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A SKETCH

OF

the political history of
Persia, Iraq and Arabia,
with special reference
to the present campaign.

Office of the Chief Political Officer
I. E. F. "D."



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PREFACE.

THIS pamphlet has been hastily prepared to meet the request of certain Officers of Indian Expeditionary Force "D" for some account of the political status of Mesopotamia and neighbouring countries with particular reference to the present campaign.

The highly confidential nature of the subjects dealt with and the limitations of time and space consequent on its compilation at short notice during the progress of the campaign have made it impossible to touch upon many aspects of the question in other than very general terms.

It is hoped, however, that sufficient has been said to demonstrate the strategical and political importance both from the European and Indian standpoint of the country in which we are fighting.

A SKETCH
 OF
**The Political History of
 Persia, Iraq and Arabia.**

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

It would be strange indeed if in a life struggle between the greatest oriental and the greatest continental power Mesopotamia had played no part in the contest. And yet to appreciate this fact, it is necessary to look far back into history, and see what has made this corner of the universe a pivot of world rivalry. Take a map, close the Suez Canal and see what, until the opening of the Red Sea route, was the nearest and most direct route between Europe and the East. You will find, on the one hand, the long circuitous route round the Cape of Good Hope through the Indian Ocean, on the other, the short Mediterranean passage that leads to the coast of Syria, and thence over the neck of land to the deep sea-indentation which has its apex at Basrah. This neck of land between the two seas was for centuries the main avenue for the riches and the wealth of the East. To keep that road open was, at all periods, the effort of the rich trading powers of the West ; to close it was the aim of any great Eastern Power which sought to dispute the growing hold of West over East. In the days of the Crusades, some interruption of the traffic began, but it was not until the early days of the 15th century that the middle eastern road was definitely barred ; when the Turks with the fresh impulse of new military power surged from Central Asia into Turkey and barred the passage of that trade which had made the Venetian Republics the centre of all wealth and civilisation in Europe. Gibbon refers to its effect in saying

that after this "grass grew in the fair and pleasant streets of Venice."

Since those early times, the established power of Turkey, together with the opening of the Suez Canal, has lessened to a certain extent the economic necessity of the land route; but none the less the central position of this neck of land, as between the settled States of the West and the unsettled States of the East, has maintained for it a position of primary importance for any one of the western Powers whose interests impinge upon the waters of the Indian Ocean or the Persian Gulf.

Just as, in earlier centuries, the Turks threw a barrier across the Mid Eastern roads in their own interests, so, in late years, we find Germany attempting the same thing. It was her intention by the construction of the Baghdad Railway and of a naval base at the head of the Persian Gulf (the concession for which she obtained whilst Great Britain was engaged in the South African War) to threaten with her influence and economic power overland and sea connections with India. Such was the position at the outbreak of war as far as Mesopotamia is concerned.

It is Indian Expeditionary Force "D" which stands, and since November 1914 has stood, between India and the war.

THE CONNECTION OF GREAT BRITAIN WITH THE PERSIAN GULF.

The political connection of Great Britain with the Persian Gulf may be said to begin with the defeat of the Portuguese in 1622 at Hormuz, the now deserted island at the entrance to the Persian Gulf, where they had established themselves for purposes of trade. The Council of the local agents of the East India Company, whose headquarters were then at Surat, a port on the Coast of India some 150 miles north of Bombay, came to an agreement in 1625 with the Shah of Persia and despatched a fleet consisting of five ships, which co-operated with the Persians in reducing the fort of Hormuz * and compelling the Portuguese to take refuge in Maskat.

* In this engagement only two Englishmen lost their lives, of whom one was William Baffin, discoverer of Baffin's Bay: his death is thus described by a contemporary:—

"Master Baffin went on shore with his geometrical instruments for the better levelling of his *peace* to make his shot; but as he was about the same he received a small shot from the Castle into his belly, wherewith he gave three leapes by report, and died immediately."

From this time, the influence of the British was steadily consolidated. On condition that they maintained two ships of war in the Gulf to safeguard navigation, they were to receive half the Customs of Bandar Abbas and other privileges. Their position was not exclusive, a French and Dutch Factory having been established there before 1628, but it is clear that, as time went on, the British did acquire an exceptional status in the Gulf, and that at a very early period in the history of the English connection with these waters there may be found the germ of the large responsibilities and influence which this country was destined to assume.

The rivalry of the Dutch soon became as embarrassing as that of the Portuguese had been; the English Factory at Basrah, which had been opened there in 1655, was almost ruined by Dutch competition.

The Dutch, however, gradually lost their position and no European Power seriously attempted, until the beginning of the present century, to compete with us in commerce or in politics.

The British opened factories at Bushire and elsewhere in the Gulf in 1763 and subsequent years under a "Firman," the terms of which indicate the high position then enjoyed by the British in Persian eyes, for it was granted to the "Governor-General for the English nation in the Gulf of Persia" a certain Benjamin Jervis, Resident, in response to a demand for "a grant of their ancient privileges in these Kingdoms"; no other foreign nations claimed or were granted such privileges.

These privileges were obtained, and our rights maintained and extended, under climatic conditions even more trying than those prevailing in Iraq in the hot weather, and contemporary historians are eloquent in their remarks on the summer heat in the Gulf * which, more perhaps than any other cause, has prevented European military penetration in this littoral.

* Of Bandar Abbas Master Ralph Fitch writes in 1583 :—

"Nature seemed not to have designed it should be inhabited. It is situated at the foot of a ridge of mountains of excessive height; the air you breathe seems to be on fire; mortal vapours continually exhale from the bowels of the earth; the fields are black and dry as if they had been scorched with fire."

Of Maskat, Abdur Rezak in 1442 left on record that "the heat was so intense that it burned the marrow in the bones, the sword in its scabbard melted like wax; and the gems which adorned the handle of the dagger were reduced to coal. In the plains the chase became a matter of perfect ease for the desert was filled with roasted gazelles."

When in 1810 an Anglo-Indian Force under Major General Grant Keir captured and occupied with a force of 1,200 the pirate stronghold of Ras-al-Khaimah on the Trucial Coast, it was the climate which forced them to evacuate that position and to establish themselves on the western extremity of Qishm Island, which is still a British enclave.

Here also, the climate was too much for them, and a naval and Military cemetery, well kept, though disused for nearly 100 years, and some ruined barracks together with the British Flag alone indicate that we still maintain our position there. Indeed, in many a deserted Gulf port, the dead alone guard the colours that are being borne afresh in Mesopotamia to-day in vindication of the old claims.

The service that Great Britain has rendered to humanity by preserving peace in the Gulf is so well known that no detailed reference thereto is necessary; suffice it to say that she has policed, patrolled or freed its highway without making a single claim to territory for a century or more; the Pax Britannica thus established found formal embodiment in the maritime truce imposed upon the warring chiefs of the littoral from Masandam to Kuwait in 1836 and annually renewed up to 1853 when it became perpetual.

Not less notable are the unaided efforts of Great Britain to put down the Slave Trade—efforts which are still maintained by His Majesty's Ships, for the traffic is not yet extinct: some fifty slaves being given their freedom yearly by British officials at various ports in the Gulf.

Piracy, which was rampant in the first part of the last century, was put down by our unaided efforts, and it is only due to the constant vigilance of the Navy that it does not break out again in the pearling season, for isolated boats of the pearling fleet fall an easy prey to a piratical dhow.

Our action in repressing the Arms Traffic was actuated less by philanthropic motives than by considerations of practical expediency. Arabia, the Gulf and Persia, and through Persia (by direct purchases made by Afghans on a large scale) Afghanistan were all being flooded with great quantities of arms and ammunition.

Some two years before the outbreak of the present war, the traffic in arms, which had its headquarters at Maskat and was mainly, owing to our discouragement of the traffic among

our own subjects, in the hands of French merchants, was finally killed by Regulations which the Sultan of Maskat was advised and consented to introduce and which were accepted, though unwillingly, by France, which Power, jointly with Great Britain, is a guarantor of the independence of the Sultanate.

The fact that arms and especially ammunition ceased to be any longer obtainable in the market has not been without its effect in the countries lying between the North-Western Frontier of India and Mesopotamia, and it is safe to say that had the Arms Traffic continued with its old vigour, our military responsibilities on the Frontier and in the Middle East would have been much heavier at the present time.

In addition to suppressing Piracy, the Slave Trade and the Arms Traffic, at a cost of thousands of British lives, and millions of money, Great Britain has surveyed, lighted, and buoyed the intricate waters of the Gulf, laid cables and introduced a regular postal service in every town of note between Baghdad (inclusive) and Karachi.

In return for sacrifices of life and treasure, and benefits conferred, Great Britain has claimed no exclusive privileges or direct compensation, but has declared publicly that no political influence shall be introduced in any form by either of the territorial Powers (Turkey or Persia) ceding to a Third Power land for a naval base or other *piec à terre*.—Such a proceeding, Britain has proclaimed,* would be a wanton rupture of the *status quo* which she would set forth her whole strength to prevent.

* Declaration by Lord Lansdowne in the House of Lords in 1903.

¶“ The noble Lord asked me for a statement of our policy with regard to the Persian Gulf. I think I can give him one in a few simple words. It seems to me that our policy 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 he suggests, or that we should suggest, 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. I say that in no minatory spirit, because, so far as I am aware, no proposals are on foot for the establishment of a Foreign Naval Base in the Persian Gulf—I at least have heard of none; and I cannot help thinking that the noble Lord waxed almost unnecessarily warm at the idea of such a Foreign intrusion with which, so far as I am aware, we are not at present threatened. Well, the noble Lord then touched upon a series of points connected with our commercial interests in the Gulf. It is impossible, to my mind, to disassociate our commercial and our political interests.”

Nor are there wanting other factors which tend to increase an already predominant British influence. At the North-Western extremity of the Gulf, the Shaikh of Kuwait has bound himself and his successors not to receive the representative of any other Power than Great Britain and not to alienate any portion of his territory to the Government or subjects of any other Power; a proceeding which was dictated by the increasing encroachment of Turkish authority and German intrigue.

