

reign is to redeem, and explaining the principles of her government. Such a document should breathe feelings of generosity, benevolence, and religious toleration, and point out the privileges which the Indians will receive in being placed on an equality with the subjects of the British Crown, and the prosperity following in the train of civilization.'

The draft proclamation spoke of the power which the British government possessed for the undermining of the native religious customs. Her Majesty disapproved of the expression which declared that she had such power. The draft also alluded to the relief of poverty as one of the government's endeavours, and the Queen thought the idea should be expanded, so as to indicate the hope that the future prosperity of India might be assured by the building of railways, canals, and telegraphs—the utility of which policy has been demonstrated to the populations of that country during the recent period of famine, in the employment of the needy and the starving on public works. Her Majesty's suggestions were accepted. They were the inspiration of her own tender womanly heart. They were words of wisdom, and assisted in the restoration of peace, which has ever since continued. The words of a Christian toleration found in that proclamation were worthy of so great and good a sovereign. Her Majesty said: 'Firmly relying ourselves on the truth of Christianity, and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of religion, we disclaim alike the right and the desire to impose our convictions on any of our own subjects. We declare it to be our royal will and pleasure that none be in any wise favoured, none molested or disquieted by reason of their religious faith or observances, but that all shall enjoy alike the equal and impartial protection of the law; and we do strictly charge and enjoin all those who may be in authority under us that they abstain from all interference with the religious belief or worship of any of our subjects, on pain of our highest displeasure,' and so Queen Victoria became enthroned in the hearts of her Hindoo subjects.

After the Sepoy rebellion had been suppressed, and the sovereignty of the Queen once more clearly established, British au-

thority was both extended and consolidated in India. The political functions of the East India Company came to an end, and the government of the Crown over the whole vast empire of India was directly established.

During the reign of Queen Victoria, British authority assumed a much more tangible shape in Africa than before. For many years, the English government exercised, through consuls and other officers, a great influence over the chiefs and Sultans on many parts of the coast, all the way from the Cameroons, on the west, to Aden, on the east. Many British statesmen had come to the conclusion that, at no distant day, the principles of free trade would be generally recognized by the great nations of Christendom. It was believed that no matter into whose hands territories might fall, the commercial door would remain open, and no barrier would be placed by one state in the way of the commerce of another extending into territories which were not colonized by settlement, but which had been brought under civilized jurisdiction. This illusion was dispelled by the Berlin conference in 1884, after which it became evident that territories acquired by a state would be treated as a commercial preserve, and the inhabitants would not be able to trade with those of any other country than the one under whose jurisdiction it had been brought. This led, not only to a complete change in the policy of the mother country, but it altered the relations in which Great Britain stood to the semi-nomadic population of those states that had been formed north of Cape Colony, by the descendants of the Dutch, who had gone into the interior of the continent, for the purpose of enjoying an immunity from all legal control. The mistaken notions, formed by British statesmen during the early portion of Her Majesty's reign, undoubtedly led to the war which was, in all probability, a source of anxiety to her, at its close.

The British Empire, it was thought by statesmen of a former generation, was composed of self-governing communities that must, as soon as they acquired ability to stand alone, assume the responsibility of setting up independent states on their own account. This notion has entirely disap-