of the Indian Navy (1877), vol. I, pp. 31-7. The terms of co-operation were never fully carried out by the Persians.

to safeguard navigation. Although the company apparently did not or could not keep the condition at all times,⁽¹⁾ nevertheless, armed ships of the company and later of its Bombay Marine were usually stationed in the Gulf on political missions or for the protection of trade.

Interference with trade by pirates threatened to be a more serious obstacle to the English than the hostility of their European rivals,⁽²⁾ the company not being able, nor at one time, even willing to eradicate the evil. In 1705, the English Agent at Gombrun reported that Arab piracy had obstructed trade to such an extent that the Persians were using it as an excuse⁽³⁾ for not paying the arrears of customs due to the company. The Moghul, who blamed the English for the continued menace from pirates, went so far as to place an embargo on trade which was withdrawn only when the English, French and Dutch promised⁽⁴⁾ concerted action against the marauders.

The later reluctance of the company to suppress the pirates may be attributed to orders sent out by the Court of Directors, in the latter part of the 18th century, that the company's ships were to take no action against the pirates save

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- (1) Fryer, Dr. J., physician to the East India Company, 1672-81, makes the statement that the company had failed to maintain the two ships. Travels, p. 222, p. 353.
- (2) Low, op. cit., vol. I, p. 79 ff. Also, Miles, S. B., Countries and Tribes of the Persian Gulf, (1919), vol. I, pp. 266 ff.
- (3) Miles, op. cit., vol. I, p. 223.
- (4) Low, op. cit., vol. I, p. 82.

in self-defence. (1) These orders, maintained literally by the
Governor of Bombay, (2) condemned English commercial interests
to a state of endurance and, at the same time, gave further en-
couragement to the pirates. These freebooters, of whom the
Jawasmi (properly ^{فوسم}) tribes, occupying the coast from
Ras Musandum to Qatar peninsula, were the most numerous and
troublesome, required little incentive, since they had come un-
der Wahhabi influence which, with its emphasis on the Muslim in-
junction of death and plunder to unbelievers, had already stimu-
lated their well-developed predatory habits.

Aroused, finally, by the continued attacks not only on
merchant shipping but also on cruisers, the company dispatched
a series of expeditions from Bombay, in 1806, 1809 (3) and 1819, (4)
which effectually broke the power of the Pirate Coast tribes. (5)
These were forced to sign the General Treaty of Peace, 8 January,
1820. (6)

From this treaty originally dictated by the demands of
safety for trade, may be dated the beginning of the political

(1) Low, op. cit., vol. I, p. 317.

(2) Ibid., p. 313.

(3) Ibid., p. 325.

(4) Ibid., p. 351.

(5) The section of coast inhabited by the Arab pirates was then so-called. After the treaty it became known as the Trucial Coast.

(6) Aitchison, C. U., Collection of Treaties, Engagements, and Sanads relating to India and Neighbouring Countries, (Delhi, 1933, 5th ed.), vol. XI., Persian Gulf, No. XIX.

supremacy of Great Britain over the Arabs of the Gulf. It was eventually replaced in 1853 by a Treaty of Peace in perpetuity.⁽¹⁾ This treaty stipulated that 'perfect maritime truce' now established 'for evermore' should be enforced by the British Government. All acts of aggression were to be referred to the British authorities in the Persian Gulf.

Traffic in slaves in the Gulf had been forbidden in Article 9 of the Treaty of 1820, but it had not been noticeably affected by the prohibition. Additional treaties and agreements attempted to deal with the traffic,⁽²⁾ but only the presence of British men-of-war on patrol in the Gulf, with orders to seize all slaving-ships, effectively suppressed it.

Experience gained from the early attempts to deal with the pirates, especially after the expeditions of 1809 and 1819, had shown that the pirates might easily escape in the innumerable bays and inlets of the Persian Gulf where English ships, through lack of charts, did not dare sail. A preliminary survey of the coast had been undertaken in 1772,⁽³⁾ but not until 1785 was the first really important survey of the coast and of the Shatt al-'Arab as far as Basra, undertaken by Lieutenant McCluer of the Bombay Marine.⁽⁴⁾ The survey was resumed in 1820, after the expedition against the pirates in 1819, and under Captain Philip

(1) Aitchison, ibid., vol. XI, Persian Gulf No. XXIV.

(2) Ibid., vol. XIII (Calcutta, 1933, 5th ed.) Persia Nos. XV, XVI, XIX; ibid., vol. XI, Persian Gulf Nos. IX, XX, XXIII, XXVIII, XXIX.

(3) Low, op. cit., vol. I, p. 185.

(4) Ibid., pp. 187 ff.

Maughan, and later, Captain Guy, continued for nine years, forming the basis of the present day charts of the Gulf. Other surveys, principally in Turkish Arabia, were made throughout the century until the outbreak of the war in 1914. (1)

The keeping of the peace, the suppression of piracy, the charting of the rivers and seas, the restriction of slave-trading and the control of the traffic in arms have often been claimed, and rightly so, as due entirely to the efforts of Great Britain in the Persian Gulf. To go further, however, and ascribe these self-imposed tasks to motives of disinterestedness or pure philanthropy, or to describe them as forming 'the most unselfish page in history', (2) and to adduce therefrom, as has so often been done, the right of Great Britain to supremacy in the Persian Gulf and its extensions, the Tigris and Euphrates valleys, is to disregard the true nature of Great Britain's activities in the Middle East.

(1) Chesney, in 1835-6, made surveys of the Tigris and Euphrates, a work carried on by Cmdr. Henry Blosse Lynch, from 1837 to 1840, when he surveyed the Tigris from Mosul to Ctesiphon, and sections of the Euphrates. Capt. J. C. Hawkins explored the Euphrates with great difficulty for some 500 miles above Basra in 1838. In 1840-2, the Tigris below Baghdad was surveyed by Lieut. C. D. Campbell. Commander Felix Jones, 1843-54, explored the Persian hills from Baghdad to Mosul, and made surveys from Musaiyib to Baghdad. In 1841-2, and again in 1856, Capt. W. S. Selby made surveys from Babylon to Samawa and up the Karun river. See: Wilson, Sir A. T., Persian Gulf, pp. 281 ff. Low, op. cit., vol. II, pp. 31 ff., pp. 403 ff.: also, Hoskins, H. L., British Routes to India, pp. 180-2.

(2) Lord Curzon, 21 November, 1903. See Lord Curzon in India, (1906), p. 502.

Nations do not vie among themselves for control over lands and seas, primarily to give justice, to raise standards of living among the people, or to suppress disorder per se. If these blessings come, they come as secondary aspects or as by-products of men's efforts to enlarge their economic resources, or to safeguard that which they have already won. It is a commonplace that where trading ventures have gone forth to new lands in search of wealth, fresh markets, new or cheaper sources of raw materials or commodities, the extension of the political authority of the mother country has eventually followed in direct proportion to the economic value of the territory concerned or to the degree of resistance which is offered by its inhabitants. Only political authority, with force at its disposal, can guard from external attack that which has already been won, or break the opposition of the native peoples and pave the way for further extension of territory. Only by the assumption of authority can a continuity of administration be provided, without which commerce cannot flourish. It only can maintain order, establish legal security, regulate tariffs and imposts, under which the economic development of the territory can proceed on the most favourable conditions to the nationals of the mother country.

If these benefits extend to the natives of the country it is because the latter cannot, in the very nature of the circumstances, help sharing them. If conscious efforts are made to extend improved conditions and to encourage the so-called arts of peace among the native population, it is because any increase

of their well-being must lead to their increased productiveness and purchasing power and to less costly methods of control and of administration.

It cannot be denied that individual officials and even the mother country itself are often genuinely concerned for the well-being of the peoples they have taken in charge. The records of India, for instance, are crowded with the names of soldiers and administrators who have given full measure of devotion to the peoples under them. In a conflict of interests, and these must inevitably occur, it is only natural that those of the mother country should come first, and that the good of the people themselves must, in reality, be subordinated to the expected material or political returns.

It is a further commonplace that once political authority has been established under such circumstances, it tends to forget the commercial origins which called it into being in the new territories. Its own maintenance becomes its chief objective. In extenuation of such diversion of aim, it might claim that only thus can it facilitate economic development, provide opportunities for the employment of its own nationals, and increase the prestige and power which are associated with the command of such territory.

The political authority is therefore constantly engaged in efforts to consolidate its control over the territory won, and to extend wherever possible, by conquest or peaceful penetration, its dominion. Its aim is not merely the increase of its own power and importance. It also seeks to bring the new

territories to strategical frontiers or to develop them along strategical lines of communication so that they may act as buffers to the original spheres of interest, particularly if these original spheres, by reason of their vastness and economic importance, have become vital to the continued well-being of the mother country.

These observations seem to be borne out particularly by the history of the relation between the Persian Gulf and Turkish Arabia, on the one hand, and India, on the other. Trade, as has already been shown, was the original objective of the East India Company in India and in the Persian Gulf. In the promotion and the protection of trade, the company was led, as has been related, into activities which, taking on the inevitable political aspect, were to overshadow the company's original aim.

European Politics and Development of British Political Influence in the Persian Gulf.

The increasing tendency, as the years passed, towards political sovereignty on a territorial or a quasi-territorial basis, while revealed early in the company's attitude to India, (1) became fully apparent in the Gulf and in Turkish Arabia when, as one of the three Middle East corridors to India and as a

(1) On 12 December, 1687, the company wrote to the President of Fort St. George: 'That which we promise ourselves in a most especial manner from our new President and council is that these will establish such a politic of civil and military power and create and secure a large revenue to maintain both at that place as may be the foundation of a large, well grounded, sure English Dominion in India for all time to come.' (Diary of Sir William Hedges, p. 117) See also, Resolution passed by the Court of Directors of the Company, 1689, Birdwood, op. cit., p. 230.

flank to the other two routes, they were taken into the arena of European politics. The schemes of Napoleon to bring England to her knees by the invasion of India, to which the brilliancy of his military genius and his spectacular negotiations with Russia, Turkey and Persia lent more colour than substance, and the subsequent Russian expansion to the south aroused both official and public opinion to fear for the safety of India. From that time, even to the present day, the political control of all possible routes to India, by Herat or Baluchistan, by the Gulf, by the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, or by the long sea route around the Cape has become the object of special solicitude to the authorities in England and in India. Such concern has varied with the fears for the safety of India and the prevailing official view as to the necessity of controlling any particular route.

In the early 19th century, Great Britain's interest in the Persian Gulf and in Turkish Arabia was, primarily, their importance as outposts of India, and as points from which Persia and the two other Middle East routes through Baluchistan and Afghanistan might be controlled, their passage by an unfriendly Power prohibited. The additional importance of the Gulf, together with the Tigris and Euphrates valleys, as an alternative or quicker route to India was realized first when the potentiality of steam as applied to river craft and railways became evident, and later, when the development of the internal combustion engine opened the way for Empire air communications.

The extension and consolidation of British political

organization were among the first steps toward the conversion of the Persian Gulf into an Indian lake. A number of the points at which the East India Company had set up its representatives had already exercised considerable extra-commercial influence. Their political importance was recognized by the British Government in the establishment of consulates, as at Basra in 1764. At Bushire, the centre of Great Britain's interests in the Gulf, a representative of H. M. Government replaced an official of the East India Company as Resident. Harford Jones, Resident at Basra, was sent, in 1798, to Baghdad as permanent Resident, with a double object: to arrange with the Pasha for the transmission of official dispatches across the Wilayet, and to observe and counteract the work of French agents believed to be active in that region. (1) It soon became the chief centre of British influence in Turkish Arabia. By 1822, the entire establishment of the East India Company had acquired a political status. Factors and brokers became Political Residents and native Agents. The relations between the Gulf and England had passed from the ledgers of merchants to the dispatches of statesmen. (2)

The political organization which was thus initiated to cover the vital points of the Persian Gulf area was augmented

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- (1) India Office Records, vol. 6, Loose Papers, Packet 11, Bundle 1, Nos. 7, 8. Jones was created a baronet for his services.
- (2) Curzon, G. N., Persia and the Persian Question (2 vols., 1892) vol. II, p.553. Until the war the Residents at Bushire and Baghdad, and the Consuls at Meshd, Shiraz, Mohammerah and Basra were nominated and paid by the Government of India, but reported both to it and to the Foreign Office. Ibid. p. 624.

by specific measures designed to meet events as they arose.

Sir Arthur Wellesley, Governor-General of Bengal, alarmed for the safety of India, sent Sir John Malcolm, in 1800, to the Shah's Court on a successful mission, of which the threefold purpose was, in Malcolm's words:

To restore India from the annual alarm of Zemam Shah's (ruler of Afghanistan) invasion; to counteract the possible attempt of those villainous but active democrats, the French; and to restore some part of its former prosperity, a trade which has been in a great degree lost.(1)

(2)

When French influence nullified the work of the mission, a squadron of cruisers was sent to patrol the Gulf, 1806-7. (3)

Several other missions were sent to the Shah, including that of Sir Harford Jones (later Brydges), former Resident at Basra and Baghdad. He had been sent in 1808 by the British Government as Envoy Extraordinary and proceeded, in his own words, 'to throw the aegis of the British Crown over the imperilled destinies of India.' (4) A preliminary treaty of alliance with Persia

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- (1) Cited by Wilson, Sir A. T., Persian Gulf, p. 25. For treaties concluded by Malcolm: Aitchison, op. cit., vol. XIII, Persia Nos. III, IV. Cf. Rawlinson, Sir H. C., England and Russia in the East (1875) p. 10; Sykes, Sir Percy, op. cit., vol. II, p. 301.
- (2) Gardane, Le Cte. Alfred de, Mission du General Gardane en Perse, sous le Premier Empire. Documents historiques (Paris, 1865), pp. 16-25, 82-94, 107-38, 205-06; Driault, E., La Politique Orientale de Napoléon, Sebastiani et Gardane (Paris, 1904), pp. 170-3, 310-22. See also, Fontanier, V., Voyage dans l'Inde et dans le Golfe Persique par l'Egypte et la Mer Rouge (3 vols., Paris, 1844-6), vol. II, pp. 6, 199, 419.
- (3) Gardane, op. cit., pp. 252-4; Driault, op. cit., pp. 336-9; Low, op. cit., vol. I, p. 318.
- (4) Cited Sykes, op. cit., vol. II, p.307.

was negotiated by him on 12 March, 1809,⁽¹⁾ which gave way, in 1814, to a so-called Definitive Treaty.⁽²⁾ This treaty, however, produced few of the benefits which the British Government had hoped to gain from it.

The Napoleonic menace to India, probably more dreaded than real, passed,⁽³⁾ but the Russian pressure southward, begun in the later part of the 18th century, intensified. Russia's long strides over the Caucasus, to the sea of Aral, 1844-8, into the valley of the Sir Darya, 1849-64, to Khiva, 1873, and Khokand, 1876, and after the fall of Geok Teppe, the Turcomans' most formidable fortress, into Merv, February 1884, brought her almost to India's Central Asian frontiers.⁽⁴⁾ These territories were consolidated by the construction of railroads. Her slow but unceasing assimilation of territory in northern Persia and her acquisition of markets and influence over even larger areas, including the capital itself, confirmed British merchants and statesmen in their fear that Russian designs included the subjection of Persia, not only for the sake of commerce, but

(1) Aitchison, op. cit., vol. XIII, Persia No. V; British and Foreign State Papers (hereafter Brit. and For. St. Papers) I, 258; Summary in Hertslet, Sir E., Treaties, etc. concluded between Great Britain and Persia and between Persia and other Powers ... in force 1 April, 1891 (1891), p. 4

(2) Aitchison, op. cit., Persia No. VII; Brit. and For. St. Papers, I, 261. See also Sykes, op. cit., vol. II, pp. 307 ff.

(3) Brit. and For. St. Papers, I, 151-170.

(4) Sykes, op. cit., vol. II, p. 354 ff.

also to guarantee access to India by the Persian Gulf or by Central Asia.

These fears were not allayed by Russian efforts to obtain a coaling station in the Gulf at the end of the 19th century, by the establishment of Russian consulates at Bushire, Basra and Baghdad where few, if any, Russian subjects lived,⁽¹⁾ and by the steady infiltration over the mountains of Kurdistan toward Baghdad. Not less disturbing were the activities of Russian financiers with political backing, in the Banque d'Escompte et des Prets de Perse, in seeking concessions in Persian and in Turkey, such as Count Kapnist's project for a Mediterranean-Kuwait Railroad,⁽²⁾ or in blocking concessions to other powers, as by the Russo-Persian Railway Agreement of 12 November, 1890.⁽³⁾ All of these were regarded, with some justification, as manifestations of the Russian dream of a vast Oriental Empire, including India and warm water ports, as revealed in the will of Peter the Great, which, even if spurious, 'enshrines with admirable fidelity the leading principles that have guided the Asiatic policy of his country ever since.'⁽⁴⁾

(1) Wilson, Sir A. T., Persian Gulf, p. 259; Frazer, Lovat, India under Curzon and After, p. 91.

(2) The Times, 17 December, 1898.

(3) Aitchison, op. cit., vol. XIII, Persia App. No. XXIII.

(4) Curzon, op. cit., vol. II, p. 601. Sykes, op. cit., vol. II, p. 245, gives an English version of the will, but gives no indication that it is a forgery.

Persia's attempts to counterbalance with conquests in the south-east what she had lost to Russia elsewhere, ⁽¹⁾ brought her into opposition with Great Britain. The presence of Persia in Herat and Afghanistan, in British opinion, meant in reality, the eventual, painless installation of Russia there. ⁽²⁾ In the efforts of Great Britain to thwart Persia, which included numerous missions, an Afghan war, 1838-42, ⁽³⁾ and a war with Persia herself, 1856-7, successful military and naval actions were launched from the Gulf, demonstrating the possibility of controlling Persia from her south-west flank. ⁽⁴⁾

Consolidation of British Influence in the Persian Gulf.

The advance of Russia, and at the end of the 19th century, the appearance of Germany as a serious claimant for a place in Turkish Arabia and in the Persian Gulf, coincided with 'a

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- (1) The Treaties of Turkomanchai, 22 February, 1822, not only gave Russia rich Persian territories, including Erivan and Nakhchivan, special commercial advantages, and extra-territorial rights over Russians in Persia, but also revealed to Europe that Persia was not the strong, independent power that she was believed to be. See Sykes, op. cit., vol. II, pp. 311, 318 ff. For texts of the Treaties, see Hertslet, op. cit., p. 117, 125; Aitchison, op. cit., vol. XIII, Persia App. No. VII; Brit. and For. St. Papers, XV, 669.
 - (2) Brit. and For. St. Papers, XXIII, 864-5; XXV, 1247, 1249, 1253; XLV, 642 ff.
 - (3) Lieut.-Gen. Sir James Outram's Persian Campaign in 1857 (1860).
 - (4) Low, op. cit., vol. II, p. 98; Asiatic Jour., vol. XXVI, N.S., Pt. II; Brit. and For. St. Papers, XLVII, 282 ff.; Douglas, Sir G., and Ramsey, Sir G., Panmure Papers (2 vols., 1908), vol. II, p. 470. For Treaty of Paris, 4 March, 1857, by which Persia recognized the independence of Afghanistan: Aitchison, op. cit., vol. XIII, Persia No. XVIII; also Brit. and For. St. Papers, XLVII, 42.

deliberate but necessary consolidation of our (British) influence' in the 'quarters where trouble threatened or where rivalry was feared,'⁽¹⁾ that is, in the Gulf and in the Tigris and Euphrates valleys..

In the Persian Gulf, veiled protectorates were established over the Arab chiefs. The Shaikh of Bahrain agreed on 22 December, 1880, to abstain from entering into negotiations or treaties with any other government than Great Britain. Nor were diplomatic or consular agencies or coaling stations to be established without its consent.⁽²⁾ In 1892, an even more comprehensive agreement was signed by the Shaikh of Bahrain and by the Shaikhs of the Trucial Coast. It was agreed that none of them would enter into treaties except with Great Britain, nor admit agents of any other power, nor alienate any territory save by permission of the British Government.⁽³⁾

Shaikh Mubarak of Kuwait, who possessed the finest natural harbour in the Persian Gulf, and who had repeatedly asked for British protection, was brought into treaty relations 23 January, 1899, at the direction of Lord Curzon,⁽⁴⁾ on the same conditions

(1) Accts. and Papers, 1908 (Cd. 3882) CXXV, 457; Extract from a Despatch from the Government of India to S/S for India in Council, dated September 21st., 1899, referring to British policy in Persia. Paras. 42-89 of this dispatch are given more fully in British Documents on Origin of the World War, 1898-1914, Gooch and Temperley (11 vols., 1927-). (Hereafter Brit. Docs.)

(2) Aitchison, Op. cit., vol. XI, Persian Gulf No. XII.

(3) Trucial Coast Agreement, 6 March, 1892: ibid., Persian Gulf No. XXX; Bahrain Agreement, 13 March, 1892; ibid., Persian Gulf No. XIII.

(4) Parl. Debates, H. of L., 5th S., vol. 7 (1911), p. 587.

as the other shaikhs of the Gulf. (1) His earlier requests had been refused, as he was under the nominal sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire, (2) and, strictly speaking, was an usurper. The prospect of Kuwait, however, as a Russian port or as the German terminus of the Baghdad Railway overcame any scruples which may have been felt. One of the first administrative acts of Lord Curzon was to direct Col. Meade, Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, to enter into treaty relations with Shaikh Mubarak.

Khaza'al, Shaikh of Mohammerah, owing allegiance to Persia, and possessing immense power on both the Persian and Turkish sides of the lower Shatt al-Arab, over which he exercised de facto control, was also brought, on Lord Curzon's suggestion, (3) into excellent understanding with the British Government.

(1) Aitchison, op. cit., Persian Gulf No. XXXVI.

(2) It is impossible here to go fully into the arguments for and against the position of Kuwait as a part of the Ottoman Empire. Lord Curzon, in 1892, had recognized that Kuwait owed allegiance to Turkey. He wrote: 'Northward from Port of Ujair, Ottoman dominion is established (on the Arab coast of the Gulf) without dispute as far as Fao.' Op. cit., vol. II, p. 462. Kuwait was included in the territory thus described. Sir A. T. Wilson, (Persian Gulf, p. 251) wrote, 1928, that until 1896, it was 'regarded at home as under the exclusive influence of Turkey.' It would appear that while Ottoman sovereignty had never been contested until 1899, its claim had rested lightly on the Shaikh. In the agreements between Great Britain and Turkey, 1913-14, never ratified, Kuwait was recognised as an autonomous qadha in which the British had a privileged position.

(3) Further agreements not to give pearl or sponge fishing concessions except by permission of the British Government, were signed by the Shaikh of Kuwait, 29 July, 1911, and later in the same year by the Shaikh of Bahrain and the shaikhs of the Trucial Coast, Aitchison, op. cit., vol. XI. Persian Gulf No. XXXIX. Agreements not to allow other post offices than those of India were signed by the Shaikh of

The ambitions of France, the menace of Russia and later, the rivalry of Germany, together with the necessity of British control of the Persian Gulf and its extensions, had not been unobserved by British statesmen, writers and publicists of the 19th century. Outstanding among these were: David Urquhart, 1805-77, one time minister to Turkey, strongly anti-Russian and pro-Turkish in his sympathies, a prolific writer and speaker; ⁽¹⁾ Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe, 1786-1880, the most aggressive British Ambassador of the 19th century to the Sublime Porte, who disliked the Turks but hated the Russians; ⁽²⁾ Sir H. C. Rawlinson, 1810-95, a strong advocate of the 'Forward' policy for India. He spent many years in service of the Crown in the East, including a term as British ⁽³⁾ Resident at Baghdad.

It was Lord Curzon, however, who, having taken India and the

(continued) Kuwait, 28, February, 1904, ibid., No. XXXVIII; by the Shaikh of Bahrain in 1911, not to grant oil concessions without permission of the British Government; by the Shaikh of Kuwait, 27 October, 1913, ibid., No. XLI; by the Shaikh of Bahrain, 14 May, 1914, ibid., No. XVI; by the shaikhs of the Trucial Coast in February and May, 1922, ibid., Nos. XXXIV, XXXV. The Shaikh of Qatar entered into an agreement on 3 November, 1916, to observe all previous treaties with the shaikhs of the Persian Gulf, ibid., No. XXXIII.

- (1) Among his voluminous writings were: Turkey and its Resources, (1833), England, France, Russia and Turkey, (1833), Spirit of the East (1838), and The Lebanon (2 vols., 1860). His only biography is inadequate: David Urquhart, by Robinson, G., (1920).
- (2) Life of the Rt. Hon. Stratford Canning, Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe, by Poole, S. L., (2 vols., 1888) is the standard biography; the Life, by Smith, E., (1933) is a newer interpretation.
- (3) England and Russia in the East (1875) is his best known work.

Middle East as his special spheres of interest, did more, both as a private citizen and as a public servant, than any other individual of his day (1) to focus attention on rival ambitions in the Middle East, particularly those of Russia, and to strengthen India's defences against what he believed to be a danger of the greatest magnitude. From his school days at Eton, he had mistrusted Russia (2) and his subsequent travels in Central Asia, India and the Far East, 1887 to 1894, confirmed him in his views. (3) He was convinced that Russian threats to Great Britain from South Persia and Turkish Arabia, could not, commercially, politically or strategically be tolerated. 'Are we prepared' he asked,

to surrender control of the Persian Gulf and divide that of the Indian Ocean? Are we prepared to make the construction of the Euphrates Valley Railroad or some kindred scheme an impossibility for England and an ultimate certainty for Russia? Is Baghdad to become a new Russian capital in the south? Lastly, are we content to see a naval station within a few days sail of Kurrachi and to contemplate a hostile squadron battering Bombay? (4)

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- (1) See tribute paid to him by Lovat Frazer, one time editor of the 'Times of India', in Pro. C. Asian Soc., 8 January, 1908, pp. 7 ff., and in India under Curzon and After (1911), p. 9.
 - (2) Frazer, Lovat, op. cit., p. 8. Also Leslie, Shane, Studies in Sublime Failures (1932), p. 204.
 - (3) Curzon, G. N., Russia in Central Asia (1899), Also Quarterly Review, January, 1887.
 - (4) Curzon, op. cit., p. 378. Contrast his view of the Euphrates Valley Railroad here, with that expressed in Persia and the Persian Question, vol. I, pp. 635 ff. It would seem that he, in common with many of his fellow countrymen, while unable to approve of Great Britain building the railway, were concerned that no other nation should be permitted to do so.

In his official role as Under Secretary of State for India, 1891-92, and later as the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs under Lord Salisbury, 1892-8, and more especially as Viceroy of India, 1899-1905, he put his convictions into practice. The Indian Frontiers were strengthened, the North West Frontier province was instituted and a frontier policy evolved. (1)

The question of the defence of India against European rivals was reviewed at the instance of Lord Curzon and set forth at length is the now famous dispatch of 21 September, 1899. (2) This dispatch reminded the Secretary of State for India of the British and Anglo-Indian commercial supremacy, amounting in many instances to almost a monopoly, in the Persian Gulf ports, of how the carrying trade was almost exclusively in British or Anglo-Indian bottoms, and of how many Indians had settled in Persian Gulf ports. It emphasized in detail that the de facto political position reflected a more positive British predominance than the de jure position might indicate. The Viceroy in Council declared:

Upon the question of allowing any European Power and more especially Russia, to overrun Central and Southern Persia and so to reach the Gulf or to acquire naval facilities in the latter even without such territorial connections, we do not conceive that any doubt whatever can be entertained; and we imagine that it is accepted as a cardinal

(1) His views on frontier policy may be examined at length in his Budget speeches of 27 March, 1901, of 26 March, 1902, and 30 March, 1904; also in his speech at the Durbar at Peshawar, 26 April, 1902. Excerpts from all these may be found in Lord Curzon in India, (1906), pp. 415 ff., 418 ff., 428 ff., 422 ff., respectively.

(2) Accts and Papers, 1908, (Cd.3882) CXXV, 457; with additional material in Brit. Docs., vol.IV, No. 319, pp. 356-363.

axiom of British policy that no such development would be acquiesced in by H.M. Government. (1)

To curb Russian rivalry, three possible policies were put forward. Of these the most favoured was that of partitioning Persia into spheres of influence along specific boundaries, (2) as was eventually done by the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907. It was pointed out, however, at the time, that if the agreement were made as suggested, it

would not for one moment retard, but might on the contrary accelerate her (Russia) advance to the same objective through Mesopotamia by way of Baghdad. This is an issue which we should regard with scarcely inferior repugnance. (3)

The efforts made during Lord Curzon's Viceregency to secure by treaty further control of the Independent Arab Chiefs, and to establish a friendly understanding with the Shaikhs of Mohammerah and of Kuwait, were capped by vigorous action to protect the Shaikh of Kuwait from the attempts to reassert Turkish authority over his territory. Twice in 1901, a British cruiser was sent to his aid. The threats of Ibn Rashid against Kuwait, in the same year, were countered by the dispatch of three British cruisers to the harbour, and of British troops to Fort Jahara, 18 miles inland. A later attempt by the nephews of

(1) Ibid., p. 8.

(2) Ibid., 'Sir M. Durand has drawn a line across Persia from Khanikin on the Turkish frontier on the West, through Kermanshah, Hamadan, Ispahan, Yezd and Kerman to Seistan and the Afghan Frontier on the East, as indicating approximately the existing line of partition between the British spheres of influence both political and commercial in Persia.'

(3) Ibid., p. 10.

Shaikh Mubarak to unseat him was dispersed by H.M.S. Lapwing. (1)

To renew Arab confidence in Great Britain's power, already somewhat shaken by German propaganda, Lord Curzon, accompanied by eight ships of war, paid, in November and December, 1903, the first viceregal visit in history to the Gulf. (2) Speaking to the assembled chiefs at a Durbar at Sharja, 21 November, he revealed his attitude to the question of Great Britain's place in India and the Middle East, a point of view which was to come to the fore again when Lord Curzon, in the months immediately following the Armistice, dominated the Middle East policy of Great Britain. He said, in part, to the shaikhs:

We were here before any other power, in modern times, had shown its face in these waters. We found strife and we have created order. It was our commerce as well as your security that was threatened and called for protection. At every port along these coasts, the subjects of the King of England still reside and trade. The great Empire of India, which it is our duty to defend, lies almost at your gates. We saved you from extinction at the hands of your neighbours. We opened these seas to the ships of all nations and enabled their flags to fly in peace. We have not seized or held your territory. We have not destroyed your independence but have preserved it. We are not now going to throw away this century of costly and triumphant enterprise; we shall not wipe out the most unselfish page in history. The Peace of these waters must still be maintained; your independence will continue to be upheld; and the influence of the British Government must remain supreme. (3)

His speech was in keeping with the statement made by Lord

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- (1) Times History of the War 22 vols., (1914-1921), vol. III, ch. LII. Also, Frazer, op. cit., p. 10.
- (2) Curzon's meeting at Kuwait with 'the late Mr. Reynolds, Mr. d'Arcy's oil engineer, who was on his way to England, led to his (Mr. Reynolds) return to examine the Maidan-i-Naptura area and the discovery of the Anglo-Persian oilfields.' Dane, Sir Louis, The Times, 6 April, 1935.
- (3) Lord Curzon in India, p. 502.

Lansdowne, Secretary of State for India, in the House of Lords, 5 May, 1903. Had any previous doubt existed as to British official policy for the Persian Gulf, none should have occurred thereafter. He said, in part:

It seems to me that our policy (with regard to the Persian Gulf) should be directed in the first place to protect and promote British trade in those waters. In the next place I do not think ... that ... those efforts should be directed towards the exclusion of the legitimate trade of other powers. In the third place - I say it without hesitation - we should regard the establishment of a naval base, or of a fortified port, in the Persian Gulf by any other power as a very grave menace to British interests, and we should certainly resist it with all the means at our disposal. (1)

BRITISH INTERESTS IN TURKISH ARABIA.

In the Tigris and Euphrates valleys, provinces of the Ottoman Empire, Great Britain was less able to adopt the vigorous policy pursued in the Persian Gulf. For the most part, she continued to rely, for the maintenance of her interests, on

(1) Parl. Debates, H. of L., 4th Ser., vol. 121, (1903), pp. 1347-8.

(2) Cf. proposals to occupy Basra in 1911, and in January, 1914, O.H., vol. I, p. 73. Turkish authorities were aware of Great Britain's desire to increase her influence. Cf. Speech of a Member of the Committee of Union and Progress, Baghdad, 18 April, 1911: 'Listen, dear compatriots - For a number of years England has been endeavouring to increase her political influence in the Persian Gulf. This influence is being felt in Basra ... We must be ready to resist any political aggression on our territories. We must awaken our Government to take immediate steps to protect Basra.' Also speech of the Wali of Baghdad, 30 August, 1911, cited infra, p. 73, and Al-Misbah, (Baghdad), 14 March, 1913, which warned readers that Great Britain intended to do in Turkish 'Iraq what she had done in India, that the Lynch Company, supported by England, were 'harbingers of a vast colony here', and advised readers 'to arm themselves to fight the pioneers of the colonizing army.'

her traditional prestige at the Sublime Porte and on the extension of her special position in Turkish Arabia, dating from the establishment of the first English factory at Basra in 1643, after the first venture of the East India Company there in 1635.⁽¹⁾

Much of the British influence in the valleys had been the result of the political organization deliberately set up in recognition of their strategical importance. The Baghdad Residency, supplanting that of Basra, in 1810, as the chief political centre of Great Britain in Turkish Arabia,⁽²⁾ acquired considerable political influence with local Turkish authorities, who had not been averse to making use of British assistance against Persian or Arab disturbers of the peace.⁽³⁾

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- (1) For an able resumé of the early development of British trading interests in 'Iraq, see Longrigg, S., Four Centuries of Modern 'Iraq (1925), pp. 107, 175, 188, 254-5 passim.
- (2) A Consulate had been established at Basra, 1764, and an Agency at Baghdad, 1755, which, because of commercial and political developments, but mainly because of the Napoleonic scare, had been raised to a Residency in 1798. Supra, p.24.
- (3) In 1763, the Pasha of Baghdad asked for help against the Ka'ab, who were attacking towns and shipping around Basra. Six ships were eventually sent from Bombay, in 1766. Later, in 1774, when ships had been furnished to the Pasha, he requested the British to use them as they thought fit for Turkish interests. In 1778, the British aided the Turks to regain Basra from the Persians, while in 1798, the Resident at Bushire was called in to adjust claims between the Sultan of Oman and the Pasha of Baghdad. When there was a possibility, between 1835 and 1839, that Muhammad Ali's Egyptian army might advance from the head of the Gulf and attack Baghdad, it is reported that the Turkish Government asked for British intervention. Hogarth, D. G., Penetration of Arabia, pp. 84-7, 104, passim.

The development of canal and river navigation ⁽¹⁾ between 1820 and 1840 gave the Mesopotamian valleys a new importance to the British Government and to the Indian Presidencies when, in the 19th century, they sought speedier communications between India and England. ⁽²⁾ The scheme to establish communications with India by means of a line of mail steamers running regularly on the Euphrates River, found its chief early protagonist in Captain F. R. Chesney, R.A., who had been commissioned in 1830 by the British Ambassador at Constantinople, ⁽³⁾ to investigate ⁽⁴⁾ both the Egyptian and the Euphrates valley routes.

H. M. Government was inclined to look with more favour on the Mesopotamian route than on the one through Egypt and the Red Sea. The former would not only give Great Britain a strategical position from which to check Russia's thrust to the south, but would also provide a route to India removed as far

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- (1) During the early part of the 19th century, navigation by canal and river multiplied in every direction between England and Europe. It was even suggested that river communications with India might be established by way of the Rhine, Danube, Orontes, Euphrates and Indus.
- (2) Parl. Debates, 3rd S., vol. 26, (1834), p. 142; Parl. Papers, 1831-2 (735-II) X, Pt. II, App. 25, 675 ff.; 1834 (478) XIV, 369 ff.; 1837 (540) XLIII, 223; 1837-8 (356) XLI, 365.
- (3) Parl. Papers, 1834 (478) App. 16, 50.
- (4) Parl. Papers, 1834 (478) XIV, App. 16; Reports on the Navigation of the Red Sea and River Euphrates, Submitted to Government, by Capt. Chesney, F.R.S. of the Royal Artillery. Chesney had at first, because of marshes, difficulties of navigation and unfriendliness of the Arabs, taken an unfavourable view of the Euphrates route (Ibid., p. 51), but later he modified his views.

as possible from the domination of Muhammad 'Ali's Egyptian Empire. France was believed to be behind Muhammad 'Ali, and, as Lord Palmerston declared, 'The Mistress of India cannot permit France to be mistress directly or indirectly of the road to her Indian dominions.'⁽¹⁾ Parliament was induced, therefore, in August, 1834, to vote £20,000 for the construction of two river steamers and for a thorough survey of the Euphrates Valley route.

Few of the results so confidently promised by Chesney were accomplished, although he actually succeeded, under great difficulties,⁽²⁾ in launching two small river steamers on the Euphrates, in reaching Basra and in obtaining much additional information.⁽³⁾

The impracticability of the Euphrates River route had been amply proven by 1837, but not until 1842, when the political situation had improved, was the expedition formally disbanded. The Near and Middle East had then become comparatively quiescent. The Turco-Egyptian problem had been settled, to Lord Palmerston's satisfaction, by the Protocol of London, 1841.⁽⁴⁾

(1) Bulwer, Sir Henry Lytton, E., The Life of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston (3 vols., 1870-4), vol. II, p. 293.

(2) Parl. Papers, 1837 (540) XLIII, 235 ff.; Chesney, F. R., Narrative of the Euphrates Expedition (1868), pp. 172 ff.; Poole, S. L., (Ed.) Life of General F. R. Chesney, (1885) pp. 293 ff.

(3) The important surveys by Chesney and his successors (supra pp. 17-18) paved the way for the Lynch navigation line, and linked the attempt of 1834-42 to open a through route between India and England with the later projects of 1856-7.

(4) Brit. and For. St. Papers, XXIV, 703 ff.

The participation of the Five Powers in the Protocol indicated that the safety of eastern routes had become a major issue in European diplomacy. By the Protocol, Russian claims to interfere in Turkey were, for the time being, removed. France was rendered powerless to dominate, by means of her protege Muhammad 'Ali, either highway to India, through Egypt or by Turkish Arabia. The latter route was, therefore, neglected in favour of that across Egypt, already partially developed and in general use. (1)

Further instances of interferences by Russia in Persia and in Turkey, each of which had a distinct bearing, in British opinion, on the security of India, and coinciding with a wave of railroad expansion in England and Europe, renewed British interest in another project, originally proposed in 1850, (2) to utilize the Mesopotamian route to India: the Euphrates Valley Railroad.

Although favoured by the Government of India, (3) the project had been given little encouragement by Lord Palmerston, who, as in 1834, continued to be apprehensive of European complications. The Association for the Promotion of the Euphrates Valley Railroad, formed in 1856, having as its Chairman, W. P. Andrew, impressed the Government, however, with the political

(1) Hoskins, op. cit., ch. IX, X, for growth of Egyptian route.

(2) By R. M. Stephenson. See article in Calcutta Review, vol. XXV, pp. 145 ff.

(3) Letter, Government of India to R. M. Stephenson, 30 January, 1856, cited in Calcutta Review, vol. XXV, p. 175.

arguments for the scheme: the possibility of checking French influence, again in the ascendancy in Egypt and Syria, of providing a diversion to the projected Suez Canal and of forestalling Russian designs on the Persian Gulf.⁽¹⁾ The fact that a French company was striving to obtain a concession for a similar railway, with some prospect of success, no doubt further influenced Lord Palmerston to alter his early unsympathetic attitude. He assured a deputation of those concerned in the Euphrates Valley project of the interest of the Government. The chief obstacle to full official support, it would seem, lay in the amount of financial guarantee expected by the company.⁽²⁾

Additional surveys were made, the firman secured from the Sultan, 1857,⁽³⁾ and the original capital of £1,000,000 was

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- (1) Andrew, W. P., A Letter to Viscount Palmerston on the Political Advantages of the Euphrates Valley Railway, and the Necessity of the Financial Support of H. M. Government (1857) The Times, 23 June, 1857. According to Andrew, Our Scientific Frontier (1880), pp. 98-9, Russia might take any of four routes to the Persian Gulf: by the line of Kars to the Euphrates valley and Mesopotamia; from Erivan by way of Lake Van to Mosul and Baghdad; from Tabriz to Shuster; from Tehran by Ispahan to Shuster and thence to the Persian Gulf. All of these lines would be intersected by the line of the Euphrates which 'takes all Russian lines of advance in the flank, and, running in an oblique direction from the head of the gulf north of Antioch to the Persian Gulf, passes along the diagonal of a great quadrilateral, which has its two western corners on the Mediterranean, its two eastern on the Caspian and Persian Seas.'
- (2) The Times, 23 June, 1857, also Parl. Debates, 3rd S., vol. 147 (1857), pp. 1226, 1652, 1662.
- (3) The Times, 10 January, 22 January, 1857.

offered to the public over-subscribed five times, ⁽¹⁾ suddenly,
14 August, 1857, the support of the Government was withdrawn by
Lord Palmerston. ⁽²⁾ The whole project fell through.

A further objection to the Mesopotamian route was found in
the fact that much of it could not be protected by the British
fleet. Nor was its strategical value, either to convey troops
to India or to counter Russia, a subject of agreement even
among military experts. ⁽³⁾ It was even contended, as it was
of the Suez Canal, that the construction of the new highway
would facilitate aggression rather than discourage it. ⁽⁴⁾

It would seem, also, that the British Government held that
if the railroad became a necessity, it could, because of its
standing prestige and influence at the Sublime Porte, take up
the project whenever it desired, a doubtful supposition in view
of Great Britain's changing position in Turkey, as yet unrealized

(1) Parl. Debates, 3rd. S., vol. 147, (1857), p. 1658.
The Times, 17 February, 1857.

(2) Parl. Debates, 3rd S., vol. 147, (1857), pp. 1676-7. Vari-
ous reasons for Palmerston's volte-face have been given.
Pressure may have been put on him by Napoleon III, then
visiting in England. Palmerston may have deemed it wiser
to give up the railway than accept the Suez Canal, in order
to preserve the nominal alliance with France. It has also
been suggested that the sacrifice of the railway was in
exchange for French consent to use the overland (Egyptian)
route for the dispatch of troops to India at a critical
stage in the mutiny. See: The Times for 8, 10, 11 August,
1857; 4 May, 1858; also, Quarterly Review, CXX, pp. 354-
397; Jour. R.C. Asian Soc., July, 1934.

(3) Jour. E. India Ass'n., vol. X, p. 250; Curzon, Persia,
vol. I, pp. 633-5.

(4) Viscount Palmerston: Parl. Debates, 3rd S., vol. 146,
(1857), pp. 1044, 1385-91.

(1)

by the British Government.

Of even greater importance was Great Britain's belief that by manipulating the political situation in Europe, she could safeguard the routes to India. She had not yet fully realized that political control, direct or indirect, would have to be assumed over territories through which lay actual and potential highways to her indispensable Eastern possessions.

Protection of the Indians engaged in trade at Basra and Baghdad and of the Indian Muslims on pilgrimage to the four Holy Cities of Turkish Arabia, concern for the sanitary conditions at Basra and the Holy Cities, the distribution of the Oudh bequest, the administration of the India Postal System, established in 1868 at Basra and Baghdad, the Irrigation schemes projected by Sir William Willcocks in 1911, (2) and executed by British companies; and, above all, the encouragement and protection of commerce and river navigation continued to be the methods by which British influence and position was maintained and extended. It centred largely about the Residency at Baghdad with its guard of Indian troops, (3) and the armed sloop attached to it, yet so strong was British prestige

(1) Hoskins, op. cit., From about 1875, Great Britain's position in Turkey steadily declined except for momentary revivals in 1877 and in the years immediately following the Young Turks' assumption of power.

(2) Willcocks, Sir William, The Irrigation of Mesopotamia, (1917, Revised Ed.).

(3) "Our maintenance of troops as far north as Baghdad ... could not have been actuated by hope of commercial gain. It must have been due to our strategic position in those regions." Lord Lamington, former Governor of Bombay, 1903-7, Pro. C. Asian Soc., January, 1908, p. 17.

among the tribes that on a number of occasions British representatives were approached by Arabs who desired Great Britain to establish a protectorate over them. (1)

Great Britain's early interest in communications with India, however, had not been without some valuable results. The expeditions sent out from 1834 onwards and the presence of armed steamers on the Tigris (2) paved the way for the initiation of a British mercantile line on the Tigris (3) and for a further expansion of British commerce, which, advancing far beyond the days when Basra had first been a centre for part of the Gulf trade, contributed not a little to the predominant position and influence which Great Britain exercised in Turkish Arabia. In 1911 and 1912, imports through Basra and Baghdad averaged for each of the two years, £3,100,000, of which the great proportion were British and Indian goods destined for re-export to Persia by way of Kermanshah. Exports by sea for the same years

(1) In 1899, 1902, 1912; Events in Turkish 'Iraq, September, 1911, October 1911, February, 1912.

(2) In 1840 and 1841, four armed steamers of the East India Company, the Assyria, Nitocris, Nimrod, and Euphrates, designed to establish further British influence, made periodic trips from Basra to Baghdad with goods, mail and passengers. Surveys were also made on both the Tigris and Euphrates (Supra, pp. 17-18). All but the Nitocris were withdrawn in 1842. Parl. Papers, 1840 (323) Pt. II, 299-300.

(3) This mercantile service was maintained from 1836 on the Tigris, ostensibly under the firman (following the Arabic فرمان) originally granted in 1834 to the British Government for the operation of two steamers for commercial purposes on the Euphrates in connection with the Euphrates Expedition of that year. (Hertslet, Commercial Treaties (1875-91) vol. XIII, pp. 838-839). Just how this firman could be applied to the Tigris is not easily understood. Neither the subsequent firmans of 1842 (Ibid., p. 839) nor the Vizierial Letter of 1861 (Ibid., p. 845) defined clearly the rights and privileges which the company exercised and claimed.

(1)
averaged £3,247,500.

The transportation of practically all of these commodities was in British or Anglo-Indian bottoms, while the handling of the largest proportion of the entire river transport had come into the hands of the firm of Lynch Brothers, who from 1860 had assumed the local management of the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company. It had enjoyed a virtual monopoly until the advent of Midhat Pasha's river service. In spite of constant interference from the Turkish authorities, (2) the company carried on a comparatively efficient service, although at high rates. It also maintained, with a Government subsidy, a line of steamers on the Karun River, after it had been opened by the Shah of Persia in 1888.

So strategically placed were the river valleys, so firmly was external trade regarded as a British monopoly, so paramount was British influence that British statesmen had come to regard them as commercial and political as well as geographical extensions of the Persian Gulf, in whose politics, as Lord Curzon declared in the House of Lords, were 'involved the security, integrity and safety of India itself.' (3)

Lord Curzon had stated in 1892, alluding to the commercial importance of Baghdad, 'Baghdad, in fine, falls under the

(1) Report on the Conditions of Trade in Mesopotamia. (Baghdad, 1920) p. 13.

(2) Other than purely political reports, the difficulties of the company with Turkish officials occupied more dispatches from the Resident at Baghdad to the Foreign Office than any other subject.

(3) Parl. Debates, H. of L., 5th S., vol. 7, (1911), p. 587.

category of the Gulf Ports, and must be included in the zone of indisputable British supremacy.⁽¹⁾ He amplified this statement in the House of Lords, in 1911, saying:

It would be a mistake to suppose that our political interests are confined to the Gulf. They are not confined to the Gulf; they are not confined to the region between Busra and Baghdad; they extend right away up to Baghdad.⁽²⁾

Any change in the status quo in Turkish Arabia became, therefore, as objectionable as any alteration in that of the Persian Gulf itself. The interest of H. M. Government in the early trans-Mesopotamian schemes of communication had been stimulated by the realization of this fact. Lord Salisbury, in 1878, had made the attitude of H. M. Government quite clear upon the subject, when he said: 'Whatever happens, whatever Ministry may be in power, the people of this country will never allow Russian influence to be supreme in the valleys of the Euphrates and Tigris.'⁽³⁾ This attitude was again reflected in the dispatch of 21 September, 1899, from the Viceroy of India in Council,⁽⁴⁾ when it was declared that Russian movement towards Baghdad would be as distasteful as Russian penetration into South Persia.

Germany's 'Drang Nach Osten.'

If Russia was Great Britain's chief rival in Asia during

(1) Curzon, Persia and the Persian Question, vol. II, p. 578.

(2) Parl. Debates, H. of L., 5th S., vol. 7, (1911), p. 586.

(3) Cited, Hoskins, op. cit., p. 446.

(4) Supra. pp. 28, 32-3.

the 19th century, Germany became her rival of the 20th century. The entry of Germany into Turkey and the Persian Gulf, although ostensibly based on commercial ventures (1) and on concessions from the Porte to build a railroad through Anatolia to the Persian Gulf, (2) came to be regarded as a greater threat than

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- (1) Details cannot be given here of the activities of the firm of Wonckhaus in the Persian Gulf, of the negotiations for the railroad concessions, of the political significance attached to the railway project both in Germany and elsewhere, and of the increase of German prestige and influence in Turkey generally. Of the mass of literature existing on this whole subject, the following may be consulted: The Times History of the World War, vol. III, ch. LII; Report on the Condition and Prospects of British Trade in Mesopotamia, George Lloyd, 1908, (Confidential). Rohrbach, P., Die Bagdadbahn, (Berlin, 1903); Helfferich, K., Die deutsche Türkenpolitik (Berlin, 1921); Schaefer, C. A., Die Entwicklung der Bagdadbahnpolitik (Weimar, 1916); Muller, K. H., Die Bedeutung der Bagdadbahn (Hamburg, 1916); Cheradame, Andre, La Question d'Orient: la Macédoine, le chemin de fer de Bagdad (Paris, 1903); also, The Bagdad Railway, Pro. C. Asian Soc. 1911; Lewin, Evans, The German Road to the East (New York, 1917); Earle, Edward M., Turkey, The Great Powers and the Bagdad Railway (New York, 1923). See also: Lynch, H. F. B., The Bagdad Railway, Fortnightly Review, March, 1911; Quarterly Review, October, 1917, pp. 491-528, (by Sir Alwyn Parker, Foreign Office).
- (2) For texts of the concessions: Actes de la concession du chemin de fer Eski Shehr-Konia (Constantinople, 1893); also, Report of the Anatolian Railway Company (1896), pp. 4, 9. preliminary concession, 1899; Young, G., Corps de droit Ottoman, vol. III, pp. 342-51; cf. Report of the Anatolian Railway Company, 1902, p. 8; provisional convention, 1902: Lecoq, R., Un chemin de fer en Asie Mineure (Paris, 1907), appendix; definitive convention, 5 March, 1903: Parl. Papers, 1911 (Cd. 5635), CIII, I. This also contains the additional convention of 1908, as well as the Statutes of the Imperial Bagdad Railroad Company, Specifications, the Loan Contract, First Series, 1903; Loan Contract, Second and Third Series, 1908; third and fourth additional conventions, 21 March, 1911: troisième convention additionnelle et quatrième convention additionnelle à la convention du 5 Mars, 1903, relative au chemin de fer de Bagdad. (Constantinople, 1911).