Such, briefly summarised, is the position of Great Britain in the Persian Gulf; it is the fruit of 150 years of continuous naval vigilance, of political watchfulness, and of commercial penetration. But in order to maintain it we have often been called upon (especially of late years) to enter into military occupation of ports or islands in the Gulf, *e.g.* :—

Qubban (near Muhammerah)	1768
Ras-al-Khaimah	1810
Qishm	1820
Bushire and Kharag Islands	1856
Muhammerah and Ahwaz	1856
Jask and Mekran Expedition	1908-1909
Bushire	1909
Maskat	1913

The occupation of these places sufficiently demonstrates the vigour with which in the past our naval ascendancy has been maintained, and reinforced, when necessary, by military action.

On the other hand the fact that, notwithstanding a plethora of opportunities and ample justification, such occupations have not been more than temporary and that we have hitherto acquired no territory except a corner of Qishm, and a concession at Hanjam, and that by purchase or negotiation and not by force, is a sufficient evidence of our pacific purpose.

The recognition of these considerations is essential to a right understanding of the attitude adopted by Great Britain on the outbreak of war in 1914 in regard to the maintenance unimpaired of her predominant position at the head of the Persian Gulf, the geographical centre of the Muhammadan World, and "the short cut to India"—not only for English tourists, but also for enemy battalions.

us through the Shah of Muhammadi, but the pretensions he put forward were moderate. Feeling his position at Basrah to be dangerously weak he took refuge in Central Arabia, and after the war came in to us at Kuwait and consented to retire into voluntary exile in India.

CHAPTER II.

THE ARAB ATTITUDE IN IRAQ BEFORE THE WAR.

The internal political condition of Turkish Iraq in the spring and summer of 1913 and 1914 was more disturbed than it had been for some years.

Though there could not be said to have been anything approaching to an organized Arab movement in this province, a certain number of Arab "nationalists" existed and were actively working in co-operation with Syrian Nationalist Societies against the existing Turkish system of Government.

Basrah took the lead in this movement under the guidance of Saiyid Talib, a member of the most venerated Sunni family on the Shatt-al-Arab, that of the Naqib. After a brief flirtation with the Committee of Union and Progress he discovered that its Ottomanizing policy left no scope for his ambition which was nothing less than the establishing of a semi-autonomous province with himself as its ruler. His aims brought him into conflict not only with the Committee but with the powerful Sa'dun family who controlled the Muntafik Arabs. The Ottoman Government, jealous of the influence of Sa'dun Pasha, the paramount chief, used Saiyid Talib to deliver him into their hands, an action which earned for Saiyid Talib the undying hate of Sa'dun's son 'Ajaimi, and threw the latter into the arms of the Committee as an opponent of the Liberal Party, Saiyid Talib's organization. In the spring of 1913 the Wali of Basrah attempted to counter Saiyid Talib's growing influence with the help of Muntafik forces under 'Ajaimi, but Saiyid Talib was too quick for him. He put Basrah into a state of defence against the Muntafik threat, caused the Turkish Commandant, a staunch adherent of the Committee, to be assassinated in the public street, cowed the authorities and forced them to issue a programme of reform. While complying outwardly with Saiyid Talib's demands, the Committee were resolved on his overthrow. He got wind of their intentions and immediately before the war entered into negotiations with

us through the Shaikh of Muhammerah, but the pretensions he put forward were immoderate. Feeling his position at Basrah to be dangerously unstable he took refuge in Central Arabia, and after the outbreak of war came in to us at Kuwait and consented to retire into voluntary exile in India.

Scarcely had war broken out in Europe than secret telegrams from Enver Pasha commenced to reach the authorities in Basrah and the leaders of the opposing faction, warning them to be prepared for the entry of Turkey into the war: every endeavour was made to enlist popular feeling against the Allies, and to bring pressure to bear on the Shaikhs of Muhammerah and Kuwait in order to detach them from us.

Little success attended these efforts until the actual outbreak of war, and the Shaikhs of Muhammerah and Kuwait never wavered, but in the excitement that followed the news and urged by a natural desire to defend their hearths and homes against the invader, as well as by the strong incentives offered by Ottoman misrepresentations and the expectation of loot a number of Arabs joined the Turks, some enlisting under compulsion as soldiers, others from villages down-stream joining in as franc-tireurs. Had we delayed in our advance on Fao or Basrah and left the Turks to raise the country and spread rumours detrimental to our arms, a considerable Arab rising might have been engineered, but the rapidity of our descent on Fao and push to Basrah frustrated these hopes.

The transports * which had been waiting in readiness for some days at Bahrain crossed the bar, anticipating by some hours the arrival of the Turkish mine laying vessels, and under cover of His Majesty's Ships, a detachment effected a landing at Fao, capturing the fort, which was full of warlike stores, after its guns had been silenced by our warships. The troops were re-embarked and were disembarked at Sanayah just above Abadan some 20 miles up-stream from Fao: just before dawn on the 11th a determined attack was made on the force, but we were fully forewarned of the precise hour at which it was to be expected and it was easily repulsed with heavy loss to the enemy.

* Indian Expeditionary Force "D" (Brigadier-General Delamain in command) left Bombay on October 6th in 4 transports: arrived Bahrain October 23rd, left November 2nd, arrived at outer bar November 3rd, landed November 6th.

Another Brigade arrived on the 14th and by the 22nd November, after a hard-fought action at Kut-es-Zain, Basrah was in our hands.

That Great Britain was obliged unwillingly to declare war on Turkey on account of the latter's alliance with Germany, as well as by various acts of hostility on her part and her declaration of war with Russia, has been clearly explained to Muhammadan peoples in general and to the Arabs of Iraq in particular; at the same time we have been careful to disclaim any intention of threatening the lives or liberties, religious or civil, of Arabs or other races subject to the sovereignty or suzerainty of Turkey, as long as they remained quiescent. When British forces invaded Iraq the following proclamation was issued to the population living on the banks of the Shatt-al-Arab:—

"Let it not be hidden from you that the British Government has to its great regret been forced into a state of war by the persistent and unprovoked hostility of the Turkish Government instigated by Germany for her own ends. The British Government has therefore been obliged to send a force to the Shatt-al-Arab to protect her commerce and friends and expel the hostile Turkish troops. But let it be known to all that the British Government has no quarrel with the Arab inhabitants on the river bank: and, so long as they show themselves friendly and do not harbour Turkish troops or go about armed, they have nothing to fear and neither they nor their property will be molested.

"They are clearly warned, however, that they must not now carry arms, for it will not be possible to distinguish an armed man from an enemy, and thus any person going about armed will be liable to be shot."

This declaration was reinforced by subsequent announcements* and in our dealings with Arabs we have been guided by the spirit of these proclamations.

* *e.g.*, "As regards the Arabs, the British Government has no desire to treat them as enemies so long as they themselves remain friendly and neutral and refrain from taking up arms against her troops. On the contrary, the wish of the British Government is to free the Arabs from the oppression of the Turk and bring them advancement, prosperity and trade."



The policy thus outlined has been in a very large measure successful: the Arabs as a whole have throughout the Id aloof from the Turks, their abstention from hostilities on the Shatt-al-Arab relieved the military authorities of much anxiety at a critical time: their attitude on the Tigris during the operations resulting in the capture of Amarah was satisfactory, and they gave comparatively little assistance to the Turks before and during the battle of Shaibah and looted them afterwards.

From a military, not less than from a political view, therefore, our policy in this respect has been amply justified, although its execution sometimes makes demands alike on the patience of political officers and on the forbearance of troops.

The adoption of any other policy would in all probability have thrown the Arabs as a whole, including those of Central Arabia and of the Red Sea littoral, into the balance against us, whereas they have, as a rule, adopted an attitude of benevolent neutrality, whilst more recently the Sharif of Mecca has initiated hostilities of his own accord against the Turks.

Only in one region, and that outside their own territories, did the Turks succeed in raising any fanatical feeling amongst Arabs. In Iraq, in spite of strong pressure unsparingly applied by the Turks to the priesthood of Najaf and Karbala, the "jihad" movement on the whole fell flat. The religious volunteers (all of them Shiah) who collected, and were dispersed at Shaibah, did not make a second appearance on the battlefield and the subsequent treatment of Karbala and Najaf, cities not less sacred in the estimation of Shiah Muhammadans than Mecca, put an end to the possibility of any recrudescence of fanaticism in that quarter.

In Central Arabia and on the Red Sea littoral there was not, and has not been, any response to the fervid call to Jihad of the Shaikh-ul-Islam at Constantinople. The source of his inspiration was too obvious, and his religious arguments insufficiently conclusive.

But amongst the Arabs of Persian Arabistan, whose sympathies with the Turks were naturally in inverse ratio to their acquaintance with their administrative methods, the Jihad propaganda, backed as it was by a powerful incursion of a mixed Arab and Turkish force, met with some success.

The appeals which had left the tribes of Iraq cold fell amongst the marshes of Hawizeh on more favourable soil and



the Bani Turuf and their neighbours rose in support of the Turks.

Their action was something of a surprise even to the most experienced native observers, for these tribes had always been hostile both to the Turks, as Sunnis, and to Ghadhban of the Bani Lam as a marauding Chief who raided their flocks when he could.

But these feelings were overcome by the attractive prospect of obtaining the powerful aid of an invading Turkish army to settle old scores in a different quarter. No love was lost between the Bani Turuf and their overlord, the Shaikh of Muhammerah. His success in the collection of revenue dues on behalf of the Persian Government and in the maintenance of order was a standing grievance amongst the petty Shaikhs, who for a century or more—probably much more—had contrived to evade their obligations in these directions. The British as friends and supporters of the Shaikh of Muhammerah, and as unbelievers came equally under the ban.

