GLIMPSES OF WORLD HISTORY

BEING FURTHER LETTERS TO HIS DAUGHTER
WRITTEN IN PRISON, AND CONTAINING
A RAMBLING ACCOUNT OF HISTORY
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

With 50 maps by
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Gopal Krishna Gokhale, a very able man who had devoted his life to service. Gokhale was also from Maharashtra. Tilak and he faced each other from their rival groups and, inevitably, the split came in 1907 and the Congress was divided. The moderates continued to control the Congress, the extremists were driven out. The moderates won, but it was at the cost of their popularity in the country, for Tilak's party was far more popular with the people. The Congress became weak and for some years had little influence.

And what of the government during these years? How did it react to the growth of Indian nationalism? Governments have only one method of meeting an argument or a demand which they do not like—the use of the bludgeon. So the government indulged in repression and sent people to prison, and censored the newspapers with Press laws, and let loose crowds of secret policemen and spies to shadow everybody they did not like. Since those days the members of the C.I.D. in India have been the constant companions of prominent Indian politicians. Many of the Bengal leaders were sentenced to imprisonment. The most noted trial was that of Lokamanya Tilak, who was sentenced to six years, and who during his imprisonment in Mandalay wrote a famous book. Lala Lajpat Rai was also deported to Burma.

But repression did not succeed in crushing Bengal. So a measure of reform in the administration was hurried up to appease some people at least. The policy was then, as it was later and is now, to split up the nationalist ranks. The moderates were to be "rallied" and the extremists crushed. In 1908 these new reforms, called the Morley-Minto reforms, were announced. They succeeded in "rallying the moderates," who were pleased with them. The extremists, with their leaders in gaol, were demoralized and the national movement weakened. In Bengal, however, the agitation against the partition continued and ended with success. In 1911 the British Government reversed the partition of Bengal. This triumph put new heart in the Bengalis. But the movement of 1907 had spent itself, and India relapsed into political apathy.

In 1911 also it was proclaimed that Delhi was to be the new capital—Delhi, the seat of many an empire, and the grave also of many an empire.

So stood India in 1914 when the World War broke out in Europe and ended the 100-year period. That war also affected India tremendously, but of that I shall have something to say later.

I have done, at long last, with India in the twentieth century. I have brought you to within eighteen years of to-day. And now we must leave India and, in the next letter, go to China and examine another type of imperialist exploitation.

BRITAIN FORCES OPIUM ON CHINA

December 14, 1902

I have told you, at considerable length, of the effect of the Industrial and Mechanical Revolutions on India, and of how the new imperialism worked in India. Being an Indian, I am a partisan, and I am afraid I cannot help taking a partisan view. But I have tried, and I should like you to try, to consider these questions as a scientist impartially examining facts, and not as a nationalist out to prove one side of the case. Nationalism is good in its place, but it is an unreliable friend and an unsafe historian. It blinds us to many happenings, and sometimes distorts the truth, especially when it concerns us or our country. So we have to be wary, when considering the recent history of India, lest we cast all the blame for our misfortunes on the British.

Having seen how India was exploited in the nineteenth century by the industrialists and capitalists of Britain, let us go to the other great country of Asia, India's old-time friend, that ancient among nations, China. We shall find here a different type of exploitation by the West. China did not become a colony or dependency of any European country, as India did. She escaped this, as she had a strong enough central government to hold the country together till about the middle of the nineteenth century. India, as we have seen, had gone to pieces more than 100 years before this, when the Moghal Empire fell. China grew weak in the nineteenth century, but still it held together to the last, and the mutual jealousies of foreign Powers prevented them from taking too much advantage of China's weakness.

In my last letter on China (it was number 94) I told you of the attempts made by the British to increase their trade with China. I gave you a long quotation from the very superior and patronizing letter written by the Manchu Emperor Chien Lung in answer to the English King George III. This was in 1792. This date will remind you of the stormy times that Europe was having then—it was the period of the French Revolution. And this was followed by Napoleon and the Napoleonic wars. England had her hands full during this whole period and was fighting desperately against Napoleon. There was no question thus of an extension of the China trade for her till Napoleon fell and England breathed with relief. Soon after, however, in 1816, another British embassy was sent to China. But there was some difficulty about the ceremonial to be observed, and the Chinese Emperor refused to see the British envoy, Lord Amherst, and ordered him to go back. The ceremony to be performed was called the kotow, which is a kind of prostration on the ground. Perhaps you have heard of the word "kow-towing".

So nothing happened. Meanwhile a new trade was rapidly
BRITAIN FORCES OPium ON CHINA

BRITAIN and CHINA

Mountains & highlands

Korea

Main points of British penetration

FRENCH INDIA

CHINA

Officials to overlook this. The Chinese Government thereupon made a rule that their officials were not to meet foreign merchants. Severe penalties were also laid down for teaching the Chinese or Manchu languages to any foreigner. But all this was to no purpose. The opium trade continued, and there was probably a great deal of bribery and corruption. Indeed, matters became worse after 1834, when the British Government put an end to the monopoly of the East India Company in the China trade, and threw this open to all British merchants.

There was a sudden increase in opium-smuggling, and the Chinese Government at last decided to take strong action to suppress it. They chose a good man for this purpose. Lin Tse-hsi was appointed a special commissioner to suppress the smuggling, and he took swift and vigorous action. He went down to Canton in the south, which was the chief centre for this illegal trade, and ordered all the foreign merchants there to deliver to him all the opium they had. They refused to obey the order at first. Thereupon Lin forced them to obey. He cut them off in their factories, made their Chinese workers and servants leave them, and allowed no food to go to them from outside. This vigour and thoroughness resulted in the foreign merchants coming to terms and handing over to the Chinese 20,000 cases of opium. Lin had this huge quantity of opium, which was obviously meant for smuggling purposes, destroyed. Lin also told the foreign merchants that no ship would be allowed to enter Canton unless the captain gave an undertaking that he would not bring opium. If this promise was broken, the Chinese Government would confiscate the ship and its entire cargo. Commissioner Lin was a thorough person. He did the work entrusted to him well, but he did not realize that the consequences were going to be hard on China.