Russia to the status quo in those areas which Great Britain had come to look upon as her own special spheres. Lord Lansdowne's official statement of policy was directed as much at Germany as at Russia, although Germany chose to regard it as applicable only to Russia.

Germany's early interest in Turkey had not been regarded with alarm. The British Ambassador at Berlin had been instructed to interest Germany in Asia Minor in order to counter-act Russia. (1) The decision of Abdul Hamid, in 1899, to grant the concession for a railroad to the Persian Gulf had been welcomed in England as a check to both Russian and French ambitions. (2)

The phenomenal expansion of Germany's industries and of her overseas commerce, the penetration of markets hitherto regarded as Britain's own, the sudden growth of Germany's mercantile marine, her Navy bills of 1899 and 1900, the colonial demands and aspirations of German diplomatists, the noisy anti-British demonstrations at the time of the Boer War, changed the picture. The English public, stimulated by the press, had come to believe that not only Great Britain's markets but also

(1) See Wilson, Sir A. T., Persian Gulf, p. 2. note.

(2) Lord Salisbury is reported to have said in 1900: 'We are in no way unfavourably impressed by the grant of the concessions in question. On the contrary we welcome them for in this way Germany comes into line with our interests in the Persian Gulf.' Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette, 1871-1914, (Hereafter G.P.) (Berlin, 1922) vol. XVII, No. 5212, p. 373. Also: Lord Lansdowne to F. Lascelles, 18 March 1902, Brit. Docs., vol. II, No. 204, pp. 177-8; Parl. Debates, 4th S., vol. 101, (1902), pp. 129, 597, 628, 669; vol. 120, (1903), p. 1371.

her political prestige in the East and in Africa were being seriously challenged.

The possibility of curbing Germany in Turkish Arabia by means of British participation in the Baghdad Railway had, at first, seemed likely. In 1903, however, the suggestion of the Prime Minister, Mr. Arthur Balfour, 7 and 8 April, ⁽¹⁾ that H. M. Government should approve of the investment of British capital in the Railway at the invitation of the German financiers, ⁽²⁾ providing such participation were on the basis of equality with any other power, raised a storm of disapproval in ⁽³⁾ the House and in the press.

The protest was due, in part to annoyance that German enterprise had undertaken, with every prospect of success, what British commercial and government~~al~~ authorities through lack of vision and mistaken policy had repeatedly rejected, and, in part, to resentment that a rival power should threaten those regions which Great Britain had looked upon as peculiarly her own. ⁽⁴⁾ Protests of shipping companies serving India, of the owners of the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company,

(1) Parl. Debates, 4th S., vol. 120, (1903), pp. 1207-08, 1358-78.

(2) von Gwinner, A., The Baghdad Railway and the Question of British Co-operation, Nineteenth Century, June, 1909.

(3) The Times, 9, 14, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24 April. Daily Mail, 9, 18, 22 April. The Daily Telegraph, 8, 9 April. Pall Mall Gazette, 9, 11, 22, 24 April. Spectator, 4, 11, 18, 25 April. Manchester Guardian, 15 April, 1903.

(4) Yate, Col. A. C., Pro. C. Asian Soc., 22 May, 1911, p. 19; Johnson, Sir H. H., Common Sense in Foreign Policy (London, 1913), pp. v-vii. Cf. also, Lord Curzon, Parl. Debates, H. of L., 5th S., vol. 7, (1911), pp. 583-7, 589.

and of the British-owned railways in Asia Minor may have also
(1)
added to the opposition.

In the face of this opposition, which may have extended to
(2)
his own Cabinet, Mr. Balfour was forced to declare to the
House of Commons, 23 April, 1903, that H. M. Government would
(3)
give no support to any British financial share in the railroad.

What the British Government had failed to secure by finan-
cial participation, it attempted to secure through diplomatic
negotiations. The rapprochement between England and France,
(4)
already in the air, soon became a reality. Following the
(5)
visit of King Edward to France in May, active negotiations
(6)
for the understanding were taken in hand. The three

(1) The Times, 18, 19, 24 April, 1903.

(2) Earle, op. cit., p. 185.

(3) Parl. Debates, 4th S., vol. 121, (1903), pp. 271-2., Lord Lansdowne seems to have believed that 'the scuttle of British financiers' at the newspaper opposition made it impossible for the Government to give assurances of its support. Brit. Docs., vol. II, Minute on No. 224, p. 196. Cf. Earle, op. cit., p. 186.

(4) For early indications of the rapprochement, see Documents Diplomatiques Français (Hereafter Docs. Fr.) (Paris, 1922--), 2e Series, vol. II, No. 524 (12 December, 1902) p. 653; vol. III, No. 138 (14 March, 1903), p. 186; vol. III, No. 192 (23 April, 1903), p. 258. Also, Tardieu, A., La France et les Alliances (Paris, 1908), pp. 51-72.

(5) Memo. on Present State of British Relations with France and Germany by Mr. Eyre Crowe, January, 1907, Brit. Docs., vol. III, App. A, p. 398.

(6) Brit. Docs., vol. II, Nos. 356-416, pp. 292-373. Docs. Fr., 2e Series, vol. III, Nos. 362, 363, 381, 384, 387, 392, 419; vol. IV, Secs. II, IIIa, VI, VIIb.

agreements, signed on 8 April, 1904, ⁽¹⁾ settled the outstanding points of friction, initiated the Entente Cordiale and paved the way to the defensive alliance between the two countries. ⁽²⁾

Thus the period of 'splendid isolation' came to an end. There was inaugurated that pre-1914 era of diplomacy among the powers which aimed, on the one hand, at securing on the basis of compensations ⁽³⁾ a recognition of their respective spheres of interest in Asia and in Africa, thus avoiding points of conflict, and, on the other hand, at providing for collective security in the event that rival ambitions, either commercial or territorial, could not be reconciled.

Tentative negotiations towards an Anglo-Russian rapprochement ⁽⁴⁾ had been interrupted by the Russo-Japanese war. Russia's defeat and her domestic difficulties in 1905 made her more amenable to the settlement of her Middle East differences with Great Britain, ⁽⁵⁾ after negotiations lasting from September,

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- (1) Texts of the three agreements: Accts. and Papers, 1904 (Cd. 1952), CX, 323-4, 340-1; 1905 (Cd. 2383), CIII, 241; 1905 (Cmd. 2384), CIII, 265; 1905 (Cmd. 2385), CIII, 285. Secret articles of Egyptian Declaration: ibid., 1911 (Cd. 5969), CIII, 353 ff., Also in Brit. Docs., vol. II, pp. 374-98, with earlier drafts in parallel columns.
 - (2) On discussions from 1906, on the Anglo-French defensive alliance, see Brit. Docs., vol. III, Nos. 210-21, pp. 170-203.
 - (3) A 'give-and-take arrangement' as Lord Lansdowne expressed it, 2 July, 1903, Brit. Docs., vol. II, No. 356, p. 293.
 - (4) Lansdowne to P. Cambon, 26 October, 1903; ibid., vol. II, No. 250, pp. 217-18. Also: ibid., vol. IV, Nos. 181-8, pp. 183-94, especially, Lansdowne to Spring-Rice, 17 November, 1903, No. 181a, p. 183.
 - (5) For the effect of the Baghdad Railroad in hastening the Convention of 1907, see Driault, É., La Question d'Orient depuis ses Origines jusqu'à la Paix de Sèvres (Paris, 1921) pp. 273 ff.

(1)
1906, to 31 August, 1907, when the Anglo-Russian Convention
(2)
was signed.

By the Convention, Persia, without her consent, was partitioned into spheres of influence, as foreshadowed by the suggestion of the Government of India in 1899. (3) No reference was made, however, to the Persian Gulf or to Turkish Arabia although Sir Edward Grey, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, had pressed urgently for the inclusion of a clause recognizing the status quo in the Persian Gulf. (4) To remedy the omission, Sir Edward, in a dispatch to Sir Arthur Nicolson, the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, 27 August, 1907, noted, on behalf of H. M. Government, that the Russian Government had explicitly stated that they did not deny the special interests of Great Britain in the Persian Gulf. He also stated, in order to make it clear that no change of policy in the Persian Gulf area was contemplated: 'H. M. Government think it advisable to draw attention to previous declarations of British policy and to affirm generally previous statements as to British interests in

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- (1) Brit. Docs., vol. IV, No. 339, p. 388; Nos. 341-517, pp. 389-576. For an indication that an Anglo-Russian understanding was imminent, see: Parl. Debates, 4th S, vol. 157, (1906), p. 1416, Sir E. Grey's statement, 24 May, 1906.
- (2) For text: Treaty Series, No. 34, (1907) in Accts. and Papers, 1908 (Cd. 3753), CXXV, 489; Also, ibid., 1908 (Cd. 3750), CXXV, 477; Brit. and For. St. Papers, C.276-7.
- (3) Accts. and Papers, 1908 (Cd. 3882), CXXV, 465. But cf.: Hardinge to Grey, 23 December, 1905, Brit. Docs., vol. IV, No. 322, 276-7.
- (4) Brit. Docs., vol. IV, No. 417, p. 465; No. 421, p. 470; No. 425, p. 473; Minutes on No. 428, pp. 476-7; Enclosure to No. 429, pp. 480-1; No. 430, pp. 481-2; No. 434, p. 484

the Persian Gulf and the importance of maintaining them.' (1)

The convention was not so much an attempt at territorial expansion as an attempt to recognize the status quo, to check further Russian advances and to free England to deal with Germany's 'Drang nach Osten'. It was received in England with great disapproval. One group alleged that the convention needlessly sacrificed British interests. The misgivings of the group which declared that the partition would alienate friendly Persian opinion were justified. The ill-feeling aroused in Persia was utilized to the fullest extent by the Germans in 1914-15.

Nevertheless, the convention served its purpose, particularly in relieving pressure on India and on the Persian Gulf at a time when it was most needed. (2)

Early attempts at an Anglo-German understanding had

(1) Accts. and Papers, 1908 (Cd. 3750), CXXV, 477, Dispatch No. I, Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Nicolson, 27 August, 1907. For previous declarations of policy, see Hertslet, Map of Europe by Treaty (4 vols., 1875-91), vol. IV, pp. 2615-17, 2624-7; Lord Lansdowne, Parl. Debates, 4th S., vol. 121, (1903), pp. 1347-8; Lord Salisbury, July, 1878, Hoskins, op. cit., p. 446.

(2) Sir E. Grey to Committee of Imperial Defence, 26 May, 1911; Brit. Docs., vol. VI, App. V, pp. 788-9. Also, MacCaulay, Capt. D. I., Pro. C. Asian Soc., 10 October, 1909. The convention was probably not sincerely observed by either Russia or England. See, Parl. Debates, H. of L., 5th S., vol. 7, (1911), p. 605; vol. 10, pp. 678, 694, 697; Cox to Grey, 28 September, 1913; Minute by H. G. Chick, Commercial Adviser to the Persian Gulf Residency; Government of India to Marquess of Crewe (Confidential), 22 January, 1914, cited in Behind the Veil in Persia (Amsterdam, 1917), pp. 148-57.

(1)
failed. Following, however, the Anglo-Russian Convention, Great Britain turned to negotiations with Germany and with Turkey on the question of the Baghdad Railroad which had continued to grow in international importance. To Turkey, consent to the increase in customs was held out in return for concessions which would both safeguard and consolidate England's acquired position in Turkish Arabia. To Germany, Great Britain was willing to make concessions in order to secure her original demands as stated by Lord Haldane to Emperor William II at Windsor in November, 1907: (2) the right to construct and control the section of the Baghdad Railroad from Baghdad to the Persian Gulf, thereby securing 'the gate to India.' (3) In 1909, she was prepared to grant Germany a free hand in Turkey north of Baghdad in return for the recognition of similar

(1) For these early negotiations, see: Brit. Docs., vol. I, No. 122 (21 August, 1898), pp. 100-01; vol. II, No. 77 (18 March, 1901), pp. 60-1 and documents ff.; vol. III, No. 1 (18 May, 1904), p. 1; G.P., vol. XIV, ch. XCI; vol. XVII, ch. CIX. For an official review of Anglo-German relations, see Brit. Docs., vol. III, App. A. pp. 397 ff.

(2) Haldane, R. B., Viscount, Before the War (1920), p. 48; Autobiography (1929), p. 220; also, Brit. Docs., vol. VI, Nos. 59, 60, 62, 63, 65, pp. 91-9. From the German side: G.P., vol. XXIV, pp. 17-22; Baron von Schoen, Memoirs of an Ambassador (1922), pp. 59-63.

(3) This arrangement, proposed to Dr. A. von Gwinner, 13 December, 1903, was accepted by him as far as the financial interests were concerned. Nothing came of it, however: Brit. Docs., vol. II, No. 224, p. 195. It was put forward officially as the basis of British policy, 25 April, 1907, Grey to Bertie: ibid., vol. VI, No. 249, p. 355. Also, Grey to Cambon and to Benckdorf, 4 June, 1907; ibid., No. 250, p. 355. For the renewal of the proposals: Grey to Goschen, 28 October, 1909, ibid., No. 277, p. 379; Marling to Grey, ibid., No. 282, pp. 384-5; and Memo. by Sir H. Babington Smith, ibid., App. VII, pp. 793-4; Enclosure to No. 309, p. 410.

(1)

privileges for Great Britain in southern Mesopotamia.

A settlement along these lines was not out of keeping with the attitude of the powers, including Austria and Italy, during the period 1907 to 1914, (2) in which there 'was an approach to a general agreement among the European nations with reference to their interests', (3) i.e. the creation of special economic and political spheres of influence. Russia and England had already partitioned Persia in 1907. By the Potsdam Agreement, 19 August, 1911, Germany and Russia recognized each other's special interests in Asia Minor and in Persia. (4) France and Germany brought their commercial interests in the Near and

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- (1) Brit. Docs., vol. VI, No. 277, p. 379; No. 287, p. 388. Also, the confidential letter from the Russian Ambassador, Constantinople, to Iswolsky, 25 November, 1909, von Siebert, op. cit., No. 576, p. 510: 'The projected treaty is equivalent to partition of Turkey into a British and a German sphere of interest: England granting Germany freedom of action in Turkey, in Europe and Asia Minor, and claiming such for herself only in the Turkish territories in the vicinity of the Persian Gulf. The projected treaty with Germany completes England's sovereignty in the Persian Gulf.' Also, Russian Ambassador, London, to Iswolsky, ibid., No. 570, p. 507.
- (2) For an able account of these pre-war aspirations: Howard, H. N., Partition of Turkey (Norman, 1931), pp. 50-60.
- (3) Official Report on Events in Turkish 'Iraq, July, 1913.
- (4) Text: Die Kriegsschuldfrage, March, 1924, p. 63. The Potsdam Agreement undoubtedly had its origin in fear of an Anglo-German understanding. In such an event, as the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople wrote to Iswolsky, 25 November, 1909: 'France and Russia would stand alone, which has to be prevented ... Hence there remains only direct though parallel negotiations between ... Germany and Russia and Germany and France.' von Siebert, op. cit., No. 576, p. 510. Also, ibid., No. 582, p. 515; No. 619, p. 543. For negotiations, see G.P., vol. XXVII, Nos. 10218-25, pp. 950-62; Un Livre Noir (R. Marchand, ed., 2 vols., Paris, 1923), vol. II, pp. 501-76.

Middle East into agreement between 1910 and 1914. (1) From
Great Britain, France had gained in 1912, it is reported (2) a
pledge of disinterestedness in Syria in exchange for a similar
disinterestedness on her part in southern Mesopotamia.

Negotiations with Turkey had begun in 1909, but not until
1913 was agreement possible, Great Britain having been forced
to give way on many of her original proposals. In the end,
however, Great Britain was able to secure the recognition of
her special position in the Persian Gulf and of the validity
of her existing treaties with Kuwait. The terminus of the
Baghdad Railway was to be at Basra, beyond which the railway
was not to extend without the consent of Great Britain. Two
British Directors were to be appointed to the Board of the
Baghdad Railway. Turkey also guaranteed that equal charges,
dues and treatment should be accorded to all nations on the
railway. The development and future control of the port of
Basra were to be partially entrusted to British hands. Ex-
clusive rights of navigation were secured to a new company
formed by Lord Inchcape and to the existing Lynch line, whose
privileges were extended. Turkey recognized the right of
Great Britain to buoy, light and police the Persian Gulf. (3)

(1) Earle, op. cit., p. 248; also Docs. Fr., 3e Series,
vol. III, No. 239, p. 317.

(2) See statement by M. Pichon at Secret Meeting of the Four
Powers, Paris, 20 March, 1919: Baker, R. S., Woodrow
Wilson and World Settlement (3 vols., 1922-3), vol. III,
p. 3.

(3) Quarterly Review, October, 1917, pp. 517-21; Parl.
Debates, H. of C., 5th S., vol. 53, (1913), pp. 392-5;
von Siebert, op. cit., ch. XX; Helfferich, Karl, Die
Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges, (Berlin, 1921) pp. 145 ff.;
The Times, 17 and 31, May, 1913.

During this period of negotiations, both the Foreign Office (1) and British representatives in Turkish Arabia were concerned with increasing Great Britain's influence and prestige, not only to counteract the importance of the Baghdad Railway, but also to provide a greater claim to Mesopotamia as her sphere of influence in the event of the break-up of Turkey. The Resident of Baghdad had telegraphed, 23 June, 1913, to the Government of India and to H. M. Ambassador at Constantinople:

In view of the possible break-up of Turkey and in the meantime the development of preparatory foreign spheres of interest, it seemed incumbent on the British Government to preserve every kind of priority which they already possessed in Mesopotamia, their natural sphere in the Ottoman dominions. Hence any abolition of British Post Offices in Turkey should not extend to those at Baghdad and Basra. The Residency guard and the R.I.M.S. Comet are appurtenances to be jealously guarded, for the present. (2)

A month later, the Acting Resident in Baghdad presented a full plan for extending Great Britain's position. (3) He advocated an extension of the Irrigation system under British auspices, as one of the most important means to that end, saying: 'To gain control of this system and create an imperium imperio is important, Control of water will give control of revenue assessment, perhaps control of collection.' As to

(1) Minute by Sir E. Grey, 12 March, 1910: Brit. Docs., vol. VI, No. 325, p. 433.

(2) Cited: Reports on Events in Turkish 'Iraq, June, 1913.

(3) He had already urged that increased efforts should be made to add Mosul, not then belonging to any sphere of influence, to Great Britain's sphere. He had suggested that the Church Missionary Society might be aided financially and that Sir Edward Grey should approach the Jewish Colonization Society to subvent schools where English would be taught. Nestorians should also be encouraged. Ibid., February, 1913.

railways, they would be auxiliary to irrigation and to the agriculture which it would encourage,⁽¹⁾ while steam navigation, he believed, would have to give way both to irrigation and to the railways. The importance of oil, in his opinion, had not been proven.⁽²⁾

Germany was not unwilling that Great Britain should possess these special interests in Turkish Arabia, although she was not willing to recognize the full British claims. The process of reconciling the differences between the two powers might not have taken so long, however, had it not been for the necessity of considering the wishes of France and of Russia, and of finding compensations for them in order to avoid that obsession of the early 20th century: a general European war. Not until 15 June, 1914, was a treaty initialled, subject to ratification, following the conclusion of separate Turco-German negotiations.

⁽³⁾
By the terms of the agreement, Germany abandoned all hope of a port in her own name on the Persian Gulf. She secured, however, cessation of obstruction to the Baghdad Railway, the recognition of her own special spheres in Anatolia, North Syria and northern Mesopotamia, in exchange for recognition of Great Britain's dominant position in southern

(1) 'Give the Tigris and Euphrates escapes into the deserts, and Babylon will again rival Egypt and the railways will be one of the best paying concerns in the world.' Willcocks, Sir W., Near East, 6 June, 1913.

(2) Reports on Events in Turkish 'Iraq, July, 1913.

(3) Political Science Quarterly, March, 1923, pp. 29 ff.

Mesopotamia and in the Persian Gulf. The terminus of the Baghdad Railway was to be at Basra, any further construction to be made only after a complete agreement had been previously reached by the Ottoman, German and British Governments. Two British members were to be added to the Board of Directors of the Railway. There was to be no discrimination, direct or indirect, in transit facilities or freight rates in the transportation of goods. Both Powers were to observe strictly the terms of the Anglo-Turkish Agreement of July, 1913, in which the agreements between Lord Inchcape and the Baghdad Railway Company regarding the important navigation rights and the port and terminal facilities on the Tigris and Euphrates were recognized, together with the agreement between the Smyrna-Aidin Railway and the Baghdad Railway regarding important extensions to the former line. As an essential preliminary to the negotiations regarding the Turkish oilfields, the German Government was forced, in March, 1914, to recognize southern Mesopotamia as well as central and southern Persia as the exclusive fields of operation of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, and, in addition, to agree to the construction of a railway from Kut al-'Amara to Mandali in order to facilitate the shipment of petroleum. Both Germany and Great Britain undertook to observe their respective interests in the irrigation of the Cilician plain and lower Mesopotamian valley.

Thus, on the eve of the world war, Great Britain's long tenure as the dominant European power in Turkish Arabia and the Persian Gulf was about to enter a new phase. Another chapter

had been added to those in which Englishmen, first as traders and then as representatives of the British Crown, sought to establish commercial and political supremacy for their country in those regions. Three centuries of British efforts to extend and to protect trade had culminated, through the new concessions contained in the Turko-German Agreement, in fresh opportunities for British capital, talent and products in the development of irrigation, of navigation, of the ports of Basra and Baghdad and in the anticipated increase in prosperity of Turkish Arabia. A share of the potential riches of the petroleum fields of Kirkuk had also been won for British exploitation.

The long series of British political activities: the suppression of pirates, the establishment of suzerainty over Arab chiefs of the Gulf, the surveys and investigations for river and railway communication projects, and the initiation of diplomatic and military measures, all of which had been successfully directed towards protecting trade and forestalling other powers from reaching the Gulf and thus menacing India, had broken the force of the latest and most dangerous of the attempts to disturb the status quo in Persian Gulf regions.

Even more important: Great Britain's claim to special consideration and position in south west Asia had achieved recognition both by the Powers and by Turkey itself. She had, in effect, with their consent, completed the peaceful annexation of the Persian Gulf as an Indian Lake and the establishment of her special position in the Mesopotamian wilayets of

the Ottoman Empire.

The agreements, however, had not been all pure gain for Great Britain. The Berlin-Baghdad Railway was to have its outlet to the Gulf. Germany, although greatly restricted, was to be admitted into the hitherto jealously guarded Garden of Eden. Nor was there any guarantee as to how long the new relations could be expected to last. In the face of previous successes in hitherto British markets already won by German commercial rivals and of the bellicose attitude and unfriendly actions of Germans, within the few months following the initialling of the Anglo-German Agreement, it is not too much to conjecture that the agreement might have been, in reality, only an uneasy truce.

It may be reasonably doubted whether these breaches in Great Britain's traditional policy would ever have taken place, whether the negotiations themselves would ever have been necessary, or whether Great Britain would have been forced to suffer nearly 100,000 casualties ⁽¹⁾ or to sacrifice £200,000,000 ⁽²⁾ in a war in Turkish Arabia had she taken the early opportunities repeatedly offered her of building the trans-Mesopotamian

(1) British casualties in the Mesopotamia Campaign:

	-a-	-b-
Killed or died of wounds or disease ..	27,621	31,758
Missing or taken prisoner ...	13,494	15,350
Wounded ...	51,386	51,150
Total ..	92,501	98,258

a-O.H., vol. IV, p. 331. b-Robertson, Sir William, Soldiers and Statesmen; (2 vols., 1926) vol. II, p. 82.

(2) Parl. Debates, H. of C., 5th S., vol. 151. (1922), p. 1546.

Railroad. Conjectures are often futile, but the concatenation of events would seem to bear out the supposition that had she built the railroad, the Wilayets of Baghdad and Basra would, in the fullness of time, have taken the status of Egypt before the war, owing nominal allegiance to the Sultan but under the protection of Great Britain.

Had there not been the visions of economic and political expansion in Mesopotamia to draw Germany onward, Germany might never have sought or acquired her predominating influence at Constantinople. Without that influence, Turkey would never have entered the war on the side of Germany. Arab Nationalism would not have arisen for at least another generation without the stimulus of the Allied war-time promises of Arab independence, in return for their co-operation against the Turks. Without that stimulus and without the war which brought the Sharifians into a position to give leadership and direction to the Arab movement, the creation of the 'Iraq Kingdom might have been delayed to the dim future.

Whatever the new relations between Turkey, Germany and Great Britain in the Persian Gulf area might have been as a result of their agreements, it was clear, immediately on the outbreak of the war in Europe, that the whole situation had been thrown once again into the melting pot. All for which Great Britain had striven, consciously or unconsciously, for nearly three hundred years, was now in danger of being swept away. The whole history of the part played by Great Britain in the Persian Gulf and Turkish Arabia made it inevitable, once

resort to arms had begun, that she should make some effort, not only to maintain that which she had won, but also to secure, once and for all, by the establishment of political control, the Mesopotamian portion of the land route to India.

Outline Map of Basra
and
Surrounding Country



CHAPTER III.

THE CONQUEST OF SOUTHERN MESOPOTAMIA.

In the four years, 1914 to 1918, British arms completed what three centuries of British commerce and diplomacy had begun. The military operations which resulted in the occupation of Basra, then of Baghdad in 1917, and finally of the whole of Turkish Arabia as far north as Mosul, have been ably recounted (1) elsewhere. It is germane here only to indicate how the motives which lay behind the forward movements and the administration of the occupied territories arose partly from immediate circumstances and partly from the long established Middle East policy of Great Britain.

Baghdad as an objective of the Expeditionary Force had not been unconsidered by military and political officials even before Basra was taken. Sir Percy Cox, Political Resident in the Persian Gulf and Chief Political Officer to the Expeditionary Force, had telegraphed privately to the Viceroy on 23 November, that the General Officer Commanding had been considering the question of the advance to Baghdad, and that he (Cox) did not

(1) History of the Great War based on Official Documents: (a) Moberly, Brig.-Gen., F. J., op. cit., (O.H.). (b) Corbett, Sir Julian, Naval Operations, vol. II, (1922); VI, (1923). (c) Macpherson, Medical Services, General History, vol. IV, (1924). Survey of India, Records of the, vol. XX. The War Record (1920). Candler, Edmund, The Long Road to Baghdad, (2 vols., 1919). Personal accounts by Sir Arnold Wilson, Lt.-Col. J. E. Tennant, C. V. Townshend and others are listed in the bibliography.

see how 'we can well avoid taking over Baghdad.'⁽¹⁾ Political officers on the spot, in Simla and in Whitehall, both at the Foreign Office and the India Office, at various times continued to give expression to similar views,⁽²⁾ but neither H. M. Government nor the Government of India were ready, at the time, to support such a far reaching objective.⁽³⁾ Indeed the attitude of the latter towards the expedition until the middle of 1915 had been that of niggardly, even unwilling compliance with the policy laid down by H. M. Government.⁽⁴⁾

The sudden reversal of this attitude by the Government of India came after the appointment of General Sir John Nixon to the command in Mesopotamia, 9 April, 1915, when it assumed, with his support, the initiative for the advance to Baghdad.⁽⁵⁾ Occurring almost at the same moment that the India Office, with a new concern for oil supplies, opposed any advance beyond the hinterland of Basra, a deliberate and concerted policy was rendered impossible. The criticism of the Mesopotamia Commission of 1917: 'The scope of the objective of the expedition was never sufficiently defined in advance, so as to make each successive move part of a well-thought-out and matured plan'⁽⁶⁾ was never more pertinent than in the days before the first advance towards Baghdad.

(1) O.H., vol. I, p. 134.

(2) Meso. Comm. Report, Cd. 8610, p. 97.

(3) Ibid., p. 20; Asquith, H. A., Memories and Reflections, (2 vols., 1928) vol. II, p. 69.

(4) Cd. 8610, pp. 97, 105, 106, 123-31.

(5) Ibid., pp. 16, 97, 125.

(6) Ibid., p. 111, O.H., vol. III, preface.

The degree to which the reversal of the attitude of the Government of India and the sanction of H. M. Government to the advance on Baghdad were influenced by the realization that India's permanent interests would be best served by the inclusion of Baghdad under the direct control of India cannot be fully known until the evidence in state archives is available. It would seem, however, that considerations of the moment played a greater part in the authorization of the advance, than did deliberate considerations of past and future policy.

Early successes around Basra had elated the military command in India, increasing their desire for further victories in order to demonstrate their importance, unduly cast in the shade, in their own opinion, by the larger and more striking operations in Europe. (1) The advance to Baghdad would not only give these opportunities, but would, as the Viceroy pointed out to the Secretary of State for India, Mr. Austen Chamberlain,

create an immense impression in the Middle East, especially in Persia, Afghanistan, and on our frontier, and would counteract the unfortunate impression in the Middle East created by want of success in the Dardanelles. It would also isolate German parties in Persia, (2) probably produce a pacifying effect in that country and frustrate the German plan of raising Afghanistan and the tribes, while the impression throughout Arabia would be striking. In India, the effect would be undoubtedly good. (3)

(1) Cd. 8610, p. 131.

(2) For German activities in Persia, Afghanistan and India in August and September, 1915, see O.H., vol. I, pp. 309 ff.

(3) Telegram (Private) Lord Hardinge to Chamberlain, 6 October, 1915, cited O.H., vol. II, p. 11; also, Letter, Viceroy to Chamberlain, 15, October, 1915, cited ibid., p. 21.

The Chief of General Staff, India, on 5 October, emphasized, in addition, that the possession of Baghdad would

deprive the Turks of a well equipped place of concentration; place us in a good position to defeat them in detail as they moved down the rivers from Asia Minor or Syria; deprive the Turks of steamers, material and resources, and increase our prestige. (1)

The whole question of the advance rested on the possibility of sending reinforcements. These, the Government of India insisted, should be provided by H. M. Government. (2) Whitehall maintained, however, that as the expedition was India's 'show', (3) the Government of India should find the forces not only for taking Baghdad but for retaining it. General Nixon had repeatedly shown himself confident that he had troops enough to capture the City. (4) He stipulated, however, that an additional division, at least, should arrive within the first weeks of the capture of Baghdad in order to hold it. (5)

(1) Appreciation, Sir Percy Lake, 5 October, 1915, cited ibid., pp. 9-10.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Interdepartmental Comm. Report, 16 October, 1915, cited Ibid., p. 17.

(4) Telegrams: Nixon to Government of India and India Office, 6 October, 1915, cited O.H., vol. II, p. 12; Nixon to Chamberlain, 8 October, 1915, cited ibid., p. 15; Viceroy to Chamberlain, 6 October, 1915, cited ibid., p. 11. Telegram (Private), Chamberlain to Hardinge, 5 October, 1915, cited O.H., vol. II, p. 9.

(5) Telegram, Nixon to Chamberlain, 8 October, 1915, cited O.H., vol. II, p. 15. Also, Interdepartmental Comm. Report, 16 October, cited ibid., p. 17.

In the arguments put forward by the Government of India, H. M. Government fully concurred. ⁽¹⁾ Indeed so convinced was the War Cabinet by 'Nixon's attitude and by opportunities within our grasp for a great success such as we have not yet achieved in any quarter, and the political (and even military) advantages which would follow from it throughout the East,' not easily overrated, ⁽²⁾ that it authorized General Nixon to 'march on Baghdad if he is satisfied that the force he has available is sufficient for operations' and promised reinforcements from ⁽³⁾ France.

The disasters which followed, ending in the surrender, 29 April, of 13,309 British officers and other ranks at Kut al-'Amara, after a siege of five months, now form part of history. The Commission appointed by Parliament in 1916 to make enquiry into the conduct of the operations in Mesopotamia, ⁽⁴⁾ placed 'the weightiest share of responsibility for the first attempt on Baghdad' ⁽⁵⁾ on Sir John Nixon, whose 'confident optimism was the main cause of the decision to advance.' ⁽⁶⁾ It must not be

(1) Letter (Private), Chamberlain to Hardinge, 7 October, cited ibid., p. 8; Telegram S/S for India to Viceroy, 6 October cited ibid., p. 11; Interdepartmental Comm. Report, 16 October, cited ibid., p. 17.

(2) Telegram, S/S for India to Viceroy, 6 October, cited ibid. p. 11.

(3) Telegram, S/S for India to Viceroy, 23 October, cited ibid., p. 28.

(4) Meso. Comm. Report, Cd. 8610.

(5) Ibid., p. 111.

(6) Ibid., p. 111.

overlooked, however, that both he and those who advocated the advance at the time were not unnaturally influenced by immediate ends which outweighed military conditions, to meet which little or no adequate preparation had been made.

In the period after the unsuccessful attempts to relieve Kut and its surrender, when the Force lay inert, concerned mainly with renewing its strength and reorganizing its vital services, (1) the ultimate desirability of extending British influence to Baghdad was not entirely forgotten. Not until 3 February, 1917, however, when the Russians were expected to converge on Mosul and perhaps Baghdad, that Sir William Robertson, it being deemed desirable for political reasons that British forces should occupy Baghdad first, inquired as to General Maude's views regarding another advance, with Baghdad as the objective. (2)

Sir William Robertson's enquiry and the definite instructions of 28 February, 1917, to capture Baghdad (3) were not influenced merely by dislike of seeing Russian forces, either as allies or otherwise, in Turkish Arabia. Circumstances arising from more deeply rooted aspirations as well as the same general considerations which (4) prompted the first advance of 1915 were also at work.

(1) O.H., vol. III, pp. 7, 20-3, 30-6, 62-70.

(2) Ibid., pp. 125, 126 and 204 ff.

(3) Ibid., p. 205.

(4) The Government of India again pressed for the capture of Baghdad on the grounds that it would relieve the increasing tension on the North West Frontier, O.H., vol. III, p. 207.

The pre-war aspirations of the powers for economic and political expansion in Asia (1) had taken on a concrete form as important war objectives of the Allies on the basis of the so-called Secret Agreements. These, as far as they affected the Ottoman Empire, were as follows: i. Constantinople Agreement, 18 March, 1915, by Russia, France and Great Britain concerning Constantinople, the Straits and Persia. (2) ii. Pact of London, 26 April, 1915, between Great Britain, Russia and Italy regarding compensation to Italy for joining the Allies against Germany. (3) iii. Husain-McMahon Correspondence, August, 1914-January, 1916, concerning Arab independence in return for Arab co-operation against the Turks. (4) iv. Agreements of the spring of 1916, between Great Britain, France and Russia. (a) Sykes-Picot Agreement

(1) Supra, p.49 ff.

(2) Text: de Martens, C., Recueil des Traites, 3e Series (Leipzig 1922), T. X, p. 347. See also, Temperley, H.W. V., (History of the Peace Conference of Paris (Hereafter H.P.C.P.) 6 vols., 1920-4), vol. VI, pp. 2-10; Manchester Guardian, 22 February, 1918.

(3) Accts. and Papers, Misc. Papers, 1920, No. 7 (Cmd. 671), LI, 261. Text: de Martens, op. cit., vol. X, p. 329; H.P.C.P., vol. V, pp. 384 ff.; also, vol. VI, pp. 10-13.

(4) The complete text of the correspondence has never been officially revealed, but summaries of substantial portions have been published: MacMunn, Sir G., and Falls, C., Military Operations, Egypt and Palestine (Official History of the World War, hereafter cited as O.H., E. and Pal.) (2 vols., 1928-30) vol. I, pp. 213 ff; Le Temps (Paris) 19 September, 1919, Letter of 25 October, 1915, not included; Cocks, Seymour, The Secret Treaties (1918); Note on the Arab Question, submitted by Amir Faisal to H. M. Government and cited Fortnightly Review, vol. 136 (1929) pp. 735-6; Al-Manar (Arabic journal, Cairo) 5 January, 1924. The present writer's summaries have been taken directly from the original Arabic text of the letters.

16 May, 1916, between Great Britain and France, concerning the division of Syria and Mesopotamia between themselves and the
(1)

Arabs. (b) Russia's assent to an agreement which assigned
(2)
her northern Kurdistan and portions of Eastern Anatolia,

v. The Agreement of St. Jean de Maurienne, 17 April, 1917, between Great Britain, France and Italy, concerning Italy's share
(3)
of Asia Minor.

The Ottoman Empire, from which Germany was to be excluded, was, by the Agreements, divided among the Allies in accordance with their long-standing ambitions. In addition, large sections of the Empire were assigned to potential allies as compensation for their participation in the war against the Central Powers. Thus, Italy demanded and received recognition, by the Pact of London, 26 April, 1915, of her claim to an equitable section

(1) Text: de Martens, op. cit., vol. X, p.350: L'Asie Française, XVII, (August-November, 1919), pp. 243 ff.; Sanné, G., La Syrie (Paris, 1920), p. 638 ff.; Loder, J. de V., The Truth about Mesopotamia, Palestine and Syria (1923), pp. 161-4. The Foreign Office 'version' in Leslie, Shane, Mark Sykes; His Life and Letters (1923), pp. 250-8, is nothing more than an explanation of the circumstances under which the Agreement was made.

(2) See Memorandum of 6 March, 1917 (first printed in Izvesta, 12 November, 1917); Manchester Guardian, 19 January, 1918; de Martens, op. cit., vol., X, p.353; H.P.C.P., vol. VI, p. 16. For negotiations in which Russia participated, see documents in Die Europäischen Mächte und die Türkei Während des Weltkrieges: Die Aufteilung der asiatischen Türkei (Adamoff, E., Ed., Dresden, 1932) (Hereafter Die Aufteilung der asiatischen Türkei), especially Nos. 56, 60, 74-8, 99, 103, 104.

(3) Reputed text: Manchester Guardian, 9 January, 1920; Current History (New York), vol. XI (March, 1920), pp. 499 ff.; see also H.P.C.P., vol. VI, pp. 18 ff.

of Asia Minor. In return for his revolt against the Turks, Husain, Sharif of Mecca, received promises, through the so-called Husain-McMahon Correspondence, of British aid for the establishment of Arab independence in a large portion of the Arab-speaking provinces of Turkey. (1)

In the Correspondence, however, Sir Henry McMahon made reservations safeguarding the interests of Great Britain and those of her ally, France. (2) Previous Agreements which Great Britain had with the Arab chiefs were to be unaltered. (3) Basra was to be placed under British control (4) while Baghdad, concerning which it was declared that a stable government was demanded by the very special British interests in the region, (5) was to be the subject of future negotiations. (6) It was also stipulated that the prospective Arab state should receive only British aid and assistance.

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- (1) Letters, Sir H. McMahon, Cairo, to Husain, Sharif of Mecca, 24 October, 25 October, 14 December, 1915; also, 30 August 1915. See also, Young, Major Sir H. W., The Independent Arab (1933), pp. 276-7.
- (2) Letters, Sir H. McMahon to Sharif Husain, 24 October, 14 December, 1915, also, 25 January, 1916. The reservation of territory along the eastern Mediterranean in the interests of France were not recognised by the Sharif, who agreed, however, to postpone the decision until the end of the war. Sharif Husain to Sir H. McMahon, 1 January, 1915. The claim of an existing secret treaty giving all of Arab-Asia to Sharif Husain has never been proven. Infra p.217 .
- (3) Letters, Sir H. McMahon to Sharif Husain, 24 October, Section 1; Sharif Husain to Sir H. McMahon, 5 November, 1915.
- (4) Letter, Sir H. McMahon to Sharif Husain, 25 October, 1915.
- (5) Letter, Sir H. McMahon to Sharif Husain, 14 December, 1915.
- (6) Letter, Sharif Husain to Sir H. McMahon, 5 November, 1915; Sir H. McMahon to Sharif Husain, 25 January, 1916.

and should employ, exclusively, British advisers. (1) The Sharif had, at first, protested at the conditions concerning 'Iraq, which, he declared, by history and religion, formed an integral part of Arab territory. (2) It was agreed, however, to leave the final decision to the future, the British to pay an indemnity for any part of 'Iraq which they occupied, even temporarily. (3)

The Sykes-Picot Agreement (4) was to regulate future Anglo-French territorial relations in the eastern Mediterranean and to govern future British policy in points of conflict arising from the interpretation of the Husain-McMahon Correspondence and the Agreement. It confirmed the arrangements made by the Anglo-Arab correspondence by assigning Basra and Baghdad to British control, and by designating a strip of territory lying between Baghdad and the zone of territory around Mosul, assigned to French influence, as a zone to be given to the Arabs, subject to British influence. (5)

(1) Letter, Sir H. McMahon to Sharif Husain, 25 October, 1915, Section 4.

(2) Letter, Sharif Husain to Sir H. McMahon, 5 November, 1915.

(3) Ibid., Sir H. McMahon to Sharif Husain, 25 January, 1916.

(4) The statement that T. E. Lawrence, 'had much to do with the Sykes-Picot Agreement' Main, op. cit., p. 58, is scarcely accurate. The first intimation received by Sir Henry McMahon or anyone else in Cairo, of the agreement seems to have been when Sir Mark Sykes, 'in conversation, producing a map, remarked "What do you think of my treaty?"' Hart, H. B. Liddell, T. E. Lawrence (1934), p. 70. See also Leslie, op. cit., pp. 244, 245, 249, 287, 288.

~~(5) See Sketch Map.~~

The necessity of capturing Baghdad as a preliminary to the application of these secret agreements thus became one of the primary political arguments in favour of the renewed advance towards Baghdad. Its capture would also restore British prestige, seriously shaken by the surrender of Kut and by the attempt, suggested by General Townshend himself, 23 April, ⁽¹⁾ and sanctioned by the War Cabinet, ⁽²⁾ to purchase the freedom of the besieged army for a sum of £2,000,000. The capture would, in addition, encourage the people of the Allied Powers and dishearten ⁽³⁾ the Central Powers.

The occupation of Baghdad would present a better opportunity to organize Arab co-operation, a step which H. M. Government had repeatedly stressed from the inception of the campaign and to facilitate which the War Cabinet was to sanction the Proclamation of 19 March, 1917, issued under the name of General Maude, following the capture of Baghdad, 11 March, 1917. ⁽⁴⁾

Among the reasons originally urged for the dispatch of the Expedition, it will be remembered, was the hope that it would

(1) O.H., vol. II, p. 450.

(2) Ibid., p. 452.

(3) The tremendous store set by Germany and Turkey on Baghdad and the plans which they elaborated for its recapture have been well described by Djemal (Jamal) Pasha in Memories of a Turkish Statesman (n.d.), During the war, he, himself, regarded Palestine and Syria as more important centres, although he had once, when Pasha of Baghdad, described 'Iraq as 'an iron gate against the great power to the south, that is, India.' Speech on the Inauguration of Jamal Bey as Pasha of Baghdad, 30 August, 1911.

(4) For text, see Appendix I.

secure the assistance of the Arabs against the Turks and prevent them from joining in a Jihad. (1) With these ends in view, proclamations (2) had been addressed to the Shaikhs of the Gulf and to the Arabs of Turkish Arabia by H. M. Political Officers, both before and after the occupation of Basra. It was emphasized that 'this War has nothing to do with religion.' (3) The Shaikhs were urged not to 'allow the foolish people to be led away by foolish talk of "Jehad".' They were assured that 'the Holy Towns of Arabia, and also the Holy Places in 'Iraq, and the port of Jeddah' would not be attacked by either the British army or navy 'so long as there is no interference with pilgrims and visitors from India to those towns and Holy Places.' It was reiterated that 'the military operations of the British Forces' were directed 'solely against the Turkish Government and its troops.' (4) The Arabs were again assured that the British Government bore 'no enmity or ill-will against the populace'; (5)

(1) Supra, pp. 4, 8-10.

(2) Compilation of Proclamations, Notices, etc... Relating to ... Mesopotamia, October 31st, 1914 to August 31st, 1919, (Baghdad, 1919) (Hereafter, Proclamations, 1914-1919.) Notices and Proclamations, Nos. 1-5, 7, 8. An interesting parallel to the Proclamations of 1914 may be seen in the instructions to Captain Seton, Political Officer to the expeditions against pirates of the Persian Gulf, 1809. See Low, op. cit., vol. I, p. 325.

(3) Ibid., Notice No. 1, 31st October, 1914; Proclamation No. 2, 1st November, 1914; Proclamation No. 3, 1st November, 1914.

(4) Ibid., Notice No. 7, 14th February, 1915.

(5) Ibid., Proclamation No. 5, 22nd November, 1914.

that it had 'no desire to treat them as enemies so long as they themselves remain friendly and neutral and refrain from taking up arms against her (British) troops.'⁽¹⁾ On the contrary, the British Government hoped 'to prove good friends and protectors' and they were assured that, under the British flag, they would 'enjoy the benefits of liberty and justice both in regard to your religious and your secular affairs.'⁽²⁾ They were warned, however, that while it was 'the wish of the British Government to free the Arabs from the oppression of the Turks and bring them advancement and increase of prosperity and trade', yet, 'in the case of those departing from the path of friendship and neutrality and taking up arms in co-operation with the enemy, their properties lying within the sphere of British control will be considered sequestrated to the British Government.'⁽³⁾ This warning had already been conveyed to them in an emphatic notice,⁽⁴⁾ on the outbreak of war, and dated 5 November, 1914.

Neither the assurances nor the warnings conveyed in these proclamations nor the personal efforts of Sir Percy Cox and his assistant Political Officers were sufficient to win over the Arabs as a whole to the British side. The problem of gaining Arab co-operation in responsible posts in the Administration or

(1) Ibid., Notice No. 7, 14th February, 1915; cf. also, Notice No. 4, 5th November, 1914.

(2) Ibid., Proclamation No. 5, 22 November, 1914.

(3) Ibid., Notice No. 7, 14th February, 1914.

(4) Ibid., Notice No. 4, 5th November, 1914.

in fighting the Turk hung largely on the ability of Great Britain to give the Arabs tangible evidence that the Turks would never return to the country. Confiscation of property would be the least of the reprisals which the Turks would inflict if they ever returned, as the Arabs well knew; a knowledge confirmed by Turkish treatment of the Arabs of Kut al-'Amara after its surrender.

Such assurance could not be given, however, not only for fear of giving umbrage to the allies of Great Britain, but also because the question of the advance on Baghdad was still in the air, and the future status of the country was still in doubt in official quarters. (1) Not even those, who, familiar with the intimate relationship which Turkish Arabia bore to India, or responsible for the administrative policy of the country, could make reassuring public announcements, although they confidently expected Mesopotamia to be 'an Indian appendage' as Sir Valentine Chirol wrote in 1915, while accompanying the Viceroy of India on an official visit to Basra. (2) The Viceroy himself, on the occasion of the visit had made a speech, interpreted by many as foreshadowing annexation to India. (3)

(1) Asquith, Herbert, wrote in his diary, 25 March, 1915: 'Grey and I..... both think that in the real interests of our own future the best thing would be if at the end of the War we could say that we had taken and gained nothing.... Mesopotamia for instance.' Asquith, H. A., op. cit., vol. II, p. 69.

(2) Behind the Veil, pp. 91-2, (facsimile, p. 119).

(3) Proclamations, 1914-1919. Speech No. 6, 6 February, 1915. p. 3.

Private assurances as given by Sir Percy Cox, Chief Political Officer, on behalf of H. M. Government, to various individuals, such as the Shaikh of Kuwait and the Shaikh of Mohammerah, had limited credence. To the former, in a letter dated 3 November, 1914, two days before the landing at Fao, Sir Percy Cox had declared that if the British succeeded at Basra, 'we will not return Basra to the Turkish Government and will not surrender it back to them at all.'⁽¹⁾

Lacking definite and public assurances, the great majority of the Arabs, both townsmen and tribesmen, while feathering their nests at every opportunity, refused to commit themselves. They preferred to let time and circumstances decide the question on whom their permanent allegiance should be bestowed.

(1) Aitchison, op. cit., vol. XI, Persian Gulf No. XLII.

CHAPTER IV.

INITIATION OF BRITISH ADMINISTRATION.

While the extension of the campaign to Baghdad and the future of the country were being discussed in official circles, the practical problem of the administration of the occupied areas was forced upon those in command of the Expeditionary Force.. Even had there been no obligation under international usage, as the Hague Conventions of 1899 and of 1907,⁽¹⁾ the needs of the Force and the necessity of replacing the vacuum left by the departure of the Turks, rendered the initiation of some form of administration imperative.

The requirements of the troops were wide and varied. Houses had to be requisitioned for billets and messes, the occupants removed. Land for camps and ammunition dumps had to be found. Labour and transport in ever increasing quantities had to be supplied. Local produce and provisions had to be obtained and constantly inspected for quality. Precautionary measures for the health of both men and animals had to be taken; sanitary regulations had to be enforced; a better water supply provided. Peace and order in the bazaars and about the camps had to be maintained; thefts from troops and stores by loose-fingered Arabs checked. Liquor shops, dance halls and brothels

(1) Regulations respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land, Annexed to Hague Convention, 29 July, 1899, affirmed in a similar Convention of the Hague, 18 October, 1907. Texts: Brit. and For. St. Papers, vol. XCI (1898-9) 988; vol. C (1906-07) 338.

had to be controlled.