The outburst was infectious, and it spread from tribe to tribe in Arabistan, for all at heart were well content at the prospect of a reversion to the anarchical conditions of 20 years ago, when each tribe was a law to itself and no government worthy of the name existed.

The Bani Saleh, Bani Tammim and Bani Sukain West of the Karun sent detachments to join the Turks at Illah on the Karkhah.

The Bawi N. E. of Ahwaz co-operated by cutting the Anglo-Persian Oil Company's pipe-line, to damage which was no doubt the subsidiary object of the Turks; the Cha'ab of Fallahiyah and the Mirs of Hindian, 40 and 80 miles respectively East of Muhammerah, declared for the Turks, as also did the populace of Ram Hormuz.

Shushtar and Dizful alone, though hot-beds of religious fanaticism, prudently held aloof from the movement and awaited developments; the Bakhtiari tribes did likewise. But for a time it seemed as if we were faced with a real menace on this flank and it was decided to hold Ahwaz in order to prevent the Turkish occupation of the town, which would have had the worst effect throughout Persia and would have greatly accentuated our difficulties in Arabistan. It would also have

isolated the oil-fields, and endangered the safety of the large European colony and valuable plant there.

The pipe-line was breached North and South of Ahwaz in February, and Ahwaz itself was only saved from attack by the presence of a British force there.

The movement reached a head in March when our troops came several times in contact with the Turco-Arab force, with inconclusive results. After the battle of Shaibah, however, the Turks withdrew their forces as rapidly as possible from this region, closely pursued by General Gorrings's force, and order was rapidly restored by the Shaikh of Muhammerah.

This pamphlet is not, however, intended in any sense to be a historical record of the progress of the war, and the above brief sketch of the political upheaval of the spring of 1915 is simply to give point to the following sketch of the history—

(1) of Arabistan

(2) of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company

during the past decade.

CHAPTER III.

ARABISTAN.

British relations with the Shaikhs and tribes of Arabistan go back over 250 years to the time when, in 1765, the Agents of the Honourable East India Company attempted naval operations against the pirates of the Cha'ab tribe. These efforts met with little success. They were repeated in June 1766 on a large scale, but again failed to be altogether satisfactory. Our attack upon the fort of Mansur, in the Khor Buziyah, 36 miles East of Muhammerah was repulsed, our losses including one British Officer and one European gunner killed and four men wounded. In August, however, we succeeded in capturing and burning several boats.

In alliance with the Turks, the fort of Qubban was next attacked, but disastrously; the Turks failed to support the Company's troops and 3 officers, a European sergeant and 13 men were killed and 32 wounded. We also lost a field piece and 32 chests of ammunition. For the next hundred years we confined our action on the Shatt-al-Arab river and in its vicinity to naval precautions, such as patrolling, to prevent piracy. From 1776 to 1779 Basrah was under Persian rule, but this brief interregnum has left little or no mark on the country or its people.

In 1856 a declaration of war between Persia and Great Britain which culminated in the fighting at Borasjan, the capture of Muhammerah and a subsequent expedition to Ahwaz, resulted from the insulting attitude adopted by the Shah to Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran and the attacks by the Persian Government on Herat. Attempts to settle amicably the question at issue having failed, war was declared by Proclamation of the Governor-General in Council on 1st November 1856.

Major-General Sir James Outram, K.C.B., was placed in command of the force. Bushire was reached on 30th January 1857 and engagements took place at Borasjan on the 5th February, where the Persian camp near the village was taken,

and at Khushab on the night of the 7th. On the latter occasion the Persians attacked the column whilst on the move at night, but were repulsed without difficulty. The battle was resumed next morning with disastrous results for the Persians, who left more than 700 dead on the field. On our side only one officer and 18 men were killed.

The troops re-embarked and the fleet arrived at the mouth of Shatt-al-Arab on the 8th March. The village of Ma'amir (Qasbat-al-Nassar) was occupied by the enemy but no acts of hostility were committed on either side. On the 23rd March the fleet moved up the river to a point 3 miles below the mouth of the Karun. The troops were now transhipped together with the guns and horses, into small steamers and vessels of lighter draught, the enemy making no attempt to interfere.

At nightfall on the 25th some engineer officers, after reconnoitering in a small canoe to within 300 yards of the enemy's forts, established a mortar battery on a raft behind the low swampy island which lies in midstream opposite Muhammerah, and was to be known henceforward by Arabs, from this circumstance, as Umm-ar-Rasas—"Mother of lead" or "bullets." At daybreak on the 26th March the mortars from this raft opened fire with deadly effect. At the first shot, our fleet consisting of 7 vessels, of which two were sloops, weighed anchor, and steaming up river, poured shell on the enemy's batteries which were situated one on each side of the mouth of the Karun. The shell-fire, it is recorded, felled many date trees and damaged others. There are still to be seen many old trees in Jabiriyah with gashes, caused, it is asserted, by round shot, while cannon balls are sometimes found in the gardens. The sloops passed unhurt within one hundred yards of the battery and the transport ships, whose decks were crowded with men, similarly passed unscathed. The Persians stood to their guns for about 3 hours, after which their fire slackened. Troops were then landed just beyond the western battery (*i.e.*, above the Customs, at Hauz-al-Malakeh) and were only feebly opposed. The Persian army fled precipitately, leaving their tents standing, whilst arms and ammunition, accoutrements and food lay about in profusion. Not less than 300 of their number were killed, and in addition large numbers were killed by the Arabs, who butchered all Persians they came across. The loot of the Persian camp is still a popular theme amongst the greybeards of Muhammerah.

The Persian General was the Governor-General of 'Arabistan, Ihtisham-ud-Dauleh, uncle of the Shah, and his troops seem to have been all Persians; the Arabs, ready, as usual, to side with the conquerors, gave a friendly reception to the British troops.

On the 29th March 2 steamers, each towing a second vessel, left Muhammerah for Ahwaz. Sabah was passed the following afternoon and Ismailiyeh reached by nightfall. The following evening Amaireh was reached and on the 1st April the force arrived at Ahwaz. The enemy was found in strength on the right bank, only a small force of 500 men being in the town as a guard for the stores, the capture of which was the object of the expedition.

Troops were landed and the town was captured without resistance, the Shaikh having surrendered, and the Persian garrison and the main body having fled. On the 6th April the expedition returned to Muhammerah.

Peace with Persia had been concluded at Paris on the 4th March previously. On the 15th May the expedition left Muhammerah for India, the town having been handed over on the previous day to Shaikh Jabir's tribe of Arabs (the Muhaisin).

From 1856—1890 the position changed but little. British enterprise had not yet penetrated into the interior of Persia or Arabistan. In 1890 a British Consulate was established at Muhammerah, simultaneously with the opening of the Karun to foreign shipping and the advent of Messrs. Lynch Brothers. Thenceforward the affairs of Arabistan began to assume more than academic importance to British diplomatic and political authorities.

In 1897 Shaikh Mizal, who had succeeded the aged Shaikh Jabir in 1881, was assassinated. His brother, Shaikh Khaz'al, at once assumed the direction of affairs. No disturbances occurred and it was soon clear that the new Shaikh was gifted with more than ordinary political acumen, combined with that faculty of managing Arab tribes which he had inherited from his father. He gradually emancipated himself from the yoke of local Persian officials, whom his predecessor had permitted to assume powers previously unknown, and by 1909 had established himself as paramount chief of the Arab tribes of Arabistan with a position stronger even than that of his father Haji

Jabir. He even officiated as Governor-General, in the absence of the nominee of the Persian Government. His principal pre-occupation during this period was periodical troubles with the Bakhtiari Khans, who were growing in strength and, with their local agents and tribesmen, were not slow to take advantage of the increased facilities for law breaking which the influx of firearms afforded them. He also had some difficulty in connection with the establishment of the Belgian Customs Administration at Muhammerah. This was however arranged in a manner satisfactory to both sides by the good offices of His Majesty's Government.

The development of the Shaikh's relations with His Majesty's Government is not a subject with which it is possible to deal at length here: suffice it to say that even before he became Shaikh, he was astute enough to realize the growing power of the British, and has never wavered in his conviction as to our ability to make good such assurances as from time to time have been given to him. His advent to power opened a new era for British commerce in Arabistan, and it was his influence and example which made the exploration and subsequent exploitation of the Bakhtiari Oil Fields possible.

The progress of his relations with the British Government may be inferred from the fact that in 1910 he was invested with the insignia of a K.C.I.E., and in 1915 with that of a K.C.S.I., a decoration which he received personally at the hands of His Excellency the Viceroy. In 1916 he was created a G.C.I.E. Already, in 1909, his salute had been raised from 7 guns to 12.

The salute of one gun which is fired opposite Failiyeh by all steamers of the British India Steam Navigation Company owes its origin to the gratitude of the Company to Haji Jabir Khan, who assisted in recovering cash stolen by pirates from the S.S. "Cashmere" in 1872, when at anchor at Basrah, and is a reminder of the days when piracy on the river affected even large ships.

ANGLO-PERSIAN OIL COMPANY.

The history of this important venture has yet to be written, and the details below are, in the absence of opportunities for reference to records, not authoritative.

The Company has its origin in the grant in 1901 by H. R. H. the Shah of Persia to Mr. W. K. D'Arcy of a concession for working petroleum in all its forms in Southern Persia.

The Company's first venture, at Qasr-i-Shirin, was disappointing ; oil was not found in quantities or at depths likely to prove remunerative. A second attempt was made at Mamatain, 12 miles North of Ram Hormuz and 60 miles East of Ahwaz, with a similar result.

At this juncture fresh capital was sought, and obtained, from the Burma Oil Company, and the promoters undaunted by their previous failures started operations at Maidan-i-Naftun or, as it is better known to the local Lurs, " Masjid-i-Sulaiman."* Boring was begun in January 1908. In May, when hope had been almost abandoned, oil was struck first in one boring, soon after in a second, and then in a third, and it became apparent that a field of great extent and richness had been tapped, as indeed has been proved by subsequent events. During 1909 the initial steps were taken to enlarge the scope and capital of the Company, which remained as before " All British " and to start (1) a pipe-line to the Shatt-al-Arab at Abadan, 150 miles distant, and (2) a refinery at Abadan. Both these were in working order by 1911 and 1912 respectively.

