

Fifth Cause.—The arrangements of the Government, in its Military Department, were always objectionable. It was a grievous mistake to keep a small force of European troops in the country. When Nádír Shah conquered Khorasán, and brought under his sway two such different countries as Persia and Afghanistan, he raised and equipped two armies equally strong, the one composed of Persian Kazalbashes, and the other of Afghans. Whenever the former showed symptoms of mutiny, the latter were ready to bring them to order; and similarly, when the latter wavered in their allegiance, the former were equally prepared to chastise them. Such however was not done by the British in India, when they assumed the Government of the country. I acknowledge that the Native troops had been very obedient, loyal, and devoted to the Government; but I am wholly at a loss to account for the prevailing belief that these troops would never disobey orders, or that no measure could sow discontent or dissatisfaction in their ranks; and, under such circumstances, what means had our Government at hand for quelling, immediately, a mutiny of these troops?

It is true that the Government had drawn its soldiers, and recruited its Military service, from antagonistic races, *viz.* Hindus and Mosalmans. But the natural antagonism of these races was to a great extent neutralized by their being enrolled in one and the same Regiment. It is plain that soldiers belonging to the same Regiment, are apt to become much attached to each other, in consequence of their living together, as it were members of the same family. Accordingly Sepoys of the same Regiment looked upon each other as brethren, and the result was that the distinction between Hindu and Mosalman ceased to be perceptible. Whatever one man of a Corps thought proper to do, all unanimously approved and took part in its performance, each assisting the other. Had Regiments been composed, some wholly and exclusively of Mosalmans, and others similarly of Hindus, it is most probable that this feeling of brotherly

attachment would not have existed, while that antagonism of race between the two nations would have been maintained. I am disposed, moreover, to think that under such circumstances the Mohamadans would not have objected to bite the new cartridges.

Owing to the paucity of European troops, the people were in great dread of the Sepoys. Besides, the latter had grown inordinately proud. They seemed to have become regardless of all but themselves, and thought lightly of the European soldiers. They were of opinion that all the British conquests in Hindoostan had been acquired by their power, and they used to boast that *they* had won for the Government the whole country from Burmah to Cabul. After the conquest of the Punjab, their insolence became so unbounded, that upon the slightest provocation they were ready to come to blows; and I should not be surprised to hear, considering the height their pride and arrogance had reached, that they were in the habit of disputing the orders of their officers, when directed to march from one station to another.

At a time when the disposition of the Sepoys was as above described, and when they were firmly impressed with the belief that the Government would succumb to any demands they chose to make, they were ordered to use the new cartridges, which they *really* believed to be composed of lard,—a thing they could not touch without losing their religion. Accordingly they refused to bite them. When the 19th Regiment Native Infantry was disbanded at Barrakpoor for this crime, and the order read, the Native Regiments throughout the country, became greatly mortified; because, being convinced that the use of the cartridges involved the loss of their religion, they felt that their Barrakpoor comrades had committed no fault, but had been unjustly dismissed by the Government. Accordingly the Native army became intensely dissatisfied and said—“To Government we have ever remained faithful; for Government we have sacrificed our lives; for Government we have won Province after Province; and Government now seeks to deprive us of our religion, and has dismissed our comrades for offering

reasonable objections to forfeit it." Up to this time, however, no disturbance had taken place. No severer measures than dismissal had been adopted; but from the operation of several causes, viz., a belief that the new cartridges were mixed with lard, dissatisfaction at the dismissal of the Barrakpore Sepoys, and particularly that excessive pride and self sufficiency before alluded to, the Sepoys unanimously and firmly resolved not to use the cartridges, let the consequences be what they might. Certainly after the Barrakpore affair, the Sepoys sent communications to each other,

The league of the Indian Army against the use of the new cartridges, formed after January 1857.

exhorting their Native brethren not to use the cartridges; but at this period, though discontented and sulky, I am not of opinion that any seditious or re-

bellious intentions had been formed.

At last the ill-fated month of May 1857, arrived. At Meerut

The impropriety of punishing the Non Commissioned Officers at Meerut which touched the vanity of the Indian forces.

certain Sepoys were then very severely punished. The measures adopted on that occasion were justly disapproved of by every prudent and wise man. It is

impossible to convey an adequate notion of the dissatisfaction felt by the men at the infliction of this punishment. They called to mind the medals which decorated their breasts, and wept as they beheld the manacles which disgraced their legs. They remembered their previous faithful services, and contrasted with them the reward they had received; besides, while their pride and insolence, which had taught them to think so highly of themselves, made them feel their degradation the more deeply. The whole of the Native troops cantoned at Meerut became impressed with the conviction that they too would have to use the cartridges, or to suffer the same fate. Accordingly, in this state of mind, they on the 10th May broke out into open mutiny, and committed outrages perhaps unparalleled in the history of the world. After this no other course was open to them but to invite others to join them, and to make the insurrection as general as possible.