The use of river and of sea transport had also to be regulated in the interests of army supplies. Freedom of movement of both persons and goods had to be so controlled that neither information nor supplies should reach the enemy.

These needs of the Forces, although met largely by the direct intervention of the military authorities, necessitated an intricate mass of detailed orders, proclamations and notices issued under the authority of the General Officer Commanding and enforced for the most part by military police and military courts. These regulations supervised the direct relations between the inhabitants and the army, ranging from the control of rents ⁽¹⁾ and foodstuffs, ⁽²⁾ the restriction of movements and rivercraft, ⁽³⁾ to orders that carriage drivers and boatmen 'shall in all cases give preference to British Officers, ⁽⁴⁾ European ladies and Government servants.'

They governed indirect relations, from the control of the carrying of arms among the inhabitants, ⁽⁵⁾ the sale of liquors and drugs ⁽⁶⁾ to minute sanitary regulations prescribing floor

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- (1) Compilation of Proclamations and Notifications Affecting Civil Inhabitants of Mesopotamia in Basrah (Baghdad, 1919) Notification No. 2 (Hereafter Procs. Basrah)
 - (2) Ibid, Notif. No. 5; Proclamations and Notifications, 'Amarah' (Baghdad, 1919), No. 1, Sec. 14. (Hereafter Procs. 'Amarah).
 - (3) Procs. Basrah, Notif. No. 6, Regulation Nos. 12, 13; Procs. 'Amarah, Proc. No. 1, Secs. 2, 3, and 9.
 - (4) Procs. Basrah, Reg. No. 12, Sec. 11.
 - (5) Procs. Basrah, Reg. No. 12; Procs. 'Amarah, Proc. No. 1, Sec. 4.
 - (6) Procs. Basrah, Reg. No. 12, Sec. 9; Procs. 'Amarah, Proc. No. 1, Sec. 7; Notice No. 5.

space per animal in stables or rewards for bringing in dogs
(1)
for destruction.

In all these relations between the civil population and the military authorities, the fact was never lost sight of that it was a military occupation and that a war had to be won. From the first to the last, the needs of the inhabitants were subordinated to those of the occupying Forces. Food, in certain cases, was admitted to market for sale only when the require-
(2)
ments of the military authorities had been met. Access to
(3)
piped water was forbidden. Families were evicted from their houses and land requisitioned, sometimes without payment
(4)
of rent. Restrictions on persons and goods were carried to unnecessary lengths, even after the danger from spies had
(5)
vanished.

Delicate handling by the Political Officers was necessary in order to enforce the orders and regulations, harsh and exacting as many of them were, and at the same time, to keep the populace friendly, an avowed aim of the Expedition, which, from its inception, placed the British authorities in a peculiar position.

(1) Procs. Basrah, Notice No. 1, No. 10: Procs. 'Amarah, Proc. No. 1, Sec. 14.

(2) Procs. 'Amarah, Proc. No. 1, Sec. 14.

(3) Ibid, Notice No. 3.

(4) Wilson, Sir A. T., op. cit, pp. 144, 242; Review of the Civil Administration of Mesopotamia (1920), Cmd. No. 1061, p. 24. (Hereafter Review C. Admin., 1914-1920)

(5) No rent was paid from the time of the Occupation, on the four or five miles of river frontage occupied by the British at 'Amara. Monthly Reports, Political Officers, December, 1918; 'Amara, p. 2.

The entire situation was a contradiction in terms. The Expeditionary Force was invading enemy territory, with the population of which the British Government were not at war, according to the proclamations issued after Fao. ⁽¹⁾ Indeed, the British Government had declared that it had come to cooperate with the Arabs for their liberation from Turkish oppressors. ⁽²⁾ In spite of these declarations, however, the restrictions placed on the inhabitants differed little, if any, from the treatment accorded to an enemy population. The situation was no doubt complicated by the refusal of many of the Arabs to be considered friendly and by the necessity of combating by rigorous measures the low standards of sanitation, housing and morality prevailing in Mesopotamia.

The fact that the military régime was accepted as long as it was, without protest, may be attributed to a variety of factors. Prompt payment for all supplies, cash rent for billets and land, although not invariably ⁽³⁾ nor always in strict proportion to prevailing rates, non-interference with such religious or local customs as did not hamper military or administrative policy, and the marked increase in general economic prosperity, did much to mitigate its rigours. While the attitude of the Army as a whole was distinctly hostile to the native population, not without good reason, yet there was a

(1) Proclamations, 1914-1919, Notice No. 4, 5 November, 1914; Proc. No. 5, 22 November, 1914, Also supra pp. 74-5.

(2) Ibid. Notice No. 7, 14 February, 1915. Also supra p. 75.

(3) Supra, p. 80, note 5.

genuine and general desire on the part of all responsible officers to be just and fair in all their dealings with the native population. The untiring efforts of Sir Percy Cox and his assistants in establishing personal relations at the same time that subsidies and remissions of taxations were distributed among the shaikhs and local dignitaries, won many of the notables to benevolent neutrality. The high integrity and efficiency of the new administration, once it has got into its stride, as contrasted with the former Turkish administration, did even more to create a general feeling of confidence and belief that the coming of Great Britain was for good rather than for evil.

Why the Turks Failed to Give Good Government to 'Iraq.

It has been the habit among many writers on pre-war and war-time 'Iraq to disparage its administration by the Turks. Much of this attitude may be due to the not unnatural desire to paint the Turkish picture black in order that the scene, after Great Britain had reconstituted the administration, might appear brighter in contrast. Undoubtedly these views are somewhat exaggerated, yet there can be no question that the Turkish system, both in conception and in application, was lamentably deficient.

The principal reason for the failure of the Ottomans to give good government in 'Iraq or elsewhere in their dominions, lay in their fundamental political concepts. From the foundation of the Empire, Ottoman subjects, their lives and property

were regarded as existing only for the benefit and glory of the rulers. Thus, in the 19th and early 20th centuries, from the Sultan downward, every member of the official hierarchy looked on each person lower than himself in the scale as providing the where-with-all for his own profit and advancement until the accumulated burden finally rested on the great mass of peasantry and common people, who, having no means of resistance, might be maltreated and starved with impunity. A wider concept of government as well as other reforms seemed imminent after the Revolution of 1908, but the Young Turk movement produced little but confusion and disappointed hopes.

The Ottomans, moreover, in all their political activities could not forget that they had come to power by conquest, a fact which bore particularly upon the non-Ottoman sections, such as 'Iraq and Syria and upon the non-Moslem sections of the Empire. They looked with ingrained aversion on all occupations except those of soldiering and governing. The potential wealth of the country was thus left undeveloped, additional sources of revenue were untouched, and, in the face of extravagant and ill-advised expenditure, the country was forced to seek for financial relief from abroad.

Another reason for the failure of the Turks to give good government lay in the hiatus between statute book and practise, between a principle and its application. Every reforming movement had seen new laws and regulations, often copied bodily from European models, added to the statute books. Rarely,

(1) A general résumé of Turkish laws, regulations, etc., may be found in Young, George, Corps de droit ottoman. Recueil
(Continued over)

however, was the will or the ability present to enforce the measures. Every innovation had to face opposition not only from a poorly-paid, badly educated, often indolent officialdom, but also from traditional usage, from religious custom and prejudice, and, not infrequently, from vested interests of the European Powers.

Although the civil bureaucracy might blindly struggle to apply the regulations as imposed by the central authorities, the impartial application of such measures varied in direct proportion to the energy and honesty of the pashas of the wilayets, on the one hand, and, on the other, to the distance of the wilayets from the central supervising authority at Constantinople.

In all these respects, Turkish Arabia suffered badly. Its remoteness from Constantinople, its lack of amenities, and its unfavourable climate made officials reluctant to take office there. The wilayets were thus staffed, for the most part, by incompetent officials, or by those in political exile from Constantinople. Proper supervision was almost impossible.

(1) (Continued): des codes, lois, règlements, ordonnances, et actes les plus importants du droit intérieur, et d'études sur le droit coutumier de l'Empire Ottoman, 7 vols. (Oxford, 1905-06). Also Biliotti, A., and Sedad, Ahmed, Legislation Ottomane depuis le rétablissement de la constitution, 24 Djemazi ul-ahir, 1326, (10 juillet, 1908, 1^{er} Novembre, 1909). Recueil des lois, décrets, règlements, conventions, actes internationaux, etc., de l'Empire Ottoman, (Paris, 1912). English translations of various Turkish laws made by the Judicial Department, during the British occupation are listed in the bibliography under Official Publications, 'Iraq Government, Judicial.

Salaries of most of the government officials from Walis to gendarmes were small and irregularly paid. Opportunities for speculation and corruption seem to have been rarely overlooked. (1) Substantial sums, exceeding the annual salaries were often paid for offices, from which holders rarely retired without having privately reimbursed themselves. Judges' salaries in the Baghdad Wilayet ranged from £.T.7½ to £.T. 35 (2) per month, but occupants of these positions had been frequently known to advance from extreme poverty to wealth within the space of a few years.

Whatever its faults and they were many, the Turkish régime had been the only Government known to Turkish Arabia. Its vagaries had become familiar. Its defects and shortcomings the populace both knew and made use of for their own ends. Its disappearance with the complete withdrawal of the Turks as far north as Kut al-Amara by September 1915, the flight of all but minor Arab officials, the destruction or removal of records both by fleeing Turks and by interested inhabitants and the

(1) Review C. Admin., 1914-1920, p. 7, cites 'an authentic story of a Turkish Mutasarrif in Syria, popular with his superiors if not with the people he governed, who boasted that his budget showed no expenditure at all. It consisted entirely of receipts. All the officials, from the Mutasarrif himself downwards, drew no pay, but lived on questionable perquisites, while repairs, maintenance, public works, etc. were simply neglected.'

(2) Report on the Admin. of Civil Justice, from the Occupation of Baghdad to 31st December, 1917, in Admin. Report of the Baghdad Wilayet, 1917, (Calcutta, 1918), p. 182. (Hereafter Admin. Report, Baghdad, 1917).

(1)

looting and pillaging of government buildings and equipment made it imperative that an administration should be re-established. As soon as the first confusion had settled into routine and the population of the occupied territories had become somewhat accustomed to British troops and their unfamiliar demands and regulations, the setting-up of the Civil Administration was taken in hand.

(2)

For the purposes of Civil Administration and control of the tribes, the General Officer Commanding had attached to his staff a Chief Political Officer (Sir Percy Cox) who appointed officers, wherever they could be diverted from their military units, as Assistant Political Officers to take charge of the occupied territories, divided for political purposes along Indian lines. At the time Kut-al-'Amara was taken, they had been established at Basra, Qurna, Nasiriya, Suq ash-Shuyukh, 'Amara, Qal'at Salih, and 'Ali Gharbi. To the Chief Political Officer, they were responsible for the maintenance of law and order, the settlement of disputes both of townsmen and tribesmen, the administration and collection of Revenue and the creation of friendly relations with the tribes. To the military authorities, they were responsible for the collection of labour and local supplies, for estimates for compensation of damages caused by military operations and

(1) Within 48 hours of the departure of the Turks, not a single government building outside Basra had doors or windows left. Wilson, Sir A. T. op. cit., p. 13.

(2) The administration until November 1920 was actually Military Government, whether called Civil or Military Administration. It was imposed by the military authorities under the necessities of war. The laws of war alone determined the legality of its acts.

for the local protection of lines of communication. ⁽¹⁾ In the towns Military Governors were appointed, with full control under the senior Military Officer.

From the outset, the primary question had to be decided whether the existing Turkish system, either as a whole or in part, should be adapted and utilized, or whether new systems based on Indian methods should be set up. Although the Hague Conventions of 1899 and of 1907, of which Great Britain was a signatory, stated that the occupant of a country '... shall take all the measure in his power to restore and ensure, as far as possible public order and safety while respecting, unless absolutely prevented, the laws in force in the country,' ⁽²⁾ the choice between the two alternatives was not difficult. Both the magnitude of the task and the military situation demanded immediate returns and a maximum of efficiency with a minimum of effort from those delegated to the initiation of the civil aspect of administration. None of the responsible officials of the Turkish régime remained. Few of the British officers of the Army of Occupation possessed any specialized knowledge of the previous administration. Such little administrative experience as existed had been gained in Indian systems which, from the British point of view, were vastly

(1) Admin. Report, Basra Sanjak, 1916-1917 (Calcutta, 1917), pp. 1-2.

(2) Regulations respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land, Sec. III, Art. 43: Brit. and For. St. Papers, vol. XCL (1898-9) 999; vol. C (1906-07) 350.

preferable to the complicated, inefficient and clumsy Turkish methods. In addition, the confident expectation within inner circles that the Government of India would assume, in the future, permanent control of Basra and its hinterland at least, stimulated the adoption of the Indian administrative methods which would aid in the assimilation of the occupied territories. Hence, in deference to political motives and practical considerations as well as expediency, it was natural that the political and military authorities should apply Indian methods and practises wherever possible.

Within a week of the occupation of Basra, a Civil Police service modelled on Indian lines, replaced the Military Police, under the supervision of Mr. E. G. Gregson of the Indian Police Service, who had had wide experience on the North West Frontier and in the Persian Gulf. Employment of the ex-Turkish police, even had they been available, was not desirable. Constables were therefore imported from India and Aden. A similar force was organized at 'Amara, and a little later at Nasiriya and at Suq ash-Shuyukh, but not with great success. Local police, or Shabana, for use in the outlying villages and districts, were recruited from the Arabs themselves.

Foundations were thus laid on which later officials from India, including Colonel H. C. Prescott, I.A., late Inspector-General of 'Iraq Police, were to construct the present 'Iraq

(1) Administration Report, Suq ash-Shuyukh, in Reports of Political Officers in Occupied Territories of 'Iraq, 1916-1917, (March 31). Submitted by Sir P. Z. Cox under No. 8850, Baghdad, 18 November, 1917, (Hereafter P.O. Reports, 1916-1917).

Police system, in which the Shabana provided the nucleus of the native element.

The introduction of Indian currency followed naturally on the coming of the Expeditionary Force, whose needs were paid for in rupees. A proclamation forbade the use of depreciated Turkish paper money, ⁽¹⁾ and the inadequate supply of small Turkish coins were driven from the bazaars. Turkish gold liras, however, continued to circulate, but their important exports were regulated.

Establishment of a Judicial System.

For the administration of civil and criminal justice, a special code, known as the 'Iraq Occupied Territories Code, ⁽²⁾ was created largely from laws in force in India. ⁽³⁾ The Code, promulgated 1 August, 1915, from which time the legal system of the Occupied Territories may be said to date, ⁽⁴⁾ established courts for the enforcement of civil rights by legal action, hitherto in abeyance, and criminal courts to supplement the military courts. These courts, functioning under the authority

(1) Proclamations, notices, etc. relating to the Civil Admin. ... issued between 22 December, 1916 and July 1, 1918.
(Baghdad, 1918) Proc. No. 1, 22 December, 1916.

(2) 'Iraq Occupied Territories Code, 1915 (Bombay, 1915).
Also six supplements to 31 December, 1918. (Hereafter 'I.O.T. Code.)

(3) A preliminary schedule of 34 Indian Acts to be applied in the Occupied Territories was annexed to the Code.

(4) Arrangements to reconstitute the courts had begun shortly after the appointment of the Senior Judicial Officer, 7 April, 1915.

of the General Officer Commanding, were supervised by Lieut. Colonel S. G. Knox, Senior Judicial Officer, and by Captain C. F. Mackenzie, Junior Judicial Officer, both of whom were members of the Indian Political Department.

Among the reasons put forward for the substitution of the Anglo-Indian Judicial system for that of the Turkish system, have been the impossibility of reproducing within a limited time the hierarchy of courts culminating in the Court of Cassation at Constantinople, the inability to find judges and officials familiar with the Turkish system, as well as other reasons already given above. (1) It was also held that the Foreign Jurisdiction Act, of 1890, (2) could not be applied and that any laws made or administered must take the form of orders issued by the Army Commander who could, by notification, depute his powers to Civil Judicial Officers and regularise the exercise of the orders so made in the form of a code (3) such as the one actually promulgated.

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- (1) Supra pp. 86-7. The additional reason for the abandonment of the Turkish system given by Sir A. T. Wilson (op. cit. p. 67) that Turkish law 'had never functioned properly in Mesopotamia,' seems hardly sufficient, especially in view of the comparatively successful application of Turkish law to Baghdad in 1917 and the re-application of the system to Basra itself in 1919. Moreover, it hardly met the requirements of the Hague Convention as stated in Section III, Article 43, to respect 'unless absolutely prevented the laws in force in the country.'
- (2) 53-54 Victoria cap. 37.
- (3) Administration Report, Judicial Department, 1915, (Calcutta, 1916) p. 1. (Hereafter Judicial Report, 1915).

Under the Code, the Senior Judicial Officer exercised the civil and criminal powers normally exercised in India by the District and the Sessions Judge, respectively. The Junior Judicial Officer possessed the powers of an Assistant Judge and a District Magistrate. The Assistant Judicial Officer, who, after 7 September, 1915, was Khan Sahib Agha Mirza Muhammad, had powers of a Subordinate and of a Magistrate of the First Class. (1) In addition, the Junior and the Assistant Judicial Officers were invested, as in India, with powers of Small Cause Court Judges. (2)

Powers were given under the Code to enforce any Indian Law, which might be amended to meet local conditions, (3) a provision which was freely used, (4) as was also the power to make rules of procedure for the better execution of any matter arising in the course of any civil or criminal case. (5)

Although provision was made for the application, subject to stated exceptions, (6) of Turkish Civil Law, (7) the exceptions (8) included in practise the bulk of suits coming before the courts.

(1) 'I.O.T. Code, Sections 8 and 14.

(2) Order by the General Officer Commanding, 1 August, 1915, in 'I.O.T. Code, p. 25.

(3) 'I.O.T. Code, Sections, 6, 4, and 55.

(4) Judicial Report, 1915, p. 1.

(5) 'I.O.T. Code, Section 51.

(6) Ibid., Sections 49, 50.

(7) Ibid., Sections 6, 32, 50.

(8) Judicial Report, 1915, p. 1.

Thus, for all intents and purposes, Turkish Civil Law disappeared. Turkish Criminal Law, the Law of Evidence and the (1) Laws of Civil Procedure were expressly excluded from operation.

The 'Iraq Code in its provisions and in the manner of its application seems to have made little distinction between India and 'Iraq. Indeed, Section 8 explicitly stated 'the Code of Criminal Procedure and other enactments for administration of criminal justice in British India shall have effect as if the Occupied Territories were a district in the Presidency of Bombay.' This section, taken with the code as a whole, tends to confirm the impression that valid as were some of the reasons advanced at the time for the introduction of the new legal system, the most cogent reason was the underlying desire to pave the way for the painless absorption of lower Mesopotamia to India.

The belief, apparently held at this time, that the Indian system introduced by the Code was no more foreign to Turkish Arabia than the Turkish system which it replaced, (2) and that therefore the change was acceptable, seems scarcely in accordance with the facts. As Sir Edgar Bonham-Carter, head of the Judicial system in Mesopotamia, 1917-1921, has pointed out,

The present organization of these Courts and the Codes (of the Turks) have been in force for more than a generation, and indeed some of the Codes date back to a much earlier date. The people are accustomed to them, and are accustomed to regulate their transactions by them. This is especially true of the Baghdad mercantile community ... Lawyers and Government officials have been trained in the

(1) 'I.O.T. Code, Section 48.

(2) Wilson, Sir A. T., op. cit., p. 68.

(1)
procedure of the Courts and use of the Codes.

The same statement could hardly be made concerning the Indian Laws, none of which were available either in Arabic or in Turkish when introduced. Even the Code was not translated into Arabic for some time following its introduction. Only four of the several score of Indian Laws had been translated into Arabic at the end of 1917, a fact which called forth a protest from the retiring Senior Judicial Officer, Colonel

(2)
S. G. Knox. With the introduction of the Code, Arabic became the official language in the Courts, a measure popular to the people. Its use, however, was not entirely new. A circular from the Turkish Ministry of Interior in April, 1913, had directed that the use of Arabic should be allowed in the Courts of Justice and in public offices. In spite of the failure to carry out this concession literally, the use of Turkish was more of an affront to Arab sentiment than a handicap to litigation. Turkish was, and in many centres still is, the polite language, much as French was at the Courts of Prussia and Russia in the 18th Century.

Although criminal cases could be tried in these newly established civil courts, the bulk of such cases were not sent to them. Serious cases, mainly robbery under arms, continued to be tried by military courts, under a highly summary

(1) Report on the Admin. of Justice, Baghdad, 1917, in Admin. Report, Baghdad, 1917, p. 184.

(2) Review of the Reports of the Administration of Basrah Wilayet from April to December, 1917 (Calcutta, 1918) (Hereafter Admin. Rep., Basrah, 1917): Report on the Admin. of Justice, 1917, p. 108.

(1)
procedure. In Basra, 'Ashar, 'Amara and Nasiriya, the Military or Deputy Military Governors decided disputes of all kinds, while in the districts the same powers were exercised by Political Officers. Until after the fall of Baghdad no civil courts existed outside of Basra town.

Justice in Tribal Areas.

It was soon evident that the 'Iraq Code could not be applied in its entirety to the tribal areas, comprising practically all of the Occupied Territories outside the town. It was also clear that special powers were needed by the Political Officers to dispose of civil and criminal cases in their districts. To meet the situation, the Tribal Criminal and Civil Disputes Regulation was drawn up by Mr. H. R. C. Dobbs, (2) on the lines of the Indian Frontier Crimes Regulation and was promulgated in February, 1916. It gave authority to the Political Officers to invoke a tribal majlis or other

(1) Admin. Rep., Basra, 1917: Rep. Military Governor of Basra, 1917, p. 199.

(2) Henry Robert Conway Dobbs, G.B.E., K.C.S.I., K.C.M.G., K.C.I.E., (1871-1934) may be rightfully called one of the makers of modern 'Iraq. He saw wide and distinguished service in India, Persia and Afghanistan. As Revenue and Judicial Commissioner to Baluchistan, 1909, 1911 and 1917, he came into direct contact with the 'Sandeman System'. He was under orders as Resident to Turkish Arabia when war broke out in 1914, but it was as Revenue Commissioner that he supervised the organization of administration, 1915-16, while Sir Percy Cox, Chief Political Officer, enlarged political relations with the Arabs. Versatile in talents, but essentially an administrator, he brought to the difficult period, 1923-9, when he served as High Commissioner to 'Iraq, a great capacity for realistic thinking, a highly developed sense of duty, and a deep loyalty to the Empire which dominated all his relations with the Arabs.

arbitrating body to deal, in accordance with tribal custom, with all cases in which any of the parties concerned was a tribesman.⁽¹⁾

In all arbitration procedure, the Political Officer had the final word, although the Chief Political Officer might re-view the case. The Political Officer had to confirm the findings of the majlis,⁽²⁾ and he might set aside or add to the sentences imposed. He was also invested with magisterial power to try cases which did not lend themselves to the application of tribal arbitration.⁽³⁾

The Regulation in its application proved congenial to the tribes, for it enabled them to settle disputes in ways long familiar to themselves. It also aided in tribal settlement and pacification by giving effect to tribal opinion obtained by arbitration, and it raised the importance of the shaikhs by giving them a recognized place in the political and legal system. The Political Officers, on their side,⁽⁴⁾ found that considerable work was taken off their shoulders.

Over one point of tribal justice the views of the tribesmen and of the Political Officers often clashed. In cases of murder arising out of a blood feud, the tribesmen were

(1) Tribal Criminal and Civil Disputes Regulation, G.O.C. Proclamation No. 2 of 1916, CH. III, Sec. 7.

(2) Ibid., Ch. III, Sections 10, 11, 13.

(3) Ibid., Ch. IV and V.

(4) Reports of Admin. for 1918 of Divisions and Districts of the Districts of the Occupied Territories of Mesopotamia. (Calcutta, n.d.): Qurna Report, p. 306. (Hereafter Admin. Report, 1918.)

accustomed to regard fasl⁽¹⁾ or payments of money and usually, of women, as sufficient to settle the score and to end the feud. Imprisonment or capital punishment was thus considered not only harsh but unnecessary. In many cases where a woman violated or had been even accused of violating the desert code of morality, the death of the offender was demanded by the code in the name of honour (namus)⁽²⁾. Capital punishment for such murders, which were frequent and usually premeditated and brutal, cut across tribal justice. The Political Officers, on their side, found such customs abhorrent and contrary to their ideas of justice.⁽³⁾ Their natural tendency was to over-ride the decisions of the tribal majlis and to impose imprisonment or death penalties. The problem was partially solved by the gradual recognition of the tribal point of view by the British authorities, but the modification of tribal custom has taken longer. At the present, it still constitutes one of the major problems in the administration of the tribal areas of 'Iraq.

(1) For valuable first-hand observations on fasl: Monthly Reports of Political Officers of the Occupied Territories, November, 1919. (Hereafter Monthly Rep'ts): Nasiriya, pp. 94-5.

(2) See Thomas, Bertram, Alarms and Excursions in Arabia, 1931, pp. 86-7.

(3) Admin. Report, 1918: Hilla Division, pp. 126, 133; Monthly Rep'ts, December, 1919; Qurna Division, p. 59; Ibid., August, 1919: Qurna Division, p. 74.

The Revenue Department.

No single task of greater magnitude faced the British administrators of the Occupied Territories than that of organizing the Revenue Department. The collection and administration of revenue, in accordance with the Turkish system but freed from abuse and corruption were not the only problems. Associated problems of land tenure, of revenue assessment, of Auqaf administration, in all their strangeness and complexity, had to be studied and solved. Responsibility for other activities, such as Excise and Customs, control of Hostile Trading Concerns, of the Public Debt, and of Education had to be assumed. To render the task more difficult, papers and records, where they had not been destroyed, were out of date, and, with the exception of land-registration, in confusion, requiring weeks of careful sorting.⁽¹⁾ Responsible officials had fled, and although important aid was rendered by residents of Basra and 'Amara and later by the discovery of old registers, the essential information concerning the complicated and often inconsistent system had to be gleaned by investigation and experience. British Military authorities had at first no time to deal

(1) Cf. the excellent unsigned article (by C. C. Garbett, I.C.S.) Turkish Rule and British Administration in Mesopotamia in Quarterly Review, vol. 230, pp. 403 ff. The claim made there, p. 411) however, that demand-statements for the annual tax on date trees as prepared by the Turks, were found intact and collection of this as well as other revenue were begun within a few days of the occupation of Basra, is not borne out by the records of the period, as Revenue Admin. Report, January-March, 1915 (confidential) nor by personal testimony of the officials on the spot at the time.

with Revenue or Fiscal matters except Customs. (1) With the arrival, however, of Mr. Dobbs in January, 1915, as Revenue Commissioner, the work was taken in hand. The taxes demanded by the Turks had to be ascertained, the proportion paid before the arrival of the Expeditionary Force had to be discovered, and a collecting agency improvised. (2) Methods of assessment had to be learned. In the first months, the process of learning was by trial and error, tempered by the desire to win the confidence and goodwill of the Arabs and to impress them with the difference between the Turkish and the British methods of government. In some sections, as about 'Amara, the revenue was farmed out to great landowners on terms which kept them loyal to the British. In other sections it was remitted in part, (3) and in still others, entirely, as at Qurna in 1915. (4) In some districts the tax on date trees alone was collected, and this in small proportions to former Turkish demands. (5) In other districts where the landowners were obviously paying on too few trees, the number was raised, with the alternative that owners might demand a recount. No such demands occurred. Considering the difficulties, it is not surprising that only Rs. 20,000 (approximately £ 1,350) in land revenue was collected

(1) Entrusted to a Private Trading firm, Messrs. Gray, MacKenzie and Co., Revenue Admin. Report, 1915.

(2) Ibid., p. 1.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Ibid.

(5) P.O. Reports, 1916-1917: Hammar Lake Area, 1916-1917, p. 57.

in the five months of the first fiscal year(ending 31 March,
(1)
1915) following the British occupation.

Full development of the Revenue Department was to come
(2)
after Baghdad Wilayet had been taken over, Nevertheless,
by October 1916, when Mr. Dobbs was invalided to India, a work-
ing administrative machinery had been set up, not only for
Revenue, but also for other branches of administration which
had been taken under the wing of the Revenue Department. A
certain amount of confidence in the British régime had been
gained. Data and information on revenue, land tenure and
other subjects had been embodied for future guidance in a ser-
ies of notes which for clarity of judgment and succinctness
have probably never been surpassed in the history of 'Iraq Ad-
ministration.

Administration of Tribal Areas.

To the establishment of a government for the tribal areas,
both Sir Percy Cox and Mr. Dobbs gave particular attention.
The greatest need of the moment was for peace and order in
tribal areas and for the restriction of aid and assistance to
the Turks from the Arabs, in order that the Expeditionary Force
might devote itself to its main objective of defeating the
Turks.

(1) Revenue Admin. Report, 1915.

(2) The Turkish system and the British methods in the various
aspects of the Revenue Department will be described in
greater detail in a later section dealing with the develop-
ment of the Administration from 1917 onwards. Supra, pp.129ff

Both Sir Percy Cox and Mr. Dobbs believed that these conditions might be attained by utilizing the natural leaders of the tribes: the shaikhs. The alternative of direct government, either by a British or Arab staff, was calculated to be contrary to immediate ends if not impossible, due to the lack of a suitable staff and to the semi-barbaric character of the tribes. Their efforts were, therefore, directed towards building up forms of administration and of justice, which, while conforming as far as possible to Western standards, were based on tribal organization, on recognition of tribal habits and customs and on support of the shaikhs as instruments of government.

The policy adopted was, in reality, an adaptation of the system so successfully developed and applied in Baluchistan by Sir Robert Sandeman, of whom it has been said 'Every great colonial administrator has, wittingly or unwittingly, taken him as their example or followed in his footsteps.'⁽¹⁾

When Sir Robert Sandeman first began to develop his system in Baluchistan, about 1875, he had found 'the tribal organization in a state of rapid decay and the power and influence of the tribal leaders much diminished.'⁽²⁾ In 'Iraq, at the outbreak of the war, the tribes, especially those on the lower Euphrates, were in much the same state, as a result of Ottoman attempts alternately, to crush or settle the tribes, and to

(1) Bruce, Col. C. E., J. R. C. Asian Soc. January, 1932, p. 60. For details of Sir Robert Sandeman and his system, see the article cited, Thornton, T. H., Sir R. Sandeman; his Life (1895); Hittu Ram, Sandeman in Baluchistan, (Calcutta, 1916); The Times, 26 February, 1935; and J. R. C. Asian Soc. April, 1935.

(2) J. R. C. Asian Soc. January, 1932, p. 51.

break or conciliate their leaders. The Turkish Government had at all times regarded the tribal Arabs as savages, who, from sheer maliciousness, opposed the Government, while, in reality, they were primitive communities still leading an existence so untouched by the benefits of civilised government that they could comprehend no other form of life than that postulated by their own codes and customs. The Government policy, until the appointment of Midhat Pasha as Wali of Baghdad, in 1869, aimed at the forcible conversion of the tribesmen from outlaws to obedient citizens without providing the means to live as such, or without arousing even a spark of the respect by which tribal obedience might be secured.

(1)

Midhat Pasha approached the tribal problem from the standpoint of the land. His method was to sell miri or state lands for small periodical payments, giving miri tapu sanads (state-land title-deed certificates), which, while not conferring actual ownership, gave security of tenure. These tapu sanads were to be open to holders of doubtful titles, to villagers who cleaned a canal or planted a garden, and to all shaikhs of tribes for their tribal area. He intended thereby to reclaim wide tracts for the plough, to increase revenue, and to subdue tribal 'Iraq by giving the tribesmen new interests and relations in agricultural life. The shaikhs, to whom the

(1) For the career of this noted Turkish official, whose reforming influence extended throughout the Ottoman Empire, and to whom the Turkish Constitution of 1878 owed much, see the interesting but uncritical Life of Midhat Pasha (1903), by his son, 'Ali Haydar Midhat.

grants were to be made, would be won to the government in self-interest, and would therefore lose their terror as rallying-points of anti-government forces. As chiefs of agricultural communities, they would be accessible because rooted to the land, taxable because crops could not be hidden, vulnerable because of government control of water, and dependent on the government as guarantor of their acquired rights to collect the landlord's share of crops.

This agrarian policy, although the only one which could permanently solve the tribal problem, never achieved more than partial success, either during Midhat Pasha's régime, 1869-72, or during those of his successors, previous to 1908, who, while nominally committed to land settlement, followed their own devices in dealing with the tribes. (1)

The machinery for registering the land was inadequate and tended to become corrupt. The majority of the tribal leaders feared the new policy and shunned the new status as a machination of government to rob them of freedom and to impose conscription. Urban speculators, friendly with tapu officers, (2) forestalled other would-be tribal purchasers.

(1) After the revolution of 1908, the Young Turks reaffirmed the policy of settling such tribes as were still nomad, such as the firman appointing Jamal Bey (better known as Djemal Pasha) as Wali of Baghdad, August, 1911: 'The Wali is to formulate a scheme with the least possible delay for the settlement of the nomad tribes on the land.'

(2) Revenue Circulars, Nos. 1-22, (Baghdad, 1920), No. 15, p. 25.

The attempt to settle the tribes had one definite result, however. It split the shaikhs, as in the case of the Sa'duns of the Muntafiq, into groups, one hostile to the innovations, the other, willing tools of the Government, bought by gifts of land. Between the two groups the government vacillated. It was easier at times to acquiesce in the domination of the countryside by powerful, reactionary shaikhs and in the consequent nullification of their land policy rather than to maintain their own partisans. Nevertheless, whatever plan for winning over the shaikhs had existed, it was soon abandoned by the young Turks. The latter, desiring to stamp out all other power than their own, sought to establish direct relations between the Government and tribesmen. Great shaikhs were struck down wherever possible, as was Sa'dun Pasha, in June, 1911, when he was treacherously captured and imprisoned in Aleppo, where he died suddenly. The authorities went deliberately 'out of their way to break the power of the individual shaikhs by multiplying their number everywhere to a bewildering degree. Anarchy reigned and nothing could be done to prevent it, owing to the lack of a strong hand in each tribe.'

The struggle between the Government and the tribes in the lower Euphrates valley had been further complicated by the disruption of the prevailing feudal system, through the unskillful application to the Muntafiq country of Midhat Pasha's otherwise sound policy of securing control of the tribes through

(1) Admin. Report, Suq esh-Shuyukh, in P. O. Reports, 1916-1917.

(1)
land-settlement. The whole of the arable land, although occupied and cultivated for many years by the tribes, and therefore claimed as their own by prescriptive right, was parcelled out between the Turkish crown and the Sa'duns, tapu title deeds being issued to the new landlords. (2)

The Sa'dun family by long usage, had exercised a form of overlordship over the Muntafiq, receiving tribute from them and holding apparently none of the territory as their private property. (3) From being mere overlords of tribal landowners, they themselves became landlords. The degradation in status of the tribesmen to tenants, much as the Irish cultivators had been reduced to tenants on their tribal lands by the English adventurers of the 16th and 17th centuries, together with the necessity of paying both rent to the landlords and revenue to the Government in the form of shares of their crops, stirred tribal feeling to revolt, in which they were joined by the party of Sa'duns hostile to the Government. (4) An era of bitter strife ensued between the tribesmen and their landlords, many of whom lived in the towns, occasionally by choice but more often by necessity, and between the tribesmen and the Government which attempted to collect both revenue and rent. In some areas, accessible to gun boats and troops, the tribesmen had begun to

(1) Nasir Pasha, the great Sa'dun and founder of Nasiriya is credited with introducing the tapu system into the Muntafiq, whereby the Sa'duns became great landlords. Note on the Sa'dun Problem (Confidential) by the Revenue Commissioner, 1916; Admin. Report of the Muntafiq Division, 1919 (Baghdad, 1920), pp. 1-2.

(2) Note on the Sa'dun Problem; Admin. Rep., Muntafiq, 1919, p.2.

(3) Ibid., Also Revenue Rep., 1919, p. 24.

(4) Rev. Circular No.15, p. 25; Admin. Rep., Muntafiq, 1919, p.2.

(1)
pay these dues regularly until the weakening of the Government hold, due to the Revolution of 1908 and later to the Italian and Balkan wars. The tribes soon relapsed into their former state of truculence, expelling their landlords and paying scant attention to the Government. (2)

In some districts revenue had not been paid by the tribes for years, as in the Hammar Lake area, (3) and in the Suq ash-Shuyukh region which had been free of any government control for fifteen years or more. (4) In still others the Turkish writ did not run outside the towns. (5)

Thus, by the time that British Administrators appeared on the tribal areas, the only attempt to settle the tribes had failed for want of will and of means to execute it. Disputes over land and water, had embittered relations between tribesmen and landlords on the one hand, and between tribesmen and the

(1) Review of Civil Admin. of the Occupied Territories of al-'Iraq, 1914-1918, (Baghdad, 1918) p. 44. (Hereafter Review C. Admin, 'Iraq, 1914-1918).

(2) The disturbances eventually led the Turkish Government in 1911, to appoint a Commission of Inquiry, which 'attributed the Muntafiq troubles to the fact that the arable lands of the tribes are in the hands of a few powerful Shaikhs who oppress their fellow tribesmen and keep them at variance ... The proper remedy is a thorough partition of the lands.' Cited: Note on Sa'dun Problem.

(3) P.O.Reports, 1916-1917; Admin. Rep. Hammar Lake Area, p. 56.

(4) Ibid., Admin. Rep. Suq esh-Shuyukh, p. 39.

(5) Arab of Mesopotamia (Basra, 1917). Hereafter this semi-official publication by Miss G. L. Bell: Bell, Arab of Meso.

Government, on the other. The authority of the shaikhs, where it had not been entirely destroyed by the Government, was antagonistic to it. Government had, for the most part, broken down. 'Iraq, in the words of one competent observer, which though written with reference to the situation in 1900, may be applied with equal force to that in 1914, was

a country of tribesmen fast losing the old loyalties, less and less able to revert to the old livelihood, attracting local rather than tribal relations, more dependent on order and control, ... yet still tribal in material equipment, in speech, in ignorance, still easily inflamed to ruin their own interests, still resentful of government and all its works. (1)

The full application of the policy of rebuilding the tribal organization under competent shaikhs, advised, controlled and supervised by British Political Officers, which was the essence of Sandeman's policy, had to wait until the force of Turkish arms had been broken. (2) In the meantime, however, every means of strengthening the power of the shaikhs was undertaken, on the basis that 'both the attitude and action of a tribe depend almost entirely on its most influential chiefs.' (3)

A single leading shaikh was recognised in every tribe, as in the Suq ash-Shuyukh district where H. R. P. Dickson, Assistant Political Officer, reported that he had 'managed during

(1) Longrigg, S. H., Four Centuries of Modern 'Iraq, (Oxford, 1925), p. 309.

(2) For instance, Nasiriya was occupied July, 1915, but not until 1918 was administrative progress possible among the tribes, because of their anti-British feeling. Admin. Rep., Muntafiq, 1919, p. 2; Revenue Rep., 1919, p. 24.

(3) Provisional Note on the Tribes within and fringing Mesopotamian Boundaries, North of Latitude 33° 20' (Baghdad) For Official use only, General Staff, M.E.F. (Baghdad, 1920), p. 1. (Hereafter Note on Tribes for General Staff). Although written in 1920 of tribes of Baghdad Wilayet, it is generally applicable to practically all tribes from 1914.

1916-17, more or less to get the power into the hands of one Shaikh in the case of each of the 22 Suq tribes.⁽¹⁾

Each shaikh so selected was made responsible for peace and order in his tribe, for the apprehension of wrongdoers, for the protection of lines of communication and of British Government property, for the cutting off of supplies and aid to the Turks, and the collection of such revenue as was levied.

In return, each shaikh was given the support of British officials, prestige and, if necessary, arms. Possession of his lands was confirmed, and his tribal boundaries were defined as closely as possible. His natural importance in the tribal majlis was enhanced by the measures of the Tribal Disputes Regulations. Added to these was the policy of 'large doles, subsidies and no taxation',⁽²⁾ which one Political Officer, at Nasiriya, held to be 'chiefly responsible for the remarkable state of law and order which now exists', since 'the Shaikh ... will obey any order than risk losing it (his subsidy).'⁽³⁾

As advantageous for immediate military ends as was the policy of restoring the cohesion of the tribes and the patriarchal rule of their shaikhs, and as well suited as it was to many aspects of tribal life, it was nevertheless fraught with difficulties for the future.

The tribal organization had so far deteriorated, especially

(1) P.O. Reports, 1916-1917: Admin. Rep. Suq esh-Shuyukh,
p. 43.

(2) Admin. Report., Muntafiq, 1921 (Confidential, Baghdad, 1922)
p. 18.

(3) Reports Admin., 1918: Nasiriyah Division, p. 351.

among the rice-growing and date-producing tribes, that it could only be restored by supporting the shaikhs with force, and, as Sir Henry Dobbs said in 1916: 'Once a shaikh has to rely on Government for support, he has lost the sympathy of his tribesmen.'⁽¹⁾ Endowed with power as they were and motivated by self-interest no less than the meanest tribesman, the shaikhs found it difficult to restrain themselves from even petty tyrannies, which, by 1920, had assumed such proportions in tribal eyes as to form a cause of the insurrection of that year.

From the standpoint of government, the efforts to restore tribal organization meant the re-imposition of feudalism, contrary to the principle of the evolution of political institutions. Purely bureaucratic government, with its lack of flexibility and sympathetic contacts, was manifestly unsuited to tribes at the time, a fact which Mr. Dobbs realized and made every effort to combat. Nevertheless, the introduction of the Sandeman system, depending for its successful operation on maintenance of the tribal status quo gave little opportunity for the operation of civilizing processes, for the growth of less primitive social codes and of more progressive forms of government. The system in 'Iraq tended to become a method of control rather than a system of government in its broadest sense.

(1) Cited, Admin. Report, Suq al-Shuyukh District, in Admin. Rep., Muntafiq, 1921, p. 56.

CHAPTER V.

BRITISH POLICY AFTER THE CAPTURE OF BAGHDAD.

Once Baghdad was in British hands, it was apparent that the Commander-in-Chief in India and the Imperial General Staff held divergent views from H. M. Government as to future policy in Turkish Arabia. The General Staff wished to assume 'an active defensive' in order that men, equipment and shipping might be re-leased⁽¹⁾ for the needs of the Western Front. H. M. Government on the other hand, pressed not only for a continuance of the offensive but also for the extension of British Political influence throughout Baghdad Wilayet. The Foreign Office, in particular, deemed the moment opportune to exploit Great Britain's Arab policy⁽²⁾ and to foster a general Arab movement to embarrass the Turks. Not to continue to encourage a movement which had proved of distinct military advantage in the past⁽³⁾ was considered unsound.⁽⁴⁾

(1) O.H., vol. IV, pp. 19 ff.

(2) This policy, in a formula proposed by Sir Mark Sykes, was: 'Towards all Arabs...whether independent allies as Ibn Sa'ud or the Sherif, inhabitants of protectorates, spheres of influence, vassal states, we should show ourselves as pro-Arabs, and that wherever we are on Arab soil we are going to back the Arab language and Arab race, and that we shall support or protect Arabs against external oppression by force as much as we are able and from alien exploitation.' Cited Hart, H. B. Liddell, op. cit., p. 105 n.

(3) Hardly a reference to Egypt, as suggested in O.H., vol. IV,, p. 6, but more probably to Arab operations in the Hijaz.

(4) Summary of telegram, Chief of Imperial General Staff to General Officer Commanding, Baghdad, 16 May, 1917. General Maude was instructed to send an outline, after consultation with Sir Percy Cox, of action which might be taken to enlist the sympathy of Arab tribes and to extend the scope of the Arab movement.

H. M. Government hoped, thereby, to hasten the defeat of the Turks, and to acquire additional compensatory advantages in Mesopotamia, as well as in Palestine, to offset the possible stalemate in Europe. They were also anxious to achieve along the lines of the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the correspondence between the Sharif of Mecca and Sir Henry McMahon, an unchallengeable position in the Middle East.

With the political aspect of the policy urged by H. M. Government, General Maude found it difficult to be in full accord. As a soldier, he considered that the destruction of Turkish arms was his primary duty from which his energies should not be diverted, particularly since he believed that an early advance would have a substantial moral effect in Mesopotamia and in adjacent countries. The collapse of the Russians, who had been expected to co-operate along the Persian front, in a general offensive against the Turks, placed increased responsibilities on his forces, necessitating their reorganisation. Moreover, an attempt by the Turks to retake Baghdad seemed almost certain.

(1) Notably: Letter, Sir H. McMahon to Sharif Husain, 24 October; 25 October, 14 December, 1915; 25 January, 1916. Sharif Husain to Sir H. McMahon, 5 November, 1915; 1 January, 1916.

(2) O.H., vol. IV, p. 42. 'In Mesopotamia one of our main guiding factors was our anxiety for the security of India.'

(3) Telegram, General Officer Commanding, Baghdad, to Commander-in Chief, India, July 1917, cited, O.H., vol. IV, p. 27.

(4) See, O.H., vol. IV, pp. 5, 7, 12, 38-41. For Enver Pasha's abortive Yilderim or 'Lightning' expedition to retake Baghdad: O.H., vol. IV, pp. 8-9, 13 ff., also Husain Husni Amin Bey, Yilderim, published by the Turkish General Staff, translated by Captain C. O. de R. Channer, I.A.; also Liman von Sanders, Gen. O.V.C., Fünf Jahre Türkei (Berlin, 1922), pp. 219-33.

He was reluctant, therefore, to assume new responsibilities and to detach from his force officers and men more than absolutely essential for political and administrative work, or for consolidating the political advantages already gained by British arms. He took his position, in spite of the fact that for every man which it was believed the Turks could send to Mesopotamia, the British had already in the field two combatants and nearly four non-combatants, and that for every Turkish gun the British had three, in addition to a vast preponderance of ammunition and stores.⁽¹⁾

General Maude, moreover, could not bring himself to believe that encouragement of the Arab movement was desirable.⁽²⁾ He had protested against the proclamation issued in his name after the fall of Baghdad,⁽³⁾ in the attempt to win Arab opinion, as unnecessary and ill-timed. It would, he believed, create confusion in the minds of the Arabs as to the future intentions of Great

(1) General Maude estimated on 5 August, 1917, that Turkish re-inforcements for Mesopotamia by the end of September would be approximately 67,000 rifles, with 308 guns, (O.H., vol. IV, p. 34). These added to troops already in Mesopotamia, estimated on 5 August as 29,500 and on 15 August, as 2,280 sabres and 31,280 rifles, (ibid. p. 38; cf., estimates given in Order of Battle of same date in Yilderim). would total between 96,500 and 100,560 effective troops, of which about 81,500 might be expected to face General Maude. Sir William Robertson, Chief of the General Imperial Staff, estimated Maude's ration strength at 340,000, of which 200,000 were fighting troops, (O.H., vol. IV, p. 44). General Maude, however, estimated, on 29 September, his effective forces at 166,450 men, (ibid., p. 45).

(2) His views were stated in a telegram to the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, 1 June, 1917.

(3) Proclamations, 1914-1919, Proc. No. 9, 19 March, 1917, p. 6.

Britain, and would unduly arouse their hopes and ambitions at a time when the authority of the British Army must remain supreme and unquestioned in the Occupied Territories.

General Maude was also doubtful, for a number of reasons, as to the military benefits to be derived from the application of the proposals of H. M. Government towards the Arabs, although the Chief Political Officer, Sir Percy Cox, thought that Arab assistance in definite instances, as by the 'Amarat section of the Anaiza tribe, numbering about 5,000 rifles, under Fahad Beg ibn Hadhdhal, might achieve a wide and important effect apart from its precise military value.

In these opinions, General Maude was in full agreement with the views of the Government of India and with those of most of his fellow officers in Mesopotamia.

Although one of the objectives of the expedition had been to win over the Arabs from their fellow-Muslims, the Turks, the

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- (1) Telegram, General Officer Commanding, Baghdad, to Chief of Imperial General Staff, 1 June, 1917, cited, O.H., vol. IV, p. 9.
- (2) The 'Amarat section ranged over the eastern half of the Syrian desert, from Karbala as far north as Dair az-Zur, and also shared with the Dulaim pastures between the Euphrates and the wells of Muhaiwir and al-Mat. Arab Tribes of Baghdad Wilayet July, 1918 (Baghdad, 1918); A Handbook of Mesopotamia, (Prepared on behalf of the Admiralty and the War Office, by Naval Staff, Intelligence Department, 1918, 2nd ed. 5 vols.) Vol. I, p. 103 (hereafter Handbook of Meso.); Note on Nomadic Arab Tribes (Baghdad, 1919).
- (3) Telegram, General Officer Commanding, Baghdad, to Chief of Imperial General Staff, 24 June, 1917. Summarized in O.H., vol. IV, p. 20.
- (4) O.H., vol. IV, p.10.

Government of India had made little effort other than with Ibn Sa'ud, to induce the Arabs to take up arms against the Turks. Saiyid Talib Pasha, the vigorous and ambitious leader of Arab Nationalism, was exiled to India. (1) Favourably disposed Shaikhs were given little active work except that of keeping supplies from the Turks, duties which made little appeal either to their pockets or to their dignity. In later 1915 and early 1916, Karbala and Najaf had risen against the Turks, the Arab forces with Khalil Pasha were openly rebellious, and the tribes were ripe for a rising. (2) These opportunities had been allowed to pass, although Arab attacks on Turkish communications might have enabled the British forces to have dislodged the Turks before Kut.

Even the Arab rising in the Hijaz had been deprecated. It had been, in the Viceroy's words, 'a displeasing surprise' and 'its collapse would be far less prejudicial to us in India and also in Afghanistan than would military intervention in support of the revolt. (3) They feared that it would be regarded by 'very many Mohammedans in and on the borders of India as having been inspired by us and consequently as a Christian interference with religion. (4)

The attitude of the Government of India may have been partially due to fear of the effect of an Arab revolt on Indian Muslims

(1) For details of his career, see infra, pp. 288 ff., 404ff., passim.