Early in 1914 in connection with the increasing use of oil fuel by the Navy and with the general trend of political and commercial affairs His Majesty's Government acquired a predominant share in the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, the All-British character of which was thus permanently assured. The decision to double the pipe-line and increase the size of the refinery, which had already been taken, was confirmed and work was pushed on with all speed by the Board of Directors, which had been strengthened by the addition of Government directors.

The Companies' activities since the outbreak of war are too well known to need detailed description, even were this permissible. The whole output of the refinery, which is now in 1917 double what it was at the outbreak of war, is at the disposal of Government, with the exception of a comparatively small surplus of kerosine which is sold locally. The difficulties of transport of the Expeditionary Force would have been greatly increased but for this valuable source of fuel oil, kerosine and petrol.

* So called from the ruins of an ancient fire temple near by.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BAKHTIARI.

There is every reason to believe that the more central portion of the mountainous tract lying between Shushtar and Isfahan has been occupied from a period indefinitely remote by the tribes known as the Bakhtiari, and their direct ancestors. It is impossible to assign a date to the separation of these tribes into their present two main branches. These are known as the Haft Lang and the Chehar Lang, and constitute two sections of the population differing to a large degree in tribal interests and manner of life.

The Haft Lang preserve almost universally a nomadic mode of existence, while the Chehar Lang, formerly also nomadic, are now for all practical purposes a settled population, supporting themselves primarily by agriculture.

Each of these main sub-divisions is sub-divided into numerous clans, of which it is sufficient to say that individuality and independence is more marked in the case of the Haft Lang than in that of the Chehar Lang. Up till near the middle of last century the hegemony of the combined tribes reposed with the Chehar Lang, but with the fall of the family of Muhammad Taqi Khan (see Layard's "Early Adventures"), this state of affairs was altered. The supreme power then passed into the hands of the leading family of the Haft Lang, who have retained it ever since through several generations, and have employed it to establish the dominance of their own sections, and to reduce their rivals to a position of complete subordination. As matters now stand, the Haft Lang Chiefs administer the Chehar Lang through the medium of the relics of the house of Muhammad Taqi Khan, which survive in three principal families.

The forces ultimately governing and directing the affairs and conduct of the tribes have to be looked for farther afield. These forces reside solely in the Haft Lang ruling family, whose shadow dominates the whole country, and in whom centre the hopes and fears of the whole populations.

Besides controlling the domestic affairs and relations of the tribes, they direct what may be called the foreign policy of the Bakhtiari.

Towards the Persian Government they stand at once in the position of hereditary leaders of the tribes, owners of the land, and governors of the province, for the revenue of which they are held directly responsible, in virtue of patents of Governorship. Two of their number hold formal appointment from the Persian Government under the titles of "Ilkhani" and "Ilbegi" and the functions of these officials are analogous to those of the Governor of an ordinary Persian province. These appointments are much coveted for the additional authority which they confer on their incumbents and they afford the only hold which the Persian Government has over them. By the successive elevation and deposition of different Khans they are able to foster those domestic jealousies and dissensions to which they are naturally prone, and to introduce a state of faction and discord which frequently makes united action or policy impossible, and reacts prejudicially on their authority at home and abroad. This said, however, the means of control enjoyed by the Persian Government has been fully stated, as it appears to have become convinced of its inability to pursue any course of control or coercion entailing the use of force.

While thus standing towards the Persian Government principally in the position of provincial Governors, the Khans have relations with their neighbours chiefly in their more private capacity. Their most important external relations are with Shaikh Khaz'al of Muhammerah, and are a constant source of discussion and apprehension to both parties.

Besides this main line of external interests, occasions occur on which the Khans are brought into contact with the authorities of Shushtar and Dizful, in both of which districts they own property.

The Khans also own important and valuable properties in the Ispahan district, the Governorship of which was from 1909 till 1916 in their hands. Their equivocal attitude towards the allies in 1915 resulted in 1916 in the replacement of the Bakhtiari nominee by Zill-es-Sultan, much to the chagrin of the Khans, whose hereditary enemy he is.*

* Zill-es-Sultan treacherously killed the Bakhtiari Ilkhani Husain Quli Khan in 1884.

All those who now figure in the public eye as senior Khans, have only to look back for two generations to find a common ancestor in one Ja'far Quli Khan, and in the generation preceding the present one they still find themselves concentrated in two brothers and an uncle.

The family of the last named, if now not entirely negligible, does not at any rate enter into the field of view under consideration, and attention need not be extended beyond the families of Husain Quli Khan, and Imam Quli Khan, also known as Haji Ilkhani. These two brothers each held the Ilkhaniship for varying periods during the eighties of last century, and each at his death left a considerable family behind him. Jealousy has always existed between these two families, but it was held in abeyance for a long time during the combined rule of Isfandiar Khan, and Muhammad Husain Khan, the senior members of the respective families. Both men were possessed of considerable capability and wisdom, and worked together in unanimity as Ilkhani and Ilbegi. Isfandiar Khan died in 1903, after 13 years' unbroken tenure of the supreme power, during the last 5 of which there was no one to dispute his authority,* and Muhammad Husain Khan, who succeeded to his official position, succumbed early in 1905 to an illness which has given grounds for some suspicion of foul play. The way to the dignity and responsibility of the Ilkhaniship was then laid open to the remaining brothers of each family, and their subsequent history presents a record of constant jealousies and intrigues, periodically terminating in the transfer and retransfer of the supreme power from the one to the other.

Since 1909 the Bakhtiari Khans have been more or less strongly represented in the Councils of the Persian Government at Tehran, for it was a Bakhtiari force of one or two thousand sowars which practically deposed Muhammad Ali Shah by imposing on him (and incidentally upon the country) the ill-starred "constitution," the advent of which gave birth to so many vain hopes.

Their power has been exerted much to the pecuniary benefit of the Khans, but it has not been without its disadvantages.

* On his release from confinement in 1890 Isfandiar Khan was appointed Ilkhani: but he was not able to assert his position fully during the life-time of Imam Quli Khan. There was therefore some division of authority, at least in practice, and Imam Quli Khan has sometimes been represented as holding the Ilkhaniship from 1890 until his death, which probably occurred in A. H. 1315-1316, or about 1898 A. D., but is sometimes given as 1896.

Instead of a dozen well-to-do Khans controlling the destinies of the tribe, there are now fifty or sixty young men accustomed to a luxurious life and plenty of pocket-money, with expensive tastes and a liking for foreign travel.

These young Khans bring constant pressure to bear on their elders to secure them lucrative appointments or other means of obtaining funds, and add greatly to the difficulties, not only of their elders, but of the political officers whose duty it is to keep the heads of the tribe friendly to the Allies, and to ensure that British interests are well served by them.

Under this head come—

- (1) Maintenance of order on trade routes:—In this connection it is worthy of note that in spite of the somewhat stormy political situation at the end of 1916, some 300 tons of munitions of all sorts for the British Mission under Sir P. Sykes in Central and South Persia, and some £120,000 in specie, were sent up the Bakhtiari road to Ispahan almost without escort and thence to Shiraz without the loss of a single package.
- (2) Maintenance of order on the Oil Fields:—It is unnecessary to dilate on the importance of this. In spite of the brief anarchy that reigned in Arabistan in the spring of 1915, when the pipeline was cut, and in spite of Turkish and German intrigues, no accident of any sort has occurred at the Oil Fields during the past two years, and work has been carried on without interruption, with results of which both the Company and the Admiralty have reason to be proud.
- (3) Maintenance of friendly relations with our Allies the Shaikh of Muhammareh in the South, and the Russians in Ispahan in the North, and conversely, the severance of all relations with the Turkish or German force and agents.

It is round these desiderata, and particularly the latter, that the political moves and counter-moves chiefly centre. The complications due to the occasional divergence from the true course of one or more Khans with their following are such that it is difficult, if not impossible, for any one not in closest

personal touch with his particular Khan and with the daily situation, and without personal knowledge of the various other Khans, to gauge the trend of events or influence them in the direction desired. For this reason, amongst others, it has been necessary to keep a political officer specially to remain with the Khans and maintain touch between them and His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, as well as with our representative (Lieutenant-Colonel T. W. Haig, C.M.G., Indian Political Department) at Ispahan.

The visit was not unfruitful, but this is not the place to speak of the results obtained, nor the means adopted.

On January 17th a messenger arrived from Mecca bearing a letter from the Sharif's son 'Abdullah who wrote that the Sharif had been called upon to proclaim the Jihad and was temporising till he heard what line Ibn Sa'ud proposed to take. Ibn Sa'ud made answer that he saw no advantage to the Arabs in joining the Ottoman Government and had himself dismissed a Turkish deputation empty-handed.

On January 24th battle was joined between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rashid and Captain Shakespear, who was present, met his death. The action was indecisive: both parties claimed the victory and both were temporarily crippled and forced to retire. It was an unexpected and a somewhat disconcerting result, for Ibn Sa'ud's preparations had been made on an exceptional scale and his forces were said largely to out-number those of Ibn Rashid, though he was inferior in cavalry. The accounts given by the Arabs attribute his defeat to the treachery of the 'Ajman. Ibn Sa'ud's personal courage is beyond question, but he not infrequently falls short as a tactician, and Mubarak of Kuwait pronounced him to be a poor leader in battle. But if he had not dealt Ibn Rashid a crushing blow, he had at least put him out of action and prevented him from joining the Turks, as, otherwise, he unquestionably would have done. The intervention of Ibn Rashid in the early part of the Mesopotamian campaign might have added considerably to our difficulties. Nevertheless Captain Shakespear's death was a heavy price to pay for the advantage of immobilizing him.

