

European Powers, and details of the Company's activities in regions as widely apart as St. Helena and the China Seas. The old General Records are open to students, while access to the older "Secret" papers kept in the Political Department, dealing with the conduct of Indian foreign policy, is allowed under special conditions for purposes of serious historical research. Much has been done in the way of calendaring, and the textual publication of, the East India Company's letters to its servants in the East; while a series of writers on Indian history, among whom may be mentioned Sir George Birdwood, Mr. F. C. Danvers, Mr. Sainsbury, Mr. S. C. Hill, Sir George Forrest, and Sir William Foster, have given to the public the results of their researches in the India Office Records.

Chapter XV

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR INDIA

The Stores Department—The Students Department

The High Commissioner is an officer of the Government of India located in London, who acts under instructions from his own Government, and whose establishment is entirely distinct from that of the India Office.

Lord Crewe's Committee in 1919 considered that "the time has come for a demarcation between the agency work of the India Office and its political and administrative functions, and that the step would commend itself to all classes of opinion in India as marking a stage towards full Dominion status." It therefore recommended the transfer of all agency work to "a High Commissioner for India or some similar Indian Governmental representative in London." The Act of the same year made provision for the appointment of a High Commissioner by His Majesty by Order in Council, which might delegate to the new official any of the contractual powers of the Secretary of State in Council, and prescribe the conditions under which he should act on behalf of the Government of India or any Provincial Government.* The necessary Order in Council was made on August 13th, 1920, and Sir William Meyer, ex-Member of

* Cmd. 207 of 1919, p. 11. Government of India Act, S.29A.

the Governor-General's Executive Council, was appointed to the new office, with an Indian, Mr. J. W. Bhore, also a member of the Covenanted Civil Service, as Secretary. The latter acted for six months as High Commissioner after the death of Sir William Meyer in 1922, and next year Sir Dadiba Dalal, a Parsi non-official who had been a Member of the Council of India, was appointed. On his resignation at the end of 1924 the office was conferred on Sir Atul Chatterjee, an officer of the Covenanted Civil Service, who, like the first High Commissioner, had been a Member of the Governor-General's Executive Council. The Indian High Commissioner enjoys the same status as his Dominion colleagues.

Certain classes of work obviously of an "agency" character were at once transferred from the India Office, such as a large section of the accounts, and the purchase, inspection and shipment of stores. But the line of demarcation was not easy to draw.

From the description already given of the position and responsibilities of the Secretary of State in Council towards the higher Services, it will be clear that questions of policy are involved in the recruitment of officers of the All-India Services, who are, therefore, still appointed by, and enter into engagements with, the Secretary of State in Council. The High Commissioner arranges for their probationary training and their passages to India, and to his Office has been transferred all the work connected with the payment of civil leave allowances and pensions, as well as the arrangements for civil officers sent to Europe for courses

of special study. The India Office retains all Military matters. Recruitment for the Government of India Central Services is at present for reasons of practical convenience divided between the two offices. But the High Commissioner selects men for the miscellaneous appointments under the Government of India, and any recruits, such as the Bengal Pilots, whom a Provincial Government wishes to engage in England. Amongst the functions that he has taken over comes the general supervision of India's participation in Imperial and International Exhibitions. He is closely concerned with the representation of Indian economic and commercial interests, and the Indian Trade Commissioner in London is now attached to his staff.

The Stores Department

The India Store Depôt at Lambeth, long maintained by the Secretary of State, has been transferred to the new authority, with the Stores Department, which has migrated over the river. The purchase of Government stores for India is a very large business, resembling that conducted by the Crown Agents for the Colonies, and the secretariat officials concerned with it are now housed with the technical experts who examine samples. The inspection of ships which carry Government stores is carried out by officers attached to the Stores Department, and the handling of the prize ships allocated to India during the War, which, under the control of the Shipping Adviser to the India Office was a conspicuous success, passed, with the services of that officer, to the High Commissioner

before the arrangement came to an end. Indian opinion is rightly desirous of supplying in India as far as possible the material needs of Government, and war conditions, with the interruption of ocean traffic, greatly increased the local production of manufactured articles. Out of the Indian Munitions Board has arisen the Government of India Stores Department, but the High Commissioner is employed to purchase such goods as the Government of India find it necessary to obtain from Europe. He is bound by the instructions received from India, where the development under the Reforms of the principle of fiscal autonomy has stimulated the interest of the Legislature in such matters. His headquarters in Grosvenor Gardens contains fine examples of Indian timbers used as wall panels.

Destitute Indians

Dominion High Commissioners in London perform many functions of a consular nature, and the High Commissioner for India is the authority to whom Indians stranded in this country appeal. The Secretary of State has no legal obligation to repatriate to India at the public expense Indians who become destitute here, except lascar seamen, but he found it possible to help on occasion cases of genuine distress. There have been pathetic cases of unsuccessful litigants of the peasant class who sold their little property in order to come to London to make an appeal for justice to the King-Emperor in person, or of Indian conjurers or actors engaged by dishonest managers and cheated and left destitute

on the Continent, whence the local British consul sent them to England. This malpractice was checked by a stringent section added to the Indian Emigration Act. The Strangers' Home for Asiatics in West India Dock Road, Limehouse, an admirable institution far too little known to or supported by the public, can give temporary shelter to such, and has often helped the official authorities to arrange for the repatriation of deserving persons. A small society with headquarters at 21, Cromwell Road, the Distressed Indian Students' Aid Committee, exists to help young Indians of the educated classes who fall into difficulties here, often because their parents do not realise the heavy cost of education and maintenance in England.