(2) Lawrence, T. E., Seven Pillars of Wisdom, (1935), p. 60.

(3) Hart, op. cit., p. 107.

(4) O.H., vol. III, pp. 26-7. But cf. Sir Michael O'Dwyer, J. C. Asian Soc., vol. X (1923), p. 63.

still loyal to the religious authority of the Ottoman Khalifa. It seems more probable that it was due to the inherent disbelief of Anglo-Indian officials in native ability, to the desire to avoid using allies who might complicate the eventual settlement of the political status of Mesopotamia, and to the antagonism to an Arab policy which did not originate in India.

For generations past the Government of India had assumed sole charge of Great Britain's relations with the Arabs. On 31 March, however, the High Commissioner took charge of all Arab affairs, save those of the south and east coasts of Arabia. (1) In this action, in Foreign Office support of the Sharif of Mecca rather than the protégé of the Government of India, Ibn Sa'ud, and in the incitement of Arabs against their spiritual and temporal overlords - a dangerous precedent, according to Indian authorities - lay the fundamental differences of opinion which gave rise to the two so-called 'schools' of thought on Arab politics. The Anglo-Indian or Eastern Arabia or Sa'udi school viewed Arab politics from the standpoint of the immediate needs of India. It regarded the Wahhabi Amir of the Najd as the proper Arab leader, and it aimed at the penetration of Arabia from the Persian Gulf and Aden, at the indirect control of Arabs in their own spheres, and at the absorption, by the Government of India, of Turkish Arabia, that it might, as a western Burma, protect and extend Imperial interests.

The Anglo-Egyptian or Western Arabia or Hashimi school, no less concerned for the welfare of India, adopted the line of

(1) O.H., E. and Pal., vol. I, p. 216.

action which, if successful, would place friendly Arabs in Damascus, barring a possible French expansion towards India, and in Western Arabia and in Turkish Arabia, facilitating the protection of both the Suez Canal and the land routes to India. Having selected the Sharif of Mecca and his family as the fittest tools available, it aimed at Arab independence in strictly Arab lands and at only sufficient influence over the other Arab-speaking portions of the Ottoman Empire as might guarantee their friendly relations with Great Britain. (1)

In Mesopotamia, the views of the Anglo-Indian school naturally prevailed. Moreover, the military authorities, trained in the conduct of war only by orthodox methods, had little desire for irregular allies, who, in their opinion, had proven both unreliable and unsuitable for conditions of modern warfare. Their own experiences were taken as justification for these views. The tribes in Mesopotamia had shifted from side to side, according to whichever at the moment seemed to be winning. (2) They turned at the first opportunity, forgetting all obligations, against ally or enemy, in order that they might plunder and loot:

(1) See Hogarth, D. G., Quarterly Review, vol. 234 (1920) pp. 411 ff.

(2) 'This is not treachery but the natural outcome of weakness and the struggle to exist.' Extract from Note on Tribes for General Staff, p. 2. Admin. Rep., Muntafiq, 1921, p. 56, cites the example of 'the carefully attested warrior, who, in an authentic tribal battle, changed sides on no less than five occasions eventually to be with the victors'.

their 'clearest and strongest positive influence.'⁽¹⁾ The Turks had relinquished hope of using them after the battle of Shu'aiba, where the 10,000 tribal allies had not fired a single shot.

Ibn Sa'ud, from whom the Government of India had expected much, had failed to render effective aid against the Turks, although, when his enemies had been removed or weakened, he became the paramount figure of Arabia. He had entered into treaty relations with Great Britain, 26 December, 1915, after negotiations extending over fourteen months. He was also in receipt of a subsidy which, in proportion to his effective participation against the common enemy, the Turks, was far greater than that paid to Sharif Husain,⁽²⁾ although he constantly complained of its smallness.⁽³⁾ His failure to render aid in

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- (1) Note on Tribes for General Staff, p. 2. Arab uncertainty and their proneness to consider loot as the chief aim of their existence more than once threatened to suspend the operations on the other side of the desert; Lawrence, op. cit., pp. 128-9, 348, 368 ff, 470, 523, passim; Hart, op. cit., pp. 296-7.
- (2) It has been estimated that the operations of the Hijaz Force accounted for 65,000 Turkish troops, at the cost of £100 per man. Ibn Sa'ud, in receipt of £60,000 annually from the British Treasury alone, as well as of other sums from the Government of India, occupied the attention of not a single Turkish soldier. Not did his pro-Turk rival, Ibn Rashid, have anything 'to fear from Ibn Sa'ud.' (Cmd. 1061, p. 25. See also O.H. E. and Pal. vol. II, p. 398). It has been estimated that in the British Army's operations against the Turks, each Turkish casualty or prisoner cost from £1,500 to £2,000 per head. See Toynbee, A. J. The Islamic World Since the Peace Settlement (1927), p. 283; Parl. Debates, H. of L., 5th S., vol. 49 (1922), pp. 241-3; Ibid., H. of C. 5th S., vol. 159 (1922), p. 490.
- (3) Memorandum No. 24, 9 August, 1917, from 'Iraq Section, Arab Bureau to Arab Bureau, Cairo. For Ibn Sa'ud's own valuation of his services to Great Britain, see Amin Rihani, Ibn Sa'oud of Arabia, his people and his land, (1928), p. 61.

1915 may have been one reason why the British authorities at Cairo turned to negotiations with the Sharif of Mecca.

The military authorities could see little practical value in the Arabs as fighting forces. General Maude, for instance, held that the tribes must be carefully organized, under officers with suitable knowledge and with military experience. They could be employed only as part of a general campaign under a single direction. Otherwise they would have little bearing on general operations. They could harry and demoralize a retreating enemy, but they would be entirely ineffective, although tiresome, against unbroken troops. (1)

With such views prevailing in India and in Mesopotamia, it is not surprising that T. E. Lawrence, on his visit to 'Iraq in 1916, with a three-fold mission, one of which was to foster, if possible, an Arab rising similar to that brewing in Western Arabia, should be treated with scorn, (2) that subsequent events in Hijaz should be belittled (3) and that the policy of organizing Arab assistance should be rejected.

(1) Summary of telegram, General Officer Commanding, Baghdad to Chief of Imperial General Staff, 1 June, 1917, O.H., vol. IV, p. 10. Cf. the views of T. E. Lawrence, op. cit., pp. 104, 339-40. For the opinion of a Turkish Army commander on the military value of Arabs, see Djemal Pasha, op. cit., p. 153. For that of the head of the German Military Mission to Turkey, see Liman von Sanders, op. cit., p. 242.

(2) Lawrence, op. cit., pp. 59-60; Hart, op. cit., p. 101.

(3) 'Nothing that had been achieved in the direction of Arab co-operation on the Palestine front, up to this date (1917), gave those on the spot (Mesopotamia) any reason to advocate any change in policy.' Wilson, Sir A. T., Mesopotamia, 1917-1920, p. 4.

The historical fact remains that while many of the same obstacles to tribal co-operation existed in Western Arabia, the effort was there made, with important results in the successful defeat of the common enemy, the Turk and his allies. The peculiar genius of T. E. Lawrence; the inspiring leadership and fervent belief in Arab Nationalism of the Amir Faisal ibn Husain; the military experience of Ja'far Pasha al-'Askari; the patient direction of Lt.- Colonel P. C. Joyce ⁽¹⁾ and the organizing ability of Colonel A. G. Dawnay and of Major Hubert Young contributed not a little to the success of the Arab movement in the West. So also did the support of those officials in Whitehall and in Egypt, including Sir Gilbert Clayton, Commander D. G. Hogarth, Sir Reginald Wingate, Colonel Kinahan Cornwallis, who while aware of the limitations of Arab character and temperament, believed in the military as well as the political value of Arab co-operation against the Turks. ⁽²⁾ This belief was not wholly unjustified; the Arabs did not rise in force against the Allied Powers, as had been predicted. The Sharifian activities in Western Arabia from 1916 onwards against isolated Turkish Posts and communications taxed the strength of the Turks and contributed almost as much to the defeat of the Central Powers as did the role which they played in the main operations in Palestine

(1) Adviser, Ministry of Defence, 'Iraq Government, 1921-28.

(2) Hogarth, Comdr., D. G., J. C. Asian Soc., vol. X (1923) p. 63.

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and Syria under the command of General Allenby.

The failure to make the same effort in 'Iraq was not due to any lack of men of undoubted ability to lead and to work with the Arabs, although none would have claimed the special gifts of the late T. E. Lawrence. Outstanding men were Major H. R. P.

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Dickson, who, combining generous sympathy with unwearying patience, possessed an unrivalled psychological understanding of the tribal Arab; Lieut.-Colonel G. E. Leachman who, by his indomitable spirit, controlled vast areas of tribal country

(2)

almost single-handed under most trying conditions; Major

(1) Allenby, Field-Marshal Lord, J. R. C. Asian Soc., vol. XXII, (1935), p. 333; and The Times, 20 May, 1935; O.H., E. and Pal., vol. 1, pp. v, 221, 372; vol. II, pp. 401-03, 408-09; Lloyd, Lord, The Daily Telegraph, 20 May, 1935; Lloyd George, D., The Times, 20 May, 1930; Hart, op. cit., pp. 374-6, 437 ff., and The Times, 20 May, 1935; Liman von Sanders, op. cit., pp. 185-7, 260-61, 290-91, 345; Djemal Pasha, op. cit., pp. 168, 170, 191, 233.

(2) Now Lieut.-Col. Dickson, Political Officer, Kuwait.

(3) For excellent summaries of his character and career, see Hogarth, Geog. Jour., vol. 56 (1920), pp. 325-36; also Near East, 26 August, 1920, and J. C. Asian Soc., vol. VIII (1921), pp. 70 ff. A highly coloured picture of Colonel Leachman's career has been given by G. N. N. Bray, in Shifting Sands (1934), a book that is both inaccurate and unhistorical. His thesis, maintained also in his more recent biography of Leachman, and by Main, E., op. cit., that Leachman actually contributed more to the success of Great Britain's Arab policy than any other individual is hardly tenable. Although a man of great gifts and a superb keeper of tribal peace, his work was less creative in character and less permanent in value than that accomplished in western Arabia. The thesis also confuses the Arab policy of H. M. Government and that pursued by the Anglo-Indian authorities in 'Iraq.

Hubert Young, who later served under Lawrence in western Arabia;⁽¹⁾
Bertram Thomas later to distinguish himself as an explorer;⁽²⁾
H. St. John B. Philby, whose knowledge of Arabia and of Arabs⁽³⁾
is now probably unequalled; and later, Major A. H. Ditchburn,⁽⁴⁾
much of whose work in the Muntafiq has endured to this day.

The energies and talents of these men, as well as of others, instead of being utilised in organising Arab co-operation as a means of winning the war as in western Arabia, were diverted to checking tribal quarrels, to preventing food and supplies reaching the Turks, to collecting revenue and laying the foundations of administration. Such activities, although no mean accomplishment in themselves, and no small contribution to the eventual establishment of the Kingdom of 'Iraq, were in no way fully indicative of the capacity of the British Officers nor of what might have been accomplished had the authorities ordered otherwise.

For whatever reasons deemed sufficient at the time, the

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- (1) Now Governor of Northern Rhodesia. He played a prominent part in the creation of the Kingdom of 'Iraq, and was Great Britain's first Minister to 'Iraq after the cessation of the Mandate. See his Independent Arab.
 - (2) See his Arabia Felix: Across the Empty Quarter of Arabia (1932). Also, Alarms and Excursions in Arabia for a vivid and well-balanced account of his experiences in Mesopotamia and Muscat.
 - (3) See his Heart of Arabia (1922); Arabia of the Wahhabis (1928) and The Empty Quarter (1933).
 - (4) Administrative Inspector, 'Iraq, from 1922 until his recent appointment as Land Settlement Officer, 'Iraq.

failure of the military authorities to make full military use of the Arabs of Mesopotamia, notwithstanding the efforts of Sir Percy Cox and his associates to win Arab support in other directions (1) had far-reaching effects, not only during the period of hostilities but also long after the end of the war.

The British authorities in Mesopotamia lost thereby the war-time services of capable Arab leaders. Arabs of 'Iraq by the score, once in Turkish service, were gathered from the internment camps in India and Egypt, to serve as leaders and officers, not in the land of their birth, but in the Hijaz. In contact there with the sources of the Arab Movement, they were to imbibe and to pass on to 'Iraq, in the days after the Armistice, an intensity of Arab Nationalism hitherto unknown in 'Iraq. On the western side of Arabia, they had come into contact with English officers, who, no less sincere in their allegiance to British interests than those on the eastern side of Arabia, were, nevertheless, sympathetic to this awakening Arab Nationalism. It is not surprising therefore, that these 'Iraqis felt the difference between the official mind in Mesopotamia and that on the Mediterranean side of the desert, nor that, appreciating the difference, they were all the more

(1) To the untimely death of Capt. W. H. I. Shakespear at Artawi, in January, 1915, has been ascribed the failure of Ibn Sa'ud to take an active part in the war and the failure to develop in Mesopotamia an Arab Movement comparable to that in the Hijaz. See Philby, The Heart of Arabia, vol. I, p. xxi; Wilson, Sir A. T. Mesopotamia, 1914-1917, p. 161; also, Coke, Richard, The Arab's Place in the Sun, p. 221.

impatient with the attitude of the Civil Administration which prevailed at Baghdad after Sir Percy Cox had been sent to Teheran in early 1918. Such impatience was none the less because they had little or no experience or knowledge of the difficulties of the military or administrative problems of Turkish Arabia, of which the British had gained an intimate, first-hand knowledge.

The military authorities in Mesopotamia also lost the opportunity to learn what British officers in Western Arabia had already learned; that the Arabs might be more than treacherous, self-seeking, half-civilised peoples. The end of the war, consequently, found few British officials in authority in 'Iraq who had any sympathy for Arab Nationalism or who had more than hearsay knowledge either of its strength or of the extent of the movement on the other side of the desert. To the majority of the British officials in Mesopotamia, engrossed in creating an Anglo-Indian régime for the country, and belonging, for the most part, to the 'Indian School' of Arab politics, and, therefore, antagonistic to everything savouring of the rival 'Sharifian School', Arab Nationalism was something to be controlled at all costs and destroyed wherever possible.

Notwithstanding General Maude's reluctance to accept political responsibilities for his force, the creation and maintenance of British influence in the Baghdad Wilayet became the chief mission of the expedition, according to instructions

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issued by the Imperial General Staff, following considerable interchange of views among the authorities concerned. General Maude's force, after Baghdad Wilayet had been cleared of Turks, was to assume the defensive, but it was to be ready to seize the earliest opportunity to resume the offensive. Tribal co-operation against the Turks was to be encouraged as far as possible, but administrative expansion was to be limited to bare essentials. These activities were to be placed under the guidance of Sir Percy Cox as Civil Commissioner, subject to the supervision of the General Officer Commanding, but with the right to correspond directly with the India Office. Sir Percy

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- (1) Cf. Orders issued to Sir William R. Marshall on his assumption of the command of British Forces in Mesopotamia. (Telegram, Chief of Imperial General Staff to General Officer Commanding, Baghdad, 22 November, 1917) of which the pertinent sections are given here:

On your assumption of the command in Mesopotamia I think it advisable to recapitulate the instructions issued to your predecessor.

1. The prime mission of your force is the establishment and maintenance of British influence in the Baghdad Wilayet. Your mission is, therefore, primarily defensive, but, while making every possible preparation to meet attack, you should take advantage of your central position and of the superiority of your communications over those of the enemy to make your defence as active as possible and to strike at the enemy whenever he gives you an opportunity of doing so with success.

4. It is important to enlist the co-operation of the Arab tribes in your theatre, and induce them to harrass the enemy's communications and refuse him supplies. For this an active propaganda, which should make the most of our recent successes in Palestine and Mesopotamia, should be undertaken. As to this you will consult and be guided by Sir Percy Cox.

in his new role, replacing that of Chief Political Officer, was given responsibility of greater scope than hitherto permitted by General Maude, who had been loth to develop the civil machine.

The general principles by which H. M. Government wished the administration to be conducted was summarised in a telegram of August, 1917:

The Civil Administration must be carried on under such military supervision as the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief considers essential, with due regard to local conditions and prejudices, if only to prevent disorder which might necessitate the detachment of troops urgently required elsewhere... For the present only such minimum of administrative efficiency should be aimed at as is necessary for the maintenance of order and to meet the requirements of the force: the amendment of laws and the introduction of reforms should be kept within the narrowest possible limits. His Majesty's Government do not wish large or controversial administrative questions raised or referred to them until the danger of Turkish attack is passed... (1)

Previous instructions had already ordered that the existing administrative machinery was to be preserved as far as possible, substituting Arab for Turkish spirit and personnel, and that every effort should be made to induce local representative men to come forward and participate in the civil administration, British co-operation being limited as far as possible to advisory functions. (2)

These orders, while indicating the procedure to be adopted until the enemy had been driven from the field, did not indicate, except by implication, Great Britain's future intentions towards Baghdad. In May, before the above orders had been issued, confidential information had been sent to those in authority in Mesopotamia that His Majesty's Government had in view

the establishment, in conformity with the Sykes-Picot agreement, of a predominantly British régime in the Basra Wilayet,

(1) Cited. Admin. Report, Baghdad, 1917, p. 1.

(2) Cited, Wilson, op. cit., p. 240.

under a High Commissioner, of an Arab régime under some form of British protection in the Baghdad Wilayet, and of an autonomous Arab régime (under French protection) in the Mosul Wilayet. (1)

It was clear on the one hand, that H. M. Government desired, in preparation for post-war settlements on the basis of its secret understanding (with France and Sharif Husain), the separate organization of Baghdad Wilayet to which the Indian régime was not to be deliberately extended, and the laying of the foundations of an Arab administration under British auspices

On the other hand, it was also apparent that H. M. Government, doubtful of the outcome of the struggle in Europe, and lacking a definite policy for the final disposition of the Wilayet, other than the establishment of some measure of control, wished to raise no question which might prejudice the eventual settlement.

Under such circumstances, it was perhaps not unnatural that the instructions of H. M. Government concerning the administration of the Wilayet should be somewhat contradictory, nor that they should be held by men on the spot to be not only impractical and out of touch with local conditions, but also contrary to Great Britain's true interests in the Middle East.

The desirability of providing local means for the prosecution of the war, in accordance with the instructions, was duly recognized by the local authorities. The legitimate claims of the civil population for the restoration of government had to be at least partially satisfied, in compliance with military law. Even more important was the necessity of

(1) Ibid., p. 241.

creating at the outset an administration which from the extent and solidity of its foundation as well as its appeal to the 'Iraqis would 'meet future as well as present requirements' and provide a firm basis for continued British control. ⁽¹⁾ As Sir Arnold Wilson wrote later: 'Neither Sir Percy Cox nor, at a later stage, I myself, could subscribe to the view that we should aim only at "the minimum administrative efficiency necessary to preserve order."⁽²⁾ Much more was at stake than the preservation of order.'

The proposed administrative and political differentiation between the Wilayets of Baghdad and Basra found little favour in Mesopotamia. It was felt that it would hamper administrative efficiency and would lead to undesirable difficulties with local opinion. If British control were to be set up, it should be established in accordance with the Sykes-Picot Agreement rather than the tenor of the promises made to the Arabs through the Sharif of Mecca. Sir Percy Cox, from the first, had advocated that Baghdad should be added to Basra ⁽³⁾ which, as he had reason to know, was to be administered directly by the Government of India.

The admission and encouragement of Arab participation in the administration of Baghdad Wilayet, the apparent intention

(1) An aim apparently achieved during 1917, in the eyes of the Acting Civil Commissioner. Cf., Admin. Report, Baghdad, 1917, p. 1.

(2) Wilson, op. cit., pp. 264-5. But, cf., Admin. Report, Baghdad, 1917, p. 1.

(3) Supra, pp. 63-4.

of H. M. Government, seems to have met with particular opposition from those in authority, including General Maude; the Civil Commissioner, who viewed the policy with misgivings, mainly on grounds of immediate expediency and the inability to find suitable 'Iraqis willing to take part in the administration; and, later, the Acting Civil Commissioner.

It was under the régime of the latter, following the departure of Sir Percy Cox for Persia, March, 1918, that the gulf widened between the original instructions of H. M. Government and local administrative opinion. The Acting Civil Commissioner held that H. M. Government's policy was based on a series of misconceptions, fostered and disseminated by irresponsible enthusiasts at the Foreign Office and in Egypt, concerning not only the ability of the Arabs to govern themselves, their desire for self-government and their willingness to serve in the administration of Mesopotamia, but also the best interests of Great Britain in the Near and Middle East. The account of his efforts to combat these misconceptions and to impose an administration which he believed best suited to the country belongs to succeeding pages.

CHAPTER VI.

INITIATION OF ADMINISTRATION IN BAGHDAD WILAYET.

In view of the divergence of opinion, both between London and Baghdad, and, to a lesser extent, between the local military authorities and Sir Percy Cox, both as regards the policy and the character of the administration to be set up in Baghdad, it is not surprising that those in charge of the Civil Administration in 'Iraq should have failed to adhere to the instructions laid down for their guidance; that the administration should have taken on aspects beyond the limits prescribed by H. M. Government; and that the immediate differentiation between the administration of Basra and Baghdad should be confined to a separation of administrative organization rather than to any alteration of spirit or character of the administration except in the Judicial System. (1)

Administrative Organization.

Under the organization adopted after the fall of Baghdad a Deputy Chief Political Officer remained in charge at Basra while Sir Percy Cox took up his headquarters at Baghdad. Later, when Sir Percy became Civil Commissioner, 1 September, 1917, both Wilayets were separated into divisions. Basra Wilayet, with the addition of Kut, remained the same as in Turkish days. Its five divisions were: Basra, Qurna, Nasiriya, 'Amara and Kut.

(1) Infra, pp. 155 ff.

Baghdad was divided into eight divisions: Baghdad, Samarra, Ba'quba, Khanaqin, Ramadi, Shamiya, and Samawa. To each of these a Political Officer was posted, as well as to 'Aziziya and to Karbala. Under each Political Officer, Assistant Political Officers administered subdivisions or districts. A Deputy Civil Commissioner assumed control of the Basra divisions until September, 1918, when the two Wilayets, largely for political reasons, were merged and the administration directed from Baghdad.

Political Control and Revenue Administration.

As at Basra, military exigencies largely controlled the situation. General Maude's own attitude to the Civil Administration had been in accordance with his views as to the necessity of establishing the unquestioned authority of the military authorities rather than with the spirit of the proclamation issued in his name after the fall of Baghdad. The appointment, often without reference to the Chief Political Officer, of military officials many of whom knew nothing of Arabic or of Arab conditions, to civil administrative positions, gave no suggestion that he took seriously the statement 'I am commanded to invite you, through your Nobles and Elders and Representatives, to participate in the management of your civil affairs in collaboration with the Political Representatives of Great Britain who accompany the British Army.'⁽¹⁾ The government by proclamation, with its harrassing and sometimes unnecessary regulations, gave as little

(1) Proclamations, 1914-1919, Proc. No. 9, p. 5. Text: App. I.

hint to the people of Baghdad as earlier regulations had given to the people of Basra, that the armies had 'not come into your Cities and Lands as Conquerors or enemies but as Liberators.'⁽¹⁾

Nevertheless, Sir Percy Cox, concerned with the future as well as the present, deemed it essential to extend political control throughout the Wilayet, as much as permitted by the military authorities and by General Maude's centralization of authority into his own hands. Such control could be best attained, as had been discovered in Basra Wilayet, by extending the administration and collection of revenue, which, in the eyes of the tribes, was regarded as a sign of government authority, just as revenue payment was considered an outward sign of their submission. Much of the confidence engendered by the Political Officers in Basra Wilayet had been the result of their revenue activities⁽²⁾ which included far more than the collection of taxes since the Revenue Board had been forced to assume a far wider range of responsibilities than merely revenue work. The extension of land-revenue collections in kind from the fertile areas of the Middle Euphrates would produce local foodstuffs for the army and thereby release much precious tonnage. Hence, after the fall of Baghdad, Sir Percy Cox's chief efforts were directed, not only to the establishment of friendly relations with leading dignitaries, but also, through the First Revenue Officer, to the collection of

(1) Ibid. p. 6.

(2) 'I have been long convinced that Revenue work is the most important part of their duties.' Deputy Civil Commissioner in Admin. Rep., Basrah, 1917, p. 8.

information as to the customary rates of demand; the sorting of a mass of papers; the foundation of a Revenue system capable of extension; the inceptions of departments such as Auqaf, Education, etc. and the actual collection of revenue in Baghdad and surrounding districts. (1)

There was every need for haste. The First Revenue Officer reached Baghdad on 22 March; the harvest was due to begin in the middle of April. Before it was cut, customary assessments had to be made, demands made according to the usual rates and the local variations as to payment taken into consideration. The easiest plan would have been to auction the right to collect the taxes and to support the successful bidders with troops. But, if it was deemed necessary to emphasize, by the collection of revenue, the coming of peaceful conditions, 'it was still more important to gain the confidence of the cultivator so that measures for future development should be welcomed.' (2)

The complexities and inconsistencies of the Turkish Revenue system, to which reference has already been made, proved, as in Basra Wilayet, one of the greatest obstacles in the way of a rapid establishment in Baghdad Wilayet of a system based on its principles.

(1) Administration Report, Revenue Board, Baghdad, March 22 to December 31, 1917. (Baghdad, 1918), p. 1. (Hereafter Revenue Report, 1917.)

(2) Revenue Report, 1917, p. 24. See also, Review C. Admin., 1914-1920, p. 76.

The Turkish Revenue System.

Under the Turks, general revenues in each wilayet had been collected under the authority of the Daftardar (Provincial Director of Finance), either directly or through departments. Among the taxes collected directly were land-revenue in its various aspects, kodah (animal head-tax), tamattu (income or professional tax), conscription exemption-tax and several minor taxes. Tax-collecting Departments controlled by the Daftardar included the Dairat al Liman (Marine Department) and the Nufus or Statistical Department. Twelve other heads of revenue, together with one quarter of 3% of the customs receipts which had been assigned to the Ottoman Public Debt Administration, by the decree of Muharram, 20 December, 1881, following the default of the Ottoman Government on its European-held debts, were collected by a special Civil Service.

(1).
(2)
A few other revenues, provincial in character, were accredited to the Muhasiba al Khususiya (Special Accounts Department) created by the Young Turks as a sop to the outcry that the Central Government drained the Arab provinces of all funds. Customs were also in charge of a special staff.

In any account of land-revenue, the most important of the

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- (1) For the decree, and full list of the assigned revenues: Young, Sir George, Droit Ottoman, vol. V, pp. 69 ff.
- (2) The 'public works' and 'education' cesses on land-revenue; 5% cess on kodah; 10% cess on income tax; half the proceeds of the slaughter-house fees; rents and profits of education trust property.

general revenues, it must be clearly recognized that the Ottoman Government made a distinction between its right over land as Sovereign and its right as actual possessor or owner of the soil as well as between the dues exacted in accordance with each right.

In 'Iraq, the Ottoman Government, by right of conquest, deemed itself in theory both Sovereign and sole owner of all land save in so far as it had divested itself of its rights of ownership by a specific act of alienation to individual owners. Lands so alienated absolutely, under the Land Code or Qanun Aradhi of 7 Ramadhan, 1274 (1858) ⁽¹⁾ were known as Sirf Mulk. ⁽²⁾ Those alienated conditionally by tapu sanads were known as Aradhi Amiriyah under the Code but were more commonly called tapu lands in 'Iraq. Such alienated lands formed but a small proportion of the arable of 'Iraq. Most of it, although great sections had

(1) Text: Ongley, F., Ottoman Land Code (1892), Bk. I, pp. 1 ff.; Young, Sir G., op. cit., vol. VI, pp. 45 ff; Fisher, Stanley, Ottoman Land Laws (1919). Under the Code five legal categories of land were recognized:

1. Aradhi Mumluka, land held in undiluted ownership.
2. Aradhi Amiriya, state land, the usufructuary possession of which is granted on a registered tenure.
3. Aradhi Muqufa, land dedicated to pious purposes.
4. Aradhi Matraka, land especially reserved for some public purpose.
5. Aradhi Mawat, waste land.

These classifications had never been applied as a whole to 'Iraq. Terms were also misapplied. Thus Aradhi Amiriya is known as tapu land in 'Iraq, while land held in legal possession of the state is called miri. Category 4 seems not to have been generally recognized in 'Iraq.

(2) See Howell, Sir E., J. C. Asian Soc., vol. IX (1922), pp. 20 ff. for an authoritative article on Qanun al-Aradhi.

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been in the actual possession and cultivation of the tribes for years, had never been granted on sanads, and was, therefore, Aradhi Amiriya or miri land in 'Iraq. Other large sections had found their way to the personal possession of the Sultan or Ottoman Royal family, and thence to Aradhi Mudawwara.

In the case of the unalienated state lands, the Government was entitled to exact from the user both rent as landlord or owner, and revenue as accruing to it as Sovereign. The distinctions between these exactions had tended to become obscure since the two were usually paid as a single contribution.

In the case of mulk or tapu land, the Government demanded revenue only since it possessed merely dominion. The possessors of the titles to such lands had the right to demand the landlord's share, normally the same as the revenue share, which was, on the principle of the 'Ashar, the tenth part of the fruits of the earth. On lands watered by flow irrigation, an additional tenth part of the crops was demanded as representing the fruits of the water.

Numerous graduations and variation of these shares had grown up, however, in recognition of the general principle that land taxation and rent were proportional to profits made on the land, which varied yearly on account of faulty water control,

(1) 'The tenure of some four fifths of the cultivated land in the country was not governed by law, was not amenable to the jurisdiction of the Courts, and was not regulated in any methodical way at all.' Dowson, Sir E. M., An Enquiry into Land Tenure and Related Questions, (Letchworth, 1932) p. 5.

(2) Aradhi Sanniya or Crown Lands until 1909, when the Young Turks transferred them to general revenues.

weather vagaries, floods, pests, dust storms, and lack of security from marauding neighbours or nomadic tribes. Annual assessments were also made on most crops in accordance with the same principle. Such assessments were usually made by sight estimation of grain shortly before it was reaped, or on the threshing floor, or by a combination of these methods. (1) The measurement of small sample areas was another method commonly used in numerous sections of the Hilla and Shamiya divisions. (2) Occasionally fixed assessment existed, as on the number of pumping engines or lift machines on an estate, (3) or where taxes were farmed for a period of years at a fixed sum. (4)

The Turkish theory of variation in rates of demand (5) and in assessment (6) which took into account local conditions, was, on the whole, well suited to a land of violent contrasts such as

(1) Outlines of Turkish Assessment methods in Revenue Report, 1917, p. 18, Admin. Report of Revenue Department, Baghdad, 1918, (Hereafter Revenue Report, 1918) (Baghdad 1919), p. 6-7, Ibid., 1919, p. 6.

(2) Revenue Report, 1917, p. 18.

(3) Ibid., p. 15. Ibid., 1918, p. 7.

(4) Ibid., 1917, p. 18.

(5) A comprehensive list of Turkish demands, together with those adopted by the Civil Administration (never higher, often lower) in: Revenue Report, 1918, p. 8; Ibid., 1919, App. B., pp. 45-7. Revenue Circular No.7, 26 February, 1919; also Report on Mesopotamian Spring Harvest (Baghdad, 1919), p. 6.

(6) For instance, land irrigated by lift on the right bank of the Tigris, above Khadhmain, paid fixed assessments in cash. Land opposite on the left bank paid fluctuating demands, Revenue Report, 1917, p. 15.

'Iraq. Behind the variations also existed a substratum of custom and of habit so firmly entrenched in the life of the country that Turkish legislation often did no more than formalise or commit to paper the habit of ages, as for instance Midhat Pasha's firman on 'Uqr.⁽¹⁾ Even the Civil Administration and, later, the 'Iraq Government, although condemning the lack of uniformity of the Turks and aiming at fixed assessments, had to recognize the validity of the variations with constantly recurring rebates and remissions of taxes to meet difficulties caused by abnormal weather, flood or agricultural conditions. The system in application was not without its abuses, which rightly drew the disapproval of the British authorities. Once a variation had been made, either in increase or in reduction of demand, valid enough at the time it was made, it was often assumed to be permanent after the original circumstances had passed into oblivion. Thus inconsistencies had grown up side by side with elasticity.

The right to collect the assessment was frequently put up to auction or sold by negotiation. In Basra Wilayet, the practise was also followed of making each shaikh responsible for the revenue of his tribe. In Baghdad Wilayet, however, the practise had been to make the sarkars (invariably pronounced sarkals) or sub-lessees, directly responsible for cultivation, and also responsible for revenue payments.

The system of annual estimates, no less than the method of

(1) Cited Revenue Report, 1917, pp. 11 ff.

collection had afforded opportunities for bribery and corruption. The assessors, without adequate supervision, varied the assessments according to the inducement offered them; auctioneers who sold the right of collection could be bought or intimidated into selling to particular bidders. Shaikhs had to be placated to permit collection, while official machinery had to be oiled in case it was necessary to employ gendarmes to overcome opposition by the tax-payers.

From the occupation of Basra Wilayet onward, British officials had deemed the opportunities for corruption, the lack of encouragement of agricultural development by means of fixed assessments, and, above all, the inconsistencies of the system, as sufficient reasons for frowning upon the system, particularly the fluctuations in assessments and the variations in demand. 'The ultimate aim', the Revenue Secretary wrote in 1918, 'of our revenue policy is to make a fixed assessment at equable rates and payable in cash, instead of the present arrangement.'⁽¹⁾

Fixed assessments, however, were found to be impossible for the time, as was the immediate creation of a revenue system which, while based on the familiar fiscal system, would embrace the improvement of the revenue staff, the settlement of 'Iraq's fundamental agricultural problem, that is, the definition of the rights of labourer, tenants, landowner and state over the land, and the resuscitation of agricultural prosperity in a manner

(1) Revenue Circular No. 7, 26 February, 1919. Cf. Revenue Report, 1917, pp. 5 and 42.

that should be politically sound. Nevertheless, steps were taken in that direction. Consolidation of position occupied most of 1917. By the end of 1918, it was claimed by the Revenue Department that, although Turkish methods were still employed, the results were better than under the Turks, even after years of effort on their part.⁽¹⁾ In fact, in that year the British authorities issued demands for and collected more land revenue than had the Turks in any pre-war year. The latter in 1911-1912 collected approximately Rs.96,97,000 or about £660,000 in tithes, kodah and minor land taxes.⁽²⁾ In 1918, similar categories of taxation produced Rs.157,47,430 or £1,124,817,⁽³⁾ or one and two-thirds times the receipts of 1911. Even greater progress was made in 1919, the civil authorities collecting Rs.182,23,497 or £1,301,784,⁽⁴⁾ or nearly double the 1911 receipts.⁽⁵⁾

Kodah, the Turkish head-tax on camels, buffaloes, sheep and

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- (1) Revenue Report, 1918, p. 6.
 - (2) Bulletin Annuel de Statistique, 1327, (1911), Imperial Ottoman Ministry of Finance (Constantinople). Turkish piastres converted throughout at 7.5 per rupee and 110 per pound sterling.
 - (3) Exclusive of revenue grains supplied to the Army, valued at 60 lakhs: Review C. Admin., 1914-1920, p. 118. Rupees converted throughout to sterling at 14 to the pound.
 - (4) Budget Estimates, 1920-1921, p. ii.
 - (5) Notwithstanding the statement 'the land-revenue receipts for 1919-1920 were substantially lower than in Turkish times', Wilson, op. cit., p. 264. Cf. statement in Review C. Admin., 1914-1920, p. 88, an official report prepared under the Acting Civil Commissioner's supervision: 'The country has paid more in taxation than it used to pay.' See infra pp. 175-6 for further comparison of revenue receipts.

goats from time immemorial, had been, at the time of the occupation of Basra, converted to a slaughter-house tax in order to lower the price of meat for the army. In other regions, as in Lower 'Iraq, where the Turks had given up the attempt to collect the tax, the British made no effort to revive it until 1919.⁽¹⁾ Elsewhere, the tax was collected by a variety of methods at the rate of a rupee per camel or buffalo, and eight annas per sheep or goat. The most common method in the tribal areas was to assess the tribe, and, in accordance with the policy of using the shaikhs to govern, lay the collection on the shaikhs and sarkals, giving them a percentage for their efforts. It was hoped to extend this method throughout the country.⁽²⁾

Other former Turkish sources of revenue, such as the military tax, fell into abeyance. Others, such as the income tax, tamattu, were abandoned, although its reintroduction had been reconsidered in April, 1915, by Mr. Dobbs,⁽³⁾ and again in 1919, when the Revenue Secretary believed that by 'postponing its imposition we are throwing an unduly heavy share of the cost of government on the shoulders of the agricultural community and allowing many to escape direct taxation who have profited most by the occupation.'⁽⁴⁾

(1) Revenue Report, 1918, p. 4.

(2) Ibid., p. 14.

(3) Dobbs, H. R. C., Collection of Notes on Revenue Matters, 1915-1916, (Confidential).

(4) Revenue Report, 1919, p. 18.

Although the necessity of safeguarding the interests of the bond-holders of the Ottoman Public Debt had been recognized in 1914, the exigencies of war and the necessity of entrusting the collection of all revenues to one Revenue Organization made it difficult to collect and to accredit the revenue under its various heads as previously. In Basra, an attempt was made, but in June, 1917, it was decided to abolish the Public Debt as such in both wilayets, and to accredit where possible its usual revenues to its account, subject to settlement after the war.

In Baghdad Wilayet, the Revenue Department included, as it had in Basra, a number of duties other than purely revenue work. It dealt with Customs, Public Debt, Waqf Administration, Land Regulation, Education, and, under military supervision, with Irrigation and Agriculture. During 1918, however, as the staff increased and organization extended, each department tended to become a separate unit. Nevertheless, the Revenue Department continued to expand, dealing with 17 varied aspects of administration in September, 1919.⁽¹⁾ By April, 1920, its activities⁽²⁾ had extended to some 22 branches of the Administration.

Irrigation and Agriculture.

In a country so predominantly agricultural as 'Iraq, where rainfall, generally speaking, is too slight for its needs, the

(1) Note on the Organisation of the Civil Administration of Mesopotamia, September 1st., 1919. (Baghdad, 1919).

(2) Ibid., April 1st, 1920. (Baghdad, 1920)

provision of irrigation from the rivers, the traditional source of the country's prosperity, remains one of the major problems. The problem of irrigation, however, is more than one of mere extraction of water from the rivers. It is also the maintenance of the natural drainage of the country, its protection from floods and the preservation of navigable waterways. (1)

After the invasions of Hulagu and Timur, the irrigation system, the remains of which can still be seen, collapsed. No government which assumed power was able to maintain canals or regulate the flow of water. Each man did what was good in his own eyes. Many canals silted up. Other canals, cut in the banks by the cultivators, without adequate knowledge or without regard for the future, came to carry more water than the parent river. In many cases, the abstracted water, through improper drainage ruined the land through salination or else filled vast marshes. The rivers, unable to scour their beds in the lower reaches, increased the dangers from floods and hampered navigation. (2)

Not until comparatively modern times were efforts made by the Turks to prevent flooding and to secure the services of engineers to study and to undertake irrigation works. The most prominent of the foreign engineers was Sir William Willcocks, who, from his

(1) Note on Irrigation in Mesopotamia, December, 1919 (Baghdad, 1920), p. 9.

(2) Ibid., p. 7; Brief Note on Irrigation Work in Mesopotamia and the operations of the Irrigation Directorate, M.E.F., up to November, 1918. (Baghdad, 1919), p. 1.

appointment in 1908, studied and proposed schemes for the irrigation and drainage of the country. His programme was, briefly: the construction of two barrages on the Euphrates, at Hindiya and at Falluja, and two on the Tigris, at Kut and Balad; the construction of a proper canal system from these barrages; the utilization of the Habbaniya-Abu Dibbis depression as an escape for the flood-waters of the Tigris; the regulation of the swamps above Basra; the rehabilitation of the Nahrwan Canal from the Diyala; and the provision for drainage, escapes and afforestation in connection with the entire project. (1)

The Turks, however, lacking both money and initiative for the whole programme, (2) undertook, with encouragement from Great Britain and from Germany, the construction of the Hindiya barrage and the Habbaniya escape, of which only the former was completed in 1914.

At the beginning of the Occupation, the interest of the military authorities in irrigation and in agriculture had been confined to restricting the former where it hindered navigation, and encouraging the latter to meet the needs of the army, although a certain amount of flood prevention work was undertaken from late 1915 onwards. Urgent repairs of the Hindiya Barrage and the

(1) Willcocks, Sir W., The Irrigation of Mesopotamia (1917, 2nd. ed.), pp. 15 ff.

(2) Sir William Willcocks' estimate for his programme was £T. 29,105,020 or about £26,537,000. He anticipated the return, once the schemes were completed, to be about nine per centum. Ibid., p. 52.

completion of its canal were also carried out by military engineers in June, 1917, but not until the necessity arose of meeting a threatened shortage of local food supplies for the army, and later for the civil population, ⁽¹⁾ was the extension and protection of a agriculture by means of irrigation taken seriously in hand through the Agricultural Development Scheme. This scheme, put forward by Mr. C. C. Garbett, First Revenue Officer, in July, 1917, ⁽²⁾ and finally approved by the War Office, ⁽³⁾ 16 September, with a budget of £400,000, ⁽⁴⁾ had been confined to the Hindiya Barrage area but later, 28 November, 1917, was extended to the whole of the Occupied Territory. Except at Ba'quba, however, little work was undertaken outside of the original area. 'The plan was to complete canals left half finished by the Turks, dig new ones, improve old ones, to import and advance to the cultivators plough-cattle and seeds.' ⁽⁵⁾

Neither the acreage of land brought under irrigation or the tonnage of grain produced under the Scheme were up to the original estimates. Nevertheless, new irrigation works in the Euphrates area, from the middle of 1917 to November, 1918 brought

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- (1) Revenue Report, 1918, p. 2. Hewitt, Sir J. P., Report for the Army Council on Mesopotamia (1919), pp. 4, 6, 9.
- (2) See minutes of Conference, 10 August, 1917, which formally proposed the scheme: Hewitt, op. cit., App. V, p. 44.
- (3) Hewitt, op. cit., p. 5.
- (4) Revenue Report, 1917, p. 28.
- (5) Revenue Report, 1918, p. 3.

into cultivation land for winter or shitwi (1) crops, estimated at 249,157 acres and land for summer or saifi (2) crops, estimated at 69,995 acres or a total of 319,152 acres out of an original estimate of 606,000 acres. (3) Mr. Garbett had calculated that 280,000 tons of grain from 30,000 tons of seed (4) would be produced. Actually between 50,000 and 60,000 tons of grain (5) for the army, besides supplies for the civil population, have been attributed to its operations and to the irrigation works. Even more valuable than these supplies and the consequent reduction of prices and economy of shipping, were the political results of averting a famine, the show of encouragement of agriculture, and the hold acquired over the shaikhs and tribes of the regions opened up under the Scheme. (6)

The Irrigation Department was taken over by the Civil

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- (1) Such crops include wheat, barley, beans, hurtuman, a kind of oat. They are sown between October and March, and harvested in April or in May.
 - (2) These crops are dates, rice, millet, maize, lentils, kidney beans, sesame, cotton and tobacco. They are planted in April, May or June and harvested in the summer (saifi), or in August, September and October.
 - (3) Brief Note on Irrigation Works in Meso. to November, 1918, pp. 3-4, 7. Results in the Tigris valley are not available.
 - (4) Actually a net total of 5,507 1/2 tons of seed was sown. Final Report of the Agricultural Development Scheme (Baghdad, 1920), p. 3.
 - (5) 56,472 tons according to Hewitt, op. cit., p. 13. See also, Review C. Admin., 1914-1920, p. 80; Revenue Report, 1918, pp. 2-3.
 - (6) Final Report, p. 1; Revenue Report, 1918, p. 2. Hewitt, op. cit., p. 9.

(1)
Administration, 1 April, 1919. The Acting High Commissioner, envisaging, no doubt, a long period of British control, advocated immediate caution and retrenchment. He recommended concentration of 'attention on securing and improving already existing systems where necessary' on the grounds that 'shortage of labour alike for construction and cultivation and financial stringency makes it impractical and inexpedient to open up considerable fresh areas for cultivation.'⁽²⁾ The arguments of the Acting Civil Commissioner as well as the 'small and unambitious programme of minor works'⁽³⁾ evolved under his direction, and centring about⁽⁴⁾ the gradual establishment of the natural régime of the rivers, were, no doubt, believed to be in accordance with the needs of the moment. Col. R. G. Garrow, Officiating Director of Irrigation, had estimated that the existing population could cultivate approximately 1,500,000 acres of which approximately⁽⁵⁾ 1,320,000 acres were to be in cultivation by the end of 1919.

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- (1) Irrigation Directorate, M.E.F., Admin. Report for period 1st April to 31st December, 1919 (Baghdad, 1920), p. 4.
- (2) Memorandum, A. C. C. to D. Q. M. G., Baghdad, 27 December, 1918. Also Draft Report Covering the Last Ten Years of the Work of the Irrigation Department, 'Iraq, dated Baghdad, 14 May, 1931, para. 3. (Hereafter, Draft Report, 1920-1930)
- (3) Irrigation Directorate, Admin. Report, 1919, p. 2.
- (4) Memorandum, Col. R. G. Garrow to D. Q. M. G., Baghdad, in Correspondence Regarding Post-War Irrigation Policy in Mesopotamia, 1919 (Baghdad, 1919), p. 9. Also, Handbook of Mesopotamia, p. 171.
- (5) Ibid., p. 2.

Nevertheless, the policy as enunciated and the programme as evolved for one of the most essential departments of government for the country was unfortunate. They set up standards for works and expenditure which were to extend over into the Anglo-Arab régime. (1) They gave little or no encouragement to the department as constituted under that régime and tended to create a non-possumus attitude which was to add to the inherent difficulties of development of the country along progressive lines.

Out of the military Agricultural Development Scheme and the Directorate of Agriculture established in connection with it, (2) also grew the Agricultural Department of the Civil Administration which took over from the Deputy Quarter-Master General on 1 March, 1919. (3) Until late 1920, the functions of the Department were threefold:

1. The improvement of Agriculture by scientific research, demonstration and education.
2. The supplying of seeds and advice to military units in connection with vegetables and fodder production.

(1) The actual expenditure of the department in 1919-1920 was 8.4% of the total, while in succeeding years the proportions to total expenditure were:

1921: 6.2%; 1922: 7.1%; 1923: 7.65%; 1924: 6.26%;
1925: 3.78%; 1926: 5.35%; 1927: 5.49%; 1928: 5.27%;
1929: 6.97%; 1930: 4.07%; 1931: 3.25%.

(2) General Routine Order No.820, 30 July, 1918.

(3) Admin. Report Agricultural Directorate, 1919 (Baghdad, 1920), p. 1.

3. The administration of the Military Farms Department
attached to the Expeditionary Force.

(1)

(2)

The prospect of developing Mesopotamia as a cotton growing country had, from the first, attracted the attention of India, which apparently had hopes that Mesopotamia might provide a possible outlet for her surplus population, and of the British Cotton Growers Association, which anticipated that it would become an additional source of supply of Empire cotton. A cotton expert, Capt. Roger Thomas, was engaged, a cotton farm at Karrada, near Baghdad, and other Experimental Plots established in the country. Mr. Thomas made comprehensive experiments, both in the growing of cotton and in the marketing of the product, which seemed to hold out bright prospects for the

(3)

(4)

(5)

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- (1) Report Local Resources Depart., 1918, pp. 7, 9, 11.
- (2) Note on Organization of Civil Admin., 1 September, 1919, p. 2.
- (3) Andrews, C. F., Foreign Affairs, April, 1930, p. 441; infra, pp. 180-1.
- (4) At the suggestion of the Trade Commissioners, Messrs. R. E. Holland and J. H. White, in their report, 16 June, 1917, The Prospects of British Trade in Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf (Delhi, 1917) (Confidential). They pointed out that in view of the prospective importance of Mesopotamia as a cotton growing area, an expert should be appointed to conduct tests with Egyptian, American and Indian seed.
- (5) Thomas, R., Possibilities of Mesopotamia as a Cotton Growing Country, Note I, June 15, 1918 (Baghdad, 1918); Note II, January 15, 1919 (Baghdad, 1919); Note III, November 5, 1919 (Baghdad, 1919); Report on Cotton Experimentation Work in Mesopotamia, 1918 (Baghdad, 1919); Ibid., 1918-1919, (Baghdad, 1920); Report of Deputation to England (Baghdad, 1919). Also, Philby, H. St. J. B., Cultivation of Cotton in Mesopotamia (Baghdad, 1919).

future of Mesopotamia as a cotton growing country. (1)

Other efforts of the Department were largely experimental, (2) both in improving agricultural products, such as wheat, (3) dates, citrus fruits, flax etc., and in the study of the soil (4) and of the diseases and pests attacking the crops. Experi- mental farms and research stations were created at Shargat, Kut, Hilla, Ba'quba and near Baghdad, at Rustam, where an Agricultural (5) College was projected in connection with the Central Farm. Most of the technical staff, both gazetted and non-gazetted, con- nected with the department, came from India, as did most of the (6) experimental equipment.

Although the activities of the Department centred about experimental work, attempts were also made to encourage better agricultural methods, both by the dissemination of information and by the demonstration of modern machinery. The handicaps, however, of the long years of ignorance and dependence on traditional methods, the consequent apathy of the actual cultiva- tors, the lack of education, the weather vagaries, the uncertainty

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- (1) Thomas, R., Note III, 1919, p. 10. Also, Baghdad Times, 14 April, 1923.
 - (2) Garbett, C. C., Note on Wheat Experiments, Mesopotamia, 1917-1918 (Baghdad, 1918).
 - (3) Results of these early studies of dates and of later experiments are given by Dowson, H. V., Dates and Date Cultivation (Cambridge, 1924).
 - (4) Results of these experiments were embodied in a series of leaflets published by the Department.
 - (5) Admin. Report of the Department of Agriculture in Mesopo- tamia, 1920 (Baghdad, 1921), p. 1.
 - (6) Ibid., pp. 2, 3.

of water supplies and the uncontrolled pests as well as the scarcity of funds available, hampered the Department on every side. Under such conditions, the pioneering activities of the Department, often discouraging in the lack of apparent results, laid the foundations of service which might have played a greater part in regenerating the country had its early efforts been maintained during the succeeding years.

