

of the Rohilla business was Eastern seems really about the worst that can be said of it, and the Rohillas themselves were a marauding tribe. It is not alleged that Hastings was personally the gainer by what he did. Francis, who inspired Burke, was a venomous knave, and Burke, with all his glories of style, was a raving enthusiast who, by his violence, brought down upon himself the censure of his own client, the House of Commons. Was anything more unfair or more mischievous ever written than Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution"?

The rule of the Company in India was a rule of merchants. Dividends were its sole object. It strictly abstained from territorial aggrandisement. It touched no moral or social reforms. It nervously respected native superstitions, even those of the worst kind, such as Suttee and Juggernaut. It discouraged the preaching of Christianity. One of its agents in swearing to a treaty with natives, invoked the native deities. Leadenhall Street seems to have done absolutely nothing in the way of improvement or beneficence.

With a transfer of the supreme power from Leadenhall to Downing Street, with the appointment of a Governor-General, and one so enterprising and energetic as Wellesley, came a marked change from the commercial to the political and social as the object of Government. Political and social the object was, and one of civilisation rather than of territorial aggrandisement. The native powers were half barbarous, intriguing, restless. There was constant liability to aggression on their part, and consequently to desolating war. The last of them which was encountered, that of the Sikhs, was aggressive and unprovoked. The conquest of Scinde by Napier seems to be about the only clear case of the aggressive kind, and in this appeared the spirit of Napier rather than that of British policy. A good deal of territory after all has

been left under the rule of native princes, though necessarily controlled by the Empire.

From that time onwards it may truly be said that the rule, alien, and therefore hardly beloved, has been one of beneficent intention. That it should not always have been intelligent and happily inspired was almost inevitable. The land settlement of Cornwallis in Bengal was far from happily inspired and bad was the result. But nothing could have been better meant. In law and its administration there may have been too much of British technicality, but Eastern unverity has probably also been fully as much in the way of justice. There has been an end of the barbarous punishments of the East. A reform of the Zenana, which has been sought, would probably be perilous. Education has been heartily promoted; though its extension, exciting ambition, was not free from danger, as now appears. The native religions, when free from cruelty or immorality, have been respected. At the same time free course has been given to Christianity, though the fruits of missionary enterprise do not seem to have been very great, the diversity of Churches probably standing in the way.

With Imperial rule in the person of Cornwallis came an end of the extortions and peculations which had disgraced the traders' rule, and though checked by Clive, had not been brought to an end till power passed into the hands of the Crown.

When all is said, and whatever may be the estrangement of race, no Empire of race which has ever existed can be compared in mildness and beneficence with British Empire in India; not the Roman Empire even under Augustus, Trajan, or the Antonines. Early in the series of Roman Emperors come Nero and Caligula, with a delirium of tyranny. In the earlier period the provincials enjoyed comparative freedom from war, though by no means from military