The two Chiefs held apart without further hostilities till the summer when an agreement dated June 10th was concluded between them. Ibn Rashid recognised Ibn Sa'ud's claims except that of overlordship which he could scarcely be expected to acknowledge, and undertook not to play a treacherous game towards the Turkish Government but to incline towards whichever Government was in alliance with Ibn Sa'ud. He confined his own jurisdiction to Hail and its villages and the Shammar tribes, while Ibn Sa'ud was acknowledged to hold all Najd from Al Khanaf to Dawasir.

Ibn Sa'ud was unaware of developments that had taken place meanwhile in S. W. Arabia: but the results to which

CHAPTER V.

PUSHT-I-KUH.

Pusht-i-Kuh is the right flank of Indian Expeditionary Force "D"; therein lies its importance, strategical and economic and thereby political. It is the home of warlike Persian nomads who make trusty labourers and sturdy porters; it sustains great flocks of sheep, whose ranks are only now beginning to be seriously depleted by the inroads of Indian Expeditionary Force "D" which has long been drawing on them to the tune of 500 or 1,000 sheep a day. It also supplies us with wood and ghi. It produces bitumen, with which Arabs make their marsh boats watertight, and cure their camels' sores; and the local Arab finds amongst its inhabitants a ready sale for any rifles of ours he may manage to steal but cannot safely keep.

So much for Pusht-i-Kuh from our point of view.

To the Turks, Pusht-i-Kuh presents much the same aspect, but the Wali, as a semi-independent Muhammadan potentate, has had difficulty in convincing the Turks of the propriety of his conduct in remaining neutral, and his platonic sympathies have not unnaturally been on the whole in the balance against us. His national and instinctive dislike of our Russian allies has also to be borne in mind: it is a permanent, deep-seated feeling which nothing can eradicate and which has given an unfriendly twist to his relations with the British. On the other hand, he has gained in pocket from the very extensive sales he has made to us of mules, sheep, cattle, etc., and by the handsome earnings of his people, and the feelings of his tribes are sufficiently pro-British to make it unlikely that the Wali would gain extensive support were he to adopt an actively pro-Turk attitude.

Pusht-i-Kuh consists of a series of mountain ranges running North-West and South-East in accord with the general trend of the Zagros range: the watercourses more often than not cut at right angles through these ranges in narrow gorges of great depth, offering very fine scenery of a rugged kind. The

higher ranges are of limestone, wooded with oak: the lower of sandstone, devoid of trees, and the lowest of gypsum, also treeless: the limestone produces very good water: the sandstone likewise, but streams rising in the gypsum formations are almost undrinkable, though no formation offers better grazing than the gypsum hills, on which the grass when it dries withers and remains *in situ*, so supplying valuable grazing throughout the year. The gypsum favours, in the little valleys and ravines, the growth of the big reed, of which the tribesmen build their huts.

Altogether the country presents a bare and unfruitful appearance, as compared with the higher ranges of the Zagros to the East and West: and in this connection it may be mentioned that Pusht-i-Kuh is the lowest portion of the whole Zagros chain from its commencement at Ararat to its virtual termination near Shiraz.

The climate of Pusht-i-Kuh presents characteristics familiar to those whose lot has brought them to Persia or to Mesopotamia.

Its upper regions in winter are excessively cold, and in summer the low hills, devoid of shape, are as hot as any part of the Mesopotamian plain which lies, enveloped in haze, at their feet.

This pamphlet is not a Gazetteer, and an enquiry into the ancient history of Pusht-i-Kuh would be out of place in it; the known facts are few and can be briefly stated. De Morgan, the French Archæologist, asserts that at all times and under all great monarchies Pusht-i-Kuh never failed to offer successful resistance to the masters of the neighbouring regions. Neither the Assyrians in Mesopotamia nor the Achaemenians, at Shush (Shushan the Palace of the Book of Esther) were able to subjugate them, and Indian Expeditionary Force "D," which combines the role of both, would probably have almost as much difficulty in doing so. The Sassanians, and later the Arabs, though they dominated Persia, failed to impress themselves on Pusht-i-Kuh, which probably only adopted Muhammadanism at a very late period. Even now, their superstitions are more powerful than their orthodox beliefs, and the worship of high places and of fire on sacred hills has not altogether died out.

The record of European travellers who have passed through the district is scanty—two at least were murdered in 1810 by a great-grand-uncle of the present Wali. The district lies off all main routes and is not sufficiently attractive to draw travellers.

Position and Powers of the Wali

(from Lorimer's Report on Pusht-i-Kuh).

The Wali governs in a dual capacity, first, as hereditary owner and ruler, and second, as the recognized representative of the Persian Government. The latter capacity weights lightly on him, though he has never allowed himself, from a diplomatic point of view, to forget it, and has always been careful, when it suited him, to invoke his Government's neutrality as an excuse for or a justification of his own attitude.

As hereditary ruler, he is the supreme power amongst his tribesmen, but his apparently autocratic rule is tempered by the fact that without the more or less cordial support of his followers he could not hold his own against hostile outsiders, whilst his followers are mutually dependent on him for the organization necessary to prevent aggressions of outsiders, and to check the internecine jealousies of rival petty chiefs. Both of these evils are ever-threatening dangers and each alike, if it made an entrance, would entail a constant liability to external war, or internal hostilities and disunion, which would directly affect every individual tribesman by effectively banishing that minimum of security without which livelihood in a poor country is almost impossible.

This state of affairs is to some extent illustrated in Luristan, where, however, the country being perhaps naturally richer, the struggle for existence is less acute.

The relations of the Wali with his subjects are if anything more patriarchal than those generally obtaining between the Lurs and their chiefs.

The whole population is nomadic, and quite a considerable section, the 'Amala, are in permanent attendance on the Wali, and receive pay from him—an arrangement which has nowhere in Persia been developed to the same extent.

The Bakhtiari Khans, it is true, part with much of their income to the heads of the nomadic sections, but they do so under a form of veiled compulsion, and not in accordance

with any prescribed rule. There is no doubt that the Wali gains by the system he employs, for he thus secures the constant presence of a standing army, whose permanent fidelity is in some measure guaranteed.

The Wali's power among his subjects is supreme, including alike the administration of justice, the collection of the revenue, the control of the movements of the tribes, the mustering of armed forces and the declaration and prosecution of war. In practice, no doubt, all ordinary matters of administration have fallen into lines stereotyped by the custom of ages, and in the exercise of his prerogatives he is guided by general considerations of expediency. Excessive oppression or unwarranted severity would lead to revolts, for which there are always prospective leaders in his chief administrators or his own immediate relations, or to the emigration and dispersion of the population. It is to the credit of the Walis that the tendency in Pusht-i-Kuh seems to be towards immigration rather than emigration.

Wali's relatives.

The Wali's relatives are few in number, comprising only his brother, 'Ali Riza Khan and his two eldest sons Amanullah Khan and Ghulam Shah Khan, the latter now an invalid.

The question of the position and employment of his kindred cannot but be a problem of some importance to the Wali.

A relative is always in the East very justifiably regarded with suspicion. History is replete with instances of the jealousy and disloyalty of brothers and sons, whether of Mughal Emperors or Persian Shahs, and in Persia the looseness of the moral tie of blood descends even to the lowest classes of the population, and reveals itself everywhere in distrust and suspicion.

There are two ways of dealing with this danger, removal by assassination, and the attempt to satisfy it by the delegation of power. The former as far as sons are concerned is opposed to the strong Muslim sentiment in favour of the production of large families to ensure the succession, and the latter is apt only to whet the appetite which it is designed to allay. The history of the family of the Shaikh of Muhammerah illustrates on the whole the former method, that of the Bakhtiaris approximates to the latter. The combination of the two methods was repeatedly attempted by the Mughal Emperors of India.

by the assassination of brothers and the cherishing of sons, invariably with unsatisfactory results. In spite of provocation the Wali seems to have favoured the more humane system.

It is a tradition in Pusht-i-Kuh, if nowhere else, that the sons of the Ruler should set up an opposition to their father. The present Wali himself, with his brother, caused his father Husain Quli Khan anxious hours, and in turn he has suffered in the same way at the hands of his own sons.

Kaka Siyah.

To observe the decencies due to royal prerogative, we have given the Wali's relatives precedence, but there is no question that his most important lieutenants come from a totally different class.

In Pusht-i-Kuh there is an influential section of negro origin, and it is among these that the greatest of the Wali's subjects are now to be found.

Of the source or date of the origin of this negro element I have been unable to obtain any information; but there seems little reason to doubt that they were introduced, probably within the last few generations, into the country as the slaves of the Walis, and that by their natural disinterestedness and higher standard of personal loyalty they gradually gained the confidence of their masters and rose to positions of trust. The same process is observable on a lesser scale in Southern Arabistan. Round Muhammerah there is a considerable element of negro blood which appears in varying degrees, from the pure African imported in the present generation, to the Arab who displays only slight signs of negro ancestry; and in the establishment of the Shaikh his most trusted servants are "Kaka Siyah," pure or almost pure negroes. They attend his person and guard his slumbers. In Arabistan, however, they have not been raised to independent positions of trust, unless perhaps in a single instance, which may be accidental.

Is the promotion of the Kaka Siyah a tribute to moral worth? It can scarcely be the natural result of any inherent intellectual superiority, and a very small admixture of Lur blood, I am afraid, effectively contaminates the most vigorous moral excellence.

In Pusht-i-Kuh admixture is constantly going on, for the Kaka Siyahs have been accorded their full rights as Musulmans, and have intermarried with good families.

CHAPTER VI.

ARABIA—OUR LEFT FLANK.

I.—GENERAL.