Education.

Under the Turkish Government, an excellent system of education existed for 'Iraq, with a Mudir al-Mu'arif (Director of Education) in every wilayet, each having a budget, staff, syllabus and long list of schools. To judge by results, however, the system was a 'whited sepulchre'. The schools were rarely as numerous nor as well attended as government statistics indicated: the teachers possessed little learning and even less moral character. Arabic was little stressed as a language. Shi'is, comprising the majority of the population, would not send their sons to government schools, invariably taught by Sunnis, nor were they encouraged to do so by the Sunni Ottoman Government.

Mr. Dobbs, a s Revenue Commissioner, had, in early 1915, studied the educational problem and had written suggestions for British policy. (2) He advocated extreme caution in initiating a

(1) A pre-war Budget for Baghdad Wilayet was:

Law School and Secondary School	L.T. 9,000
Other schools (from Local Revenue)	<u>L.T. 25,000</u>
<u>Revenue Report, 1917, p. 45.</u>	Total: L.T. 34,000

(2) Dobbs, H.R.C., Notes on Education, 13 February, 1915.

system of education in order that the mistakes made in India might be avoided. The shortage of primary teachers led him to declare that if it were not for the urgent necessity of equipping Arabs for government service and for avoiding the imputation that the British Administration was not inclined to provide education, he 'should be inclined to advise that not a single school should be opened for the next two years'⁽¹⁾.

Under the circumstances, however, he recommended that one or two primary schools be opened and that subsidies be given to the American Mission Schools under Mr. John Van Ess and to the Carmelite Freres School. The opening of other schools would have to be left to the future.⁽²⁾ Thus from the beginning, the necessity of encouraging education to provide youths for government service became a guiding factor, which stimulated the establishment of educational facilities where the natural tendency on the part of the British authorities was to restrict education or to regard it as of secondary importance in the work of regenerating the country. Nevertheless, only two primary schools were established by the end of 1915, although subsidies had been granted to the two institutions already mentioned.

During the same period only Rs. 6,500 were spent on promoting education, or 0.4% of the civil expenditure, Rs. 16,22,344.⁽³⁾

(1) Ibid., para. 2.

(2) Ibid., para. 11.

(3) Note by Financial Secretary in Review C. Admin., 1914-1920, p. 119. For table of expenditures by heads, see Table I.

Table II.

T A B L E I.

Main Headings.	1915-1916	1916-1917
	Rupees	Rupees
1. Headquarter Administrative Expenditure. (1)	5,54,230	11,83,425
2. Political Officers, Revenue Establishments.	5,48,892	9,19,085
3. Customs - Officers - - - - -	1,11,898	3,85,800
4. Transport - - - - -	---	---
5. Judicial - - - - -	1,20,207	1,27,295
6. Medical - - - - -	61,345	87,180
7. Education - - - - -	6,500	23,530
8. Police - - - - -	1,99,146	2,86,975
9. Jails - - - - -	20,126	44,460
10. Public Works - - - - -	---	1,05,450
11. Posts - - - - -	---	---
12. Telegraphs - - - - -	---	---
13. Survey - - - - -	---	---
14. Irrigation - - - - -	---	---
15. Agriculture - - - - -	---	---
16. Levies - - - - -	---	---
Totals	16,22,344	31,63,200

(1) Includes Salaries, Secret Service, Subsistence Allowance, Sea Passages, Telegrams, Stationery, Press, etc.

Figures for all years, except 1919-1920, based on Revenue Admin., 1914-1918, p. 119. Figures for 1919-1920 based on actuals in Budget Estimates, 1920-1921, p. iii.

	1917-1918	1918-1919	1919-1920
	Rupees	Rupees	Rupees
25	24,18,253	33,90,100	73,60,714
35	51,89,233	93,21,690	70,67,420
00	5,80,350	6,75,000	29,64,169
99	---	---	30,87,834
05	2,14,983	3,73,000	8,21,145
30	1,39,887	4,63,750	20,31,542
50	35,500	1,80,000	8,86,808
75	8,90,163	12,04,080	22,71,389
50	98,517	1,67,400	5,44,304
50	4,61,400	8,74,700	49,63,292
	---	---	23,74,831
	---	---	8,19,868
	---	---	94,859
	---	---	38,78,605
	---	---	3,81,738
	---	---	66,49,490
00	100,28,286	166,49,720	461,98,008

lowances,

Review C.
based on

Table II.

Main Headings	1915- 1916	1916- 1917	1917- 1918	1918- 1919	1919- 1920
Total Expenditure (1)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
1. Headquarter Administrative Expenditure (2)	34.16	37.41	24.11	20.42	15.93
2. Political Officers Revenue Establishments	33.83	29.06	51.76	55.99	15.30
3. Customs	6.90	12.20	5.79	4.09	6.42
4. Transport	-	-	-	-	6.68
5. Judicial	7.41	4.02	2.14	2.24	1.78
6. Medical	3.78	2.76	1.39	2.79	4.40
7. Education	0.40	0.74	0.35	1.08	1.92
8. Police	12.28	9.07	8.88	7.23	4.92
9. Jails	1.24	1.41	0.98	1.01	1.18
10. Public Works	-	3.33	4.60	5.25	10.74
11. Posts	-	-	-	-	5.14
12. Telegraphs	-	-	-	-	1.77
13. Survey	-	-	-	-	0.21
14. Irrigation	-	-	-	-	8.40
15. Agriculture	-	-	-	-	0.83
16. Levies	-	-	-	-	14.40

(1) Total Expenditure, in rupees, for each year given in Table III.

(2) Includes Salaries, Secret Service, Subsistence Allowances, Sea Passages, Telegrams, Stationery, Press, etc.

In the following fiscal year ⁽¹⁾ however, Rs. 23,530 or 0.74% of the total civil expenditure were spent, entirely in Basra Wilayet. Nor did the situation improve after the taking of Baghdad, the attention of the authorities being almost exclusively taken up with consolidating the military and political situation. Expenditure on education in 1917-1918 totalled but 0.35% of the total civil expenditure.

Not until the appointment of a Director of Education, Major H. E. Bowman ⁽²⁾ in September, 1918, was a vigorous start made towards creating an educational system. By the end of 1918, 20 primary schools had been set up, ⁽³⁾ but expenditure still formed only 1.08% of the total expenditure.

The desire for schools and educational facilities, especially the opportunity to learn English was everywhere manifest, petitions and requests coming from all parts of the Occupied Territories. ⁽⁴⁾ To meet these demands, 21 new primary schools ⁽⁵⁾ were opened in 1919, while a further 15 were added in 1920,

(1) 1 April to 31 March.

(2) Egyptian Ministry of Education, 1903-1923; Director Palestine Education Department, 1920-1936.

(3) Administrative Report of Education, 1918, p. 10. (Hereafter Admin. Rep. Ed., 1918).

(4) Fortnightly Reports of Political Officers, Baghdad Wilayet, Ist-15th June, 1918: Mandali, p. 23 (Hereafter Fortnightly Rep'ts.); Monthly Rep'ts, January, 1919: Basra Sanjaq, p. 32; Qurna, p. 79; Ibid., August, 1919: Erbil, p. 45; Ibid., November, 1919: Dulaim, p. 14.

(5) Administration of the Department of Education for the year 1919 (Baghdad, 1920). (Hereafter Admin. Rep. Ed., 1919).

which, including 24 subsidized schools, brought the total number to 85 boys' schools of all types, and five girls' schools (1) with a total enrolment of 6,182 pupils or one for every 462 of the population. (2) The proportion of the expenditure for Education to the entire expenditure in this year, the fifth of the British Occupation, had risen to 1.9%. (3)

The years of neglect of education, including the war years, the lack of trained teachers and of equipment and the paucity of the funds sanctioned by the Civil Administration which rendered it impossible to overcome adequately the lack of teachers by bringing them from Syria and Egypt, made for the slow creation of educational facilities. Nevertheless, the aims of the Department were kept high. These, as summarized by the Director of Education in 1918, were

to provide a sound elementary education, on which to base an edifice lasting, enduring and firm. To open new schools gradually as trained teachers become available. To select as teachers only the best candidate, socially, morally and mentally, and to pay them well. To never lose sight of the real object in view - the formation of character and the spirit of good citizenship. (4)

(1) Review C. Admin., 1914-1920, p. 104.

(2) On the basis of the census, 1918-1919, of 2,890,000 inhabitants.
Education. Rs. 8,86,808.
Total Budget Rs. 461,98,008.
These figures are taken from actual expenditure given in Budget Estimates, 1920-1921, p. iii. They differ slightly from the estimates given in Review C. Admin., 1914-1920, p. 119.

(3) See Table II.

(4) Admin. Rep. Ed., 1918, p. 10.

As long as British advisers played a decisive part in the educational affairs of 'Iraq, these aims formed the basis of their policy.

Judicial System.

In accordance with Great Britain's policy of establishing an Arab administration in Baghdad, of which the promise, in General Maude's Proclamation, not to introduce alien institutions was an indication, instructions had been issued that the 'Iraq Occupied Territories Code was not to be introduced into Baghdad Wilayet. ⁽¹⁾ The policy adopted, therefore, was not 'to make a clean sweep of the Turkish legal system based on English models, as had been done in Basrah Wilayet' but rather 'to carry on the Turkish organization of Courts and system of law, making such immediate modifications only as are necessary to ensure justice ⁽²⁾ and a reasonably efficient administration.'

As at the occupation of Basra, most of the Turkish Judicial personnel had fled. The more recent records had been removed or destroyed. Beyond the institution of a Court of Small Causes and a Shara' Court (Moslem Law Court) in July, ⁽³⁾ Civil Courts were in abeyance until the Courts' Proclamation of 28 December

(1) Supra, pp. 124-5.

(2) Administrative Report of Justice from the Occupation of Baghdad to 31. 12. 17, p. 4. (Hereafter Admin. Rep. Justice, 1917).

(3) Proclamations, 1916-1918: Proclamation No. 8, 2 July, 1917.

(1)
1917, reconstituted the Civil Courts under Mr. (later Sir) Edgar Bonham-Carter, as Senior Judicial Officer. He had arrived in October, and after studying the situation with the experience gained in his long and distinguished career in the Sudan Legal Department, had outlined the essential requirements to be embodied in the proclamation.

Under the Turks, First Instance Courts had existed at the headquarters of each Liwa or District, and of each Qadha or Sub-district: a total of 10 Liwa Courts of First Instance and 40 Qadha Courts of First Instance in the three Wilayets of Basra, Baghdad and Mosul. Obviously, from the standpoint of the prevailing poverty and the sparseness of the population, the number was excessive. In addition, most of the judges had been untrained if not actually incompetent. Under the new system, a Civil Court of First Instance, normally to be composed of a British judge and two Arab judges, was to be reopened at Baghdad and later, elsewhere, as deemed necessary. (2) Peace Courts which were also Small Cause Courts, such as had been established in Baghdad and a few other places just before the war, were to be reconstituted wherever required. (3) Where they were not established, either Judges of Courts of First Instance or Political

(1) Ibid., Courts' Proclamation No. 17, 28 December, 1917. The date 'end of December, 1918' given for this Proclamation in Review C. Admin., 1914-1920, p. 94, is obviously a misprint.

(2) Ibid., Courts' Proclamation, Section 3 (1).

(3) Ibid., Section 5.

Officers or other officers were given the right to officiate.

In the days of the Turks, Appeals lay from the lower Courts (1) to a Court of Appeals situated at the capital of each Wilayet. Decisions from these Courts could be revised by the Court of Cassation at Constantinople. The Courts' Proclamation abolished (2) appeals to any Court outside 'Iraq, and replaced all other Courts of Appeal by a single Court of Appeal composed of a (3) British President and two Arab Judges. Religious Law Courts, in addition to those already established, were to be created as (4) required.

Religious Courts.

The importance of reconstituting Shara' or Religious Law Courts, as provided in the Proclamation, had been recognized in 1917 by Mr. Borham-Carter. He had then pointed to the respect with which the Courts were regarded in Muslim countries, to the practical advantage of deciding certain classes of cases by Muslim Judges in accordance with Muslim Law, and to the immense additional political advantage of associating with the Government the influential religious class of the 'Ulama from which the Qadhi (5) were drawn. He had indicated these alone as adequate reasons

(1) Normally composed of a Turkish President and four Arab Judges. Admin. Rep. Justice, 1919, p. 1.

(2) Courts' Proclamation, Section 9.

(3) Ibid, Section 6.

(4) Ibid., Section 10.

(5) Admin. Rep. Justice, 1917, p. 4 (12).

for continuing them.

Sunni Qadhis, therefore, were appointed with these ends in view to 14 centres by the end of 1918, and to 12 additional ones by the end of 1920, as well as to the Shara' Court set up in Baghdad in July, 1917.

Not only were Sunni Shara' Courts established, but a long-standing grievance partly remedied by permitting Shi'īs to refer their cases to Shi'a Qadhis. Under Turkish rule, the Shi'īs had been forced to submit their personal status cases, if they took them to court, to the Sunni Shara' Courts where the cases were decided in accordance with Sunni Law. Shi'a religious Judges under the name of Nayabat-al-Ja'fariya were appointed in 1918 to six centres, to four others in 1919, and to two others in 1920.

Criminal Courts.

The reorganization of the Criminal Courts was more difficult than that of the Civil Courts. In the first place, the Ottoman Criminal Procedure required a multitude of Courts, investigating magistrates and procurators, which it would have been beyond the capacity of the Civil Administration to supply. Nor would it have conduced to the effective administration of justice if the Magistrates, most of whom were English officers with little previous experience of the administration of law, attempted to follow the elaborate Ottoman Procedure. (1)

In addition, the Ottoman Penal Code present^{ed} difficulties.

(1) Admin. Rep. Justice, 1920, p. 2 (7).

Although based on the French Penal Code, it had been subjected to so many amendments since it was issued in 1859 that it was, in the opinion of the Senior Judicial Officer, 'unscientific, ill-arranged and incomplete.'⁽¹⁾ The first difficulty was overcome by the creation of a special code known as the Baghdad Criminal Procedure Regulations,⁽²⁾ brought into operation 1 January, 1919. Until then all criminal cases had been tried by Military Governors and Political Officers.

Although the Regulations adopted one or two sections from the Ottoman Criminal Procedure,⁽³⁾ the ultimate origin of which was the French Criminal Procedure, its main provisions revealed the inability of those in the Civil Administration to dissociate themselves from Indian traditions or to escape from the application of British Military Law. Both of these formed the basis of the Sudan Code of Criminal Procedure from which the Regulations were drawn. The new Regulations were admittedly subject to the exigencies of war and of military occupation.⁽⁴⁾ Offences committed by members of the Army of Occupation even against the inhabitants of the country were not to be tried under them. It

(1) Memorandum on Baghdad Penal Code, by the Senior Judicial Officer, 21 November, 1918. Also Admin. Rep. Justice, 1918, p. 2 (7).

(2) Promulgated by Proclamation of General Officer Commanding, 15 November, 1918. (These Regulations hereafter Bd. C. P. Reg.)

(3) Particularly Chapters III and IX, concerning Procurators, and Chapter XI, concerning Civil Complaints and Civil Damages. For Ottoman Criminal Procedure, see Young, Sir G., op. cit., vol. VII, pp. 226 ff.

(4) Bd. C. P. Reg., Sec. 2 (1).

was expected, however, that after the conclusion of hostilities, a permanent Code would be prepared.

Four classes of Criminal Courts were to be constituted:

1. Courts of Session. 2. Courts of Magistrates of the First Class.

3. Courts of Magistrates of the Second Class. 4. Courts of

Magistrates of the Third Class. ⁽¹⁾ A Court of Session was to be

a Court consisting of three Magistrates, of whom one at least

must be a Magistrate of the First Class. ⁽²⁾ Political Officers

and British Judges were to be Magistrates of the First Class,

Assistant Political Officers and Arab Judges were to be Magis-

trates of the Second Class. ⁽³⁾ The Civil Commissioners might

appoint any person a Magistrate of the First, Second or Third

Class. ⁽⁴⁾

The Ottoman Penal Code was replaced on 1 January, 1919, by the Baghdad Penal Code, ⁽⁵⁾ based largely on the former, but with amendments and additions from Egyptian sources, in themselves based on the French Penal Code.

Among the tribes, the Tribal Criminal and Civil Disputes Regulation continued to be applied with considerable success. ⁽⁶⁾

(1) Ibid., Sec. 4.

(2) Ibid., Sec. 5.

(3) Ibid., Sec. 6.

(4) Ibid., Sec. 5.

(5) Promulgated by Proclamation of the General Officer Commanding, 21 November, 1918.

(6) For views of Political Officers: ibid.: Shatrah (Nasiriyah) p. 387; Qurnah, p. 306; Kut, p. 384; Admin. Report, Hillah, 1919 (Baghdad, 1920), p. 3; 'Amarah Division Admin. Report, 1920-1921 (Baghdad, 1921), p. 7; Monthly Rep'ts., January, 1919: Basra Sanjaq, p. 32.

It was regarded in the tribal areas as 'undoubtedly the most satisfactory' method of settling tribal disputes, ⁽¹⁾ as the reason for decrease of crime ⁽²⁾ and as 'one of the props of the tribal system.' ⁽³⁾ Although doubt was cast on both the wisdom and ability of the Administration to continue the tribal system indefinitely, ⁽⁴⁾ only in 'Amara Division was uncertainty felt as ⁽⁵⁾ to the usefulness at that time of the Tribal Disputes Regulation.

Amalgamation of Basra and Baghdad Courts and the Creation of the Judicial Department.

The political and administrative considerations which motivated the amalgamation of the administration of the Basra and Baghdad Wilayets in September, 1919, ⁽⁶⁾ applied with equal ⁽⁷⁾ force to the judicial systems which had not then been assimilated. On 1 January, 1919, however, the two systems were finally consolidated, ⁽⁸⁾ the 'Iraq Occupied Territories Code and all Indian

(1) Admin. Reports, 1918: Hillah, p. 127.

(2) Ibid.: Nasiriyah, p. 355.

(3) Ibid.: Hillah District, p. 144.

(4) Admin. Reports, 1918: 'Amarah, p. 336; Hillah District, p. 34; 'Hillah Division, pp. 120-1; 'Amarah Report, 1919, p. 9; 'Amarah Report, 1920-1921, p. 25.

(5) 'Amarah Report, 1919, p. 11.

(6) Supra, p. 129.

(7) Cogent reasons for amalgamating the two judicial systems were advanced in Review Admin. Basrah, 1917, p. 6.

(8) Basrah Courts' Amalgamation Proclamation, 1918, by the General Officer Commanding, 24 December, 1918.

and British Acts operative under it being repealed with the exception of nine Indian Laws and one English Law, set forth in a special schedule. 'The change was effected without difficulty and was welcomed by the population since it replaced a foreign system of law and procedure by one with which they were familiar.'⁽¹⁾

The judicial system of Mosul, the administration of which H. M. Government had at one time desired to organize separately, in anticipation of it being assigned to France at the Peace Settlement, was also assimilated, on the same date, to the system in operation throughout the Occupied Territories.

The number of Courts established under the Civil Administration, 1914-1920, had been recognized as being as insufficient as the number under the Turks had been excessive.⁽²⁾ Expansion and reform, however, had proved difficult owing to the necessity of subordinating the policy of the Department to that of the General Administration, owing to the lack of funds⁽³⁾ and to the difficulty in finding suitable staff, whether 'Iraq or English, to

- (1) Admin. Rep. Justice, 1919, p. 4 (12); Admin. Report, 1918: Nasiriyah, p. 355.
- (2) Admin. Rep. Justice, 1918, p. 1. Ibid., 1919, p. 2 (4).
- (3) Ibid., 1920, p. 8 (16). The proportion of expenditure on Judicial services to total expenditure and to receipts, based on figures given in Table I, p. is as follows;

	1917-1918	1918-1919	1919-1920
	Rupees	Rupees	Rupees
Percentage of Expenditure on Judicial Services to total Expenditure.	2.14%	2.24%	1.78%
Percentage of Expenditure on Judicial services to total Receipts	1.57%	1.41%	1.43%

(1)
undertake them.

Recognition was not lacking of the unsatisfactory nature of legislation which, during the whole period of the Occupation, was by proclamation by the General Officer Commanding, or by regulations or orders issued by the chief civil authority and the Judicial Officer, under authority of the General Officer Commanding. Colonel Knox, Senior Judicial Officer, in his report for 1917 had commented:

It is high time that he (Senior Judicial Officer) be relieved of his legislative duties, which should be the special task of a legal Secretary ... Assigning work to one such person would put an end to notices of spurious legality, threatening the public with dire and unspecified penalties for dubious offences.⁽²⁾

Mr. Bonham-Carter, on his side, believed that while considerable legislation would be necessary before the Courts could contribute to better conditions in 'Iraq, no radical legislative improvements could be undertaken without the coming of peace and without a Representative Legislative body.⁽³⁾

Under Mr. Bonham-Carter, the policy of employing 'Iraqis both as Judges and as clerical staff was applied from the first. Although difficulty was often experienced in making suitable selections of Judges and Qadis,⁽⁴⁾ he 'had no hesitation in saying

(1) Admin. Rep. Justice, 1920, p. 8 (16).

(2) Review Admin. Basrah, 1917: Report on Admin. of Civil and Criminal Justice in Basrah Wilayet, by Courts established under the I.O.T.Code, during 1917, p. 107.

(3) Admin. Rep. Justice, 1919, p. 9 (23). Ibid., 1920, p. 8 (16)

(4) Admin. Rep. Justice, 1918, p. 6 (15).

Table III.

The following Table indicates the nationality of personnel of the Judicial Department.

	1918 (Bd. Wilayet only)	1919	1920
British	6	10	11
Indians	-	4	6
'Iraqis (Muslims)	82	197	247
" (Christians)	1	9	12
" (Jews)	9	9	12
Syrians	-	1	1
Egyptians	-	1	-
Armenians	2	1	-
Total non 'Iraqis (A)	8	17	19
Total 'Iraqis (B)	92	215	271
Percentage of A to B.	8.7%	7%	6.6%

that the work had been done efficiently' (1) through the 'valuable services of the Arab Judges and staff,' without whose 'help it would have been hardly possible... to carry out the policy of applying Turkish Law and Procedure.' (2)

To this policy of rendering more than lip-service to the principle of employing Arabs wherever possible may be attributed the comparative immunity of the Judicial Department from the criticism and hostility directed by 'Iraqi Nationalists, during the period before the establishment of the National Government, against the unsympathetic attitude in other Departments of the Civil Administration.

(1) Ibid., p. 2 (5).

(2) Ibid., p. 6 (15). Also Ibid., 1920, p. 8 (15).

CHAPTER VII.

POLICY OF THE CIVIL ADMINISTRATION.

Before the publication of the Anglo-French Declaration, 7 November, 1918,⁽¹⁾ those in authority in Mesopotamia apparently assumed 'that the policy envisaged by the British and the French Governments in the Middle East was one in which the principles and methods followed by Lord Cromer in Egypt would, with suitable modifications, find acceptance both on the spot and at home.'⁽²⁾

The original instructions of H. M. Government, General Maude's Proclamation, the Prime Minister's Declaration of 5 January, 1918,⁽³⁾ concerning non-annexation of Turkish territory and President Wilson's 14 points,⁽⁴⁾ which had been accepted both by the Allied and the Central Powers as the basis of Peace,⁽⁵⁾ had been regarded by those in charge in 'Iraq as merely introducing disturbing elements

(1) Released simultaneously in London, Paris, New York and Cairo, 8 November, 1918. Copies distributed to Arabs in Palestine bore the date of 9 November, 1918. For text, see Appendix IV.

(2) Thus wrote the Acting High Commissioner 12 years later; Wilson, Sir A. T., Mesopotamia, 1917-1920, p. 110.

(3) The Times, 7 January, 1918.

(4) Made in an address to U.S. Congress, 8 January, 1918. Text: Brit. and For. St. Papers, III (1918) 950 ff.; App. III.

(5) 5 November, 1918. See H.P.C.P., vol. VI, p.24. Turkey and Austria, who had signed their Armistices previously, were not legally bound by the agreement of 5 November, but the Allies had propogandised the subject peoples of the two Empires on the basis of the Points and could not repudiate them entirely. Ibid., p. 24, also Wright, Quincy, A.P.S.R., November, 1926, p. 744.

(1)
into the situation. These utterances were held to be inconsistent with the traditional aims of British policy in the Middle East, and with confidential information received concerning the Secret Agreements. They were therefore disregarded.

The Anglo-French Declaration, however, placed a different complexion on the situation. Issued after the Armistice of Mudros, it was generally accepted throughout the East as a pronouncement of policy by victorious Powers no longer engaged in encouraging a non-Turkish population to hostilities against the Turks. In the eyes of the Acting Civil Commissioner, however, (2)
it was a 'disastrous error'.

Nothing in the political situation in Syria or 'Iraq rendered such a declaration necessary. Unfettered by such an announcement, France and Great Britain could have come to an agreement as regards their spheres of influence and have proceeded to endow the indigenous populations with institutions calculated to attain the objectives mentioned in the Declaration. (3)

So strongly convinced was he that nothing but ill could follow if H. M. Government persisted in a literal interpretation of the Declaration that he took the first opportunity to voice his disapproval, not only of the Declaration but also the policy it symbolized, in a telegram to the Secretary of State for India. (4)
The telegram, in part, is given below:

(1) President Wilson's 14 Points were withheld from publication in 'Iraq by the authorities until 11 October, 1918: Review C. Admin., 1914-1920, p. 126.

(2) Wilson, op. cit., p. 103.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Telegram, Political, Baghdad, to S/S for India, No. 9926, 16 November, 1918.

Your telegram Nov. 14.

I should not be doing my duty if I did not first of all record my convictions that the Anglo-French Declaration of November 8th, in so far as it refers to Mesopotamia, bids fair to involve us in difficulties as great as Sir A. H. MacMahon's (sic) early assurances to the Sharif of Mecca.

It is for the representatives of H. M. Government on the spot to make the best of the situation created by this Declaration, and as Government is aware I am trying to do so, but unless the latter is superseded or modified by a pronouncement of the Peace Conference, I anticipate that in years to come we shall be faced with the alternatives of evading the spirit whilst perhaps keeping within the letter of this Declaration, or of setting up a form of Government which will be the negation of orderly progress and will gravely embarrass the efforts of the European Powers to introduce stable institutions into the Middle East.

The Declaration involves us here on the spot in diplomatic insincerities which we have hitherto successfully avoided and places a potent weapon in the hands of those least fitted to control a nation's destinies.

I would emphasize the almost entire absence of political racial or other connexion between Mesopotamia and the rest of Arabia.

If the future of this country is to be dealt with successfully it must, I am convinced, be treated independently of Arab problems elsewhere.

The Arabs of Mesopotamia will not tolerate that foreign Arabs should have any say in their affairs, whether those Arabs come from Syria or from the Hijaz. In practice they dislike and distrust both. National unity means for them unity of Mesopotamia, and not unity with either Syria or Hijaz. So, too, they resent the importation of social or administrative institutions or methods that savour of India.

The average Arab, as opposed to the handful of amateur politicians of Baghdad, sees the future as one of fair dealing and material and moral progress under the aegis of Great Britain, and is clear-sighted enough to realize that he would lose rather than gain in national unity if we were to relinquish effective control. He will learn more quickly than the Indian. But he is still behind him in education and experience.

Irrespective of this, the tribal element is a constant potential source of dissension and grave public insecurity. Nor can we afford to ignore the mutual contempt and jealousy that exist between townsmen and tribesmen.

With the experience of my Political Officers behind me, I can confidently declare that the country as a whole neither expects nor desires any such sweeping scheme of independence as is adumbrated, if not clearly denoted, in the Anglo-French Declaration.

The Arabs are content with our occupation; the non-Muhammadan element clings to it as the tardy fulfilment of the hopes of many generations; the world at large recognizes that it is our duty and our high privilege to establish an effective protectorate and to introduce a form of Government which shall make possible the development of this country, which in spite of centuries of neglect is still the ganglion of the Middle East.

If we allow ourselves to be diverted from this path by political catch-words, our soldiers will have fought and died in vain and the treasure we have lavished in this country will in the eyes of the world and of the peoples of the Middle East have been wasted; for it was not merely to defeat Germany that we came here.

This reaction of the Acting Civil Commissioner to the policy of the Declaration was only natural to one of his background, training and experience. His services in the Indian Army, in Persia and in the Persian Gulf had confirmed him in what he believed to be the needs and interests of India and the British Empire in general, in whose greatness he gloried. He was fully aware of all the reasons which had brought the Expeditionary Force to Turkish Arabia, and for which such great sacrifices had been made. These interests of the Empire were paramount with him as he was frank to admit. (1) In 'Iraq they could be served but ill by relinquishing the country to an indigenous administration which had no prospect of being either sound or efficient.

In common, however, with other men of similar training, he believed in England's peculiar mission: to bestow its gifts

(1) Wilson, op. cit., p. 322.

of efficient administration, of impartial justice, of honest finance, and of security on backward peoples, who in return for these services were to assume places in the economic and defensive system of the Empire. (1) His attitude was, apparently, one prevalent among British administrators in India: that as long as the material well-being of the subject peoples were being advanced, no other standard need be set up by which to judge the administration. As long as administrators spent the best of their bodily and mental vigour on the people, there was no need to justify the measures which kept them in authority. Political aspirations and the desire for self-government were to be dismissed as vagaries of ungrateful extremists or to be repressed as firmly as wayward thoughts in any adolescent youth.

Whether or not a literal application of the Anglo-French Declaration was expected, it would seem that, following its appearance and a further divergence of opinion between London and Baghdad, traced in detail in succeeding pages, the policy in 'Iraq tended to develop in accordance with these views of the Acting Civil Commissioner. Indeed, there is reason to believe that the main efforts of the Civil authorities, from the capture of Baghdad until the Insurrection of 1920, were increasingly directed, not to meeting the needs of the country but to establishing a régime so substantially British and so definitely

(1) 'I felt it to be in our power, as in that of no other people, to seek justice and ensue it - to protect minority interests - the fair treatment of which is the best rough test of any civilization.' Ibid., pp. x, 322.

dependent on the Indian Empire, on the one hand, so convincing in its show of machinery and of material progress, and so ostensibly supported by local opinion on the other, that the influence of the 'Sharifian' school in Whitehall Councils might be checked and that H. M. Government might hesitate before wrecking the established administrative machinery by handing it over to the Arabs.

That such was the tendency of the Civil Administration seems to be borne out by the tendency to increase, from 1918 onward, the size and extent of the Headquarters Administration, to the neglect of other services. Secretariats, Departments, Directorates, Bureaus, Circles, and varieties of forms, reports, files and procedure ⁽¹⁾ were created in the best Indian administrative tradition to such a degree as to draw down the censure of even the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Lord Curzon, ⁽²⁾ formerly Viceroy of India.

Examination of the annual expenditure from 1914 also seems to indicate that even when the increase of occupied territories is taken into consideration, the steadily increasing funds devoted to Headquarters Administration expenditure, culminating in ⁽³⁾ an approximate 220% increase between 1918-19 and 1919-20, and the stringency of funds for those branches of the administration which directly benefitted the public, such as Education, Judicial

(1) The index of files in the Civil Commissioner's office alone in 1920 comprised 207 printed foolscap pages ranging over some 170 subjects.

(2) Sunday Times, 20 September, 1920.

(3) See annexed Table of Expenditures.

and Medical Services, (1) and Public Works, were based on the aim of building up a machine with a view to the future. Indeed, the large proportion of expenditures on Headquarters Administration and on staff organization (2) in relation to Education, Judicial and Medical services make it appear that it was not merely the excuse that funds were not available (3) nor the lack of suitable personnel which restricted the development of social services, but rather the absence of the will to create them.

It may be argued that the small proportion of revenue devoted to services which directly benefitted the civil population was not a true index of the benefits accruing to them, as the Army undertook a number of services, such as Irrigation, Agricultural development, building of roads and bridges which would have normally fallen under Civil Revenues. These activities, executed and originally paid for by the military authorities,

(1) Ibid.

(2) Table II, p. To percentages given under items 1 and 2, should be added the administrative costs of the other services which on the estimated budgets of 1919-1920 varied from 81% in the case of Surveys to 9% in the case of Public Works.

(3) Surpluses occurred every year of the Occupation:

†	1915-1916	...	Rs. 29,46,298.
†	1916-1917	...	Rs. 49,45,050.
†	1917-1918	...	Rs. 52,23,762.
††	1918-1919	...	Rs. 94,61,745.
††	1919-1920	...	Rs. <u>110,73,932.</u>

Total .. Rs.336,51,777.

† From Financial Secretary's Note, Review C. Admin. 1914-1920, pp. 118-19.

†† From Actuals in Budget Estimates, 1920-1921, p. i.

did undoubtedly confer great benefits on the country, causing a development within a period of two or three years under the stimulus of war, such as it would otherwise not have gained in as many decades.

It must not be overlooked, however, that these works and expenditures were originally undertaken to facilitate winning the war, to which they contributed no less than other manifold activities on which no other return had been demanded or expected. This fact was recognized by Sir John Hewitt, who, after spending three months in 'Iraq in late 1918 and early 1919, on behalf of the Army Council, ⁽¹⁾ reported:

We are unanimously and emphatically of opinion that there is no ground for the suggestion that the expenditure of Army funds has been prompted by the desire to provide for after-peace developments, and we consider that they have been uniformly expended with the primary object of securing the efficiency and comfort of the force. ⁽²⁾

Nevertheless, the demands by the military authorities for repayment of their expenditures, incurred at unprecedented rates, for objects which they considered, often arbitrarily, would prove useful to the civil population, and the enforced necessity of taking over unfinished programmes of the Public Works and of other departments, also conceived on a war-time scale and which had to be completed to avoid losing the original outlay, placed an undue strain on the Occupied Territories Budgets. The large sums necessitated for the completion of these programmes, often attended with wasteful expenditure, due

(1) Terms of reference for the Hewitt Commission are given in Hewitt, op. cit., p. 3.

(2) Ibid., p. 27.

to lack of supervision and of trained personnel,⁽¹⁾ and the expenditure on quarters and amenities for the British and Indian personnel of the Civil Administration account for the comparatively large increase in funds expended on services for developing the country between 1919 and 1920.

Further examination of the Budgets for 1919 and 1920 seems to indicate the intention, in anticipation of the continued extensive employment of British and Indian Officials, to provide equipment such as motor transport, to acquire land, and to build offices, billets and residential quarters, such as the Alwiya cantonment. The transport budget for 1919-1920 was estimated at Rs. 50,62,280; land acquisition at Rs. 12,01,250; while approximately 40% of the Public Works Budget was set aside for plans to promote the comfort and efficiency of these British and Indian officials. Although these estimated amounts were not entirely spent in 1919-20,⁽²⁾ the estimates for 1920-1 provided even larger amounts:⁽³⁾ Transport being allotted Rs. 60,31,641, while Public Works estimates, of which offices and residential quarters composed the largest single item, drew Rs. 98,43,500.⁽⁴⁾

(1) A typical example, cited Hewitt op. cit., pp. 18-22 and App. XVI-XIX, is that of the purchase of irrigation pumps by an inexperienced officer, dispatched to India without adequate instructions. Two hundred pumps were asked for, of which the pre-war price, in new condition averaged £188, delivered in Basra. After months of delay 14 second-hand pumps were delivered, at a price averaging £1,177 in Bombay. The pumps were eventually re-sold by the Director of Agriculture at a considerable loss.

(2) Budget Estimates, 1920-1921, p. 111.

(3) Ibid., p. 91.

(4) Ibid., p. 112. Also Budget Estimates of Expenditure for the Civil Administration for the year 1920-1921; Directorate of Military and Civil Works. (Baghdad, 1920).

To meet these Public Works budgets, it seemed reasonable to the Civil Administration that they should be defrayed from the surplus ⁽¹⁾ accumulated by means of revenue collection on the basis of the former Turkish demands but, unlike the Turks, with insistence on the payment of the full demand wherever presented, and of expenditure on objects 'which could only be justified or explained', as Mr. Asquith declared in the House of Commons, 'on the assumption that you are going to deal with 'Iraq as a province or district which was going to be governed in the Anglo-Indian fashion.'⁽²⁾ In the two years of 1918 and of 1919, the Civil Administration collected Rs. 803,44,502,⁽³⁾ or an average of twice the revenue collected in 1911, equivalent to Rs. 206,57,000.⁽⁴⁾ In 1920, the revenue receipts were Rs. 693,22,587, excluding railway revenue,⁽⁵⁾ or three and a third times the Turkish receipts of 1911. The original estimate had been Rs. 760,65,698.⁽⁶⁾ The surplus for 1919 alone was one half the total receipts of the Turks in the pre-war year

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- (1) Report by H. M. High Commissioner on the Finances, Administration and Condition of the 'Iraq for the period from October 1, 1920, to March 31st, 1922, (Baghdad, 1922), p. 22. (Hereafter Admin. Rep., 1920-1922). The figure for the annual surpluses are given supra, p. 172.
- (2) Parl. Debates, H. of C., 5th S., vol. 151 (1922), pp. 1554-5; also Ibid., vol. 130 (1920), p. 2234.
- (3) This total (exclusive of revenue grains supplied to the Army, valued at 60 lakhs: Review C. Admin., 1914-1920, p. 118) is based on Actuals in Budget Estimates, 1920-1921, p. 1.
- (4) Bulletin Annuel de Statistique, 1327. For comparison of land-revenue receipts see supra. pp. 138 ff.
- (5) Admin. Rep., 1920-1922, pp. 23-4.
- (6) Budget Estimates, 1920-1921, p. ii.

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just mentioned, while the entire surplus accumulated in the period of the Military Occupation was one and a half times the revenue collected in the same pre-war year. ⁽¹⁾ These figures are all the more remarkable when the amounts remitted as subsidies or for political services, as in the 'Amara and Dulaim Divisions, are taken into consideration.

It need not be supposed, however, that taxation was unduly oppressive, although it tended to press most heavily on the agricultural worker to whom the burden was eventually passed under the prevailing land tenure. Prosperity was general: trade was flourishing, the price of agricultural products was high, wages had risen beyond the bounds of imagination, and rents had soared. In addition, classes who had never paid taxes were no longer able to evade payment by bribery or force as in pre-war days. ⁽²⁾ Others who had paid little through faulty assessment or official discrimination were now forced to pay in full.

The accusation made by Lord Islington in the House of Lords that the political unrest of 1920 was primarily due to heavy taxation ⁽³⁾ was essentially untrue. Nevertheless, the fact that the landlords, dignitaries and tribesmen who had once escaped taxation were no longer able to escape, undoubtedly influenced them to throw their weight against a regime which was able to collect what it demanded. Moreover, gratitude for the

(1) Supra, p. 172.

(2) Handbook of Meso., vol. I, p. 145, estimates that in pre-war days 7/10ths of the population of the Wilayet of Basra escaped scot-free of all taxation and paid nothing whatever except perhaps bribes.

(3) Parl. Debates, H. of L., 5th S., vol. 40 (1920), pp. 850-1.

fact that for the first time in the lives of the tax-payers, tangible and concrete returns for their money were visible, was often lost in the knowledge that they had no voice in the initiation or incidence of taxation or in the choice of the objects of expenditure which, because they were essentially desirable in the eyes of the Anglo-Indian officialdom, were placed in the budget estimates, regardless of whether or not the expenditure had corresponding value in the desires and standards of the tax-payers or whether it was necessary for the peculiar needs of the country.

In responsible administrative positions, the Civil Administration from 1914 to 1920 employed comparatively few Arabs. The Arabs drawing Rs. 600 or more per month ⁽¹⁾ formed but 3.74% of the 534 officers in the same category on 1 August, 1920, numbering 20, while the remainder, 514, were British or Indian officials. The distribution of the 20 Arabs so employed was as follows: Judicial Department 10; Divisional Political Staff 4; Irrigation 3; Tapu 2; Waqf 1. This situation was due, partly to the lack of Arabs who by training, education and character could stand comparison with the high ability of the British officers, and partly to the view that 'the interests of the country will be served by having a large proportion of ⁽²⁾ British personnel in all branches of the Administration.'

(1) Following the official division as in Review C. Admin., 1914-1920, p. 122.

(2) Admin. Report, Baghdad, 1917, p. 3. The figures above, together with the Acting Civil Commissioner's persistent refusal to set up an Arab Government in Mosul, as ordered by H. M. Government, 9 May, 1919, make it difficult to understand his later statement, (Wilson, op. cit., p. 313) 'From the outset I did my best to induce H. M. Government to allow me to introduce a very large Arab element into the Civil Administration.'

Nor were the various advisory Councils, of which so much has been made as indicating the participation of Arabs in the Government, ⁽¹⁾ of any practical value. They were so organized that their effect on the conduct of the Administration, except in minor local affairs, was nil.

Indeed it was from Indian rather than Arab sources that both methods and officials were drawn. Thus in 1917, of the 59 officers serving in the Civil Administration of Baghdad Wilayet, 29 came from services in India, either directly or on loan from the military authorities. The proportion, roughly, held good in Basra Wilayet also. ⁽²⁾ In 1920, although only 79 of the 507 British officers drawing over Rs. 600 per mensem were on the active lists of Indian Government services, a much greater proportion of these as well as of the 515 British officers drawing less than Rs. 600 possessed Indian experience. In addition, 2,216 Indians were employed, who, with the 1022 British officials, composed 50.5% of the total administrative personnel, excluding the railroad staff and non-administrative ranks of the Levies and the Police. ⁽³⁾ Of the Railway personnel, numbering 24,928 of all grades, on 1 April, 1920, 80% were Indians, 3% were Europeans, and 17% were inhabitants of the

(1) Review Civil Admin., Occupied Territories, 1914-1918, pp. 24-6, (hereafter Review C. Admin., 1914-1918). Ibid., 1914-1920, pp. 131-2.

(2) Admin. Report., Baghdad, 1917, p. 2., Residents of the Occupied Territories, however, composed 83% of the subordinate officials in the same year.

(3) Table IV.

Table IV.

Officers and Personnel

Employed by the Civil Administration, 1 August, 1920.*

		British	Indian	Inhabitants Occupied Terr.
Part I	<u>Officers & Personnel drawing over Rs.600 per m.</u>			
	Central Admin.	5	-	-
	Divisional Admin.	106	-	4
	Other branches	396	7	16
	Total	507	7	20
Part II	<u>Officers Drawing less than Rs.600 per m.</u>			
	Central Admin.	55	62	123
	Divisional Admin.	28	316	862
	Other branches	432	1,831	2,167
	Total	515	2,209	3,152
	Grand Total	1,022	2,216	3,172
	Total non-Arab staff	3,238		

Above does not include Railways or non-administrative rank and file of Police and Levies (less than Rs. 600).

* Based on Review C. Admin., 1914-1920, p. 122, and on various monthly Lists of Officers (Part I and II) Serving Under the Civil Commissioner, M.E.F.

(1)
country, including Arabs, Kurds and Jews.

The Judicial system as created in 1919 was scarcely less indebted to Indian and British Military Law than the 'Iraq Occupied Territories Code had been. Those familiar with the Indian Administrative system will find repeated in 'Iraq the familiar titles borne in India: Civil Commissioner, Political Officer, Assistant Political Officer, Revenue Officer, Judicial Officer, etc. (2)

Much of the Indian influence was undoubtedly due to the fact that India had both the motive and personnel for the expeditions. Officers came afterwards from other parts of the Empire, but the tradition remained. There had even been a suggestion of a Civil Service on the lines of the Indian Civil Service, but comprising 'Iraq, the Sudan and the Levant generally. (3)

The early mention of Mesopotamia as a colony of India or as an outlet for India's surplus population, which had been current from 1915 to 1917, (4) had subsided, although the idea continued in official circles. (5) The stronger claim, however,

(1) Review C. Admin., 1914-1920, p. 118.

(2) Political Officer H. R. P. Dickson had suggested in 1917 that familiar Arab titles be given to the ~~British~~ officers. Admin. Report, Suq esh-Shuyukh, 1916-1917, p. 20.

(3) Wilson, op. cit., p. 159; Ormsby Gore, W., J. C. Asian Soc., vol. VII (1920).

(4) J.C. Asian Soc., vol. IV (1917), p. 87.

(5) The Secretary of State for India, Edwin Montagu, writing in February, 1918, in My Indian Diary (1930) p. 250, seems to have had in mind some colonizing scheme for Mesopotamia.

which India and Indian methods had in 'Iraq, lay in the interests of the Indian Empire in the future of Mesopotamia, ⁽¹⁾ to which it had so long been bound by political and economic ties. These interests had to be safeguarded, as none knew better than the Acting Civil Commissioner. To him, Sir Arthur Hirtzel, Assistant Under Secretary of State for India, who had lent his weight to the dispatch of the Expeditionary Force in 1914, wrote on 12 March, 1918:

Entirely different currents are flowing now, and we must shape our course to them if we are to get what we want in 'Iraq. The old watchwords are obsolete, and the question is how we are to secure what is essential under the new ones. The thing can be done, but a certain re-orientation is necessary. The 'Arab façade' may have to be something rather more solid than we had originally contemplated. (2)

(1) The recognition of the interests of India in the House of Commons, 'The matter cannot be settled without a great deal of careful study and conference with the Indian authorities and others', (Parl. Debates, H. of C., 5th S., vol. 120 (1919), p. 1798) tended to confirm the Arabs in their belief that India might take over 'Iraq. Also infra, p. 240.

(2) Cited Wilson, op. cit., p. 166.

CHAPTER VIII

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE.

The Armistice of Mudros, 30 October, 1918, terminated hostilities between Great Britain and the Ottoman Empire. Only by the addition of Mosul to the Occupied Territories was the status quo altered. British troops, under the command of General Marshall, pressing towards Mossul had been within fourteen miles of the city on 31 October, when the Armistice of the previous day was announced.

Acting under orders received from the War Office on the night of first November, and on the authority of clauses VII and XVI of the Armistice,⁽¹⁾ General Marshall occupied Mosul on 7 November in spite of resolute protests from 'Ali Ihsan Pasha, the Turkish commander. The latter maintained that the terms of the Armistice did not cover the occupation of the city or the country beyond.⁽²⁾ By his prompt action and his determined stand in face of the opposition of the Turkish commander, General Marshall carried out the undoubted wishes both of H. M. Government and of France to whom Mosul had been assigned under the Sykes-Picot Agreement. In deference to that Agreement, the Administration was organized separately from that of the Occupied

(1) Brit. and For. St. Papers, 111 (1918) 611 ff; also H.P.C.P., vol. II, p. 496.

(2) This contention formed one of the main arguments of the Turkish claim to Mosul, not relinquished until the Treaty of Angora, 5 June, 1926; Brit. and For. St. Papers, 123 (1926) Pt. I, 599 ff.

Territories, with the exception of the Judicial system which was assimilated on 1 January, 1919, to that of Baghdad and Basra.⁽¹⁾

The Armistice apparently found H. M. Government without a definite policy for Mesopotamia other than that proclaimed generally for the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire by the Anglo-French Declaration.⁽²⁾ Nor could they, although the Interdepartmental Committee on Near and Middle East Affairs began almost at once to meet, in an attempt to frame 'a policy for those territories likely to remain under British influence,'⁽³⁾ hope to bring immediate order to the complexity of aspirations, interests and viewpoints left in the wake of the war.

Agreements, Declarations and Correspondence had piled up conflicting responsibilities. Promises and Proclamations had been made under the stress of abnormal war-conditions. These had to be liquidated or England's prestige and reputation for fair dealing would be forfeited. Thus, there arose the necessity of reconciling the Husain-McMahon Correspondence with the Sykes-Picot Agreement among the three parties concerned, of satisfying the aspirations of the Arab Nationalists whose war-time services, in response to encouragement of the Allies gave

(1) Even separate postage stamps were issued: Turkish fiscal stamps overprinted I.E.F.D. with new values.

(2) The original 'intention of the Anglo-French Declaration was primarily to clear up the existing situation in Syria which Arab suspicion of French intentions had created.' Telegram, S/S for India to Political, Baghdad, 29 November, 1918.

(3) Young, Major Sir H. W. op. cit., p. 279.

substance to their demands, and of ensuring that the interests of the Empire for which British blood and treasure had been so lavishly expended, should not be bartered for transitory gains or monetary conditions. In addition, the necessity existed for obtaining the approval, not only of the Peace Conference, at which President Wilson's 14 Points threatened to play a prominent part, but also of world opinion, which, because of constant appeals to it during the war, had acquired the position of a
(1)
super-tribunal.

In formulating a policy for 'Iraq, the primary decision lay between two main issues. Would Great Britain retain control of 'Iraq or withdraw entirely? These issues, however, were complicated by important side issues. If Great Britain made an attempt to control, would she exercise direct control or would some form of indigenous administration under British influence be established which would guarantee her essential interests? The question was further complicated by uncertainty as to the area to be occupied. Would it be Basra only, as originally foreshadowed at the outbreak of war and as still urged in some quarters, or would it be Basra and Baghdad, as the amalgamation of the two wilayets in September, 1918, seemed to presage? Or would British control be extended, as the Anglo-French negotiations seemed to suggest, to Mosul and on to Dair uz-Zor, or even Jazirat ibn 'Umar and Birejik as some military

(1) For a discussion of world-opinion and its influence on post-war diplomacy, see Nicolson, Harold, Curzon, the last Phase (1934), pp. 382 ff.

(1)
experts desired.

Direct control of any area, save perhaps that of Basra Wilayet, would run counter to General Maude's Proclamation, to the Anglo-French Declaration, and to the general tenor of the Husain-McMahon Correspondence as well as to the Prime Minister's statement of 5 January, 1918 and to the twelfth of President Wilson's 14 Points. It would, on the other hand, meet the views of the Government of India, (2) of the officials of the 'Iraq Administration, many of whom were still on the active list of Indian services, and of the Imperialists in general who saw in the occupation of 'Iraq the logical climax of three centuries of British activity in the Middle East. It would ensure the safety of the alternative route to India, of which Baghdad was to be the Clapham Junction of the air, the protection of India from Bolshevik Russia, now more dangerous than ever before, (3) her ambitions sustained by insidious social doctrines, and the safeguarding of commercial interests, of which oil in Persia, in the Transferred Territories and at Kirkuk has assumed primary importance.