The news of these disturbances caused great excitement

Want of confidence of the Sepoys in Government after the occurrences which took place at Meerut.

among the troops in the different stations. The atrocities committed by the 3rd Cavalry at Meerut left no

doubt on the minds of the Sepoys that the Government would no longer have any confidence in their faithfulness, and that punishment would be dealt out to them whenever the opportunity occurred. For this reason they placed no faith in the words or promises of their officers. They used to say to each other—"These fine words and promises are all made for the occasion, just wait until the crisis is passed, and you shall see how they will treat us." I speak correctly when I state that among the rebels who had assembled at Delhi, there were thousands who repented of having committed so many atrocious acts, and of having taken part in the mutiny. They bitterly lamented their misfortune, and cursed their unhappy fate. At the same time, however, they were of opinion that they could not help acting as they had done; for even had they not mutinied, the Government which no longer had any faith in the fidelity of the Native Army, would have annihilated them at the first favorable opportunity. At the beginning of the mutiny when troops had not yet marched to the Hindan, it was the opinion of various parties, that the moment Delhi should be attacked it would be the signal for a general mutiny of the whole Native Army. Nor was the result at variance with these anticipations. The reasons are obvious; for when once the mutineers had been attacked, it was impossible that the rest of the army could have any confidence in the Government, which, it implicitly believed, would turn its arms against them, after their brethren had been put to death. Accordingly they all turned unfaithful, and Corps after Corps mutinied. Those who were not evil disposed, could not help joining their comrades, as they all belonged to the same Army. The Native subjects of the Government were under an impression that the British had no other troops but the Sepoys, and accordingly when the report of the disaffection and mutiny of the whole Native Army was circulated, the people ceased to have any regard for the authority of the Government, and the whole country was filled with rebellion.

I beg now to offer a few remarks on the state of the Punjab.

Why the mutiny did not break out in the Punjab.

The Mosalmans in that province had been severely persecuted by the Sikhs. Under the British Government they had had little or no injury to complain of. British rule, it is true, had been inaugurated in the province with certain strong measures, but it was gradually becoming milder and milder, contrary to the state of affairs in Hindoostan Proper, where a precisely different policy was pursued. After its annexation, the whole province was completely disarmed, and, accordingly, none, however evil disposed, had the means of creating disturbances. Though the Sikhs had lost their power and wealth, the money they had acquired had not yet been wholly expended, and that poverty, therefore, which had overtaken the Natives of Hindoostan, had not yet befallen those of the Punjab. Besides all this, there were three distinct causes why the Punjab did not join in the rebellion. *Firstly*, the presence of British troops in the province. *Secondly*, the timely disarmament of all the Native corps, carried out so prudently and with so much tact by the authorities, before the Sepoys could have any notion of their intentions. In consequence moreover of the swollen state of the rivers, and the closing of the *Ghāts*, the Sepoys were quite shut in and helpless. *Thirdly*, all the turbulent characters among the Sikhs Panjabis and Pathans (from whom disturbances had been anticipated), enlisted in the service of the Government. Incited by an inordinate thirst for plunder, they could gratify it with ease and honor in the service of Government, while the followers of the rebels could only attain the same end by incurring disgrace and great danger. It appears, therefore, that the circumstances of Hindoostan Proper and the Punjab were wholly dissimilar.

THE END.

MEMORANDUM.

An Essay on the causes of the Indian Revolt by Syud Ahmed Khan, Principal Sudder Ameen of Moradabad.

I HAVE read this paper, and proceed to note briefly such remarks as occur to me.

The opening remarks, regarding the Queen's Gracious Proclamation, do correctly represent Native opinion. Natives generally say that its merciful and considerate spirit had the best effect.

After defining rebellion, the author goes on to say—"There is but one thing which causes rebellious intentions to arise in the mind, *viz.* the introduction of measures unsuited to the disposition, or to the wishes, institutions, or customs of those who rebel."

It is evident that, though such a cause may be of great importance, yet there may be *other* causes. I notice this here because the author starting with this idea, tries afterwards to show that the British Government brought on the rebellion by certain measures it adopted, from which conclusion I, for one, dissent.

Then the author clears the ground by mentioning various things which did *not* cause the rebellion. This part of the *Essay* is very true. He shows that there could have been no conspiracy; that Russia and Persia could have had nothing to do with it; that the King of Delhi could not have raised such a storm; that the domination of foreigners is not necessarily distasteful to the people; that no regular Mahomedan "Jehad" or Crusade had been preached.

In this part of the *Essay* too there is a passage worthy of particular perusal.

The author says that in the early days of our rule "the people and chiefs were inclined towards our Government. The report of its justice, mercy, generosity, faith, and treaties, and admirable arrangements for ensuring happiness to the people and peace in the country, had made the neighbouring Hindoo and Mahomedan states wish to be taken under its protection."