

dan: of Hindoostan. They entertained an hereditary hatred against the city of Delhi, where Togh Bahadur, one of their famous warrior priests, was cruelly put to death, and where the limbs of the martyr were exposed at the gates. The Punjabees of all classes, Sikhs or Mahomedans, are fond of plunder, and the wealth of Delhi had been long notorious to all. The hope of sharing in such spoil turned the thoughts of many towards our service during the crisis. Then the whole people had been accustomed to regard our power as irresistible, and our prestige when the war broke out was mighty in their eyes. They saw that at least we held their country in considerable force, and that we were able to deal vigorously and severely with our mutinous Hindoostanees. They, perhaps, did not consider whether we were or were not equally strong elsewhere. At all events they may have been inclined to draw their conclusions from what passed before their immediate view. Then we began to engage the services of the more adventurous and excitable spirits all over the country in a popular expedition. Thus, the very class most likely to profit by disturbance, and to turn against us for the want of something better to do, were enlisted in our cause; and the idea got possession of their minds that (to use their own expression) the bread which the Hindoostanees had rejected would fall to the lot of the Punjabees. Many a man who sighed in retirement for the good old days of war and excitement, and who would have been ready to start up against us on the first sound of tumult, marched joyously off for Delhi, to earn abroad the living he could not get at home, and to share in the spoils of Hindoostan. Again, the Chief Commissioner believes it may be truly said, that the people had on the whole been well and kindly governed. They had no grievances to complain of, while they had solid and appreciable advantages to be thankful for. Though fanatical in some respects, they are less sensitive and suspicious in respect to caste and religion, less enslaved to prejudice than the Hindoostanees. Their minds had not been poisoned by malicious stories regarding the intentions of the British. The mass of the people had never been so prosperous, so easy in circumstances, as under British rule. Agriculture, commerce, material wealth of all kinds was increasing; the middle and lower classes were thriving and multiplying. In no parts was improvement more marked than in hill tracts like Huzara, and in the wild jungly tracts towards the south. In all parts there were numbers who could remember the evils which war and insecurity inflict; and for some time there were few or none who conceived that the cause of the mutineers could ever prosper. But it is never to be forgotten that the people were without arms. Even in a few years, the general disarming had produced a change in the national habits. The rougher and sturdier classes felt that they were unprepared for strife, and that they were destitute of one principal means of resistance. Then, fortunately, the class of men who once had been leaders in strife, and round whom the disaffected might rally, were scarcely to be found in the Punjab. State prisoners and dangerous characters had always been kept at a distance from their native province. This circumstance, without doubt, proved most opportune. The chiefs who remained, either with feudal possessions or with independent powers, were on our side to a man. In the days before our rule they had witnessed the effects of military anarchy, and knew that they themselves would be the first prey of an insurgent soldiery flushed with victory over their

lawful rulers. No respectable man wished to see the revival of a military domination, such as that with which the country was threatened, should the mutiny succeed. Those chiefs who had troops, perceived in the events of Hindoostan an example of what would next happen to themselves, and the aged Maha Rajah of Jummoo and Cashmere trembled, lest the scenes which he remembered at Lahore should be re-enacted in his old age by his own army.

47. On the whole, it must be said, in fairness, that the Punjab people behaved creditably, and deserve well of the British Government. There was no marked or extraordinary increase of violent crime; of lesser offences there was a positive decrease upon former years. In almost all districts the civil courts were open throughout the period of trouble, and there was no falling off in the amount of judicial business during the year. The land revenue was paid up to the last rupee; in the excise taxes there was actually an increase. Even the attendance of pupils at the Government schools did not materially diminish; and the public dispensaries were resorted to much as usual. All these points indicate that the people preserved an even mind; that they never mistrusted our intentions; that they were slow to doubt our power. Many of the chiefs rendered that degree of assistance which should claim the gratitude of Englishmen. The independent tribes on the frontier seemed either not to comprehend how really embarrassed we were, or else to be intent on plunder rather than conquest. They showed, in many instances, that their disposition towards us was bad, and were frequently meditating serious irruptions on various points; yet they did not make any systematic attempt to break through that British cordon of power, which, through the vast length of the frontier, has so long acted as a barrier against evil. The Affghans were in a position to cause us extreme embarrassment. But the friendly attitude of the Ameer's Government was doubtless in part the result of the treaty of 1855, and of the closer relations which subsisted since 1856, so greatly to his Highness's advantage. Such, so far as secondary human causes go, were apparently the reasons why the Punjabees remained true to the British during this most critical period. In enumerating these we must never forget to look up to the first Great Cause, namely, the Divine mercy towards us.

48. But the aspect of things, at first so encouraging, began gradually to be darkened over. When week after week, and month after month passed away, and the rebellion was not put down, the Punjabees then began to think that the British power could hardly recover from the repeated shocks it was sustaining. The accumulating odds against us seemed insuperable. When detachment after detachment of Europeans went out of the Punjab, and none came in; when the success of the mutineers reached through the land; when cantonment after cantonment in Hindoostan was destroyed and deserted by its soldiery, who rushed to Delhi; when incendiary letters arrived, figuratively indicating the position of the British in India, and saying that "many of the finest trees in the garden had fallen," that "white wheat had become very scarce, and country produce very abundant," that "hats were hardly to be seen, while turbans were plentiful;" then the Punjabees began to feel how utterly isolated we were, and how desperate was our cause. Their minds passed from confidence to doubt, then to mistrust, and then to disaffection. This last symptom had begun to set in, when Delhi fell. To the last, however, the Punjabees