On the other hand, if Great Britain were to support an Arab Government, problems would immediately arise as to the type of Administration to be established and as to the degree of

(1) Wilson, op. cit., p. 116.

(2) The Government of India, however, was somewhat perturbed by the prospect of the financial responsibilities involved; Ormsby-Gore, W., J. C. Asian Soc., vol. VII (1920), p. 93.

(3) For Lord Curzon's views, see infra, p. 221; also J. C. Asian Soc., vol. VII (1920), p. 98; vol. VIII (1921), pp. 21, 33.

power and responsibility with which it was to be endowed, bearing in mind both the necessity of safeguarding British interests and the fact that the Arab state must be constructed almost from the foundations.

Among those who would restrict the participation of Arabs in the government of 'Iraq were those who favoured direct British control. At the other end of the scale, varying in their views as to the degree of responsibility to be given to an indigenous administration, were the Arabs themselves, having an unlimited belief in their rights and in their own untried abilities; the Englishmen who, like the late T. E. Lawrence, believed in the sanctity of Great Britain's pledged word; those who believed, as doctrinaires believe, in the rights of Arabs to a national existence; and those who held that the interests of the Empire could be as well served and at a much less cost by friendly Arabs supported by Great Britain, as by a direct administration of the country.

The alternative policy of complete withdrawal was complicated by the undoubted fact that the Turks would immediately return. Against their return, Great Britain had long set her face as being inconsistent with her own interests. The British Government, however, from the first, had refused to make any reassuring announcements with the result that uncertainty, even fear of the future existed among many of the inhabitants, particularly in regard to Mosul.⁽¹⁾

(1) A number of the inhabitants, especially ex-Turkish officers regarded the return of the Turks with favour. The Acting Civil Commissioner drew attention to the influence of this class of inhabitants in Telegram No. 10025, Political, Baghdad, to S/s for India, 19 November, 1918.

The creation of an independent Arab state following a British withdrawal was a distinct possibility if the Anglo-French Declaration were to be taken literally, of which the establishment of the Arab régime in Damascus gave some hope. This line of action the Arab Nationalists were to demand and the British Press⁽¹⁾ was to urge in the coming months, but, apparently, it was never seriously considered by H. M. Government. Nor did it meet the approval of those in 'Iraq who were bringing order where confusion had reigned before, those who were engaged in creating a complicated administrative machine, those who genuinely feared for the prospects of an Arab state in the presence of both internal and external dangers, and all those who saw in even partial withdrawal a complete disregard of Imperial interests.

The solution of these problems, difficult both in themselves and in regard to the interests of the Empire, was rendered none the less difficult by the necessity of settling them to the satisfaction of the Allied Powers, France in particular, and of adjusting them in relation to European problems, which, for the first time since the days of Napoleon, assumed a greater share of attention from H. M. Government than did those of the Empire.

Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that the dispatches of the next few months should give the impression that beyond the desire to give effect to the Anglo-French Declaration, by establishing an indigenous government with an Arab Amir under British influence, H. M. Government had no

(1) It is one of the curious phenomena of the day that the British Press, in keeping with its hysterical misinterpretations of the post-Armistice European situation, should vehemently demand the evacuation of the Middle East areas in which, during pre-war days, it had insisted, in no uncertain tones, that Great Britain should maintain, at all costs, her vital interests.

definite plans as to how it should be done. Indeed by its immediate post-war actions, H. M. Government gave the impression that it would welcome any inspiration which would point the way out of the maze. Nor is it surprising that the inability to frame a straightforward policy in the presence of so many conflicting issues, should prolong the period of indecision into many months and heighten the difficulties of the Acting Civil Commissioner and his staff in dealing with the political situation arising in 'Iraq.

In 'Iraq itself, the end of the war brought no other indication of the future save a proclamation by the General Officer Commanding and the Anglo-French Declaration. The Proclamation by General Marshall, on 2 November, 1918, ⁽¹⁾ stated: 'We are now in a position to show that the promises that have so often been made to you are to be kept at the first possible opportunity.' The Anglo-French Declaration of 8 November, following closely on the appearance in the 'Iraq press of President Wilson's 14 Points, withheld from publication until 11 October by the Civil Administration, ⁽²⁾ had introduced a new factor into the situation, although it was dismissed by the Acting Civil Commissioner and local official circles as being too idealistic to form the basis of official policy. Its publication, however, had 'thrown the whole town (of Baghdad) into a ferment.' ⁽³⁾ Even worse consequences might follow if it were

(1) Proclamations, 1914-1919, pp. 20-1: Proclamation No. 31. It was drafted by the Acting Civil Commissioner.

(2) Supra, p. 167, n. 1.

(3) Letters of Gertrude Bell, vol. II, p. 463 (Hereafter, Bell; Letters).

taken literally as an indication of the policy of H. M. Government.

Feeling as the Acting Civil Commissioner did concerning
(1)
the Declaration and the policy it implied, he could have been
in no happy frame of mind to receive the following telegram on
(2)
19 November, 1918, from the Secretary of State for India:

Colonel Lawrence, now home on leave from Syria has submitted proposal to H. M. Government for dealing with Arab question. He advocates viz: 1. Lower Mesopotamia, 2. Upper Mesopotamia, 3. Syria, to be placed respectively under 'Abdullah, Zeid and Feisal, sons of King Hussain. Hussain himself would remain King of Hejaz and would ultimately be succeeded by his eldest son Ali. He would have no temporal authority in three states above-mentioned and in fact no position at all there save insertion of his name in Friday prayers in all mosques as Emir el Momenin ... It is of course understood that both states would be in the British sphere and Lower Mesopotamia under effective British control. I recognise that these proposals as involving definite separation of Mosul from Baghdad conflict with recommendations in Baghdad telegram 8745 though interstatal boundary does not appear inconsistent with that suggested in Baghdad telegram 8744; also that importation 'Abdullah into Mesopotamia would be in direct opposition to (Ibn Sa'ud?)⁽³⁾ But I should be glad if you would review whole question in light of existing conditions and let me have your views on Lawrence's proposals with as little delay as possible.

In the opinion of the Acting Civil Commissioner, the proposals not only failed utterly to meet the situation in 'Iraq

(1) Vide supra pp. 167 ff.

(2) Telegram, S/S for India to Foreign, Delhi, repeated Political Baghdad, 18 November, 1918.

(3) The frequent and uncritical assertion, as found in Kohn, H., A History of Nationalism in the East (1928), p. 308, that Great Britain at no time considered the effect on Ibn Sa'ud of the introduction of sons of Sharif Hussain into Mesopotamia and Syria, is, in the light of the above telegram, inaccurate. See also, infra Chapter XVII.

but they also confirmed his fears of the degree to which H. M. Government were permitting themselves to be guided by the unpractical counsel of the Western Arabia school. He prefaced his reply with statements from shaikhs and notables of Diwaniya, Rumaita, Nasiriya, Qal'at Sikar, Hai and Kut, in which they expressed themselves as desiring British rule only. (1)

(2)
He then proceeded, in a second telegram, to answer the proposals. They were wholly impractical. The introduction of the sons of the Sharif, however acceptable Faisal might be to the Syrians, was in the interests of neither the British nor the inhabitants of the country, nor to the wishes of the latter. Division of the country into Upper and Lower Mesopotamia had no historical, political or economic basis. The Wilayets of Basra, Baghdad and Mosul were essentially one unit and should be administered as such under effective British control. He concluded by saying:

I would therefore urge H. M. Government if they wish to promote the welfare of peoples of Mesopotamia and value aid to spirit underlying Anglo-French Declaration, to exclude this country definitely once for all from any contemplated Sharifian settlement and from further discussion in that connection, our past conversations with the Sharif notwithstanding. Our moves are being carefully watched by critical audiences and any move capable of being attributed to political motives rather than desire for welfare of Mesopotamia will evoke bitter criticism.

A few days later he telegraphed:

Arab state under Arab Amir, including Basrah, Baghdad and Mosul is considered an ideal solution by all.

(1) Telegram No. 10030, Political, Baghdad, to S/S for India, 20 November, 1918.

(2) Telegram No. 10031, Political, Baghdad, to S/S for India, 20 November, 1918.

British High Commissioner and British Advisers in all the ministries of the Arab State and throughout the country are unanimously desired.

All agree in wishing Sir P. Cox to be the first incumbent of the post.(1)

He put forward the idea of a plebiscite to take the opinion of the country saying:

All agree that the opinion of the country must be taken before any decision can be rightly come to and on the clear understanding on which the inhabitants of the country themselves rely, that a protectorate will in due course be declared and that for the present military administration will continue. I am prepared to arrange for this in a manner consonant with educated opinion and not inconsistent with public order. I do not doubt that our confidence will be justified by results. (2)

Although he reported that none agreed as to the Amir to be chosen, four names had been put forward which he submitted 'in the order of public preference as far as can be ascertained.'⁽³⁾

1. Hadi Pasha al-'Umari; 2. member of family of Sultan of Egypt; 3. son of Sharif of Mecca; and 4. Naqib of Baghdad. Of these, Hadi Pasha was suggested as the most eligible candidate. He would be especially welcomed in Mosul, from which the family originally came.⁽⁴⁾ Concerning the second name, he plead that insufficient knowledge of Egyptian affairs excused him from expressing an opinion.

(1) Telegram No. 10250, Political, Baghdad, to S/S for India, 24 November, 1918, paras. 4, 5, 6.

(2) Ibid., para. 7.

(3) Ibid., para. 8.

(4) Ibid., para. 8. Also, Telegrams: No. 10251, Political, Baghdad, to S/S for India, 24 November, 1918; S/S for India to Political, Baghdad, 28 November, 1918; No. 10465, Political, Baghdad, to S/S for India, 29 November, 1918.

In regard to a son of the Sharif, he stated:

I am now convinced that the third proposal would meet with widespread acceptance in Baghdad, and that it would probably be well received outside because all know who the Sharif is. It is also considered that he would be acceptable to Shi'is on account of the Sharif's well known latitude in religious views. I am, however, strongly opposed to it. For reasons connected with Persian Gulf and Central Arabian politics and on other grounds. (1)

The other candidate put forward, the venerable, religious dignitary, 'Abdur Rahman al-Gailani, Naqib of Baghdad, he negatived as a possibility on account of his great age, his failing health and his lack of influence save in Sunni religious circles. In addition, the Naqib was not known in Basra and Mosul, which would be a further disadvantage in case Mosul and Kurdistan were added to the prospective state. Nor were any of his family better qualified. The Acting Civil Commissioner, in making this answer to the special inquiry from the India Office, (2) also stated: 'The above appreciation differs fundamentally from that formed by Sir Percy Cox in 1917.' (3)

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- (1) Ibid., para. 8. Sir Arnold Wilson, writing in 1931, in reference to his sentiments towards a son of the Sharif as ruler of 'Iraq, transmutes 'strongly opposed' above to 'misgivings' (Mesopotamia, 1917-1920, p. 108) and also apparently forgets entirely his Telegram No. 10031, 20 November, 1918.
- (2) Telegram S/S for India to Foreign, Delhi, repeated Political, Baghdad, 22 November, 1918.
- (3) Sir Percy Cox's views concerning the Naqib at this date may be seen in the Handbook of Mesopotamia, p. 128: 'Much the most influential Sunni in Mesopotamia is the Naqib of Baghdad, the official head of the Arab community in that town... It is worthy of note that extreme deference is paid to the Naqib of Baghdad and his family by many of the most influential and wealthy, as well as the humblest and poorest, of Indian and Afghan Moslems.'

Under the existing circumstances, it no doubt seemed to the Acting Civil Commissioner that the solution lay in another alternative candidate as head of the proposed new state, which he put
(1)
in the same telegram:

A fifth alternative has not yet been discussed in Baghdad, but if I might be authorized to suggest it would probably meet with immediate acquiescence in Baghdad and would be even more acceptable to the rural districts, namely that Sir P. Cox should be appointed High Commissioner for the first five years without any Arab Amir or other head of the State, but with Arab Ministers backed by British Advisers. I earnestly hope that this course will be adopted if it is at all compatible with our national peace policy and the general scheme of things in Arabia.

Its adoption will save Government, the public in Mesopotamia and the representatives of His Majesty's Government on the spot from being rushed into a premature decision.

A solution along this line as proposed must have appealed to the Acting Civil Commissioner for reasons mentioned in his
(2)
telegram, but it must have also met his own personal views by supplying a check to the dangerous tendency towards Arab Nationalism by restricting the power to be placed in Arab hands, and by ensuring effective British control with the minimum of controlling machinery. The arrangement would secure, for a few years at least, a protected Arab National State with a maximum of protection and a minimum of Arab Nationalism.

No doubt he relied on the personal popularity of Sir P. Cox to overcome any threatened opposition arising from disappointment

(1) Telegram No. 10250, para. 12.

(2) He returned to the attempt to influence H. M. Government to accept his views in Telegram No. 10465, Political, Baghdad, to S/S for India, 29 November, 1918.

that an Arab Amir was not to be set up immediately, or that the Anglo-French Declaration was not to be given a more literal interpretation.

Authorization of the Plebiscite.

In London, the Interdepartmental Committee on 27 November considered the views and suggestions of the Acting Civil Commissioner. Still unable to enunciate a concrete policy, the Committee resolved to formulate a general statement which might guide the Acting Civil Commissioner, and to request him to obtain expressions of public opinion. (1)

This statement of policy, the first which H. M. Government had enunciated for 'Iraq since the Armistice, was received in Baghdad with the order for the plebiscite on 30 November. After declaring that the final status of the Arab provinces would be settled at the Peace Conference, the statement did little more than reiterate the policy of the Anglo-French Declaration, although, in conclusion, it stated that H. M. Government had no intention of relinquishing control or of abandoning their friends. It also betrayed their indecision by stating: 'In the meantime our attention is being given to the question of the best form of Government to set up.' (2)

In requesting the plebiscite, H. M. Government said in the

(1) Young, op. cit., p. 280.

(2) Telegram, S/S for India to Political, Baghdad, 29 November, 1918.

same telegram:

We are anxious in particular that you should render us an authoritative statement of the views held by the local population in the various areas affected on the following specific points:

(1) Do they favour a single Arab state under British tutelage stretching from the Northern boundary of the Mosul Wilayet to the Persian Gulf?

(2) In this event, do they consider that a titular Arab head should be placed over this new State?

(3) In that case, whom would they prefer as head?

In our opinion it is of great importance to get a genuine expression of local opinion on these points, and one of such a kind that could be announced to the world as the unbiased pronouncement of the population of Mesopotamia.

On the same day that the order was received, instructions for taking the plebiscite were sent out, together with the salient features of the above telegram and the related correspondence.

These were:

I have been instructed by H. M. Government to ascertain authoritatively without delay the views of the local population in the areas affected upon the following points:

(1) Are they in favour of single Arab State under British tutelage from northern boundary of Mosul Wilayet to Persian Gulf.

(2) If so, do they consider that the new state should be placed under a titular Arab head.

(3) If so, whom do they suggest as Amir for future 'Iraq state.

Great importance is attached to obtaining a genuine expression of local opinion in these points, and one that can fairly be placed before the world as an unbiased pronouncement of all classes of the population of Mesopotamia of their own free will.

In connection with first point, you should ascertain whether the inhabitants of your area wish to form part of an

'Iraq state stretching from Raqqah on the Euphrates and Jazir ibn'Umar on Tigris to Basrah and the head waters of the Greater and Lower Zab. This question only arises in Kurdistan, Mosul Wilayet and Dair uz-Zor. But it is of greatest importance. Alternative is establishment of separate state, roughly Mosul Wilayet not under British Protection.

As regards second point the correspondence annexed to this memorandum sufficiently indicates the arguments for and against and the possible alternatives.

As regards third point, answer is of course inseparable from the decision in point.(2). Here again the correspondence is sufficiently explicit as regards possible choices. Too much emphasis cannot be laid upon the importance of avoiding the exacerbation of religious differences which might follow upon an indiscreet selection in this connection...

As soon as you conveniently can after the receipt of this letter, you should discuss the questions raised therein confidentially with the principal personalities in your area, and ascertain from them what the trend of public opinion is likely to be, and inform me accordingly.

When public opinion appears likely, under the guidance of the persons you have consulted, to take a definitely satisfactory line, you are authorized to convene an assembly of all leading notables and shaikhs with a view to placing before them the above questions, informing them that their answers will be communicated to me for submission to Government. When public opinion appears likely to be sharply divided or in the unlikely event of its being unfavourable, you should defer holding a meeting and report to me for instructions.

In such cases, it may be anticipated that the favourable verdict of neighbouring districts will tend to have a favourable effect in forming public opinion.

When opinion is favourable, it is desirable it should be reduced to writing and signed by as many as possible.(1)

The task of conducting the plebiscite presented grave difficulties, of which the Acting Civil Commissioner as chief Political Officer and as the agent of H. M. Government in carrying out the plebiscite must have been fully aware from the time

(1) Memorandum 27190, Civil Commissioner to Political Officers, Baghdad, 30 November, 1918.

he suggested it to H. M. Government. To extract the desired information and, at the same time, to maintain public order and to prevent the exacerbation of religious and racial feeling would not be the least of these problems in a land where the two chief Islamic sections were highly antagonistic to each other; where the religious leaders of Najaf and Karbala opposed any secular government as a matter of principle; where Christians and Jews lived as uneasy minorities; where Arab, Kurd and Turcoman possessed racial antipathies; and where propagandists, Nationalist, Turkish and Bolshevist, were already at work.

He must have recognized also, although H. M. Government apparently did not, that the first of the three questions would be regarded by many, not merely as a choice between a single Arab state or several, but rather as a referendum between independence and British control. He may have felt, in spite of his confident assurances to H. M. Government, just six days before, that public opinion as he knew it was in favour of continued 'British advice, assistance and control,' that a free expression of opinion, uncontrolled and unorganised, might result in such an outburst of feeling against British control that would undermine all the administrative work of the past two years and leave no basis, save that of arms, on which Great Britain might establish her claims to occupy and to control the country.

The most careful examination of the instructions fails to produce the impression that they were framed primarily to meet the difficulties of maintaining order and quiet in the land.

The Political Officers had been instructed to convene assemblies, not when they were likely to be orderly and peaceful, but when public opinion was 'likely to take a definitely satisfactory line.' They were ordered to report to headquarters for further instructions, not when the situation was likely to be disorderly but when public opinion was 'likely to be divided or unfavourable.'

Nor does examination of the communications from the India Office to the Acting Civil Commissioner reveal that H. M. Government had given any indication of what they would consider 'favourable or unfavourable'. Nothing in the telegram ordering the plebiscite indicates that H. M. Government was not genuinely seeking for guidance in setting up the best forms of government in 'Iraq; that it had reached any definite conclusions concerning the questions it had sent to the Acting Civil Commissioner; or that its instructions were not to be followed literally. It would appear that as far as H. M. Government was concerned, any straightforward, authoritative statement of genuine and unbiassed views would be welcomed as indicating the trend of public opinion, on which they might base the government of the new state.

The emphasis placed by the Acting Civil Commissioner on securing 'satisfactory opinion' together with the inclusion of his own strongly worded telegrams as guides as to what might be considered satisfactory, seem to point to a desire on the part of the Acting Civil Commissioner to make sure that the results of the plebiscite would be satisfactory to his own proposals.

It is possible that he had seen, at the time he suggested a consultation of public opinion, the opportunity, in a well-controlled plebiscite, to confound and discredit, once and for all, the Western Arabia party and others of like ilk who sought to give independence to 'Iraq by demanding a literal interpretation of the clause in the Anglo-French Declaration, 'the establishment of national governments and administrations drawing their authority from the initiative and free choice of indigenous populations.' If this group could be confronted with the established fact that all sections of public opinion had been consulted and did not want independence but rather continued British control, he believed it would no longer be a menace in the councils of H. M. Government.

It may be also that he had seen from the first the opportunity which a plebiscite presented to convince H. M. Government, palpably without strong convictions of its own, save the observations of the Anglo-French Declaration, that his own proposals drew 'their authority from the initiative and free choice of indigenous populations', and therefore afforded the only real bases on which H. M. Government, in safety and in self-interest, could establish the new government.

It must not be imputed to the Acting Civil Commissioner that he suggested the recourse to public opinion and then took steps to ensure answers favourable to his own proposals, because they were merely his own views. It may be suggested, rather, that he genuinely believed that his policy, founded on his own

knowledge of the country, on his own background and training as a servant of the Indian Empire, and on a desire to promote its interests as well as those of the people of 'Iraq, presented the only way to draw H. M. Government away from the dangerous tendencies which they seemed to be following, and of combatting the idealism of those who, from Cairo and from Whitehall, had encouraged and sympathised with the cause of Arab Nationalism.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PLEBISCITE OF 1918-1919.

(1)

In obtaining 'the views held by the local population', the Acting High Commissioner believed that the extension of the plebiscite to the rank and file of the inhabitants was both impractical and unnecessary. The masses were too illiterate, too ignorant and dependent on their leaders to merit consideration. The garden cultivators and date growers of the Tigris and the Euphrates, the orange growers of Ba'quba, the shepherds of the Dulaim, the rice cultivators of Diwaniya and Shamiya, the marsh dwellers of 'Amara and Qurna, the tribesmen throughout the land and the townsmen of little substance were regarded as having neither opinions of their own nor ability to form them other than as echoes at the behest of their religious and secular leaders. The attention of the Civil Administration was thus directed to those elements of the population, who, by position and by character were presumed to be favourable to continued British control, and whose opinions might be put forward as representative.

In the tribal districts and in small towns, therefore, the operations of conducting the plebiscite were confined to the shaikhs and land-owning dignitaries, called together in assemblies where they gave their declarations under their seals and signatures. Among the shaikhs, dependent on the British for

(1) Telegram, S/S for India to Political, Baghdad, 29 November, 1918. Cited, supra, pp. 195-6.

support of their position, (1) for possession of their lands, as
at 'Amara, or for their highly-prized subsidies, (2) and with
whom the British Political Officers were usually on terms of
friendship, the declarations or madhibat were almost unanimous
for continued British rule. At a majlis in 'Amara, at which
the Acting Civil Commissioner was himself present, (3) the shaikhs
declared that they desired 'Englishmen speaking Arabic' and that
they would not accept French, American or Arab officials. They
requested that Sir Percy Cox become the governor of 'Iraq. In
conclusion they asked that no higher offers for their lands be
entertained and that they be protected in possession thereof as
long as they were loyal to the Government. (4) The Qurna
shaikhs replied in much the same vein. (5)

In Nasiriya, a declaration or madhbata, signed by 271 tribal
shaikhs, town notables and others, implied the continuance of
the British administration; scorned the idea of an Amir as not
coinciding 'with our interests nor with the interests of 'Iraq
in general' (6) and, in conclusion, requested that the management
of their affairs should be undertaken by Sir Percy Cox.

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- (1) During the troubles of 1920, many shaikhs were forced into the towns, as they had no power to maintain themselves otherwise over their tribes.
- (2) As in Diwaniya Division, where every shaikh until 1920 received a subsidy from the Civil Administration.
- (3) Monthly Reports, December, 1918: 'Amara. p. 7.
- (4) Self-Determination in 'Iraq (Secret compilation of Declarations in Arabic, with English translations.) (Baghdad, 17 May, 1919): 'Amara Declaration, p. 8.
- (5) Ibid., Sec. 2, Qurna Declaration, p. 7.
- (6) Ibid.: Nasiriya Declaration, p. 11.

The tribal shaikhs of Diwaniya and of the Hilla Division in their declarations approved of continued British control. The former thanked the British Government for its desire to give them an Amir which they agreed was in accordance with common sense and the dictates of their religion which enjoined them to appoint an Imam. They considered it premature, however, not only because of their own lack of experience in affairs, but also because no man seemed suitable for the office. They asked, therefore, for an officer of the British Government to govern them. (1)

The tribal shaikhs around Karbala, where the acute hostility of the Mujtahids made the suspension of inquiries desirable in accordance with the Acting Civil Commissioner's instructions, also declared for British administration. They stated: 'We do not want to elect a king over us, but a man well qualified for that post. The person qualified for it is His Honour Sir Percy Cox.' (2) From Kut al-'Amara, Musaiyib and Khanaqin came similar pronouncements (3) of approval of British rule and requests for British officers.

In larger centres, as in Basra, individuals of importance were interviewed personally by the Acting Civil Commissioner and by the Political Officers. (4) At Basra, where most of the

(1) Self-Determination: Section 8, Hilla Declaration, No. 4, (Diwaniya) p. 17.

(2) Ibid.: Section 8, Hilla Declaration, No. 5, p. 18.

(3) Ibid.: Section 4, Kut Declarations, pp. 9-10; Section 8, Hilla Declaration No. 3 (Musaiyib) p. 16; Section 10, Khanaqin Declaration No. 1, p. 20.

(4) Monthly Reports, December, 1918: Basra, p. 10; Hilla, p. 14

dignitaries so interviewed were landowners or had benefitted personally by the British Occupation, the majority of the declarations were for British control. (1) In Mosul, the ten declarations (2) taken from representatives of religious communities, seven of them from non-Muslim groups, (3) asked for British rule directly or for British protection. Two of the Muslim groups, Kurds, asserted that they would never live under Arab rule, as did also the Yazidis of Jabal Sinjar. The other Muslim declaration, representative of nearly 65,000 Muslims of Mosul city (4) and about 100,000 non-Kurdish Muslims of the Wilayet also asked for British protection. (5)

In other districts, notably the Holy Cities, Najaf, Karbala and Kadhimain, and in Baghdad, the course of the plebiscite did not run so smoothly nor were the pronouncements so favourable. In Najaf, 'the subject passed through three stages as far as the Government officials responsible for conducting it were concerned. At first sight, it appeared to present no great

(1) Self-Determination: Section 1, Basra Declarations, pp. 1-5.

(2) Ibid.: Section 14, Mosul Declarations, pp. 15-28.

(3) Representing 18.3% of the total population of the Wilayet, according to the official estimates of 1918-19, which gave the figures for Mosul Wilayet, excluding Kirkuk, as:

Muslims-	Non-Muslims-
Sunnis-425,813	Christians-55,370
Shi'as 22,100	Jews -13,835
	Others- 31,180
Total -447,913	100,385

(4) Report, Civil Administration of Mesopotamia, 1919, Part I, Mosul (Calcutta, 1920), p. 28, estimated the population of the city at 80,000, of which four fifths were Muslims, the remainder being Christians, with a negligible number of Jews.

(5) Self-Determination: Section 14, Mosul Declaration, No. 2, p. 26.

difficulty.'⁽¹⁾ The Acting Civil Commissioner, realizing the strategic importance of Najaf, appeared before the 'Ashraf, representing the divines and tribal shaikhs, and explained to them that their opinion was to be asked on three questions. The gathering was unanimously in favour of British protection from Mosul to the Gulf without an Amir.⁽²⁾ Two days later, however, a Shi'i of some local reputation came from Baghdad to Najaf⁽³⁾ and persuaded the dignitaries not to send the original petition. On learning of the difficulty, the authorities got in touch with the leading notables including Saiyid Kadhim Yazdi, with whose unostentatious help 'the matter was brought to a successful conclusion',⁽⁴⁾ a series of 14 declarations from individuals and groups being secured.⁽⁵⁾ Most of these asked for a British Protectorate and an Amir when the country should be ready for him. Several asked outright, however, for an Arab Government with an Amir, no mention whatever being made of Great Britain. Other declarations alleged that their religion prevented the authors from answering the questions.

In the city of Karbala, the religious leaders or Mujtahids

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- (1) Admin. Report, Shamiyah Division, 1919 (Baghdad, 1920), p. 30.
- (2) Memorandum on Self-Determination in Mesopotamia (Secret Memorandum No. S24, by Miss G. L. Bell, 22 February, 1919). An abridged version appears in Wilson, Sir A. T., Mesopotamia, 1917-1920, App. III.
- (3) Ibid.
- (4) Admin. Report, Shamiyah, 1919, p.30.
- (5) Self-Determination: Section 7, Shamiya Declarations, pp. 14-15.

issued a decree or fatwa that any person who desired other than a Muslim government was an infidel. Under this pronouncement the people of the town hesitated. When they did make a declaration,

their opinions were not in accordance with those taken by the Najafis. Fortunately, in Najaf the step had been irrevocably taken, and there could be no turning back. The double effect was that in Karbala no progress was made and the opinion formulated was never expressed officially, (1) while in Najaf the discussion was closed beyond reopening.

In Kadhimain, anti-British feeling ran high. 'The 'Ulama threatened with excommunication and exclusion from the mosque anyone who voted for British Occupation.' (2) A group of inhabitants, however, was found which drew up a declaration in which the question of protection was left until after the Peace Conference. (3)

In Baghdad, the centre of anti-British agitation, the difficulties facing the Civil Administration were even greater than elsewhere. The plan of delaying the plebiscite in Baghdad

(1) Admin. Report, Shamiyah, 1919, p. 30.

(2) Memo. on Self-Determination in Mesopotamia.

(3) Self-Determination: Section 13, Baghdad Declaration, No. 8 (Kadhimain). A translation of the declaration, indicative of the trend of opinion in the Holy Cities, is as follows:

In accordance with the liberty conferred on us by the Great Powers, the principal of which are the two esteemed Governments of Great Britain and France, we, being of the local Arab nation, choose a new Muslim Arab Government to be ruled by a Muhammadan King, one of the sons of our Lord the Sharif, bound by a local majlis, and the question of protection will be considered after the Peace Conference. Dated 5th Rab' el Thani, 1337.

(Signed by 143 Muhammadan residents of Kadhimain).

to the last, in the hope, as expressed in the instructions to the Political Officers, that favourable declarations in other districts might influence Baghdad opinion, would not, it was soon apparent, produce the desired results. The inhabitants of the city, more politically minded and less inarticulate than other sections of the country, would not be influenced or even controlled as in other towns or in the tribal areas.

The attempt to convene an assembly of local dignitaries, carefully selected by persons believed to be favourably inclined to British rule, also failed. The Acting Civil Commissioner had proposed that the 25 Sunni delegates should be selected by the Sunni Qadhi.⁽¹⁾ Similarly, the 25 Shi'a representatives were to be chosen by the Shi'a Qadhi, 'a creation of the British Administration, no Shi'a Qadhi having been recognized by the Turks ... a weak and colourless individual whose self-effacing piety' was 'his best recommendation.'⁽²⁾ The heads of the Christian communities were to nominate the Christian delegates and the Grand Rabbi, the Jewish representatives.

In the selection of the Muslim delegates, on whom the character of the declarations of Baghdad opinion would depend,⁽³⁾ the Qadhis, 'either by intent or under religious or political pressure, did not execute their task loyally.'⁽⁴⁾ Instead of

(1) The Naqib, although asked to act with the Qadhi, had refused.

(2) Memo. on Self-Determination in Mesopotamia.

(3) If friendly Muslim magnates were chosen as intended, the Assembly would almost surely give the desired declaration since the non-Muslims were known to be standing solidly for continued British rule.

(4) Review C. Admin., 1914-1920, p. 128.

selecting representatives, they called 'meetings of their communities for the purpose of selection. At both gatherings, extremely inflammatory language was used and the delegates chosen were bound down to ask for an Arab Government without European protection.'⁽¹⁾ Not all the Muslims so chosen would serve, however, seven Sunnis and one Shi'i resigned and were replaced by five Sunnis. The group, with whom the Christians and the Jews were too frightened to act, passed on 22 January, 1919, a declaration of which the following is a translation:

As it has been understood that the object of the Governments of Great Britain and France in the East is the liberation of the people and the constitution of local Governments and administration founded on a practical basis, according to the wishes of the inhabitants, we being of the Muslim Arab nation and representing the Muslims of the Shi'a and Sunni Communities inhabiting Baghdad and its suburbs, resolve that the country extending from northern Mosul to the Persian Gulf to be one Arab State, headed by a Muhammadan King, one of the sons of our Sharif Husain, bound by a local Legislative Council sitting at Baghdad, the capital of 'Iraq. ⁽²⁾

The anti-British declaration of the Muslim delegates may well have been a disappointment to the Civil Administration. The vehemence of the group, however, brought about a reaction among the landowners and the more sober-minded notables who, responding to the suggestions judiciously thrown out by members of the Civil Administration, readily brought in declarations formulated along the desired lines.⁽³⁾ They were joined by Jews, Armenians and other Christians, tribal shaikhs about Baghdad and Muslim merchants in petitioning for continued British

(1) Memo. on Self-Determination in Mesopotamia.

(2) Self-Determination: Sec. 13, Baghdad Declaration, No. 2 p. 23.

(3) Ibid., Nos. 1, 3-9, pp. 23-5.

rule, either directly or as protection for an Arab Government. Two declarations asked specifically for Sir Percy Cox as head of the British administration.

Ostensibly the results of the plebiscite confirmed the views put forward by the Acting Civil Commissioner to H. M. Government. An almost universal desire that Mosul should be included in the new state had been expressed. (1) Notables, (2) both individually and collectively, of seven Divisions had indicated a desire for British administration without substantial changes. A majority of declarations in five Divisions had manifested a desire for an Arab Government, but, as the Acting Civil Commissioner had predicted, admissions were made that no suitable person could be found, and that consequently British protection was desirable. Two Divisions had specifically declared against a son of the Sharif of Mecca. The Acting Civil Commissioner's suggestion of Sir Percy Cox as head of the new State (3) had been supported by declarations from four

(1) The Nasiriya Declaration (Self-Determination: Sec. 5, Declaration No. 5, p. 11) stated the common belief:

Ever since our boyhood we have been hearing that 'Iraq is composed of these wilayets: Basra, Baghdad, and Mosul, which as a whole are called 'Iraq. Their capital has always been Baghdad. Anyhow, Mosul is attached to Baghdad, as Baghdad is watered by Mosul and Mosul gets food from Baghdad by the sea trade. We, therefore, can never agree that the 'Iraq country should be detached from the Mosul wilayet.

In the beginning of Islam, when war was waged between 'Ali and Mu'awiyah, Syria and its dependencies were under Mu'awiyah, while 'Iraq, along with Mosul was controlled by 'Ali. This is a sufficient reason.

(2) 'Amara, Qurna, Mosul, Kut, Basra, Hilla and Khanaqin.

(3) Telegram No. 10250, Political, Baghdad, to S/S for India, 24 November, 1918, cited supra, p. 194.

(1) divisions. The three declarations which had declared for an Arab Government with a son of the Sharif as ruler (2) were dis- counted as being the opinion of irresponsible and fanatical ele- (3) ments, aroused by nationalists and by ex-Turkish malcontents.

In reality, it seems certain that the greater portion of public opinion, at that moment, was, on the simple issue of continuance of British Occupation, in favour of such rule, either direct or in support of an Arab Government. Yet the picture was not so definitely clear-cut; public opinion was not so one-sided; nor was pro-British sentiment, so preponderant as the declaration and the reports forwarded to the India Office might seem to indicate. The results were hardly the unbiased pronouncements requested by the India Office. The instructions issued by the Acting Civil Commissioner, the method of selecting those who signed the declarations, the personal interviews conducted by the Acting Civil Commissioner and by the Political Officers and the safeguards adopted so that none but favourable views might be registered, precluded a 'genuine expression of local opinion' in 'Iraq from ever finding its way to H. M. Government, unless the local opinion were satisfactory to the Civil Administration itself.

In Baghdad, seven men were deported for their activities in

(1) 'Amara, Nasiriya, Karbala and Baghdad (two).

(2) Self-Determination: Sec. 13, Baghdad No. 2, p. 23 and Kadhimain (Baghdad No. 8), p. 25; Sec. 9, Ba'quba (town), No. 3, p. 19.

(3) Memo. on Self-Determination in Mesopotamia.

connection with the plebiscite. The declaration of the chosen representatives of the Muslims, far from being accepted as the official declaration as originally intended, was dismissed as being unrepresentative of the politically and economically important inhabitants of Baghdad.⁽¹⁾ The opinion formulated by the city of Karbala, the second most important of the Holy Cities of 'Iraq, was 'never expressed officially',⁽²⁾ on account of the opposition to British rule which it contained. No declaration was obtained from Samarra, the fourth of the Holy Cities. No declarations were taken in the Dulaim Division, either from the tribes or from Falluja, Ramadi or other towns. One declaration signed by 20 Muslims represented the 160,000 Muslims of Mosul Wilayet. Official pressure had to be brought to bear in Najaf⁽³⁾ before its notables produced satisfactory declarations.

The knowledge that all statements with their signatures would be sent to the Government by the Political Officers, in accordance with their instructions, did not decrease the willingness of notables, both tribal and urban, to make protestations of loyalty and devotion, if such declarations met the manifest desires of the Hakuma or Government and placed them in its good books.

The main criticism of the plebiscite as 'an authoritative

(1) Memo. on Self-Determination in Mesopotamia.

(2) Admin. Report, Shamiyah, 1919, p. 30. Cf. Admin. Report, Hillah Division, 1919 (Baghdad, 1920), p. 17.

(3) Admin. Report., Shamiyah, 1919, p. 30.

statement of the views held by the local population', ⁽¹⁾ is that it failed to indicate the elements of opposition in the country and to reveal the relative strength of such elements. It gave no hint, for instance, of the large section of opinion, particularly strong in Basra, ⁽²⁾ which, while recognizing the benefits and the increased prosperity of British rule, found the constant growth of the military machine - ports, camps, depots; the continuation of military regulations; and the very efficiency of the administration with its insistence on promptness, probity and justice, too disturbing to their life-long habits of mind and of action, and too much of a strain on their patience to be endured. ⁽³⁾

The plebiscite gave no hint that the tribesmen, uncivilized, even barbarous, were already restive under the British tribal policy which gave the shaikhs, relying on British support, almost unlimited power over the details of tribal life, a power too often abused for the advancement of the shaikhs' own personal interests. It gave no inkling of such tribal feeling, which was to grow in intensity during the next 18 months and which was to pave the way for the rebellion against both shaikhs and the British rule which maintained them in control.

The Mujtahids of the Shi'is and the other religious dignitaries who, firm in their opposition to any but a theocratic

(1) See Telegram, cited supra, pp. 195-6.

(2) See statement by the Rev. J. Van Ess, cited Wilson, op. cit., p. 112, confirmed to writer, in April, 1935.

(3) Admin. Report, Shamiyah, 1919, p. 1.

Muslim state, would allow no idols other than of their own making, were dismissed, although their power over the masses was enormous, as too ignorant of modern state-craft, too self-centred and too alien to be allowed to influence the creation of a new state.

The Nationalist elements, composed of those who had worked for Arab autonomy before the war, those who prided themselves on being the intellegentsia of 'Iraq, and the religious leaders, were brushed aside, although they were destined to grow in power and influence during the coming months, especially under the stimulus of Nationalism in Syria, as being too negligible, too irresponsible and too full of sound and fury to merit consideration. No inferences seem to have been drawn from the fact that the anti-British declarations, almost identical in tenor and phraseology, pointed to a carefully organised opposition, just as the close resemblance of many of the pro-British declarations indicated the care and attention which the Civil Administration had devoted to the conduct of the plebiscite.

The failure of the plebiscite to represent all these elements of current opinion in their relative importance and to reflect local opinion in its true proportions, was destined to mislead H. M. Government in its attempts to set up a new state satisfactory to the inhabitants of 'Iraq, and, by making it complacently unaware of the need for quick and decisive action in settling the future of the country, to prepare the ground for the disastrous events of 1920.

CHAPTER X

COMMITMENTS, CONSTITUTIONAL PROPOSALS, DELAYS.

In the few months following the Armistice, it became increasingly evident that any intention or desire which H. M. Government may have had of giving effect to their promises to guarantee Arab independence, ⁽¹⁾ would be circumscribed by the necessity of preserving the Entente Cordiale in the face of more pressing problems arising in Europe, and by Imperial interests, held to be even more insistent than at any time before or during the war.

In Syria, it became clear that the Arab Government set up at Damascus chiefly by the efforts of Colonel Lawrence with the concurrence of H. M. Government, in accordance with the promises of 1915-16, and the Declaration of Cairo, 11 June, 1918, ⁽²⁾ that Arabs should keep what Arabs could win, would be abandoned to French protection, in exchange for compensation elsewhere. The advice given to Amir Faisal, both before and during his visit

(1) Lawrence, although one of the chief agents in convincing the Arabs, that these promises were genuine, was sceptical throughout the war of the intention of H. M. Government to fulfil them. Op. cit., pp. 502, 545, 550-2, 556, 608. Also Philby, Sunday Times, 21 July, 1935. The reported understanding between Lloyd George and Clemenceau, December 1918, H.P.C.P., vol. VI, p. 141, also gives the same impression, although at the secret meeting of the Four Powers, 20 March, 1919 (Baker, R. S., Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement (3 vols., 1922-3) vol. III, pp. 1-19) the former defended the British promises to the Arabs.

(2) Lawrence, op. cit., p. 555; Young, Sir H. W., op. cit., pp. 276-7.

(1)
to Europe in the winter and spring of 1918 and 1919, was but a warning of the application of the Sykes-Picot Agreement, revised along lines discussed by Lloyd George and Clemenceau in December, 1918, (2) and formalized at the San Remo Conference in April, 1920.

In return for British concurrence in the application of French control (3) to Damascus, Homs, Hama and Aleppo, for British support against American objections to such extension, and for French participation in oil development in Mosul Wilayet, the French were to agree that Mosul Wilayet was to become part, de jure as well as de facto, of the Occupied Territories of Mesopotamia. France was also to relinquish its claim to administer Palestine. Great Britain, instead, was to assume direct control of all Palestine, essential for implementing the Balfour Declaration of 2 November 1917, regarding the establishment of a National Home for Jews, (4) and for securing the western base and springs of the two arches of land and water communications between the Eastern Mediterranean and India. (5) Palestine, and

(1) H.P.C.P., vol. VI, pp. 142, 144.

(2) Tardieu, A., in L'Illustration, 19 June, 1920. His account seems confirmed by Baker, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 78-9.

(3) Statement of French policy in Near East: Journal des Débats, 29 December, 1918.

(4) For text, see facsimile of Mr. Balfour's letter to Lord Rothschild: Stein, L., Zionism (1926); also The Times, 9 November, 1917, and infra., App. II. For origins: H.P.C.P., vol. VI, pp. 170 ff; Stein, op. cit., ch. IV.

(5) Roughly speaking, one arch, resting on Egypt and on India, passes through Palestine, Transjordan, and the Syrian desert to Baghdad and thence down the Tigris and Euphrates valleys and the Persian Gulf to India. The other arch, inverted, based also on Egypt and on India, passes down the Suez Canal, the Red Sea and around Arabia to India.

with it Jerusalem (in Arabic, al Quds ash-Sharif or the Sanctuary), almost as sacred to Muslims as to Jews and to Christians, was to be withdrawn from the Arab sphere. Thus (1) was laid the basis of the bitterness and frequent bloodshed in the Holy Land, for whether or not Palestine was originally included in the lands promised to the Arabs, as they stoutly claim and as representatives of Great Britain as vehemently (2) deny, the Palestine Arabs had been, without doubt,

(1) Relations have been strained throughout the period from 1920 to the present. Bloodshed has been largely confined however, to four occasions:

(i) April 1920: 9 killed and 222 wounded. Report of the Commission on the Palestine Disturbances of August, 1929, Cmd. 3530, p. 12. See Also The Times, 15 May, 1920; The Morning Post, 25 August, 1920.

(ii) May, 1921: 95 killed, 219 so seriously wounded as to need hospital attention. Palestine Disturbances in May, 1921: Reports of the Commission of Inquiry with Correspondence thereto, Cmd. 1540, p. 60.

(iii) August, 1929: killed - 133 Jews, 116 Arabs; wounded - 339 Jews, 232 Arabs. Report. 1929, Cmd. 3530, p. 65.

(iv) October, 1933: killed - 26; wounded 243. Morison Commission, in The Times, 10 February, 1934. See also Manchester Guardian, 28 October, 1933.

(2) Palestine was never specifically reserved from territories guaranteed to the Arabs by any of the letters to Sharif Husain from Sir H. McMahon. The latter's explanation in a letter to the Colonial Office, dated 12 March, 1922, nearly seven years after the Correspondence, that he meant Palestine to be excluded, although it was not mentioned, is hardly proof that it was so excluded. His explanation, if taken literally, reflects little credit on his ability as a negotiator. On the other hand, the claim, made by Amin Rihani, the Lebanese-American poet, of a secret treaty, of January 1916, granting to Sharif Husain all territory between the northern boundaries of Aleppo and Mosul Wilayets and the Indian Ocean, and between Persia and the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, except Aden (Kings of Arabia, vol. I, p. 60), which he maintains (Manchester Guardian, 22 January 1934) must be considered authentic until formally denied by the British Government, can scarcely be accepted as historical evidence that such a treaty exists.

propagandized into believing that they were fighting for their freedom from foreign rule. (1)

In Mesopotamia, the keystone of the upper arch of the overland route, a state or group of states was to be set up to further the general policy of creating a chain of friendly states between Europe and the borders of India. The administration of the new 'Iraq states, in accordance with the prevailing tendencies in political thought, with the desire to honour, as far as convenient, their pledges, and with the fundamental necessity of easing the British taxpayers' burdens, for whom the Northcliffe press and other journals had taken up cudgels, were to be administered according to the wishes of the inhabitants, in so far as they coincided with strict British tutelage and control, essential to the maintenance of British interests there and in the Middle East generally. The success of Great Britain's policy in Persia, for example, depended on possessing in 'Iraq what was tantamount to a British frontier. (2)

With the policy of creating friendly states, Lord Curzon, Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, had long been

(1) Report of the Commission on the Palestine Disturbances of August, 1929, Cmd. 3530, pp. 124-7, reviews, with documents, the means adopted to arouse Arab feeling in Palestine during the war. See also Hogarth, D. G., Quarterly Review, vol. 234, (October, 1920), p. 420.

(2) Extract from address by Lord Curzon to Eastern Committee of War Cabinet, 30 December, 1918.

(1)
in agreement. In the War Cabinet, to which he had been brought from his involuntary retirement, he had already become, in all questions of British policy in Asia, a 'dominant and (2) challenging figure.'

Lord Curzon, with other members of the Cabinet, including (3) Sir William Robertson, held that Germany, operating through prostrate Russia, was still the chief enemy of Great Britain in Asia, although concern was not lacking that Bolshevist doctrines might reach India, a fear which was later to become paramount. He declared, on 25 June:

She (Germany) can afford to give up everything she has won in Western parts, in France and Flanders, if only this door in the East remains open to her. If peace proposals were made now, Germany could, I venture to submit to you, afford to give back Belgium, to make large concessions in respect of Alsace-Lorraine ... and she would still have the illimitable range of future ambitions and opportunities which I have been describing. (4)

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- (1) 'It was all part of a perfectly definite and logical policy which had taken shape with his first glance at the political map of Asia while still a boy at Eton, and had remained clear-cut in his mind ever since. It rested upon a single and quite simple conception - the creation of a chain of buffer states stretching from the northern confines of India to the Mediterranean sea, to serve as a screen, giving protection against attack to India and the arterial line of communication between Great Britain at one end and Australia, New Zealand, and the Far East at the other.' Ronaldshay, Lord, The Life of Lord Curzon (3 vols., 1928), vol. III, p. 209.
- (2) Ibid., p. 154.
- (3) See O.H., vol. IV, p. 138, for his strongly worded appreciation to the War Cabinet, 14 March, 1918.
- (4) Extract from an address by Lord Curzon to the Imperial War Cabinet, 25 June, 1918. Similar views had been put forward in a Memorandum of 21 September, 1917.

As a programme against the menace,, he proposed that neither Germany or her allies should ever again be permitted to occupy Palestine or Mesopotamia. Every effort should be made to re-create Russia - 'even though it may take ten years or twenty years' - as a bulwark against German penetration towards India, and, finally, 'we must endeavour by any means in our power to secure a friendly Persia and a loyal Afghanistan.' (1)

These views were amplified in an address to the Central Asian Society, 12 October, 1920, when he stressed Bolshevist Russia as the great menace to Britain. He said in part:

Our aim is to give security to what we possess ... I hold that what we have to do is to try to make islets in the ocean, peaceful spaces in the chaos, landing places in the storm; to elaborate palisades of stable and peaceful states around the fringe of India. It is for that object that I am working.

We want ... freedom from the contagion of Bolshevist misgovernment and anarchy, which will not only be injurious to the British Empire, but which will mean its ruin.(2)

Urge these views as he might, he was not able to give effect to them until January, 1919, when he was Acting Secretary of State while Mr. Balfour was at the Peace Conference. Even then, he did not possess full responsibility, Mr. Balfour remaining titular Secretary of State until October, 1919. Nor had he a free hand. Mr. Lloyd George, assuming that the Foreign Office was but an extension of No. 10 Downing Street, kept his finger on most affairs. Nevertheless, although circumscribed in action on most of the great problems of the day,

(1) Ibid.

(2) J. C. Asian Soc., vol. VIII (1921), pp. 8-9.

he placed his impress on Egypt and on the Near and Middle East. The Treaty of 1919 with Persia, negotiated by Sir Percy Cox, whereby Persia was to become a link in the chain and was to be bolstered up against encroachments from the north, was due directly to his initiative. In matters concerning 'Iraq, although Mr. Montagu, Secretary of State for India, was nominally responsible for its affairs, Lord Curzon practically took charge, using as a channel the Chairmanship of the Inter-departmental Committee on Middle East Affairs, sometimes called the Curzon Committee, ⁽¹⁾ composed of representatives of the Foreign Office, the India Office, and the War Office. Most of the steps taken in 'Iraq by H. M. Government in the following months, owed their origin to him.