The peninsula of Arabia, which covers a larger area than India, has the form of a vast parallelogram tilted from S. W. to N. E. with the excrescent eastern promontary of 'Oman jutting out towards the Persian coast and all but closing the entrance of the Persian Gulf. Climatically one of the driest regions on the earth's surface, it contains no continuous regions of settled habitation. The Western ridge along the shores of the Red Sea, rugged and forbidding in its Northern and Central reaches, where lies the province of the Hijaz, rises as it extends south to the fruitful uplands of the Yemen and the heights above Aden. From these elevations two great drainage systems cut diagonally across the heart of the peninsula, the Wadi Dawasir to the south and the Wadi-al-Rumma to the north. Neither carries running water to the Persian Gulf, but subterranean infiltration would appear to feed a series of oases in the unexplored Wadi Dawasir, and its northern tributary, if such it can be called, the Wadi Hanifah, has always been, as it is to-day, the seat of political authority in Najd, the southern central province of Arabia. The Wadi-al-Rumma expends itself in the oases of Qasim, but there can be little doubt that the depression of the Batin continues its course to Zubair and the head of the Khor Abdullah. Between the two systems of the Dawasir and the Rumma stretch immense steppes, by no means devoid of water and vegetation, but in quantities sufficient only to sustain a thin nomadic population. To the south of the Dawasir extend the unpenetrated and probably impenetrable lands of the Empty Quarter which cover a third of the peninsula, and north of the Rumma there is a smaller belt of sand, the Nufud, which divides central Arabia from the pasturages of the Syrian desert. Apart from the two drainage

systems the mountains of 'Oman shelter production valleys situated in neighbourless isolation east of the great sands. Abundant ground-water, the drainage, it would seem, of the Jebel Ruwaiq, which forms the eastern limit of the Qasim, makes the fortune of the province of Hasa on the Persian Gulf, while the fumaras of the lofty volcanic outcrop of Jebel Shammar supply the wells of Hail and of a number of small oases in its vicinity.

The briefest survey of the geographical features of Arabia indicates the political divisions into which the country falls. Cultivation, and therewith established rule, is limited to the Western chain of mountains wherein are the provinces of the Hijaz, Asir and the Yemen, to Najd, which includes Wadi Hanifah, with Riyadh the capital of the Al Sa'ud, the Qasim and the Hasa, to 'Oman, a province placed geographically outside the general trend of Arabian politics, and to Jebel Shammar, the seat of the Al Rashid Dynasty. The rich oases of the Qasim, with their population of enterprising merchants, the aristocracy of settled Arabia, have been the object of ambition to the chieftains of Wadi Hanifah and Jebel Shammar, and even to the more distant Hijaz, and are now an appanage of Riyadh. In like manner the Hasa, coveted for its date groves and its ports on the Persian Gulf, has changed hands several times during the last 200 years and was finally wrested from the Ottoman Government by Ibn Sa'ud in 1913.

The history of modern Arabia has been determined by two main factors, the rise and growth of the Wahhabi power in Najd, and the attempts made by the Turks to enforce their dominion over deserts where the suzerainty of any exterior or centralized government has never been permanent.

In Arabia political power, other than the somewhat indefinite claims of tribal overlordship, has rested almost invariably on a religious sanction, and the domination of the Wahhabi house of the Al Sa'ud is no exception to the rule. Wahhabiism, the greatest Puritan movement of Islam, takes its name from its founder, Muhammad ibn 'Abdul Wahhab, a native of Najd born about 1691. After receiving education at Basrah and Damascus, he returned to his native land towards 1742, and there carried on an active propaganda for over 40 years. He preached an Islam reduced to its original simplicity, a personal austerity of life such as had been practised by the earliest of the warriors of the Faith before the tide of conquest had laid

the wealth and luxury of Asia at their feet, he forbade the invocation of saints and the very mention of Muhammad or any other prophet in prayer and set his face against the loose living of Mecca and the idolatrous veneration of the Prophet's tomb at Medinah. One of the most zealous and the most influential of his converts was Muhammad ibn Sa'ud, Shaikh of Dara'iyah in the Wadi Hanifah. When 'Abdul Wahhab died in 1787 the prosecution of his teaching fell to Ibn Sa'ud's son and successor 'Abdul 'Aziz, who had married a daughter of the reformer, and the spiritual impetus of Wahhabiism helped to create the temporal supremacy of the Al Sa'ud. 'Abdul 'Aziz mastered the Qasim and the Wadi Dawasir and forced the new creed upon the reluctant inhabitants of Jebel Shammar, but it was left to his son Sa'ud to carry the sword of the Wahhabis to the shores of the Persian Gulf, the borders of the 'Iraq and into Western Arabia.*

As early as 1784 the frontiers of the Iraq were pillaged by Wahhabi marauders, and after a fruitless expedition sent by the Turks into the Hasa, they pushed their depredations further north. In 1795 Sa'ud reduced the Hasa. Kerbala was sacked in 1801 and a second Turkish expedition, despatched in 1802, got no further than Kuwait. In 1803 tribute was exacted from Bahrain and 'Oman was threatened, and in the same year Sa'ud turned his arms to the west where he captured and purged Mecca. The following year saw the fall of Medinah, the Prophet's tomb was burnt and pillaged and the Turkish representative driven out. The sacking of the Red Sea ports as far as Hodaidah in the name of the Wahhabi Amir marked the furthest extension of his power to the south, but in 1810 a Wahhabi army ravaged the Hauran and all but reached Damascus, while a second attack on Kerbala and Najaf was with difficulty repulsed, and Sa'ud's son Abdullah raided to within a short distance of Baghdad.

A new Muhammadan invasion, scarcely less sweeping in its results than that of the 7th Century, menaced the Ottoman Empire and the Sultan Mahmud II, roused by the loss of the Hijaz to a realization of the danger which faced him, called upon his great feudatory Muhammad 'Ali of Egypt for help. A series of expeditions, led either by Muhammad 'Ali himself

* Sa'ud's accession took place in 1803 when 'Abdul 'Aziz was murdered by a Persian fanatic, but he had been associated with his father during the lifetime of the latter and was entrusted with the command of military operations.

or by his sons Tussun and the more famous Ibrahim Pasha, checked Wahhabi conquests. Sa'ud died in 1814. Three years earlier, when his position in the Hijaz had become embarrassing, he had made overtures to the Government of India, conveying his desire for amicable relations, but it was considered inexpedient at that time to enter into intimate connection with the Wahhabi Amir.

The Egyptian invasion is a chapter of Arabian history no less bloodstained than that which chronicles the career of the Wahhabis. Egyptian forces landed at Jiddah in 1811 and after preliminary reverses succeeded in recapturing the Hijaz. In 1815 they invaded the Qasim but did not retain it; two years later Ibrahim Pasha overran the Qasim, captured and destroyed Dara'iyah in 1818, and sent the Amir 'Abdullah a prisoner to Constantinople where he was beheaded. Before they withdrew the Egyptians completed the desolation of Najd by ravaging the Hasa down to the coast. It was not till 1824 that Turki ibn Sa'ud ejected the last remnants of Ibrahim's garrison from Riyadh and regained possession of the Hasa, but further reverses were in store for his house. In 1838 the Egyptians re-occupied both Najd and the Hasa, though not as on the previous occasion on behalf of the Sultan of Turkey. Muhammed 'Ali's ambition had taken wider flights and he caused himself to be proclaimed sovereign of Najd, but the failure of his attempt to form a united Arab empire which should embrace not only Egypt and Arabia but also Syria led to the final evacuation of Najd in 1840. The Amir Faisal ibn Sa'ud, who had been deposed by the Egyptians, returned to Riyadh in 1843. There he was visited in 1865 by Palgrave—whose journey is famous in the annals of Arabian travel—and by the English envoy Col. Pelly in 1865. Faisal in restoring Wahhabi authority had once more shown it to be a threat to 'Oman and Bahrain, and though the British Government clung to a policy of non-interference in Central Arabian affairs, our political and commercial interests in the Gulf obliged us to counter the advance of the Amir of Riyadh with naval demonstrations. In spite of the friction thus occasioned, Faisal continued to refer to "the understanding between us and the British Government of a hundred years standing for the security of travellers and traders passing on the sea" in allusion apparently to a correspondence on the subject of piracy which had taken place between the British authorities and the Amir Sa'ud in 1809. It was in order to dissipate the

ill-feeling caused by the frustration of Wahhabi aims on the coast and by the restrictions which had been placed by us on the slave trade that Colonel Pelly's journey was undertaken. Faisal died the same year and a few months later it became necessary to renew naval operations against his son 'Abdullah for the protection of the Sultan of 'Oman as well as of the Chiefs of the Trucial Coast. Internal rivalries weakened the authority of the Amir 'Abdullah and induced him to invoke the assistance of the Porte, and in 1871 Turkish troops occupied the Hasa and 'Abdullah accepted the title of Qaimmaqam of Najd.

In Central Arabia a new power had arisen which was destined to dispute Wahhabi supremacy. In 1835 a member of a Shaikhly house of the 'Abdah section of the Shammar, 'Abdullah ibn Rashid, had been appointed governor of Jebel Shammar under the Amir of Riyadh. A series of prudent and able rulers shed lustre on Hail and in 1872 the accession of the Amir Muhammad gave to the Shammar a leader unrivalled among his Arabian contemporaries in political skill. In the pages of "Arabia Deserta" Doughty has drawn an undying picture of this soldier statesman. Dissensions between Hail and Riyadh began in 1877; by 1882 Muhammad had seized the Qasim land: in 1887 he reduced Riyadh. Until his death 10 years later he remained in absolute possession of Central Arabia, and the Ottoman Government saw in his friendship their best hope of maintaining touch with the interior of the peninsula. Friendly relations were established about 1885 and were continued after Muhammad's death had overturned once more the balance of power in Najd. In 1904 the young Amir 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn Sa'ud aided by the Shaikh of Kuwait returned to Riyadh and recovered the Qasim. The position of Ibn Rashid became so precarious that Ottoman troops were sent to his assistance in 1904 and again in 1905, when for a short time the Qasim was occupied by a Turkish garrison and placed under the nominal administration of the Sultan. Bitter family feuds among the Al Rashid and the growing reputation of Ibn Sa'ud have made formidable inroads into the political importance of Jebel Shammar, but Ottoman support has never wavered, and the steadfast allegiance of the present Amir Sa'ud ibn Rashid has in a measure justified the policy, though his inability to keep his tribesmen together has gone far to invalidate the diplomatic success of the Porte.