Indian Students

The Indian student in England often presents a more difficult problem than he is himself willing to admit. Admirable qualities are shown by many of these young men, but their knowledge of life when they arrive here is narrow, and, highly creditable as is the success which the majority of them achieve in their studies, the difficulties of unfamiliar customs and a strange language press hardly at the outset. Government scholars, selected at Indian Universities for special courses of study in England always came under the official guardianship of the India Office, but all others were obliged to make their own arrangements. Two non-official societies in London,* the National Indian Association and

* The Indian Gymkhana Club, and the Indian Y.M.C.A. Students' Union and Hostel, deserve mention as entirely

the Northbrook Club, existed mainly to provide meeting-places for young Indians and to foster friendly relations between them and English people, while a third, the East India Association, organised debates on Indian questions. But clubs do not fulfil the primary needs, and Indian students often suffered from the difficulty of finding suitable lodgings, and from lack of advice as to the best way of managing their usually small incomes. In 1907 Lord Morley appointed a small committee with Sir William Lee-Warner as chairman, "to inquire and report upon the position in this country of young Indians who come to England, otherwise than as Government scholars, to study for University degrees, or for the Bar or other professions; and to make recommendations." Their recommendations* resulted in the creation of a Bureau of Information for Indian students at the India Office in 1909 under Dr. (now Sir Thomas) Arnold, and in the establishment next year of a hostel in Cromwell Road at which students immediately on their arrival in London could be housed, and advised as to permanent quarters, and in which the National Indian Association and the Northbrook Club were installed. In 1912 the Bureau of Information was

non-official institutions of more recent origin. The latter, which has no religious propagandist aim, offers at times a rather stimulating diet of debates on highly controversial subjects, but no one can enjoy its hospitality without being impressed by the real services it does to young Indians, and by the excellent spirit of camaraderie that it has established.

* Lord Minto's Government at the time deprecated the publication of this Report, which discussed frankly and temperately, in 4½ out of its 34 pages, the tendency of many of the students to

enlarged into an Indian Students' Department at the India Office under Mr. (now Sir Charles) Mallet. A system of Advisory Committees in correspondence with the Department was established in the principal Indian cities. The Department accepted the actual guardianship of youths whose parents desired this, and tried to supply to all Indian students who sought its help information as to educational facilities and to suitable quarters, and to aid them in obtaining admission to Universities, Inns of Court, hospitals, engineering and other technical schools, and manufacturers' works. In 1920 it was transferred to the High Commissioner. Next year the Secretary of State appointed under the chairmanship of the Earl of Lytton a committee of ten, with four Indian members, to report on "the adequacy of existing arrangements in India for facilitating the access of Indian students to the United Kingdom" and on questions connected with Indian students here. But as the Legislative Assembly refused to vote funds to enable the Committee to visit India, the primary object of its appointment could not be attained. Its Report,* however, is one of great interest, containing much information not to be found elsewhere. The Committee's recommendations that the Indian Students' Department should

association with extreme political views, and the Secretary of State could not in the circumstances press the matter. Consequently, for fifteen years a cloud of suspicion enveloped the Students' Department.

* "Report of the Committee on Indian Students, 1921-22," with Evidence. H.M.'s Stationery Office, 1922. The full text of the Report of the Lee-Warner Committee of 1907 is printed as an Appendix.

be brought to an end and the Cromwell Road Hostel abolished were not accepted, but its opinion that the development of education in India affords the only permanent solution of the problem can hardly be disputed and is already bearing fruit. The main attraction of the British Universities in the past was due to the system that confined the higher openings in the Government services to men appointed in London, and to the advantages conferred on legal practitioners in India by Call to the Bar here, a question which is being considered by the Indian authorities.* Though Indian students still come in greater numbers† than the older Universities can admit, the fact is being increasingly recognised that post-graduate studies and technological courses afford the chief advantages to be derived by Indians from completing their education in this country.

* Lord Haldane's advocacy of the creation of an Indian Bar is expressed in pp. 157-159 of the Lytton Committee's Evidence.

† The Lytton Committee estimated the number of Indian students in the British Isles at the end of 1921 at 1,450. There are probably some hundreds in the United States, while France, Germany, Switzerland and Japan attract an appreciable number.

Chapter XVI

THE INDIA OFFICE AND ITS STAFF

The Building and its Plenishings

"The India Office," wrote Sir Alfred Lyall to a friend, "is comfortable and convenient, but rather depressing." For him, as for many other distinguished Indian administrators, it was the building in which for a few sedentary years at the end of a stirring Indian career they rendered their final services to the State. "The India Office," said an enthusiastic Member of Parliament after an interview with a somewhat sceptical official to whom he was denouncing alleged abuses, "is like Hell. I paced along miles of gloomy corridors, and at the end I met the Devil himself!" It must have melancholy associations for officers on sick leave who come to learn from a Medical Board that their Indian service is over, but possibly a more cheerful character for the numerous pensioners who like to draw their payments in person.

The exterior of the India Office with its flagstaff tower is seen at its best from the suspension bridge over the water in St. James's Park, and the trees and waterfowl of the park make the building a more cheerful prison-house for that part of the staff inhabiting the west side than it is for their colleagues who look out (if they have time) on the Foreign Office quadrangle or the narrow thoroughfare of