The results of the 'Iraq plebiscite as sent to London must have been indeed welcome to H. M. Government, ⁽²⁾ who, torn between the desire of consolidating Great Britain's position in 'Iraq and that of taking no action which might be assailed in the peace Conference or which might prejudice their case in world opinion, were still unable to decide upon the method of giving effect to their policy. In the trends of 'Iraqi public opinion as reported, they seemed to find sufficient promise of a solution of their difficulties to justify an advance towards

(1) Parl. Debates, H. of C., 5th S., vol. 151 (1922), p. 1559.

(2) The results of the plebiscite also assisted the Acting Civil Commissioner in his successful efforts to dispense with an International Commission of Inquiry (Telegram, A. T. Wilson, London, to Officiating Civil Commissioner, Baghdad, 10 April, 1919), a proposal by President Wilson, 20 March, 1919, which resulted in the King-Crane Mission to Syria.

setting up the new government, and a further statement of policy. The India Office telegraphed to Baghdad on 14 February:

They (H. M. Government) will be glad if you will telegraph outline of constitution of Arab State or group of States, which you would propose on basis of wishes of inhabitants, as disclosed in telegrams and of necessity of effective and indisputable British control. By Anglo-French Declaration we are committed to indigenous administration and we must adhere to this, not only in letter but in spirit. Our objective should be a flexible constitution, giving full play to different elements of population and recognizing and incorporating local peculiarities and idiosyncrasies such as will provide for Arab participation as the time goes on in the actual Government and Administration of country, and preventing Arab nationalists from being drawn into opposition to British control.

These general ideas may not be any great hindrance to you in endeavouring to work out solutions of an extremely difficult problem, but they will serve to show you what is in the mind of H. M. Government. (1)

The promises of the Anglo-French Declaration, thus, were not overlooked, but to any who might demand full independence on the basis of that document, H. M. Government could now point to the array of documents resulting from the plebiscite, as proof positive of the concurrence of the population in the form of government proposed. To those who demanded that England should not forego her imperial interests, they could point to the 'effective and indisputable British control' which they proposed to maintain in accordance with the expressed wishes of the inhabitants. The difficulties of giving a tangible and workable expression to this dual-purpose policy were realized, but, relying on the support of the more substantial elements of the population, which they believed to stand behind

(1) Telegram, S/S for India to Political, Baghdad, 14 February, 1919.

them, H. M. Government might well have believed that a beginning could be made.

The Acting Civil Commissioner's draft Constitution for (1) which the India Office had asked, was ready on 20 February. Five days later, he left for Paris and London to discuss the situation in person. His constitutional proposals were based on the following assumptions:

One. There will be no Arab Amir, but a British High Commissioner.

Two. Mosul Wilayet and Dair-uz-Zur will be included in 'Iraq, as also those portions of Kurdistan which are now a part of Mosul Wilayet and which are not included in the future Armenian state, i.e. the whole of the basin of the Greater Zab. This is necessary in order to admit of inclusion of Assyrians.

Three. British control, however expressed in words, will be effective in practise and will be ensured by retention of adequate military and air-forces distributed primarily with a view to aid the civil power in the maintenance of order.

Four. Adequate British Financial support for the 'Iraq State in its early stages, firstly by loan secured on revenue, secondly by allowing Civil Administration to take over surplus military assets such as Railways, Bridges, Motor Works, Electric Plant, etc., at a low valuation.

The proposals in an abridged form were:

One. 'Iraq to be ruled by a High Commissioner having under him four Commissioners controlling provinces as follows: Basra, ... Baghdad, ... Euphrates, ... Mosul... If Kurdistan is included there will be five Commissioners.

Two. Divisional Councils ... to be made full use of as advisory and deliberative but not as legislative bodies...

Three. Provincial Councils to be formed in each of the above provinces from members selected of their own

(1) The draft proposals, in Secret Letter S/11, dated 20th February 1919, were sent to Sir Edgar Bonham-Carter, Senior Judicial Officer, to Col. Evelyn Howell, Revenue and Financial Secretary, to Col. F. C. C. Balfour, Military Governor of Baghdad, and to the Political Officers of Divisions with the request that they discuss the proposals among themselves and with leading notables.

choice by the Divisional Councils. The latter are nominated bodies ...

Carefully selected Arabs of good birth and education, especially from those in Government Posts in Syria, ⁽¹⁾ were to be given, from the outset, positions of executive and administrative responsibility, ⁽²⁾ as

Governors of Baghdad, Basrah, Mosul and 'Amarah, with a specially chosen British official of ability and character as Municipal Commissioner and Adviser to the Governor, in which dual capacity he could control finances and mitigate inevitable inefficiency in early stages.

This draft constitution had been formed, the Acting Civil Commissioner declared, 'in consultation with the most experienced officers on my staff, on whom the responsibility of giving effect to it will fall. I am authorised by them to assure Government that it will have their whole-hearted, if cautious ⁽³⁾ support.'

In reality, the above statement was not in strict accordance with the facts. To many of the British Officials, the Acting Civil Commissioner's letter of 20th February had been their first intimation of the proposals, and, as the Acting Civil Commissioner has himself stated: 'Before their replies ⁽⁴⁾ could reach me I received instructions to go myself to Paris.'

(1) Cf. his views here with those expressed in his Telegram No. 9926, 16 November, 1918, cited supra, pp. 167 ff.

(2) The tribal districts were to be excluded from the operation of such a scheme, since it would not be welcome to the tribes or to the officials, who, moreover, were not 'fit for responsible district work from any point of view.'

(3) Draft Proposals, 20 February, 1919.

(4) Wilson, op. cit. p. 115.

All the proposals did not have the whole-hearted support which was claimed for them. Among the senior officials, the division of the country into Provinces, the erection of Provincial and subsidiary Councils, and the scheme of indirect election to the latter commanded general agreement. The establishment of town Governors, however, found little support. The Revenue Secretary, Colonel E. B. Howell stated frankly: 'The more I think of Wilson's four town Governors the less I like them. I do not believe that if they are to come from outside, the people will like them any better.'⁽¹⁾ The Military Governor of Baghdad was convinced of the 'impossibility of finding men who could run an administration so closely involved as that of Baghdad with military and technical departments, which will continue to be run by Englishmen.' There was also the 'difficulty of getting British officials to serve under natives.'⁽²⁾

It was the Judicial Secretary, Sir Edgar Bonham-Carter, whose ability and experience had established him as one of the outstanding senior officials, who offered the most trenchant criticisms. His familiarity with India, the Sudan and Egypt and with the judicial and administrative practises there, and his store of experience and knowledge enabled him to approach the task with a more mature judgment and, perhaps, a more tolerant spirit than did some of the other officials.⁽³⁾ In a

(1) Letter, Col. E. B. Howell, to Sir E. Bonham-Carter, 21 February, 1919.

(2) Secret Letter, C.9/1: Military Governor, Baghdad, to Acting Civil Commissioner, 24 February, 1919.

(3) He had already written a Memorandum, The Place of the Arab

letter to the Acting Civil Commissioner, 11 March, 1919, Sir Edgar pronounced himself strongly in favour of the proposed provinces. They would facilitate the adaptations of administrative measures to local sentiment and make it 'easier to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the Shiyahs.' They might lead, also, to a federal form of Government, under which 'self-government as regards internal affairs could be combined most easily with the control of the protecting power.' He pointed out, however, that Provincial self-government was a long way off save on restricted lines. The country was not sufficiently developed nor were the revenues sufficient to grant independent powers to the Provincial Councils.

His main objection to the proposals, however, was that they did not

go far enough, either to satisfy the declarations which had been made on behalf of the British Government nor to put the Arabs in a position to obtain a fair and increasing share in the administration ... I think from the outset some Arabs should be employed as Assistant Political Officers and Deputy Assistant Political Officers ... I consider also that the positions of importance should be given to Arabs in the Civil Administration either as Ministers or as Assistant Secretaries and that a Legislative Council should be formed, similar to the Council of Ministers in Egypt, consisting of the Arab Ministers or Assistant Secretaries and a rather larger number of the principal British heads of departments. Notwithstanding the impossibility of now finding men fitted for the position, (1) I think it wise to give the designation to these appointments of Ministers rather than Assistant Secretaries. To begin with, the

(3) (Continued): in Administration, 5 February, 1919, remarkable for its reasoned appreciation of the situation. For his achievements, in reconstituting the Judicial system, employing Arabs both as Judges and Staff, see supra, pp. 155 ff.

(1) He had reviewed this difficulty in his Memorandum of 5 February, (~~incorrectly given as 8 February in his letter of 11 March~~) dated 8 February in typescript versions.

Arab Ministers would be little more than figure-heads, but their position would be none the less valuable. It would maintain the social and political status of the Arabs and would encourage the employment of Arabs in lower posts and without any upheaval such as would be necessary to replace a British head of a department by an Arab. An Arab Minister of ability could, at any time, make his influence felt and exercise real powers. If all posts of importance in the Administration are reserved for the British, this must necessarily lower the status of the Arab, and make it increasingly difficult to introduce Arabs into the Administration.⁽¹⁾

The Acting Civil Commissioner, on arriving in Paris, took part in the discussions for which he had been summoned. He also discussed the problems of 'Iraq and Arabia in general with numerous individuals, English, American and French. The atmosphere, in his opinion, was dominated by the Western Arabia viewpoint, the experts being lamentably ignorant of conditions in 'Iraq and even in Persia.⁽²⁾ On the other hand, he himself created the impression that he was out of touch with conditions under which the Peace Conference was proceeding, and that he had little conception of the strength of Arab Nationalism or of the forces which had given rise to it.

In London, his appeals for an official pronouncement of the intentions of H. M. Government regarding 'Iraq were not fruitful. It was felt that until further progress had been made toward the settlement of peace, the telegram of 14 February must suffice.⁽³⁾ The Secretary of State for India agreed that

(1) He embodied his suggestions in a Tentative Draft of Arab Institutions (not dated); see App. V. There is no indication that it was ever submitted to the Acting Civil Commissioner.

(2) Wilson, op. cit., p. 116.

(3) Cited supra, p. 223.

the Acting Civil Commissioner should make specific proposals, and suggested that Lord Curzon might help him in formulating a policy and in obtaining sanction for his plans.

The Acting Civil Commissioner, therefore, bespoke the aid of Lord Curzon in obtaining an agreed scheme on which to build and an accepted policy by which he might be guided. His constitutional proposals, drawn up in February, were placed, by the arrangement of Lord Curzon, before the Interdepartmental Committee on Middle East Affairs on 6 April, at a meeting before which he appeared personally. His proposals for provinces (five instead of four proposed) in 'Iraq proper' were sanctioned, together with Provincial Councils for each. Divisional and Municipal Councils were to be developed and consolidated. Arab Advisers were to be appointed to the British heads of three Departments of State, Revenue, Justice and Education. The Arab Secretaries of the Divisional Councils were sanctioned as Advisers to the Political Officers, and Arabs were to be appointed Presidents of the Municipal Councils of Baghdad, Basra and 'Amara.

In deference, however, to Lord Curzon's idée fixe that nothing should be done to anticipate the decisions of the Peace Conference, the appointment of a High Commissioner and the Provincial Commissioners, as suggested by the Acting Civil Commissioner, were not sanctioned, while the distinction between Mosul and 'Iraq proper was to be continued by giving the former an Arab administration.

The Acting Civil Commissioner left England armed with

authority to proceed along these lines. (1) The former official authorization which, however, reached Baghdad on 10 May, the day following his arrival there, read as follows:

We authorize you to take in hand the construction of five provinces for 'Iraq proper on the same lines as recommended by Howell in enclosures five and six of your letter of April 6th. You will also proceed with the creation of the Arab province of Mosul fringed by autonomous Kurdish States under Kurdish Chiefs who will be advised by British Political Officers.

We also approve of the formation of Provincial Councils and the development and institution of Divisional and Municipal Councils. (2)

The references to 'Iraq proper' and to 'Arab province of Mosul' were undoubtedly disconcerting to the Acting Civil Commissioner. The inference, however, that the above telegram was his first intimation that H. M. Government intended to exclude Mosul from the operations of the proposals, which he later claimed had 'been accepted almost without discussion', (3) and that his strenuous efforts of the next few months were due to his anxiety to counter this new and unexpected turn in policy, as he later implied (4) seems hardly in accordance with the facts available. The Secretary of the Committee, in his account of the meeting of 6 April has stated: 'The meeting decided to make a start by creating five provinces in Mesopotamia proper and an 'Arab' province of Mosul, etc.' (5) and that the Acting

(1) Young, op. cit., p. 286; Wilson, op. cit., p. 122.

(2) Telegram, S/S for India to Political, Baghdad, 9 May 1919.

(3) Wilson, op. cit., p. 122.

(4) Ibid., pp. 119, 123.

(5) Young, op. cit., p. 285.

Civil Commissioner had 'returned armed with authority to proceed on these lines.'⁽¹⁾ It would seem, therefore, that his continued efforts to influence the policy of H. M. Government were due to his desire to make a final attempt to insure the inclusion of Mosul in the new state, his efforts in London having already proved unsuccessful, rather than to any reaction to what he has inferred was a novel policy suddenly put forward by H. M. Government.

The Acting Civil Commissioner had long considered the inclusion of Mosul in 'Iraq as essential. Sir William Marshall's strong action in completing the conquest of the Wilayet after the Armistice, had met with his approval.⁽²⁾ It had rounded out 'Iraq geographically and had pushed back the Turks to a more natural frontier. It had brought under British protection the Christian population, including the Assyrians who, encouraged by the Allies, had taken up arms against the Turks. It had put the Wilayet's economic resources, including its revenue, at the disposal of the rest of 'Iraq, of whose autonomous existence without these potentialities, the Acting Civil Commissioner was inclined to be sceptical. It gave Great Britain control of oil resources, which, if not wholly proven, were enough to disturb the chancelleries of several nations and to produce the oil agreement, 15-17 May, 1916, and the

(1) Ibid., p. 286.

(2) Wilson, op. cit., p. 22.

(1)
Berenger-Long Agreement, 18 April, 1919.

He saw little reason, other than the Sykes-Picot Agreement, why 'Iraq and Great Britain should forego these advantages by any post-war settlement. Inasmuch as Lloyd George had given him to understand that the French claim to Mosul, under the Sykes-Picot Agreement, had been settled, as far as France was concerned, he saw no justification for the non-extension of the proposed new régime to the Wilayet. Any serious attempt to set up an Arab Administration would be followed by violent protests against such discrimination from Arab Nationalities of Baghdad and lower 'Iraq, where little self-government had been authorized save Arab Advisers, Municipal Presidents and local Councils, stripped of any real authority or power. He also foresaw that when Mosul was assimilated, as it would undoubtedly be, any attempt to bring its Arab Government into line with the rest of 'Iraq would be met by storms of opposition, not only from the Arab inhabitants of Mosul but also from those of 'Iraq and of the entire Arab world, intent on demanding their rights in the face of the hostile Western Governments.

Accordingly, when an announcement was made of the impending changes on the occasion of the King's birthday celebration in Baghdad on 29 May, the Acting Civil Commissioner spoke only in generalities. No mention of Mosul was made nor was any hint

(1) Also the San Remo Agreement, 25 April, 1920: Brit. and For. State Papers, CXIII (1923) 350; Misc. No. 11 (1920) Cmd. 675; See also H.P.C.P., vol. VI, pp. 182-3; App. II, Part I.

given as to^{the} future administration which H. M. Government proposed to establish there. (1)

A few days later he renewed his efforts to win H. M. Government to his opinion. In answer to a telegram (2) from H. M. Government, thanking him and his staff for their work, and stating that his recommendations marked an important stage towards the definite form of administration, and that the ultimate Constitution must await the coming of peace, the Acting Civil Commissioner answered in a telegram of 7 June, that it was difficult, if not impossible to proceed with constitutional organization, until the future of Mosul had been settled. He asked that he be permitted to make an announcement regarding Mosul on 21 June.

Lord Curzon, on the receipt of the telegram, which did not officially reach the Foreign Office until 24 June, (3) took the position that the creation of the sanctioned provinces, councils and advisory positions were steps in devolution and in decentralization from the temporary military administration. He

(1) Text; Proclamations, 1914-1919, No. 49, pp. 38-9. The speech was the combination of a draft prepared by Col. E. B. Howell, 7 May, and a draft prepared by the Acting Civil Commissioner, 21 May 1919. In view of this announcement, reprinted in local papers and in official compilations, it is difficult to understand the Acting Civil Commissioner's statement: 'H. M. Government had firmly refused either to make any public announcement themselves in regard to Mesopotamia, in amplification of the Anglo-French Declaration of 8th November, 1918, or permit me to do so.' Wilson, op. cit., p. 237.

(2) S/S for India to Civil Commissioner, Baghdad, 6 June 1919.

(3) Young, op. cit., pp. 287-8.

could not understand, moreover, why the application of such steps should be dependent on the inclusion of Mosul in 'Iraq or on any particular combination of provinces. The original sanction for the Acting Civil Commissioner's proposals had not implied that any combination of provinces or that even the guardianship of H. M. Government would be permanent.

A telegram to this effect was despatched to Baghdad, 5 July, which stated in conclusion: 'Any action which would give rise in Mosul Wilayet or elsewhere to the impression that the future political status of 'Iraq has already been settled, (1) should therefore be most scrupulously avoided.'

Still unsatisfied, the Acting Civil Commissioner, instead of devoting his energies whole-heartedly to the execution of the proposals which he had himself drawn up, entered into further correspondence with H. M. Government, endeavouring to obtain their approval to the inclusion of Mosul in the new régime.

In the meantime, elements of opposition to British control had continued to grow. A letter in January, 1919, from the 'Iraqi officers in Syria, welcoming the Anglo-French Declaration as an indication that no part of 'Iraq was to be under foreign rule, had been followed, in early June, by another letter, supposed to have been written by Amir Faisal himself,

(1) Telegram S/S for India to Civil Commissioner, Baghdad, 5 July, 1919.

and addressed to Sir Gilbert Clayton, Chief Political Officer of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force. The letter suggested that the severity of the British officials in 'Iraq had begun to turn away the regard of the people. There was a general feeling, that if the Anglo-French Declaration signified anything, that the time had come for a change. His own officers felt strongly the need for acceleration of a National Government, and fully understood that the longer the present system existed, the greater would be the difficulty in changing the system later.

Lord Curzon, however, believed that no further action was necessary. He had already, two months before, sanctioned what he believed was the limit of Arab self-government compatible with a military occupation. No reply was sent.

The incident of Naji Beg as-Suwaidi, in addition, confirmed both the Arabs and the British officials of the hostility and bad faith of those on the opposite side. The Acting Civil Commissioner, on his journey from London to Baghdad, had interviewed two of the 'Iraqi officers in Damascus. He had admitted that affairs in 'Iraq were not perfect, and that he was ready to do what he could to meet their views. He had pointed out his difficulty in obtaining good men for positions in 'Iraq. The two officers had then asked him whether he would consent to a representative being chosen from among their number to go to Baghdad and to make suggestions. He had at once agreed.

Accordingly, Naji Beg, a capable and ardent Nationalist,

of an old Baghdad family, ⁽¹⁾ arrived in Baghdad, early in June. He soon found, contrary to the expectations which the interview with the Acting Civil Commissioner had aroused in himself and in his fellow 'Iraqis, ⁽²⁾ that he was to be merely a cog in the British machine and that his advice would not be heeded and was not even wanted. He therefore resigned and returned to Syria.

His resignation confirmed the opinion of the 'Iraqis in Syria that the British authorities in 'Iraq regarded them as active enemies who were trying to undermine British influence in the country, and that no real opportunities would ever be given to the Arabs to manage their own affairs. The Acting Civil Commissioner, in his turn, was convinced that his view of the Arab Nationalists was the correct one: that they were incapable and inconstant and that nothing constructive might be expected from them. When, therefore, the Acting Civil Commissioner's opinion was asked on a draft reply to a Memorandum which the 'Iraqi officers had sent to the Foreign Office demanding the immediate establishment of a National Government,

(1) Naji Beg, now known as Naji Pasha, was a son of Yusuf as-Suwaidi, who, as a prominent Arab Nationalist in Baghdad before the war, had suffered imprisonment at the hands of the Turks, (Events in Turkish 'Iraq, July, 1913), and who took a large part in the post-war Nationalist movement in 'Iraq. Naji Pasha had been a popular Qaimmaqam of Najaf under the Turks (Ibid., April, 1913). He was Acting Civil Governor of Aleppo under the Damascus Government, and has been Prime Minister, Minister of Finance, etc., of 'Iraq.

(2) In an interview with the writer, Naji Pasha stated that he believed that he had been asked to come to Baghdad to assist and to advise in setting up a National Government. On discovering his mistake, he, not unnaturally, resigned.

he gave way to a characteristic outburst, deprecating in no uncertain language, any notice being given by H. M. Government to 'such small fry'.

Nevertheless, some form of reassurance to the officers was deemed necessary both by Lord Curzon and by Mr. Montagu, although Mr. Montagu himself agreed in the main with the Acting Civil Commissioner's arguments. Another reply was drafted, again stating that it would be premature to attempt constitutional experiments pending the decision of the Peace Conference as to the mandatory Power and the nature of the Mandate and that if the officers would visit the country they would find that Provincial and Divisional Councils were already being formed to ensure as much Arab participation as was possible under a military occupation of a country of which the political future was undecided. The appointment of Naji Pasha was mentioned as evidence of the good-will of H. M. Government.

This reply, dated 9 August, sent to Sir Gilbert Clayton for transmission to the 'Iraqi officers, was also repeated to the Acting Civil Commissioner at Baghdad. Whatever its effect may have been at the time, he was later to claim that it came as a 'serious blow, not less serious because it was addressed to Cairo, for communication to a group of prominent 'Iraqi officers in the Sharifian service, and was the outcome of tele-
(1)
graphic correspondence extending over four months.'

(1) The facts available make it difficult to understand how he

(1) Wilson, op. cit., p. 124.

could have regarded the telegram as a result of his own efforts (1) or as the outcome of his own 'telegraphic correspondence extending over four months,' (2) which had been concerned mainly with limiting Arab participation, not extending it, and with the inclusion of Mosul in a British-administered 'Iraq. The reply was primarily addressed to the Arab officers, and had been forwarded to him, as he was well aware, as a matter of official routine to keep him in touch with matters pertaining to his sphere, similarly as the original draft of the middle of July had been forwarded to him for his comment.

It is not easy to understand just how the telegram was a blow or check to the carrying out of the proposals with the execution of which he had been entrusted in April. The excerpt which the Acting Civil Commissioner later extracted from the telegram and presented in a setting of his own fashioning in his apologia, The Clash of Loyalties, (3) might well give the impression he desired to make, if he had not already been informed in the telegram of 5 July that constitutional experiments, other than those already sanctioned, could not be approved. The telegram taken as a whole and in its proper setting can be considered only as a blow to the demand of the 'Iraqi officers for immediate national government. Far from being a rebuff to him, it was an indication that H. M. Government stood behind

(1) 'I eventually elicited the following pronouncement from the Foreign Office (9th August) ...' Ibid.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Wilson, op. cit., p. 124.

him in his attempts to realize the measures he proposed, since H. M. Government invited the officers to visit Mesopotamia and see there the measures of Arab participation being initiated. It should, moreover, have been extremely welcome to the Acting Civil Commissioner in his attempts to combat any scheme of Arab Government as implied in the Anglo-French Declaration, since the telegram assured both parties that no further constitutional changes could be expected in the near future.

So far was the Acting Civil Commissioner from being affected by the 'serious blow', as he has endeavoured to indicate, that he was assuring H. M. Government within the following week that while the constitutional proposals sanctioned in May would require a year to put into operation, they should meet the need of the country for many years to come. (1)

In Syria, the agitation for a National Government at Baghdad continued, eventually overflowing into 'Iraq itself and swelling the local movement there until it broke into a flood of rebellion. The telegram of 9 August from the Foreign Office had not satisfied the 'Iraqi members of Faisal's staff. Naji Pasha's appointment had been no answer to their aspirations; his resignation had been the confirmation of their fears. What they wanted, they declared, was assurance that the existing military administration was not to continue. They found

the attitude of the British officials was more than that of administrators of a foreign population who were incapable, and would always remain incapable, of governing

(1) Young, op. cit., p. 294.

themselves than that to which the Baghdadi officers had become accustomed on the other side, of friendly advisers who started on the assumption that the Arabs were managing their own affairs, and that it was not for them to do more than make friendly suggestions for the improvement of their plans. (1)

The delay in setting up the various measures which had been sanctioned, seemed to point to lack of goodwill on the part of the Acting Civil Commissioner, and no real aid to the achievement of their aspirations could be expected from that quarter. Rumours were about that the mandate system was but annexation in a new form, and that colonization by the British and by the Government of India had not been abandoned. The coming of 550 Englishwomen, wives and relatives of officials, pointed to the establishment of the British for a long stay. The establishment of farms for experimental work in cotton-growing were interpreted as further evidence of India's intentions towards 'Iraq. Confidence was difficult to maintain in the face of so many facts and rumours. The 'Iraqis, like their fellow Arabs, lacked patience to await developments. They desired results, and these immediately and in a tangible form. Cool and far-sighted heads were not lacking, but they were not always in control. The majority believed, as Ja'far Pasha al-'Askari was to remark later to Miss Gertrude Bell, 'My Lady, (2) complete independence is never given, it is always taken.'

(1) Nuri Pasha as-Said to Major Sir H. W. Young, cited Young, op. cit., p. 297. Confirmed by Nuri Pasha to writer, 18 December, 1934.

(2) Bell, Letters, vol. II, p. 569. Lawrence had continually drilled the same principle into the leaders of the Movement in Western Arabia: 'I had preached to Faisal, from our first meeting, that freedom was taken not given.' Lawrence, op. cit., p. 274.

The establishment of the Syrian State, immediately following the Armistice, encouraged the 'Iraqis to look to their own country where direct British administration continued. The growing insistence of the Syrians that posts in the Damascus Government be given to Syrians only made it necessary for the 'Iraqi officers there to seek new outlets and opportunities for their energies. 'Iraqi officers, disguised as Bedouins, had already toured Mesopotamia during July. They had reported that the temper of the country was rising, and that active agitation and continuous propaganda, backed with funds, might win independence from Great Britain if it were refused.

Propagandists began to slip over the desert. Societies, already existing throughout 'Iraq, became the channels of Nationalist agitation. Anti-Government and anti-British sentiment and discontent in the towns, in the religious centres, among the tribes and among the unemployed ex-officials, were stimulated and then skilfully assimilated to the nucleus of Nationalist feeling already existing among those who believed in Arab and in 'Iraqi independence as desirable in themselves. Appeals to religious fervour and fanaticism, to pride of race, to Nationalist feeling, to cupidity, and to all the elemental instincts in each of the component groups which had been drawn into the movement, were working their spell during the days when politicians of the West, like Joshua of old, bade the East stand still until the battle at Paris over the spoils should be ended.

H. M. Government was not entirely unaware that public

opinion in 'Iraq during the last months of 1919 was not the same as had prevailed in the final months of 1918. As early as 23 August, when a police report of 7 July stated that

every Moslem Arab of education in Baghdad was a member of a society, with branches in all the important towns in Mesopotamia, which was described as simply a pan-Arab and anti-foreign organisation formed with a view to the expulsion of the British and the establishment of Arab rule. (1)

Mr. Montagu's suggestion that an announcement should be made that Great Britain would remain in the country, in some form or other, was negatived by the British delegation at Paris, who deprecated such action as injudicious in view of the state of affairs at the Peace Conference.

In October and November, when even more disturbing news was received of the temper of the country, of the attitude of the 'Iraqi officers in Syria, and of the slowness with which the constitutional proposals were being executed, (2) Lord Curzon, in alarm, called a meeting of the Interdepartmental Committee, 10 November. There, all agreed that the first condition for recovery of confidence and for the future settlement of the country was the return of Sir Percy Cox. This would be difficult, however, until the Mandate was announced and he could act with complete authority. (3) The Mandate would

(1) Cited Young, op. cit., p. 294.

(2) After six months, only four of the nine Divisional Councils and none of the Provincial Councils had been formed. On further inquiry, it was discovered that the Acting Civil Commissioner did not contemplate moving in the matter that year. Ibid., p. 298.

(3) Reference to Sir Percy Cox in Tehran, found him unprepared to return without complete authority.

probably not be given before the New Year, but an early announcement of his impending return was desirable. Yet, since he could not be expected to return to 'Iraq from Persia without a short leave at home, it was hardly possible that he could take up his new duties until the autumn.

In his turn, the Acting Civil Commissioner also realized that the temper of the country was altering. He assigned, correctly, much of the change to trans-desert sources, but, considering the authors to be unimportant, he was inclined to under-rate their influence - a mistake which was to contribute to his undoing. Resentful of the Western Arabia policy, he was ready to believe that Sharif Husain's inordinate ambition, that England's golden sovereigns and the Arabs' love of plunder were the sole motives behind the movement in the West. He shut his eyes to the other factors. His contacts with the Middle East had hitherto been primarily in Persia and the Persian Gulf. (1) His first-hand acquaintance with Arabs and his knowledge of their character had, therefore, been limited. He had no personal knowledge of the deep hold which Independence and Nationalism, as abstract ideas, had upon the 'Iraqi participants in the Arab Movement. He could not realize, therefore, that the motives which had helped to sustain them during months of desert warfare would continue to do so, even if their enemies were France or England.

(1) He had spent about ten days in Baghdad, July, 1911:
Events in Turkish 'Iraq, July, 1911.

He did not seem to realize that, however much the digni-
taries of Baghdad might repudiate the officers as men of im-
portance and position, ⁽¹⁾ many of the latter had been the life
of the pre-war Arab Movement and had been instigators of
several disturbances in the Turkish army. ⁽²⁾ Moreover, they
had created positions for themselves by their ability, first
in the Turkish army and then in the Arab Movement, and, in
consequence, had acquired a reputation in popular opinion
equalling their actual importance. In addition, the 'Iraqis
had, in Mosul, Basra, Baghdad and outlying districts, families,
relatives and friends who cast up, at their instigation, waves
of increasing size in the sea of 'Iraqi Nationalism.

Outwardly paying lip-service to Arab participation, his
real opinion, not only of Arabs, but also of those who advo-
cated their wide participation in the government and adminis-
tration of 'Iraq, came out in his note to Miss Bell's report
on Syria. He disagreed with her fundamental assumption that
'an Arab State in Mesopotamia ... within a short period of
years is a possibility, and that the recognition or creation
of a logical scheme of government on these lines, in supersession

(1) Practically every 'Iraqi who served under Faisal has
occupied, upon his return to 'Iraq, positions of responsi-
bility in the 'Iraq Government. Their enemies declare
that this monopolization of high office has been due to
British influence, and to the fact that they have consti-
tuted themselves a ruling clique. Their friends maintain
their position has been due to their ability and experience.

(2) As in Baghdad, from March to July, 1913: Events in
Turkish 'Iraq, March, April and July, 1913.

of those on which we are now working in Mesopotamia, would be practical and popular.' He declared:-

My observations in this country and elsewhere have forced me to the conclusion that this assumption is erroneous, ... and I venture probably for the last time in my present capacity to lay before His Majesty's Government the considerations which have led me to this conclusion ...

Effective British administration is vital to the continued existence of Mesopotamia as an independent State or administrative entity. (1)

Nevertheless, he continued to express his conviction, in telegrams to H. M. Government, (2) that he was working on right lines and that good administration would counteract serious political discontent - a characteristic belief held by Anglo-Indian administrators.

In the end, however, he was forced to the reluctant conclusion that his 'right lines' were not those approved by H. M. Government nor those which would find acceptance in the country itself. The Prime Minister's speech in the House of Commons on 23 February, reaffirming the Anglo-French Declaration; the discouraging attitude of the Foreign Office regarding his proposals for further administrative and financial measures (August and March); the seizing of the bit into their own teeth by the Arab Nationalists in Syria when Faisal was declared King of Syria and 'Abdullah, King of 'Iraq; (3) and the

(1) Cited Young, op. cit., pp. 302-3.

(2) As in telegram received by Foreign Office, 11 February, 1920.

(3) By groups of Syrian and of 'Iraqi Covenantors at Damascus, 11 March, 1920.

rising temper in 'Iraq, convinced him, as he had never been convinced before, that his views, as expressed in the dispatch of 15 November, were unacceptable to H. M. Government, and untenable in the new situation. Sharifian influence was still his bug-bear, however, and, in a last-hour attempt to exclude it, he approached H. M. Government in a series of telegrams, 19, 20, 21 March, proposing measures which he had so long opposed, as for instance 'a Central Legislative Chamber, . Arab members in charge of Departments, with British Secretaries.'⁽¹⁾ In addition, believing that the declaration of the Prime Minister, 'we shall claim the right as Mandatory Power of Mesopotamia, including Mosul,'⁽²⁾ signified the end of his long struggle for the inclusion of Mosul, and that the assignment of the Mandates was not far off, he set about to prepare a constitution which would both satisfy H. M. Government and effectively block any Sharifian manifestos regarding 'Iraq, and at the same time would cast the administrative machinery in a mould of his own devising. He therefore appointed a Committee with Sir Edgar Bonham-Carter as Chairman, to formulate

(1) Telegram No. 3517, Civil Commissioner, Baghdad to S/S for India, 19 March, 1920.

(2) Parl. Debates, H. of C., 5th S., vol. 127 (1920), p. 664. This view was confirmed by a telegram, S/S for India to Civil Commissioner, Baghdad, 26 March, 1920. The latter took advantage of the opportunity to urge that 'including Mosul' should mean 'all the Mosul Wilayet as administered by the Turks': Telegram No. 3883, Civil Commissioner, Baghdad to S/S for India, 28 March, 1920.

(1)
constitutional proposals.

In London, Mr. Montagu, in the light of recent events, such as the Dair uz-Zur incidents, (2) of the Acting High Commissioner's telegrams, and of the imminent announcement of the Mandate of 'Iraq for Great Britain, again suggested that a statement should be made at once of the intention of Great Britain to set up a National Government in an Arab State in 'Iraq.

The terms of the announcement, tentatively discussed by representatives of the Foreign Office and of the India Office 26 March, were left to the Interdepartmental Committee. The Committee, on 13 April, agreed that 'Lord Curzon and Mr. Montagu should formulate an announcement for immediate publication in Mesopotamia.' A telegram to this effect was dispatched to the Acting Civil Commissioner.

Seeing that his plans would go awry if the announcement, preceding his new Constitution, left no opportunity for its application, and feeling that H. M. Government were still pursuing the wrong policy, he begged that the announcement should be deferred until they had seen and considered the answer (3) which he would send on 27 April. The report of the Bonham-Carter Committee would be sent on that date.

(1) The committee, usually known as the Bonham-Carter Committee was also composed of Col. E. B. Howell, Major H. H. F. M. Tyler, Col. F. C. C. Balfour, and Major R. W. Bullard.

(2) See Review C. Admin., 1914-1920, pp. 133-8. Also infra. ^{318 ff} pp. 7

(3) Telegram No. 4848, Civil Commissioner to India Office, 21 April, 1920.

In the meantime, however, Lord Curzon and Mr. Montagu had difficulty in reaching an agreement on the draft announcement. Mr. Montagu, in accordance with the personal belief which impelled him to advocate Indian reforms, and under the influence of Miss Bell and others, wished to announce that a representative National Government would be erected. Lord Curzon, although professing himself converted to the idea of self-governing native states, could not overcome his life-long belief in England's mission to rule nor his mistrust of native ability. He hesitated to go as far as Mr. Montagu. The discussions were still in progress when Lord Curzon left London for the conference at San Remo. They were not resumed until after the Mandate for 'Iraq had been granted to Great Britain.

CHAPTER XI.

CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT FOR 'IRAQ:

PROPOSALS, COUNTERPROPOSALS, ANNOUNCEMENTS: APRIL-JUNE, 1920.

The constitutional proposals of the Bonham-Carter Committee had been intended by the Acting Civil Commissioner to form the second stage in the transition from Civil Administration under Military Occupation to a peace-time Government. The Committee, therefore, had been instructed 'to frame specific proposals... for the establishment of constitutional Government in this country consistent with Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, the Anglo-French Declaration and other public announcements.⁽¹⁾ Its attention was called to the past correspondence between Baghdad and H. M. Government, especially to the India Office telegrams of 28 November, 1918, and 14 February, 1919.⁽²⁾

Although the Committee in preparing its Report apparently did not see the draft Mandate for 'Iraq,⁽³⁾ then in existence,⁽⁴⁾ the proposals of the Committee represent the first embodiment

(1) Telegram No. 5110, Civil Commissioner to S/S for India, 26 April, 1920.

(2) Ibid.

(3) According to Sir E. Bonham-Carter, 28 November, 1935.

(4) Drawn up in the Spring of 1919 by Cmdr. D. G. Hogarth, Miss Gertrude Bell and Col. T. E. Lawrence, with the concurrence of the Acting Civil Commissioner.

(1)

of the principle of the mandatory system in a Constitution, and, as such, foreshadowed the 'Iraq Organic Law or Constitution of 1924. The conditions which the Constitution was, therefore, to fulfil were summarised by the Committee as follows:-

a- Subject to the tutelage of a Mandatory Power, the Government must be an indigenous Government.

b- The form of Government must be adopted by the free will of the inhabitants, subject to such powers as are necessary to enable the Mandatory Power to perform its mandate.

c- The constitution must contain necessary securities to enable the Mandatory Power to perform the trust confided to it of ensuring the well-being and development of the people. This implies the maintenance of peace and order.
(Para. 3) (2)

(1) Several points of similarity exist between the draft mandatory document and the Committee's Proposals. Article I of the draft Mandate stated that the 'Organic Law (or Constitution) shall be framed in consultation with native authorities.' This principle formed the second of the three conditions which the Committee believed the Constitution should fulfil, ~~Infra, xxx~~

Article I also stipulated 'Provisions designed to facilitate the progressive development of Mesopotamia as an independent state.' Similar provisos in the Committee's Report were : a- Initiation of the policy of employing natives of the country in preference to any other persons (Para. 4, Sec. 7). b- The composition of the Council should be considered as tentative only (Para. 15, Sec. 5). c- The Educational and Political progress of the country should be periodically re-examined (Para. 19).

Article III reserved foreign relations to the mandatory Power. The proviso is reproduced in Para. II of the Report.

(2) Extracts and summaries here are from the official text in Report of the Baghdad Committee on Constitution for 'Iraq (Secret), dated Baghdad, 26 April, 1920; (India Office No. B. 343; Foreign Office No. E. 6011), made available by the Foreign Office for the first time to the writer.

The complete fulfilment of the second of these conditions: the form of the new government to be adopted by the free will of the inhabitants, was deemed to be impossible until the Mandate had been granted and until more settled conditions had been obtained when a consultation of public opinion could take place. The latter, the Committee suggested, might be accomplished by inviting the Legislative Assembly, which it was proposed to set up, to voice its opinion on the Constitution, at not later than the Assembly's third session.⁽¹⁾ (Para. 9).

Until that time the country was to be administered on the basis of the Constitution which they proposed in the full knowledge that it was provisional. In the meantime, the Committee claimed for its proposals the sanction of such native authority as existed, since the proposals had been formulated after consultation with 'local notables of weight and standing.'⁽²⁾ In lieu of a more extensive expression of 'free will' the Committee may have well believed that such opinion formed an adequate background for their provisional Constitution.

The Report indicated, in addition, that the Committee was

(1) Review C. Admin., 1914-1920 is palpably in error when it states: 'Within a period limited to two years, the Legislative Assembly was to draw up an Organic Law for the Permanent settlement of the country' (p. 141). No such proviso was present in the proposals, nor was the duration of the sessions, referred to above, indicated in the Report. The failure to state the length of the sessions and to name a definite period in which the permanent constitution was to be considered drew down severe criticism, notably from Mr. H. R. C. Dobbs, Infra, pp. 266 ff.

(2) Telegram No. 5110, Civil Commissioner, Baghdad, to S/S for India, 26 April, 1920.

not unaware of the grave difficulties inherent in the conditions of the country itself: the religious divisions, the antagonisms between townsmen and tribesmen, the deplorable lack of education and of political morality, and the dearth of capable and honest indigenous administrative personnel (Para 4). So strongly did the Committee feel that the gulf between the townsmen and tribesmen was, for the present, unbridgeable that it stated:

We desire to place on record definitely that in the tribal area, for many years to come, direct control by the British Officers in charge of Divisions is a sine qua non, since no one else commands the confidence of the people to a degree which will ensure obedience to the orders of the Government without the presence and not infrequent use of armed force. (Para. 4, Sec. 7).

With these observations and reservations, the Committee turned to the main problem: the devising of governmental machinery which might be called indigenous but which would ensure, as much as possible, the initiative and direction and the definite ultimate control remaining in British hands. It was not an unfamiliar problem to British administrators. It had been practised in various Indian Native States and in Egypt with varying degrees of success. Familiarity with the general problem, however, did not make the specific task in 'Iraq any the less difficult.

If insufficient power and responsibility were placed in the hands of the Arabs or if the machinery was too transparently dependent on British officials, there would be no satisfaction of Arab aspirations, and further agitation would continue. On the other hand, if sufficient means were not retained to ensure the

acceptance of British direction in matters which the mandatory Power considered essential, not only for the 'well-being and development of the people' but also for the maintenance of its own position in the dual role of a Mandatory and an Imperial Power, the mandatory principle would be defeated and the British position would be rendered intolerable. Its position in the country would then rest on the force of arms alone, an undesirable alternative, the ultimate necessity of which, however, had been recognized.⁽¹⁾ The expense of a large army would be objectionable to British taxpayers and its enforced use would proclaim the failure of Great Britain to govern by civil measures alone.

In the establishment of a Council of State under British control, fashioned much on the pattern of the Council employed in Egypt before the war, the Committee sought the solution of the problem. The Council was to be, ostensibly, the principal executive authority and also the Second Chamber to a representative Legislature (Para. 15, Secs. 1 and 8). In its name were to be promulgated 'state executive decisions, and executive decisions of the various departments issued to the public' (Para. 15, Sec. 8). It was to legislate and to impose taxes, normally with the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly (Para. 18, Sec. 2a). In cases of conflict or of necessity, however, the Council was to have power to legislate without the Assembly's concurrence (Para. 18, Sec. 2b). To the Council was also reserved the annual budget,

(1) Bell, Letters, vol. II, p. 578: 'No Government in this country, whether ours or an Arab administration, can carry on without force behind it.'

on which advice only might be given by the Assembly (Para. 18, Sec. 6). Temporary Laws might also be issued, but these had to be submitted to the following session of the Assembly, as under the Ottoman Constitution (Para. 18, Sec. 3).

The President of the Council, who was not necessarily to have departmental duties, was to be an Arab. He was to be of good social status and prestige. (Para. 15, Sec. 3). Associated with him were to be 11 Council members. The Committee believed that 'the Constitution should not lay down how many members should be Arab and how many should be English', but it contemplated that initially a majority should be English ⁽¹⁾ (Para. 15, Sec. 5).

British Officials were stipulated as the Chief Executive Officials of the Departments, with the exception of that of Auqaf. These officials under the title of Secretaries of Departments were to be the British members of the Council (Para. 15, Sec. 9). The Arab members of the Council were to be Advisers to the Departments. Each Adviser was 'to be consulted by the Secretary

(1) The composition tentatively proposed included six British members with votes and five Arab members with votes divided among the various departments as follows:-

	<u>English.</u>	<u>Arab.</u>
President	-	1
Department of Interior	1	1
Department of Justice	1	1
Revenue (including lands)	1	1
Education	1	1
Finance	1	-
Public Works and Health	1	-
Auqaf	-	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	6	6

on all matters of importance and to have access to all departmental papers; and to have the right to refer to the Council of State any difference of opinion between themselves and the Secretaries' (Para. 15, Sec. 9). All departments, except purely technical departments, such as Public Works, having no representatives on the Council were, nevertheless, to have Arab Advisers and Assistants (Para. 15, Sec. 9).

The functions delegated to the Council appeared to give it extensive powers and to make it what the Committee had claimed for it, the Chief Executive Authority of the State. Nevertheless, final effective authority remained in British hands through the power of the High Commissioner to appoint and remove, at his pleasure, members of the Council ⁽¹⁾ (Para. 15, Sec. 2), and through his power to overrule the decisions of a majority of the Council. His decision was 'to be deemed for all purposes the decision of the Council' (Para. 15, Sec. 7). Control was also effected, more indirectly, by the predominance of British members on the Council, the Arab President being excluded from voting save in equality of votes (Para. 15, Sec. 6).

The arrangements whereby British Officials became titular as well as actual heads of departments, with Arab Advisers, and whereby the former composed a majority of the Council, were not entirely in accordance with the views of the Chairman, Sir Edgar Bonham-Carter, as expressed earlier in his Memorandum on the Place of the Arab in Administration of 5 February, 1919, and in his Tentative Draft of Arab Institutions, drawn up in the spring

(1) In practise this would probably apply to Arab members only.

(1)
of the same year. The arrangements suggested in the Report, furthermore, were not in accordance with those of the Egyptian pre-war Council on which the proposed Council had been profess- edly modelled.

No doubt Sir Edgar allowed his own views to be overruled in deference to those of his colleagues or of the Acting Civil Commissioner. It was perhaps unfortunate that he did so, for it was precisely these proposed arrangements for the Council to which H. M. Government took the greatest exception and which caused the eventual rejection of the Report as a whole.

The Council of State, under British direction and control, had been designed as the chief instrument of government. The Committee hoped, however, that the elective Legislative Assembly, for which the Body provided in the Egyptian Organic Law of 1913 was taken as a model, would give the 'Iraqis the greatest impression that they were participating in the Government.

(1) But cf. views in his letter to the Acting Civil Commissioner, 11 March, 1919, cited supra, p. 227. For text of draft see App. V.

(2) The Committee used both 'Council' and 'Assembly' in reference to this legislative body. 'Assembly' is employed more frequently and in Paragraph headings, as in Para. 17, Secs. 1, 2, 3, 5, 7; Para. 18, Secs. 2b, 3, 5, 6, 'Council' is used in Para. 17, Secs. 2, 4, and Para. 18, Sec. 2a. 'Assembly' will be used here throughout in reference to this body.

(3) Organic Law of Egypt, 21 July, 1913, Parts II, III, IV. Text: Acc'ts and Papers, 1913 (Cd. 6878) LXXXI, 307.

In the Assembly all classes were to be included, as follows:

- (a) Elected members for the towns and country districts approximately proportionate to their population on the basis of one to 50,000 inhabitants;
- (b) elected members representing the Jewish and Christian Communities;
- (c) Arab members of the Council of State who, as we have already advised, should be ex-officio members. (Para. 17, Sec. 2).

In addition to these members, estimated at 50, the Committee proposed that the British heads of Departments should be allowed to attend the Legislature, to speak and to introduce measures, but not to vote (Para. 15, Sec. 10, Para. 17, Sec. 5). A British Joint-Secretary for the Assembly, to assist in matters of procedure was also stipulated (Para. 17, Sec. 6).

For the election of the members of the Assembly, alternative methods were suggested. By the first method, members for the larger towns were to be elected by the Municipal Councils; for Divisions, by the Divisional Councils. In areas predominantly tribal, tribal subsections were to elect their headmen, who in turn would elect the shaikh of the tribe, subject to confirmation by the authorities. By the second method, the municipal and divisional members were to be elected directly by the municipal and divisional voters, respectively. Tribal representatives were to be elected much the same as under the first method (Appendix C).

Application of the elective principle to the Assembly removed, at least theoretically, one means of control which had

been applied to the Council of State. The impotence of the Assembly as a legislative body, however, stripped it of any real power to oppose the will of the Council of State itself or of the mandatory Power as expressed through the Council of State. Its greatest influence over the Government would be its power to ask questions in writing (Para. 18, Sec. 8) and in its reflection of public opinion of the country. As such an agency it could indirectly, especially when public opinion was too strong to be denied, influence the Government, both through its power of passing resolutions on internal affairs ⁽¹⁾ (Para. 18, Sec. 5) and its refusal to co-operate with the Government.

For all posts, other than those directly controlling the administration, such as executive heads of Departments, who were to be British, the Committee advised that where an 'Iraqi could be found, capable of filling a post, he should be employed in preference to any other person. They stated that 'on this canon, it would be possible to employ more natives than hithertofore and in higher posts' (Para. 4, Sec. 7).

In conclusion the Committee expressed its opinion that periodic enquiries, perhaps every seven years, should be made into the state of the country and into the desirability of extending or restricting self-government (Para. 19).

Another period of stalemate in setting up constitutional government was to follow the submission of this Report on

(1) On these resolutions the Council was not obliged to take action, other than to give reasons for not accepting them.

(1)
26 April. Two days before its reception in London, the principal Allied Powers, meeting at San Remo, 24 and 25 April, had formally assigned the Mandates for 'Iraq and Palestine to Great Britain and that for Syria to France. (2)

No official announcement of the action at San Remo, for publication in 'Iraq, was forthcoming, however, until after 3 May, when Lord Curzon and Mr. Montagu composed their differences concerning the form of the statement of policy sanctioned 13 April, which, they believed, should accompany the announcement that Great Britain had accepted the Mandate for 'Iraq.

In the meantime, the Acting Civil Commissioner, who had received the news through Reuter's, had withheld permission to publish it until 3 May. It was then issued, together with a communiqué of his own, couched in general terms, the only reference to the future government being: 'The establishment of Civil Administration will give an ever widening field to native energies.' (3)

Two days later, on 5 May, the Acting Civil Commissioner received the official announcement from H. M. Government with instructions that it was to be published immediately. The first part of the statement referred in vague generalities to the action of the Powers at San Remo. It called attention to the previous declarations of H. M. Government's 'firm intention

(1) Summarized in Telegram Nos. 5111, 5112, 5113, Civil Commissioner, Baghdad, to S/S for India, 26 April, 1920.

(2) The Times, 26 April, 1920.

(3) Baghdad Times, 3 May, 1920; also Wilson, op. cit., pp. 248-9.

to promote the creation of a form of civil administration based upon representative indigenous institutions which would prepare the way for the creation of an independent Arab State of 'Iraq' and to the important steps which had already been taken in this direction. (1)

In the second part it stated:

The time has now arrived for 'Iraq to reap the fruits of this course, and for a further forward step to be taken in the development of national life of the people. His Majesty's Government have accordingly directed the Civil Commissioner to take immediate measures in consultation with the Councils and with approval of local opinion in all parts of the country to frame definite proposals with above named object. (2)

In conclusion, the Acting Civil Commissioner was notified that the Bonham-Carter proposals were under consideration.