In the prolonged conflicts of Central Arabia the British Government declined to take any part, on the ground that our interests were strictly limited to the affairs of the Gulf. The suppression of piracy, of the slave trade and of the traffic in arms were the main features of our policy and with these ends in view we entered into treaty relations with the Sultan of Oman, or as he is now called the Sultan of Muscat, and in 1798 with the chiefs of the Trucial Coast and the Shaikh of Bahrain in 1820. A series of agreements have secured the peace of the sea and safeguarded the interests of Great Britain. A claim made by the Porte to sovereignty over Bahrain was summarily rejected by the British Government in 1851.

But if it was comparatively easy to protect these remoter regions of the Gulf from Ottoman interference, the geographical position of the Shaikh of Kuwait made it more difficult to uphold his semi-autonomy. Until the end of the 19th century Great Britain took little interest in the affairs of Kuwait, and the province was generally regarded as falling within the limits of Ottoman control. But after the accession, in 1896, of Shaikh Mubarak, a man of rare political acumen, doubts arose as to whether the connection of Kuwait with the Porte was as close as had been supposed. In 1897 Mubarak asked for British protection against Turkish aggression and after some hesitation an exclusive agreement was concluded between Great Britain and Kuwait in 1898. The development of the Baghdad railway scheme offered new perils. The possibility that Kuwait would prove the best terminus on the Gulf redoubled the desire of the Turks to turn suzerainty into sovereignty, and awakened on our part a lively sense of the identity of the Shaikh's interests with our own. In 1904 a British Agent was appointed and the independence of Kuwait was upheld in a comprehensive agreement with the Ottoman Government which was on the point of conclusion at the outbreak of the war. The British occupation of Mesopotamia put an end to Mubarak's anxieties. He died in the winter of 1915, but his policy of close friendship with Great Britain was continued by his son and successor, Shaikh Jabar, and when Jabar died in 1917 his brother Salim, who succeeded him, expressed his determination to follow the same course.

Far more vital to Turkish interests than an acknowledged suzerainty over the sands and scattered cases of Central Arabia, or even over the shores of the Gulf, was the retention of an

effective dominion in the Hijaz. The possession of the two holy cities, Mecca and Medinah, is essential to the Sultan as Khalif of Islam. It was the extension of Wahhabi conquest in this direction which roused the Porte to the gravity of the movement, and when in 1840 the Ottoman Government resumed direct control of the Hijaz after the occupation of the province by Muhammad Ali, the Amir of Mecca was not permitted to return to the position of practical independence which he had enjoyed until the end of the 18th Century. If most of the great chiefs of Arabia have a religious as well as a secular authority the Sharif of Mecca, guardian of the Holy Places and direct descendant of the Prophet, commands the consideration, willing or unwilling, of the Islamic world outside Arabia and the veneration of the Sunni clergy of Syria and Mesopotamia. But to the Puritan Wahhabi, who accords reverence to God only, he is no more than any other powerful ruler of Beduin and Oasis Arabs, and any extension of his influence eastward, more especially in the Qasim, is a matter for jealous suspicion. Temporal power is subject to rapid variations in nomadic countries. No frontier lines have been drawn across the Arabian deserts, the roving tribesmen pass easily from one allegiance to another and their fluctuating obedience gives ample opportunity for the rivalry of princes.

Although the Porte maintained in the Hijaz its own political and military officers together with a small garrison in the principal towns, the Sharif was recognized as the chief executive officer of Mecca and he alone swayed the tribes. The construction of the railway to Medinah was of high strategic importance to the Sultan as a means of tightening his grasp on the Hijaz, but the Sharif successfully resisted its extension to Mecca and thereby preserved the isolation of his own stronghold. This isolation, coupled with his mastery of the tribes, enabled him successfully to raise the standard of revolt against the Turks in June 1916.

In November 1916 he was proclaimed king of the Hijaz. The close connection of his family with Egypt, where they own large estates, and the dependence of the Hijaz upon Egyptian resources guarantee the amicable relations of the new Arab kingdom with Great Britain.

II.—RELATIONS WITH IBN SAUD.

'Abdul 'Aziz ibn Sa'ud, the present Hakim of Najd, may be said to have begun his reign in 1901, when he was pro-

claimed Governor of Riyadh by his father 'Abdul Rahman. The Sa'ud family were at that time in exile, having been driven out of their dominions in 1891 by their hereditary foe, Ibn Rashid. In 1902, 'Abdul 'Aziz with the help of Mubarak Ibn Sabah, Shaikh of Kuwait, recovered Riyadh in a daring raid which he led in person, and by 1906 he had so far re-established the old supremacy of the Sa'ud as to carry hostilities to the gates of Hail. During the years succeeding his return to Riyadh he acted in close alliance with the Shaikh of Kuwait, who had every reason for desiring the curtailment of Rashid influence. For the Rashid were allies, and in a remote acceptance of the term, vassals of the Ottoman Empire, subsidized and backed by Constantinople, and they represented in Arabia the Turkish policy of centralization which the Shaikh was covertly resisting in his own territories. His geographical position on the shores of the Persian Gulf had placed him in relations with the British Government; since 1899 we had had a friendly understanding with him and had promised to support him against Ottoman aggression. But the existence of this connexion made us unwilling to see him drawn into the confused and uncertain feuds of the interior, and acting on the principle laid down in 1897 that we were "not disposed to interfere more than was necessary for the maintenance of general peace in the Persian Gulf," we had discouraged him from embroiling himself in Central Arabian affairs.

Ibn Sa'ud, in spite of his growing importance, was outside the limits of our interest, thus appointed, and it was not until 1911 that special attention was drawn to him in our official reports. In that year Captain Shakespear, the Political Agent at Kuwait, while on tour, met him by chance in the desert and was hospitably entertained in his camp. Ibn Sa'ud expressed to him a desire to be received into a recognised relationship with Great Britain; he referred to Colonel Pelly's visit to Riyadh in 1865 and to the overtures made to us by his father 'Abdul Rahman in 1904 when a British Agent was first appointed to Kuwait. He spoke in strong terms of the hatred which the Arabs entertained for the Turks and of his own resentment of their occupation of the Hasa, a Province which he was particularly anxious to regain, not only because it formed part of his ancestral dominions, but also because it would give him access to the sea and control over the tribes from Riyadh to the coast. He regarded with grave appre-

hension the aggressive policy of the new régime in Turkey and would welcome, if he recovered the Hasa, a British Agent in one of his ports, and he added that our trade would benefit from the increased security which he would maintain on the caravan routes. Captain Shakespear could make no other rejoinder than that the British Government confined its interests to the coast and had never challenged Turkish claims to the ordering of affairs in Central Arabia, with which we had no concern; that we were moreover on amicable terms with Turkey and should be averse from anything in the nature of intrigue against the Ottoman Government; but in his comments on the report of this interview Sir Percy Cox pointed out that as the Porte seemed disposed to be intractable in the adjustment of matters relating to British interests in the Gulf, we could not afford to ignore Ibn Sa'ud's attitude. His personal authority had greatly increased and it would be well to entertain cordial if distant relations with him. The Foreign Office, however, decided that it was impossible at that time to swerve from our policy of strict non-interference.

Two years later Ibn Sa'ud, without the assistance which he had tried to obtain from us, though he was credited throughout Arabia with having secured it, overran the Hasa, ejected without difficulty the small Turkish garrisons and established himself on the coast at Qatif and Ojair. Captain Shakespear on his return to England in June 1914, from a long projected journey across Arabia in the course of which he had visited Riyadh, bore witness to the strong personal domination which Ibn Sa'ud's vigorous and commanding personality had established, and from other reports it was clear that he was regarded beyond his own frontiers as the coming man. He proved more than a match for the ineffective efforts of the Turks to re-take the Hasa; they resorted to diplomacy and opened negotiations with him through Saiyid Talib of Basrah. Early in May Tala'at Bey had formulated in private conversation at the British Embassy the expectations of the Ottoman Government in terms which seemed to his hearers little consonant with actual conditions. He proposed to establish a strictly delimited frontier between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rashid, place representatives of the Sultan at Riyadh and at Hail, and rely upon the guile of these officials to control without the aid of force the actions of the two Amirs. As for the Hasa, Ibn Sa'ud would be appointed Mutasarif of the Province, but the collection of the

Customs would remain in Turkish hands and Turkish garrisons would be restored in the ports.

Nothing was more certain than that Ibn Sa'ud's appearance on the coast must ultimately bring him into direct contact with ourselves whether we welcomed it or sought to avoid it; and this anxiety underlay and possibly accelerated the action of the Porte.

In May a secret Treaty was signed between Ibn Sa'ud and the Turks; it was put to the test by the outbreak of war in Europe a few months later, and found wanting.