The proposed announcement met with immediate and open opposition from the Acting Civil Commissioner. The consultation of opinion, he believed, would produce no proposals which could guide H. M. Government (3) and would, in fact, be fraught with danger. It would mean delay when speedy action was essential. The issue in any such consultation would become again, as in

(1) Telegram, S/S for India to Civil Commissioner, Baghdad, 4 May, 1920.

(2) Ibid.

(3) H. M. Government, in reality, had little expectation that proposals from the inhabitants of 'Iraq would be of value, even if the Bonham-Carter proposals were submitted to the Councils as suggested. ~~xxx~~ The consultation had been sanctioned in order to avoid the appearance of imposing a constitution on the people, and to comply with the conditions of the Mandate. See also Young, op. cit., p. 309.

(2) Telegram, Civil Commissioner, Baghdad, 8 May 1920.

1918-19, that of Arab independence versus British control. He was well aware that since the time he had suggested and carried out the earlier plebiscite, the temper of the country had changed and that no amount of official control or organization, such as had been employed on that occasion, could produce declarations for British control which would ring true, although many substantial elements of the population were still pro-British. He voiced his opposition in a strongly worded reply, 8 May, stating in part:

It is with great regret that I find myself compelled to ask His Majesty's Government to reconsider this portion of their announcement.

I submit that it is for H. M. G. as Mandatory Power to prescribe what form of Government shall be set up in the immediate future.(1) To refer the question afresh to Divisional Councils and to 'local opinion' can have but one result. The extremists who following the example of their colleagues in Syria are demanding absolute independence for 'Iraq with or without 'Abdullah will by threats and by appeals during the coming month of Ramadhan to religious fanaticism win over moderate men who have hitherto looked to Government for a scheme offering a reasonable chance of success and which they can support.(2)

It was not merely the danger of excitement of public opinion which aroused his opposition. The announcement, to him, seemed to mean once again, the ruin of his plans and desires for the future of 'Iraq. He had already abandoned, partly from necessity and partly from personal motives, his first constitutional proposals, ostensibly based on 'Iraqi opinion obtained in the plebiscite of 1918-1919, but in reality carefully designed to preserve the

(1) But cf. his views, of three weeks later, on the imperative necessity of consulting local opinion, cited infra, pp. 271-2.

(2) Telegram, Civil Commissioner, Baghdad, to S/S for India, 8 May 1920.

pattern of the Anglo-Indian administration which he had so diligently created. His original attitude to Arab participation in the administration had been submerged in order to win the sympathetic attention of H. M. Government and of the moderates among the 'Iraqis for his second attempt at drafting a Constitution which incorporated his views on the future administration of 'Iraq.

The announcement, however, implied that H. M. Government without reference or consideration to the Bonham-Carter proposals, with which he was in full agreement, had settled on a policy which, if published, would sweep away all his efforts to check Arab Nationalism and to maintain his administrative machinery, would destroy what he believed to be the immediate means to consolidate the moderate party behind British policy and would give the final victory to the Western Arabia party.

In addition, therefore, to his request that H. M. Government reconsider their announcement, he pressed for permission to announce as an alternative, the Bonham-Carter proposals. He stated:

If during the next seven days I can be authorised to announce that H. M. G. provisionally approve of the Constitutional proposals made by me and have instructed me to communicate them to leading inhabitants with a view to giving effect to them in the autumn, there are grounds for hoping that we shall be able to count on the support of a strong block of moderate opinion. Once this is done we shall be in a position to deal with extremists.

An announcement that Sir Percy Cox will shortly return as High Commissioner would also be of great value in this connection.

I beg for orders on these lines at the earliest

(1)

full possible date.

In conclusion, in an adroit attempt to obtain the support of the military authorities and of the War Office to which they were responsible for maintenance of order, he submitted:

As a staff officer of the G.O.C.-in-Chief I have a responsibility towards him also in that I could not properly without his approval take action which would imperil his forces and the numerous women and children and lengthy L. of C. in his charge. Further consultation with local opinion at this juncture will in my opinion have this result.

Additional opinion obtained from the Bonham-Carter Committee was also dispatched, on the same day, as confirmation of his viewpoint. The Committee, according to his telegram, had put forward views approximating his own and had called attention to its Report as supporting its opinions. It had also stated:

The Divisional Councils are constituted for local and not national purposes and have no authority to give an opinion on a national question: serious difficulties would be caused if different Councils expressed opposite opinions. Committee draw attention to the fact that few members of Divisional Councils have any political knowledge or experience and to the possibility of a dangerous outbreak of extreme nationalism and religious fanaticism, and mention as an example of the state of education in the country that four out of six of the tribal members on the 'Amara Divisional Council cannot read or write.(2)

In loyally supporting the Acting Civil Commissioner by thus repudiating the authority of the Councils, the Committee seemed to forget, however, that the initiation and development of the Councils had been originally suggested 'to secure the

(1) Ibid.

(2) Telegram, Civil Commissioner, Baghdad, to S/S for India, 8 May, 1920.

full benefit of co-operation by tribal leaders and large land-owners in the administration of these territories,⁽¹⁾ and in the expectation that 'the constitution of a future advisory of Legislative Assembly for the whole of Mesopotamia, when the time is ripe, will be much facilitated by the development of these bodies and of the Municipal Councils.'⁽²⁾ The Councils had been sanctioned by H. M. Government, in April, 1919, with that end in view: a preliminary step towards an indigenous government. The Committee apparently overlooked the fact that the declaration by the Hilla Divisional Councils had already been used as evidence of the country's desire for British control of the national destiny.⁽³⁾

Furthermore, the shaikhs of the 'Amara Council, repudiated in the Committee's statement, were the very shaikhs whose strong pro-British declarations in 1918 had been put forward then as indicating 'Iraqi public opinion on the three questions, national in scope, which had been placed before them.'⁽⁴⁾

The Acting Civil Commissioner's telegrams, including one

(1) Telegram No. 9696, Political, Baghdad to S/S for India, 10 November, 1918.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Wilson, op. cit., p. 212; so also was regarded the later decision of the Basra Council, 22 June, 1920; Admin. Report, Basra Division, 1920, pp. 2-3; Wilson, op. cit., p. 265.

(4) Self-Determination, Sec. 3, Amara Declaration, p. 8; Bell, Memo on Self-Determination in Mesopotamia; Wilson, op. cit., p. 112.

received from him on 15 May, and the Bonham-Carter Committee Report itself, were considered by the Interdepartmental Committee on 17 May. In face of the strong objections made by the Acting Civil Commissioner and by the Baghdad Committee, the London Committee agreed that the second part of the announcement should be withheld.

The Committee was not so ready to recommend the Bonham-Carter proposals, which had been undergoing a close scrutiny in both the India Office and the Foreign Office, for immediate announcement in Baghdad as Great Britain's policy for constitutional Government in 'Iraq, as the Acting Civil Commissioner urged.

The proposals, to the Interdepartmental Committee, seemed to set up a government based on an 'Anglo-Indian' ideal, whereas the Committee believed in something more approaching an 'Indian State' ideal. Lord Curzon pointed out that the 'proposed constitution was not an Arab Government inspired and helped by British advice, but a British Government infused with Arab elements to a gradually increasing extent.' Mr. Montagu went further and suggested that the Mandate should be exercised in the form of a treaty with the people of the country rather than in accordance with a mandate document.⁽¹⁾

The criticisms were not from Whitehall officials who had no personal knowledge of the country, its people or its administrative difficulties. Major H. W. Young, Secretary to the Interdepartmental Committee, who had served both in Mesopotamia and in

(1) Major H. W. Young maintains that he himself had already proposed the policy a month and a half earlier: Op. cit., p. 313.

Western Arabia, believed that the necessary control in 'Iraq could be secured to Great Britain as effectively through British advice and protection to the new state as by the retention of direct executive control, as contemplated by the Bonham-Carter Committee. (1)

Mr. H. R. C. Dobbs, who, as Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, had examined the Report on behalf of the India Office, made the most detailed critical examination. (2) He believed that no great objection would be found to the general premises of the first fourteen paragraphs of the Report (Sec. 1). He maintained, however, that it would be

hardly advisable to make the President or Members of the Council removable at the pleasure of the High Commissioner for that would make the Council too obviously the High Commissioner's passive instrument. If removable, they should be removable by the British Secretary of State. In any case a period should be fixed for holding of posts (Sec. 2).

He went on to point out that

If a British Secretary has technically all the executive power and the Arab member is a mere adviser, the position of the Arab member will be so weak as to deceive no one. It would seem greatly preferable to make the Arab members technically responsible and to give the British Secretary the right to refer to the High Commissioner any important differences of opinion between themselves and their members. (Section 2).

He declared, moreover, that the relation of the High Commissioner to the Council had been given only general definition. Only his power of overruling decisions and his power of appointment

(1) Ibid., pp. 312-313.

(2) Memorandum by H. R. Dobbs, C.S.I., Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, on Proposals of Bonham-Carter Committee, (India Office, B. 342).

and dismissal bound him to the Council. No provisions were made for periodical reports from it to the High Commissioner.

Mr. Dobbs' viewpoint as an Indian administrator and as an official of the Government of India was indicated in his criticism of the failure of the Committee to provide for the representation of Indians on the Council and in the Legislative Assembly (Secs. 2 and 4).⁽¹⁾ Room for criticism was also found in the failure to provide for specific representation of Jews and Christians on the Council (Sec. 2) and of large commercial firms trading within the country, in the Assembly (Sec. 4); for adequate arrangements for appointment and dismissal of administrative officials (Sec. 2) and a definite statement regarding the length of the sessions of the Legislative Assembly (Sec. 1). In addition, Mr. Dobbs objected to the methods of electing tribal representatives, as impairing the power and prestige of the shaikhs, who, he believed, should be given full support and backing. He approved of the reservation of tribal areas from the operation of the new Government and maintained further that no law passed by the Government should apply to such districts without a specific statement to that effect at the time of its passage (General Section (2)).

In view of the above criticisms and of others made during the discussion of the Report, it seemed clear to the Interdepartmental Committee that the proposals were unsuitable; they did

(1) Mr. Dobbs stated in Section 2: 'In view of the very large part which Indian officials and personnel must, for a long time to come, play in Mesopotamia, it would seem advisable to have one Indian Member of Council or at least one Indian Secretary.'

not grant the degree of self-government to 'Iraq which H. M. Government was now ready to give and they were also inadequate in other respects. It was agreed that permission to announce them immediately in Baghdad should be withheld.

The decisions of the Interdepartmental Committee were conveyed to the Acting Civil Commissioner on 20 May in the following terms:

H. M. Government greatly appreciates the care and ability expended by Bonham-Carter's Committee in preparation of scheme. Their recommendation will receive fullest and most attentive consideration. Framing of the mandate for 'Iraq is now engaging the active attention of H. M. Government and as you have realised, orders on your proposal, which may have to take a different shape, cannot be passed until a decision has been reached on this point. Publication of the announcement conveyed in my telegram of 4th May may be postponed in view of your proclamation of May 3rd. Meanwhile no further action should be taken on announcement made. I hope to be able to send you fuller instructions shortly. (1)

The reply of the Interdepartmental Committee filled the Acting Civil Commissioner with apprehension. The reference to 'framing the mandate' seemed to presage new and disheartening delays at a time when action was imperative. The failure to approve of the Bonham-Carter Report left him little with which to combat the growing unrest in 'Iraq. His telegrams to H. M. Government, were, however, not without results. At the second of the two meetings of the Interdepartmental Committee to re-examine the draft Mandate in the light of recent developments, Mr. Montagu's suggestion of the establishment of a provisional Government with Sir Percy Cox in charge, on the lines proposed

(1) Telegram, S/S for India to Civil Commissioner, Baghdad, 20 May, 1920.

by the Bonham-Carter Committee but with increased Arab participation, was approved. The Interdepartmental Committee agreed that Mr. Montagu should draft the telegram along these lines.

Events had now begun to move more swiftly towards an announcement of British intentions regarding 'Iraq. They were not swift enough, however, to prevent open conflict between the inhabitants of 'Iraq and the forces of Great Britain.

Excitement had been running high in Baghdad following the announcement of the Mandate. Meetings organized by the Nationalists had been held in the mosques where orators in the name of independence, race and religion had urged their listeners to rise against the British. Clashes between Nationalists and the authorities had already taken place, and it had been necessary to patrol the streets with armoured cars. The group of 15 Baghdad Nationalists, known locally as the Mandubin or Delegates, had approached the Acting Civil Commissioner asking for an opportunity to lay their proposals before him for transmission to H. M. Government. He had tried to avoid giving the interview. He did not wish to give any opportunity for a demonstration and he felt that he had nothing definite with which to counter their demands. He held, moreover, that the Mandubin were unrepresentative, referring to them in his dispatches as self-elected Delegates, although they had received the approval of a public meeting held in one of the principal mosques. Realizing, however, that they had a large popular following and that they could sway great masses of public opinion, he finally

gave them an appointment for the morning of 2 June, at the Turkish Sarai or Government headquarters. He took the precaution, however, of inviting by name about 40 other dignitaries of all religions, supposed to be favourably disposed to the British régime. To cope with possible demonstrations or disorder among the expected crowds, special police arrangements were made, troops were held in readiness at the barracks and R.I.M.S. Comet with steam up and trained guns was stationed on the Tigris opposite the Sarai.

At the meeting, the Acting Civil Commissioner explained the desire of H. M. Government to give a National Government and the difficulties which had been encountered. He declared that they were then about to make an announcement along the lines proposed in the Bonham-Carter Report of which he gave an outline. He reminded his hearers that nothing was to be gained by hasty action, and that with the best will in the world an indigenous National Government could not be set up at once. He warned them that any attempts at disorder or violence would be met with force and that the military authorities would be called in if necessary. (1)

The Delegates professed themselves unsatisfied with the proposals and presented their own petition asking for the immediate formation of a National Convention for 'Iraq, elected according to Turkish Electoral Law. The Convention would be empowered to draw up proposals for a National Government as promised in the Anglo-French Declaration. With these demands a number of the invited notables, contrary to the Acting Civil

(1) For text of speech: Wilson, op. cit., pp. 255-7.

Commissioner's expectations, associated themselves and declared that 'Iraqi independence was the concern of the entire Arab people.

The meeting itself, although feeling ran high, had been conducted with dignity. As those attending began to disperse, however, the immense crowd which filled the Court of the Sarai hissed and shouted abuse at the British officials. The Mandubin were cheered and several of the leaders were carried out on the shoulders of the crowd. No clashes occurred, however, between the crowds and the police.

In forwarding the petition and an account of the meeting, the Acting Civil Commissioner threw the entire blame for the 'movement reaching its present uncompromising form, backed as it is by skilfully fomented public excitement' on the failure of H. M. Government to allow him to make the announcement of the Bonham-Carter proposals before the beginning of Ramadhan as he had requested on 8 May.

He then declared:

It is probable that in the present temper a proposal that the country should submit even for a limited period to a provisional Constitution as to which they had not been consulted would be met on the part of the Nationalists by a Declaration of Independence. Such proposals would be represented as contrary to the Anglo-French Declaration, the real meaning of which is little understood and widely misrepresented, and would harden public opinion against us, while if the present temper continues the proposed Legislative Assembly would on being summoned convert itself (1) into a Constituent Assembly though not so authorized.

He submitted that the difficulty could be countered only

(1) Telegram, Civil Commissioner, Baghdad, to S/S for India, 2 June, 1920.

by calling a Constituent Assembly and by inviting Sir Percy Cox to spend a few days in Baghdad, on his way to England from Tehran: ^{that} and/his visit and the anticipation of his return would 'do much to restore public confidence, which has been shaken.'

(1)

(2)

Five days later, on 7 June, authority was sent from London to make an immediate announcement of Sir Percy Cox's return and of the general application of the Bonham-Carter Proposals, which, subject to reservations on points of details, were 'accepted in principle as furnishing a generally suitable basis on which to construct provisional institutions such as are postulated by Mandate.'

(3)

Permission to call a Constituent Assembly was withheld.

In his acknowledgment of the telegram, the Acting Civil Commissioner stated that the authorized announcement would be made at the end of Ramadhan, or about 18 June.

(4)

(1) Ibid.

(2) Telegram, S/S for India to Civil Commissioner, Baghdad, 7 June, 1920.

(3) It is somewhat surprising that the Secretary of State for India should have used the words 'subject to reservation on points of detail' when the differences of opinion between Baghdad and London were fundamental, as, for instance, in the matter of a Council of State. The Baghdad authorities advocated a predominantly British Council; the India Office, a predominantly Arab Council and the Foreign Office a wholly Arab Council. Mr. Montagu, however, may have believed he was acting in the spirit of the decision of the Interdepartmental Committee, on 1 June, and that he was but recognizing the fait accompli of 2 June, when the Acting Civil Commissioner outlined the proposals in Baghdad. In any case they were not to be applied until Sir Percy Cox had returned to Baghdad as High Commissioner.

(4) Telegram, Civil Commissioner, Baghdad, to S/S for India, 9 June, 1920.

Although he had just achieved his immediate aim: a public announcement of Great Britain's intentions, the Acting Civil Commissioner's long suppressed misgivings as to the direction in which the policy of H. M. Government was tending, could no longer be held back. The sanction of the Bonham-Carter proposals, with which he had identified himself, had come too late to be of value. He could not avoid seeing how his strenuous efforts of the past two years to determine policy in 'Iraq had failed. Step by step, he had been forced out of every position from which he had attempted, on the one hand, to mould 'Iraq along the lines of an Indian province, administered and staffed in the best Anglo-Indian traditions, and, on the other, to defeat the influence of Arab Nationalists, the Western Arabia party and other doctrinaires. In his opinion, H. M. Government, in weakly giving way to the policy advocated by such groups and in embracing a literal application of the League of Nation's mandatory system, had set out on a perilous path, illumined only by the broken lights of sentimentalism.

He gave vent to these views in his telegram of 10 June, in which he also pointed out that the failure of Great Britain to maintain adequate troops and administrative officers in 'Iraq had contributed to the growth of the opposition prevailing in the country. ⁽¹⁾ He declared in conclusion:

We cannot maintain our position as mandatory by a policy

(1) But cf., his view expressed later: 'A substantial reduction in the military forces in Mesopotamia during 1919 would have greatly facilitated the pacification of the country.' Wilson op. cit., p. 44.

of conciliation of extremists. Having set our hand to the task of regenerating the internal Government, we must be prepared to furnish alike men and money and to maintain continuity of control for years to come. We must be prepared, regardless of the League of Nations, to go very slowly with constitutional or democratic institutions, the application of which to Eastern countries has been attempted of late years with such a little degree of success. If His Majesty's Government regard such a policy as impracticable or beyond our strength (as well they may) I submit that they would do better to face the alternative, formidable and, from the local point of view, terrible as it is, and evacuate Mesopotamia.(1)

His telegram brought to an end, in effect, the long struggle between H. M. Government and the Acting Civil Commissioner over policy for 'Iraq. The alternatives he had proposed, control without reference to the League of Nations or immediate evacuation, were rejected as unacceptable by the Interdepartmental Committee, on 16 June. Lord Curzon believed that the middle course of maintaining Great Britain's position through the goodwill of the people could be maintained. He had sympathy and admiration for the Acting Civil Commissioner, personally, but his latest telegram, together with previous indications of his attitude, proclaimed him as unable to bring himself to carry out the policy which H. M. Government, through the Interdepartmental Committee, had consistently advocated. Lord Curzon's views found support in the Committee, and following a Cabinet decision on the subject, 17 June, the text of an announcement to replace that sent on 7 June, and a request for Sir Percy Cox to come to England at once, were telegraphed to Baghdad.

(1) Telegram, Civil Commissioner, Baghdad, to S/S for India, 10 June, 1920.

The text of the announcement made in Baghdad on 20 June, is as follows:-

His Majesty's Government, having been entrusted with the Mandate for Mesopotamia, anticipate that the Mandate will constitute Mesopotamia an Independent State under guarantee of the League of Nations and subject to the Mandate of Great Britain, that it will lay on them the responsibility for the maintenance of internal peace and external security, and will require them to formulate an organic law to be framed in consultation with the people of Mesopotamia and with due regard to the rights, wishes and interests of all the communities of the country. The Mandate will contain provisions to facilitate the development of Mesopotamia as a self-governing state until such time as it can stand by itself, when the Mandate will come to an end.

The inception of this task H. M. Government have decided to entrust to Sir P. Cox, who will accordingly return to Baghdad in the autumn, and will resume his position, on the termination of the existing Military Administration, as Chief British Representative in Mesopotamia.

Sir P. Cox will be authorised to call into being, as provisional bodies, a Council of State under an Arab President and a General Elective Assembly, representative of and freely elected by the population of Mesopotamia. And it will be his duty to prepare in consultation with the General Elective Assembly, the permanent organic law.(1)

It was the first straightforward public announcement of a concrete and specific policy which H. M. Government had made in 'Iraq since the Armistice, a year and eight months before. Even so, another five months were to elapse before the policy could be put into effect. In the interval, the temper of Nationalism in 'Iraq was to rise to the point of armed rebellion which was to shake the country to its foundations.

(1) Compilation of Proclamations, Notices, Etc... Relating to ... Mesopotamia, 1st September, 1919 to 30 September, 1920, (Baghdad, 1920) (Hereafter Proclamations, 1919-1920) Announcement No. 49, dated 17 June, 1920.

CHAPTER XII.

ARAB NATIONALISM IN 'IRAQ BEFORE 1914.

Nationalism as an organized movement in the name of the Arab peoples first arose in the Lebanon and in Syria. In Beirut, Damascus, Aleppo and Jaffa, the imaginative and volatile Syrians, influenced primarily by French education and political thought, and, to a lesser extent, by the American theory of government by 'consent of the governed', inculcated by American missionary schools, ⁽¹⁾ began to work for Arab separation from the Ottoman Empire. The movement gathered converts throughout the Arabic-speaking world. In Arabia, the revolt of Imam Mahmud Yahia of Yemen, of Saiyid Idriss of Assir in 1906, and the defeat of Turkey's ally, Amir ibn Rashid of the Shammar by Ibn Sa'ud in the same year, were taken as indicating the Arabs' desire for independence. The revolt at Port Said of 400 Syrian troops on their way to Yemen was also taken as evidence of the unity of the Arabs. In Paris, a group of Syrians, including Najib Azuri who had been forced to leave Turkey in 1904 because of his pro-Arab activities, agitated for Arab independence through the French press and through Arab committees in France and Egypt. Through the Ligue de la Patrie Arabe, founded in 1904 by Najib Azuri and Eugen Jung, an ex-official of the French Colonial Service, who saw the

(1) Chief among these was the Syrian Protestant College, founded in 1866, now the American University at Beirut.

great benefits which would accrue to France through the Arab movement, ⁽¹⁾ stirring appeals were made to the Arabs ⁽²⁾ and to the peoples of Europe and America. ⁽³⁾ Najib Azūri also founded, in April, 1907, with the collaboration of M. Jung, L'Indépendance Arabe, through which, as well as through other avenues, he continued to work for the Arab Nationalist cause.

By 1908, however, little remained of the once promising Arab Movement. In spite of its sudden flowering, it had not yet taken sufficient root. The gendarmes and troops of 'Abdul Hamid, brought into operation against the rebellious chiefs and revolutionaries, had not been the only cause of its failure. The Young Turks by more subtle means had undermined it. The Committee of Union and Progress, by promising much in reforms and in privileges to every community, to be fulfilled once the Hamidian régime should be overturned, had obtained the support not only of Arab leaders but also of other non-Turkish groups, for the bloodless Revolution of 24 July, 1908.

The new régime did indeed seem to foreshadow a new era of liberty, fraternity and equality. The Committee, commonly

(1) His viewpoint is apparent in his works: Les Puissances devant la Révolte Arabe (Paris, 1906) and La Révolte Arabe (2 vols., Paris, 1924-5).

(2) Text: Najib Azuri, La Reveil de la Nation Arabe dans l'Asie Turque (Paris, 1905), pp. 1-3; Jung, E., Les Puissances devant la Révolte Arabe, pp. 24-9; Kampffmeyer, G., Dokuments zum Kampf der Araber um ihre Unabhängigkeit (Berlin, 1926), pp. 99-100.

(3) Text: Jung, op. cit., pp. 22-4; Kampffmeyer, op. cit., pp. 100-01.

known as the C.U.P., had proposed to consolidate the revolution by instituting parliamentary self-government in which all nationalities in the Empire were to participate in proportion to their numbers. Throughout the Empire, rival communities, bitter enemies and revolutionary leaders vied in praising the new order. Najib Azūri, in a valedictory number of l'Indépendance Arabe, September, 1908, declared that all for which Arabs had been striving would be attained under the aegis of the Committee. His work for the Arab cause had therefore come to an end. (1)

The first auspicious augury, however, was short-lived. Within the Western concept of nationality, then in the ascendancy in the Near East and nowhere more so than in the C.U.P. itself, existed contradictions which produced irreconcilable antagonisms in the heterogeneous and polyglot Empire, (2) and which contributed to its final break-up. The non-Turkish groups could not and would not permanently renounce the ideal of an independent state for every nation: part and parcel of the Western concept. The Young Turks, on the other hand, could not abandon the ideal of sovereignty over the whole population and territory within the frontiers of the State, equally a part of the same concept. (3) Thus, while 'Ottomanism' in the

(1) Declaration cited: Jung, La Révolte Arabe, p. 23.

(2) For political effect of language differences in the Ottoman Empire, see note by Mary Mills Patrick in Mears, E. G., Modern Turkey, (New York, 1924), pp. 35 ff.

(3) Toynbee, A. J. and Kirkwood, K. P., Turkey, p. 53.

programme of the Committee of Union and Progress meant in theory that all sections of the Empire were to enjoy equal cultural liberty and that all were to be represented in Parliament and in government services on a proportional basis, in reality it came to mean that the non-Turkish elements were to be enfranchised and tolerated only in so far as they accepted the Committee's programme in full. In Arab lands, the 'Ottomanising' policy involved a ban on Arabic language and literature, - the original basis of the Arab revival, the compulsory use of Turkish in official circles and in schools, and the abandonment of all institutions and customs which Arabs cherished.

In Syria, the effect of the programme of the C.U.P. was to revive the Arab Movement and to increase the resentment of the inhabitants against the Turks. A section, largely but not exclusively Catholic Christians, turned to France, their traditional protector and cultural mentor, for support and intervention on their behalf. France, nothing loth to increase her influence in a region which she had long coveted, welcomed the overtures. Through her consuls and diplomatic officials, secret negotiations were carried on with the Nationalists, which, when discovered by the Turks, after the outbreak of the war, brought death and imprisonment at the hands of Djemal Pasha, to those involved. (1)

(1) Thirty-four Syrians were sentenced to death, five to imprisonment and four to exile, largely on the evidence of documents taken from the French Consulate in Beirut. Facsimiles of some of the documents may be seen in the

Another group, principally Druses and Muslims of the Lebanon and of Damascus whose part Great Britain had taken after the massacres of 1860, approached the British Consul General in Beirut, requesting that Great Britain, not France, should assist them in their struggle against the Turks. ⁽¹⁾ A delegation of Syrian Muslim notables was also reported to have visited Lord Kitchener, High Commissioner in Egypt, petitioning Great Britain to annex Syria to Egypt, and to give Syria an independent administration. ⁽²⁾ Sharif 'Abdullah, on behalf of his father, Sharif Husain of Mecca, also visited Lord Kitchener in 1913 and again in 1914, ⁽³⁾ seeking British assistance against the Turks.

The British Government was not unwilling to make its influence paramount among the Arabs. Such influence was essential if its still nebulous projects of a Trans-Arabian Railroad to the Persian Gulf and of the creation of a Khalifate,

(1) (Continued):

Turkish Red Book, La Vérité sur la Question Syrienne (Stambul, 1916). On Georges Picot, French Consul General in Beirut, and a co-negotiator of the Sykes-Picot Agreement, must rest the onus for allowing these documents to fall into the hands of the Turks. On the declaration of war, M. Picot, unlike his British colleague, who spent the night burning the British Consular files, merely placed official seals on the safe containing the incriminating papers. The Turks, as might have been expected, disregarded the seals and burst open the safe.

(1) Figaro and Le Temps, 18 November, 1912; L'Eclair, 2 December, 1912.

(2) Le Temps, 18 November, 1912; L'Echo de Paris, 28 February, 1913; also Najib Azuri to Quai d'Orsay, 16 March, 1913, cited Jung, op. cit., pp. 60-1.

(3) Hart, H. B. Liddell, op. cit., p. 61.

independent of Turkish control and of German influence, ⁽¹⁾ were ever to be realized. The Foreign Office, however, considered that the moment was not opportune. The Nationalist advances were tactfully received, the way being left open for further negotiations. Thus, at the outbreak of war, the laconic message from Sharif 'Abdullah' 'The time has come' was sufficient to pave the way for the negotiations which brought the revolt of Sharif Husain in its wake.

Still another section of Syrians hoped to obtain decentralization by means of agitation and by exerting pressure both locally and on the authorities at Constantinople. Another revolutionary group, for the most part Muslims of Damascus and of the Syrian hinterland, aimed at complete independence and membership in a confederation of Arab states.

Behind the movement were ranged the Arabic press and the Arabs domiciled in Egypt, in Paris, in the United States, in South America and in Australia. ⁽²⁾ In Syria, including Palestine and the Lebanon, Arab journals increased ⁽³⁾ 850% in the period 1904 to 1914, over the preceding 10 years, 33 journals

(1) For an indication of the influence of this policy on war-time negotiations, see Aufteilung der Asiatischen Türkei, especially No. 32, Nicolson to Sasanov, 20 March, 1915, p. 30.

(2) Tarazi, Vicomte Philippe, Arabic Periodicals (Beirut, 1934)

(3) Newspapers and magazines established in Arab countries, during the periods, 1894-1904 and 1904-14, are given below, arranged according to their present political divisions:

	1894-1904		1904-14.	
	News.	Mags.	News.	Mags.
Syria	1	2	73	14
Lebanon	15	14	117	51
Palestine	1	0	26	5
'Iraq	1	1	61	9
Hijaz	0	0	6	0
Total	18	17	283	79

being established from 1894 to 1904 and 286 in the period 1904
(1) to 1914. In Egypt and in the United States, the Arabic
(2) press, with a wide circulation even in the Ottoman Empire, (3)
was a powerful agent by its constant and bitter denunciation
of the Turks, in arousing Nationalist sentiment among Arab
(4) peoples.

In 'Iraq, no less than in Syria and Arabia, the 'Ottoman-
izing' policy of the Young Turks stimulated the Nationalist
movement. It continued, however, to lag behind the movement
across the desert, even as it had been slower to develop. Cut
off by its geographical position and by its lack of communica-
tion from the West, 'Iraq lay torpid, a potentially rich
Turkish Siberia but lacking educational facilities and the
stimulus of new ideas and of political thought such as prevailed
along the Mediterranean coast. Conservative in thought, the
Sunni Muslims were slow to withdraw their political allegiance
from the Sultan whom both religion and tradition had established
(5) as their religious head. The Shi'a priesthood, Persian

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- (1) The life of a journal during the Turkish régime was often not long, particularly if in opposition to the Government. Suppressed journals frequently reappeared under new names.
- (2) From 1904 to 1914, 385 Arabic newspapers and magazines were founded in Egypt, North and South America: Ibid.
- (3) Although banned from Turkey, they were distributed through the foreign post offices.
- (4) Djemal Pasha, in particular, resented the part played by the Arabic Press abroad: Turkish Red Book, La Verité sur la Question Syrienne, pp. 12-13.
- (5) Infra, p. 293 for typical view on the sanctity of the Ottoman regime.

for the most part, hated the Osmanlis both as Sunnis and as oppressors, but possessed little community of interest with the Arabs, although Arabs of the Shi'a sect formed a majority of the population of 'Iraq.

The social structure, based fundamentally on the soil, and not far removed from feudalism, was stony ground for Nationalism. Landlords sought only relief from taxation. Shaikhs desired individual freedom for themselves and their tribes. Merchants, principally Jews, perhaps the most progressive single element in the land, had little deep feeling for either Turk or Arab, except as productive of order, stable finance and equity in the courts, essential for their commerce. There were few professional men, such as doctors, lawyers, teachers and civil officials, who formed the backbone of the movement across the desert. Nevertheless, from them and from the Arab army officers came the leaven of pre-war Nationalism in 'Iraq. Trained, for the most part, in the professional and technical schools of Constantinople, they had been touched by the Western political theories permeating the capital. They had been in contact with separatists from Syria and from other parts of the Empire. The Arab officers of the army, in particular, as members of the only numerous and organized class in the Empire which received a systematic Western training and which, therefore, was exposed to Western thought, assumed important roles in the movement.

Not merely the policy of crushing Arab feeling and sentiment and of turning Arabs into good Turks aroused the 'Iraqis..

The secularizing policy and the irreligiousness of the Young Turks had offended many religious dignitaries who wielded great power and influence. The Naqib of Baghdad, Saiyid Abdur Rahman al-Gailani, for instance, found little to command his respect or obedience in the new régime. Although he himself habitually refrained from political activities, his son, Saiyid Mahmud al-Gailani, described as an Arab of the Arabs, and knowing no Turkish, took a prominent part in the opposition to the C.U.P.

In spite of the discontent in 'Iraq, rife and acute as it was, little trace appeared on the surface before late 1910. The measures employed by the C.U.P. to stamp out disaffection were too vigorous and too harsh for opposition to show itself openly. In the Chamber of Deputies, however, from the midst of the group of Arab Deputies, to which all the 'Iraqi members, except Isma'il Haggi Beg Baban, the Kurd, had attached themselves, 'Iraqi feeling was publically voiced.

Underground, however, the movement had taken on form and substance. (1) At Constantinople, Arab army officers, among whom 'Iraqis were the most prominent, formed Al-'Ahd, a secret group pledged to work for Arab independence. Its membership, (2) throughout the Empire, was said to number 4,000. Allied in purpose was the Assibat al-Hamra, the 'Iraqi counterpart of the

(1) La Question Syrienne, p. 12. A fairly comprehensive history of several Arab secret societies is to be found in the same work, pp. 9-123.

(2) La Question Syrienne, p. 12; Jung, op. cit., p. 32.

Committee of Decentralization, with its headquarters in Cairo. (1)

The separatist tendencies shown by other non-Turkish portions of the Empire were not without influence on Nationalism in 'Iraq as well as in Syria. The detachment from the Empire of Bosnia, of Bulgaria and Crete, the demand for reforms and decentralization in Macedonia, supported by the Great Powers, the revolt of the Druses in the Hauran and of the Arabs in Trans-jordan in 1910-11, and the demand of the Albanians for fiscal reforms in 1909 and 1911, while regretted by Muslims as weakening the strength of Islam, encouraged the Arabs as a whole to demand decentralization for themselves. Rashid al-'Umari, head of the powerful 'Umari family of Mosul, a member of which was advocated by the Acting Civil Commissioner in 1918-19 as head of the 'Iraq state, (2) expressed the views of many Arabs with whose sentiments he was in close touch, when he said, in October, 1911, to the British Vice Consul: 'As the Albanians have demanded and got what they wanted, I hope we shall do the same.' (3) It was generally believed that the end of the Turko-Italian war would find the Arabs united in a protest against the Turks and in an attempt to set up an Arab dynasty and an Arab Khalifate. (4)

The convening of Parliament at Constantinople also encouraged 'Iraqi Nationalists by bringing them into contact with the

(1) Alleged to have had 10,000 members and 75 branches in Syria and Palestine alone: Jung, op. cit., p. 61.

(2) Telegram, No. 10250, Political, Baghdad to S/S for India, November, 1918, cited supra, pp. 192, 194.

(3) Events in Turkish 'Iraq, October, 1911.

(4) Ibid., November, 1911.

ardent Nationalists of other parts of the Empire, who, in spite of the great care with which the C.U.P. had conducted the elections, found seats in the Chamber. With them the 'Iraqis made common cause in the Moderate Liberal party, founded by Prince Sabah-ed-Din in opposition to the C.U.P., and later in the Itilaf or Coalition Party. These parties were not merely sectional groups, although the 'Iraqi branches of the former, founded in Basra and Baghdad in August and September, 1911, were known in 'Iraq as the Hurr-i-Mu'tadil, while branches of the Itilaf to which the Moderate Liberal party gave way in early 1912, were known as Hurriya wa Itilaf. The organization of the parties extended throughout the Empire, the branch in Basra, for instance, being formed by Saiyid Talib Pasha in obedience to a telegram sent by a person unknown.

In the years 1910 and 1911, 'Iraqi feeling also sought means of outlet through the press. In these two years were established 36 or 60% of the 61 Arabic newspapers founded in 'Iraq during the period 1904 to 1914; 22 or nearly 40% being founded in 1911 alone. (1) Of these, 19 were founded in Baghdad. In the same two years, were founded 6 of the 9 magazines established in the same period of 1904 to 1914. A number of these papers were periodically suppressed by the Turks, after which the owners re-issued them under new names.

In the years 1912 and 1913, the movement firmly established itself in 'Iraq. The British Resident in Baghdad in an official

(1) Based on Tarazi, op. cit.

report in early 1912 stated:

I have been much struck of late by the increasing freedom with which anti-C.U.P. and anti-Turkish sentiments are expressed here. Hitherto this was regarded as treason to the State ... This growing political confidence of non-Turkish Muhammadan elements is noticeable even among officials ... It is clear also that the eldest son of the Kiliddar of Najaf and 'Abdur Rahman Pachachi, welcome the formation of a new party which would assert Arab interests. If political developments here follow a normal course and if the people of the country have any real political convictions and courage, - two conditions of which the fulfilment is doubtful, the support of the Baghdad province will bye and bye be lost to any party which does not concede to the Arabs political equality with the Turks. (1)

Nowhere did the rising opposition show itself more clearly than in the local elections to the Chamber of Deputies in 1911 and in the following years. Pressure was used by the C.U.P. to secure the return of its candidates. Nevertheless, Sayid Mahmud al-Gailani, whose anti-Turkish sentiments were well known, was elected, as well as Fuad Effendi, a Baghdad lawyer, known to be in opposition to the C.U.P. In Basra, the elections represented both local opposition to the C.U.P. and the personal ascendancy of Saiyid Talib Pasha, son of the Naqib of Basra. All the deputies elected, in addition to himself, were his partisans, being his cousin, his father's clerk, a friend of the Naqib's family and another member of the Hurriya wa Itilaf. According to the British Vice Consul at Basra, 'no pressure was used, however, all the Ittilafjis representing the free choice of united suffrage.'⁽²⁾

(1) Ibid., March-April, 1912.

(2) Ibid., October, 1912.

Saiyid Talib Pasha ibn Saiyid Rajab was one of the outstanding figures in pre-war Turkish Arabia, and, until his enforced removal from Baghdad by Sir Percy Cox, 16 April, 1921, played a prominent part in the creation of modern 'Iraq. He came of an old family of Basra, doubly influential because of its wealth and its hereditary religious leadership. His native ability, enhanced and developed by a fair education, by residence at Constantinople and travel in Europe, found full scope in political activities. A vigorous personality, of great charm and dignity, although given occasionally to tempestuous anger, he had collected around him a band of followers and adherents, bound to him both by fear and affection. His generosity to the poor was proverbial, but it was the liberality of a Robin Hood: his funds for his benefactions and for his retinue, as he himself was not wealthy, were not infrequently obtained by levies, reminiscent of blackmail, on wealthy Arabs in southern 'Iraq.

His personal ambitions, not necessarily of an unworthy character, were undoubtedly strong. To 'Abdul Hamid he had submitted a comprehensive scheme for the inclusion within the Empire, and under his personal authority, of Al-Hasa of which he had been Mutasarrif, and of a large portion of central Arabia.

(1) Infra, p. 407.

(2) His interment at Zubair, following his death in Munich, July, 1929, drew an immense crowd from every part of 'Iraq and was made the occasion of eloquent tributes to his work for Arab Nationalism.

The proposal was not unnaturally rejected at Constantinople.

After the Revolution in 1908, which he, in company with many other Arabs, had hopefully supported, he turned against the C.U.P. and its programme. He assumed, in the name of Arab Nationalism, the leadership, both in the Chamber of Deputies and in southern 'Iraq, of the opposition to the Turks in Basra Wilayet. So closely did his efforts on behalf of Arab separation and his own ambitions seem to coincide, however, that even now it is debateable whether his actions were primarily designed to further the Arab cause or to carve out a portion of the Ottoman domain for himself, as the Shaikh of Kuwait had already done, and as Ibn Sa'ud was in the process of carrying out in Al-Hasa. His many enemies, including Shaikh Ajaimi as-Sa'dun, which his ruthlessness and his energy had made for him, subscribed to the latter view. They constituted one of the principle handicaps to the Nationalist movement as led by Saiyid Talib, since they would not have acquiesced without a struggle in any measure of decentralization by which Saiyid Talib profited. These charges of personal ambition were to be recalled and enmities rekindled in 1920-1, when Saiyid Talib put forward, with some justification, his claim to the headship of the 'Iraq state.

Whatever his motives, Saiyid Talib pushed forward Arab Nationalism both in Basra Wilayet and throughout 'Iraq in the years immediately preceding the war. On 20 February, 1913, at a meeting in his house, attended by all the principal Arabs of Basra, a madhbata or petition was drawn up. It asked for permission to summon the Provincial Council with the view of

elaborating a scheme of reforms needed in the Wilayet, which, it was urged, should be similar to that recently sanctioned for Syria. It proposed that all taxes be devoted to local needs. Despite its veil of temperate and courteous language, the madhbata, to which about 300 of the leading citizens of Basra added their signatures, was in reality a demand, the first to be made, for autonomous government for Basra. (1)

The future government and administration of 'Iraq, were the primary subjects of discussion at an Arab Conference held at Mohammerah, March, 1913, attended by the Shaikh of Mohammerah, himself an Arab although a Persian subject, by the Shaikh of Kuwait, by Saiyid Talib and by a highly-placed Turkish official. It was agreed that each leader should do all in his power to advance the claim of 'Iraq to independence or, at least, to self-government. Emissaries were commissioned and dispatched to Karbala and Najaf to stir the people there and to prepare them for further activity. The Arab Nationalists in Baghdad, Constantinople, Syria, Egypt and Arabia, with whom Saiyid Talib had already maintained correspondence, (2) were informed of the decision of the Conference.

In the following month, Saiyid Talib made a test of his power. On 23 April, a deputation of Basra notables, headed by himself, visited the Acting Wali. They demanded the dismissal

(1) Events in Turkish 'Iraq, February, 1913; Ibid., March, 1913.

(2) For Saiyid Talib Pasha's relations with the Decentralization Committee in Syria and Egypt, see La Question Syrienne, pp. 102-3.

of certain officers of the Gendarmerie, who, they believed, belonged to an anti-Arab society. The demand, when referred to Constantinople, was rejected, whereupon Saiyid Talib hinted that the Arabs might resort to force. The British Vice-Consul, in alarm, immediately asked for a ship of war for the protection of British interests. ⁽¹⁾ H.M.S. Alert arrived at Basra on 4 May. Saiyid Talib, however, finding that Shaikh Ajaimi had moved with his Muntafiq tribesmen towards Basra, with the intention of supporting the Government, and that a new Wilayet Law had been promulgated, agreed on 12 May to press Arab demands with moderation.

Although the new Wilayet Law, together with an official circular from the Ministry of Interior conceding wide official use of Arabic in 'Iraq, had supposedly granted self-government on paper, neither Saiyid Talib nor other Arab leaders were misled as to its real nature. The new law, if ever applied, which they doubted, still kept real power in the hands of the Wali or Governor, while they had in mind actual participation by Arabs in the Government. In spite of the momentary check to the Nationalists at Basra, the Arabs elsewhere redoubled their efforts to obtain the full measure of their demands.

The Arab movement had developed faster in Basra than in Baghdad, due to the efforts of Talib Pasha, but Nationalism was not lacking in strength in the latter city. In closer contact than Basra with the outside world and consequently in closer

(1) Events in Turkish 'Iraq, May, 1913.

relation with the Nationalist movement at Constantinople and among the Syrians and Egyptians, the Baghdad Nationalists had divided themselves into four groups. One section consisted of partizans of Saiyid Talib and the Basra Nationalists. Another looked to Syria for leadership and assistance. Still another group was in correspondence with Egypt, from which it was rumoured that the Khedive would be elected King and Khalifa of the Muslims. The fourth group formed a separate Baghdad party, relying chiefly on their own efforts and on their own leaders. These groups, however, were without hard and fast lines, and in the spring of 1913, when a concerted effort was made to unite the Arabs of 'Iraq, Syria and Egypt in presenting demands to Constantinople, the groups apparently sank their differences and began to work together. The local secret Patriotic Society, formed in 1912 to expel the Turks and to establish autonomous government, had as members the principal Arabs, including more than a hundred Arab officers of all ranks. Manifestos and literature from Basra and Constantinople attacking the Turkish Government circulated in the city. Placards appeared on the walls of Baghdad, as on 18 March, exhorting Arabs to rise against their **oppressors** and to demand autonomy or decentralization. The reforms announced in April and May were dismissed as being inadequate. The newspapers Bain an-Nahrain and Misbah⁽¹⁾ took courage and demanded further reforms and decentralization. A delegate, Taufiq as-Suwaidi, son of Yusuf as-Suwaidi, an

(1) Founded in Baghdad by Muhammad Kamil, 9 December, 1909, and by Abdul Husain al-'Uzri, 7 March, 1911.

outstanding leader in the movement, was nominated to the first Arab Congress held in Paris, 18 June, 1913. Even more significant was the growing hostility between the Turkish and the Arab officers of the 13th Army Corps in the Baghdad Barracks, and (1) between the Turkish and Arab civil officials of the Wilayet.

The Turks were not inactive in the face of these manifestations of Arab feeling. Arab teachers and mullas were appointed to advocate faithfulness to the Government, inspired (2) articles appeared in the press, and reforms were promised. Spies were increased and following a search in Baghdad by the police for a supposed emissary of Egyptian and Syrian Nationalists in early June, a sudden arrest of Arab leaders was made, 14 June. Among them were: Yusuf as-Suwaidi, Saiyid Kamil Effendi, proprietor of the suppressed Bain an-Nahrain, Shukri Effendi, and Salman Effendi. Mahmud Effendi, editor of Bain an-Nahrain, was also arrested at 'Amara. All were released two (3) days later with the exception of Saiyid Kamil.

(1) Events in Turkish 'Iraq, March to October, 1913, passim.

(2) Al-Zuhur (Baghdad) published the following, 14 March, 1913, under the heading 'Decentralization':

Some Muhammadans want decentralization. They ought to know that decentralization is not permissible according to the Muhammadan Law because the centre of the whole Islamic world is the town of the Khalifa. Christians are said to be making great progress by means of decentralization, but Muslims must recollect that Christians have three Gods and can, therefore, have more than one centre. Muslims having only one God can have but one centre.

(3) Events in Turkish 'Iraq, June, 1913.

The murder at Basra of Farid Bey, Gendarme Commander, who, it was reported, had come to Basra to kill Saiyid Talib and twelve other Arabs in opposition to the C.U.P.,⁽¹⁾ and of Badi' Nuri Bey, Mutasarrif of Muntafiq, by followers of Saiyid Talib, on 20 June, intensified the anti-Turkish aspect of Saiyid Talib's agitation in Basra. The failure of the Turkish Government to bring him to book emboldened Arabs, both at Basra and at Baghdad. The official circular from the Minister of Interior, extending special considerations to Arabs, such as three Ministers of State, five Waliships, ten Mutasarrifships, etc.,⁽²⁾ was dismissed without confidence. In Basra, the Reform Committee with Saiyid Talib at his head, published its programme⁽³⁾ which, if realized, meant the transfer of the real authority from Constantinople to the Administrative Council of Basra Wilayet. In addition, the Reform Committee issued a long appeal to troops and Arab tribes in the Wilayet, denouncing the Turkish Government, and calling upon all Arabs to arise and throw off the Turkish tyranny by asserting the independence of 'Iraq.

In Baghdad, all of the seven members elected by Baghdad city on 8 September, as its members to the first General Council of Baghdad Wilayet, were in opposition to the C.U.P. Manifestos, including especially virulent ones from Aleppo, demanding decentralization, continued to circulate. A new vernacular newspaper, An-Nahdha or The Awakening, published by Mudhahim

(1) So 'Izzat Beg, sent as successor to Farid Beg, declared. Ibid., July, 1913.

(2) The Times, 3 and 4 July, 1913.

(3) Al-Dastur (Basra), 22 August, 1913.

al-Pachaji, one of the Arab leaders began to appear in the first week of October. ⁽¹⁾ The quarrel between the Turkish and Arab officers would have burst into a violent rupture without the intervention of General Muhammad Dagistani, who appealed to their military honour.

In spite of arrests in the middle of October of leaders of the Arab movement, including Yusuf as-Suwaidi, Shaikh Sa'id Effendi, Hamdi Bey Pachaji, Mahmud Bey, head of Nadi-al-Watani, or Native Land Club, and Bahjat Bey, fresh demands for decentralization were formulated. A general conference to meet at Kuwait in early 1914, to consider Arab questions, was proposed in November. Representatives of Amir Ibn Sa'ud and of the Sharif of Mecca, with whom Saiyid Talib had long been in correspondence, and Amir Ibn Rashid of the Shammar, Shaikh Ajaimi of the Muntafiq, the Shaikh of Kuwait and Saiyid Talib were to be among the delegates. Ibn Sa'ud, in response to the invitations, replied that when the time came to rise he would be ready, but that the moment had not come. ⁽²⁾ Neither he nor the other Arab potentates were as yet able to sink their personal ambitions and enmities in the common cause. The conference was never convened.

In this same inability to make common cause seems to lie the failure of Arab Nationalism to make even greater progress

(1) Baghdad, 3 October, 1923.

(2) The statement in The Times, 27 December, 1913, that the Arab chiefs had composed their differences proved to be unsubstantiated by facts.