Early in October Captain Shakespear who was in England, was ordered to return to the Persian Gulf and get into touch with Ibn Sa'ud, so as to prevent, if possible, the outbreak of unrest in the interior, and in the event of war with Turkey to ensure that no assistance should be rendered from that quarter. Before he could reach his destination war had been declared. A message had been despatched to Ibn Sa'ud informing him of Captain Shakespear's impending visit, recognizing his position in Najd and the Hasa and guaranteeing him against reprisals by sea or land if he would commit himself to enter the lists against Turkey. The Turks on their side lost no time in approaching the Amirs of Central Arabia. Their scheme, which was that Ibn Rashid should aid in the campaign against Egypt while Ibn Sa'ud opposed the British advance in Mesopotamia, showed that they were as unaware of the feeling towards them which prevailed among the Arabs as they were ignorant of the conditions of the desert, where the network of tribal feud permits no man to withdraw his forces on a distant expedition without fear of attack on his unprotected possessions. Ibn Sa'ud, apparently in order to gain time, took advantage of his abiding enmity with Ibn Rashid and launched into open hostilities against him. In vain Enver Pasha urged him to abandon private quarrels and sent him a gift of money. Ibn Sa'ud replied that he could spare no troops for the 'Iraq till he had reduced Ibn Rashid to his rightful state of vassalage. To the British message he replied that he was unshaken in his long-standing desire for intimate relations with us. But he was not unnaturally reluctant to take open part with us until he was satisfied that our change of front towards himself was likely to be permanent, and in spite of his personal confidence in Captain Shakespear it was with some misgiving that he consented to his visit.

it led could not leave him indifferent ; his relations with the Sharif had for some time been friendly.

In January 1915 they were acting in concert and Ibn Sa'ud told Captain Shakespear that in his view the Khalifate would revert to the family of the Prophet, of which the Sharif was the representative, if it passed out of the hands of the Sultan of Turkey. In November 1915, 'Abdullah re-appeared in Najd, with what object is not very clear.

But Ibn Sa'ud, barely emerged from a perilous contest in the Hasa, not unreasonably regarded the Sharif's enterprise as inopportune and even suspicious. (These sentiments were reflected in his conversations with Sir Percy Cox in December. He reminded the Chief Political Officer that the Wahhabis recognised no Khalif after the first four, and was careful to add that if the Sharif should assume the title, it would make no difference to his status among other ruling chiefs.) In June of the following year the Sharif rose in open rebellion against the Turks and declared the independence of the Arabs. Ibn Sa'ud, writing in July to the Chief Political Officer, acknowledged the receipt from him of official news with regard to the Hijaz, expressed his satisfaction at the discomfiture of the Turks, but put forward his own apprehensions that the Sharif might proceed to claim authority over parts of Najd, and in support of this fear observed that in declaring the independence of "the Arabs" the Sharif appeared to treat them as a compendious whole, an attitude which he regarded with anxiety. Nor is this attitude, in view of the history of Najd and of its relations to the Hijaz, unreasonable or unnatural: it has its origins deep in history: as in the 6th century, so now, the tribes of the Arabian peninsula fall into four or five divisions; each of which group themselves under their own notables and can no more be treated as a whole, or welded into one, than can the States of Europe at the present day. Syria, 'Iraq, Najd, Hijaz, Oman are not merely geographical expressions, but racial centres with a pedigree to which few European countries can aspire.

Ibn Sa'ud is now in Qasim, preparing renewed hostilities against our common enemy: he has recently received money and arms from us and it is hoped that his position is now strong enough to enable him to take the offensive again.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TREND OF TURKISH POLICY BEFORE THE WAR AND SINCE. (OFFICIAL.)

I.—INTERNAL POLITICS.

There has been a traditional friendship or sympathy for the Turkish Empire in the minds of many Englishmen in the past, and this sympathy still survives and tends to foster many misconceptions in regard to the existing state of affairs in the Ottoman Empire.

In the first place, we must distinguish between the people and the Government. The Ottoman people have qualities which get them a certain amount of credit; they are dignified, hospitable to strangers, courageous soldiers, moderately kind to animals, hard-working, fond of children, manly in appearance and honest in trade. On the other hand, they are cruel to subject races, backward, jealous and slow-witted. Further, it is a signal peculiarity of the Ottoman race to be abjectly submissive in the face of Government orders. This fault is often mistaken for discipline, but at root it is undoubtedly want of moral courage, arising from an unhappy combination of Moslem fatalism, Byzantine submissiveness to the power that is, and the unreasoning collective obedience of the Turkish Horde. Once Ottoman Turks fall under an alien Government as they have done in Greece, Bulgaria and the Caucasus, they become completely resigned to their fate, show no desire to re-assert themselves, and are as submissive to a Christian Government as they were to their own. This submissiveness or automatic response to orders is to be strongly insisted upon, because it banishes any hope of the Turkish peasantry or people ever rebelling against or even influencing the Government of the Ottoman Empire. Whoever is supreme at Constantinople is master throughout Turkish-speaking Turkey, and supremacy at Constantinople is in the hands of those who can control the secret police and the garrison. Some stress is laid on this particular point, because it is necessary to make it quite clear

that the qualities which cause Turks to be attractive to English travellers and writers have no influence on the political situation whatever.

A second factor in the situation is the recent realization of all political power in Constantinople. The Imperial traditions and the geographical situation of the city have saved the Ottoman Empire from one fertile source of dismemberment, and that is the oriental tendency for provincial governors to become founders of local independent dynasties. The destruction of the local feudal nobility in the latter part of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th has robbed the provinces of any power of independent action, the only persons not members of the bureaucracy now remaining in the Ottoman Empire who count as leaders being the desert Arab chieftains, a few of the Kurdish Aghas in the remoter fastnesses, and in a lower degree some of the notables of the cities of Damascus, Aleppo, Mosul and Baghdad.

Consequently, in the Ottoman Empire nothing counts except the bureaucracy, and bureaucracy is always at the mercy of those who control the Army and the treasury.

In analysing the interior forces of the Ottoman Empire the whole mass of the people may be dismissed as submissive and docile, while the bureaucracy is mechanically controlled by those who hold power at Constantinople. Formerly this power lay in the hands of the Sultan, the Palace, the inner ring of high functionaries and the Moslem clergy. Since the advent of the Committee of Union and Progress these elements have entirely disappeared, the Sultan has become a puppet, the Palace has been scattered, the older Ministers have retired or died off, the Moslem clergy has been completely tamed by terrorism, exactions and the appointment of religious chiefs such as the present Shaikh-ul-Islam and the Grand Chelabi of Konia, who had no connection whatever with religion before assuming office.

Wholesale executions, assassination, delation, exile and confiscation have crushed the possibility of a revolution of a real kind, though it must never be forgotten that the Committee of Union and Progress is always ready to engineer a revolution against itself for the purpose of reappearing in another role, or of ridding itself of some cumbrous appendage.

This evolution the Committee of Union and Progress has performed on different occasions. The first was during the

so-called counter-revolution of 1909. The Committee felt that the prestige of Abdul Hamid was too strong and that the Liberal Union showed signs of becoming a real political force. The *modus operandi* was as follows:—The Committee of Union and Progress officers were withdrawn to Salonika, the ignorant troops who formed the garrison at Constantinople were excited to mutiny by “agents provocateurs” in the pay of the Committee of Union and Progress who passed themselves off as agents of the Sultan. As a consequence the Liberal officers were murdered by their men who imagined they were acting according to the wishes of the Sultan. The Committee of Union and Progress returned to Constantinople with an army previously prepared for the purpose, as saviours of the situation, with their political opponents killed and a mandate to dethrone the Sultan and hang whomsoever they desired.

Again when the Turco-Italian War was nearing an unfavourable crisis, the Committee of Union and Progress retired and lay dormant until the Balkan situation became strained, then by means of mobs and demonstrations forced the Government into war, withdrew all Committee officers from the army on the eve of mobilisation, ensured defeat at Luli Burgas, remobilised the Committee officers, assassinated the Commander-in-Chief, overthrew the Government and retook Adrianople.

Subsequently, desiring to get an excuse to eradicate the last remnants of the Liberal Union, the Committee of Union and Progress on discovering a plot to assassinate Enver, Tala'at, Jemal and Shevket Pasha, and considering Shevket Pasha as an old man who had served his turn, they arrested all the conspirators but those detailed for his removal, and allowed him to be killed in order to have an excuse for arresting some 800 innocent persons whom they wished to put out of the way.

From these events it can be inferred that, should there be a spectacular revolution at Constantinople during the present war, it will not be improbable that it may have been engineered with the cognizance of the Committee of Union and Progress, and in any case it may be taken for granted that the people themselves are mere tools.

II.—EXTERNAL POLITICS.

The salient feature in the external relations of Turkey during the last 20 years has been the growth of German influ-

ence, consequent on the inception and development of German ambitions in the Near East. These ambitions, which revolved at first round Asia Minor as a promising field for German commerce and even for German colonization, expanded into wider hopes of domination which took concrete form in the Baghdad Railway project. If the Teutonic dream of supremacy in Western Asia had become a reality it must have entailed the complete subordination of Turkey, but though the political extinction of the Ottoman Empire stood at the end of the chapter, it was necessary at the outset to secure the aid of its armies, and the arrival at Constantinople of Von der Goltz at the head of a Military mission in 1882 may be regarded as the first move in the game. The sensational visit of the Emperor William to Palestine in 1898 and his protestation of undying friendship with the Sultan, whose responsibility for the Armenian massacres of 1897 had led to his being regarded as an assassin by the bulk of Christendom, marked the next forward step. The favours obtained by the Emperor in person at Constantinople crystalized into the Baghdad Railway Concession of 1902. Year by year the military element in Turkey was bound yet more closely to the chariot wheels of Germany, and German militarist ideals gained the upper hand in Ottoman Councils. The revolution of 1908 was a momentary set-back, and if the catchwords of Liberty and Equality which ushered in the Constitution had had any real meaning, German predominance would have been doomed, but Marschall von Bieberstein, most astute of Ambassadors to the Porte, was not long in gauging the underlying aims of the Committee of Union and Progress and in re-establishing with its leaders the position which his Government had enjoyed with the Sultan. The defeat of Turkey in the Balkans in 1913-1914 threw her irrevocably into the arms of the country which was credited with supreme knowledge of the arts of war, and when Europe stood at the threshold of universal conflict in 1914 the unshakable conviction of the Ottoman army that Germany was invincible, together with the traditional fear of Russia and the hope of recovering Egypt, directed the leaders of the Committee to a decision which, however, the fortunes of battle might turn, could result in nothing but disaster for Turkey.