The consequences were: war with Britain, defeat of China, a humiliating treaty; and opium, the very thing the Chinese Government wanted to prohibit, forced down their throats. Whether opium was good or bad for the Chinese was immaterial. What the Chinese Government wanted to do did not much matter; but what did matter was that smuggling opium into China was a very profitable job for British merchants, and Britain was not prepared to tolerate the loss of this income. Most of the opium destroyed by Commissioner Lin belonged to British merchants. So, in the name of national honour, Britain went to war with China in 1840. This war is rightly called the Opium War, for it was fought and won for the right of forcing opium on China.

China could do little against the British fleet which blockaded Canton and other places. After two years she was forced to submit, and in 1842 the Treaty of Nanking laid down that five ports were to be opened to foreign trade, which meant especially the opium trade then. These five ports were Canton, Shanghai, Amoy, Ningpo, and Foochow. They were called the "treaty ports." Britain also took possession of the island of Hongkong, near Canton, and extorted a large sum of money as compensation for the opium
that had been destroyed, and for the costs of the war which she had forced on China.

Thus the British achieved the victory of opium. The Chinese Emperor made a personal appeal to Queen Victoria, England's Queen at the time, pointing out with all courtesy the terrible effects of the opium trade which was now forced on China. There was no reply from the Queen. Just fifty years earlier his predecessor, Chien Lung, had written very differently to the King of England!

This was the beginning of China's troubles with the imperialist Powers of the West. Her isolation was at an end. She had to accept foreign trade; and she had to accept, in addition, Christian missionaries. These missionaries played an important part in China as the vanguard of imperialism. Many of China's subsequent troubles had something to do with missionaries. Their behaviour was often insolent and exasperating, but they could not be tried by Chinese courts. Under the new treaty, foreigners from the West were not subject to Chinese law or Chinese justice. They were tried by their own courts. This was called "extra-territoriality", and it still exists, and is much resented. The converts of the missionaries also claimed this special protection of "extra-territoriality". They were no way entitled to it; but that made no difference, as the great missionary, the representative of a powerful imperialist nation, was behind them. Thus village was sometimes set against village, and when, exasperated beyond measure, the villagers or others rose and attacked the missionary, and sometimes killed him, then the imperialist Power behind swooped down and took signal reparation. Few occurrences have been so profitable to European Powers as the murders of their missionaries in China! For they made each such murder the occasion for demanding and extorting further privileges.

It was also a convert to Christianity who started one of the most terrible and cruel rebellions in China. This was the Taiping Rebellion, started about 1850 by a half-mad person, Hung Hsin-Chuan. This religious maniac had extraordinary success and went about with the war cry "Kill the idolaters", and vast numbers of people were killed. The rebellion devastated more than half China, and during a dozen years or so it is estimated that at least 20,000,000 people died on account of it. It is not right, of course, to hold the Christian missionaries or the foreign powers responsible for this outbreak and the massacres which accompanied it. At first the missionaries seemed to bless it, but later they repudiated Hung. The Chinese Government, however, continued to believe that the Christian missionaries were responsible for it. This belief makes us realize how greatly the Chinese resented missionary activities then and later. To them the missionary did not come as a messenger of religion and good-will. He was the agent of imperialism. As an English author has said: "First the missionary, then the gunboat, then the land-grabbing—this is the procession of events in the Chinese mind." It is well to bear this in mind, as the missionary crops up often enough in Chinese troubles.

BRITAIN FORCES OPIUM ON CHINA

It is extraordinary that a rebellion led by a mad fanatic should have had such great success before it was finally suppressed. The real reason for this was that the old order in China was breaking up. In my last letter on China, I think I told you of the burden of taxation and the changing economic conditions and the growing discontent of the people. Secret societies were rising everywhere against the Manchu Government, and there was rebellion in the air. Foreign trade, the trade in opium and other articles, made matters worse. Foreign trade China had had, of course, in the past. But now the conditions were different. The big machine-industry of the West was turning out goods fast, and these could not all be sold at home. So they had to find markets elsewhere. This was the urge for markets in India as well as in China. These goods, and especially opium, upset the old trade arrangements, and thus made the economic confusion worse. In India, the price of articles in the Chinese bazaars began to be affected by the world prices. All this added to the discontent and misery of the people and strengthened the Taiping Rebellion.

This was the background in China during these days of growing arrogance and interference by the Western Powers. It is not surprising that China could do little to withstand their demands. These European Powers and much later Japan, as we shall see, took full advantage of China's confusion and difficulties to extort privileges and territory from her. China, indeed, would have gone the way of India, and become the dependency and empire of one or more of the Western Powers and Japan, but for the mutual rivalry of these Powers and their jealousy of each other.

I have tried to tell you from my own story in telling you about this general background during the nineteenth century in China, of economic breakdown, Taiping Rebellion, missionaries, and foreign aggression. But one must know something of this to be able to follow intelligently the narrative of events. For events in history do not just happen like miracles. They occur because a variety of causes lead up to them. But these causes are often not obvious; they lie under the surface of events. The Manchu rulers of China, till recently so great and powerful, must have been amazed at the sudden change of fortune's wheel. They did not see, probably, that the roots of their collapse lay in their own past; they did not appreciate the industrial progress of the West and its disastrous consequences on China's economic system. They resented greatly the intrusions of the "barbarian" foreigners. The Emperor at the time, referring to these intrusions, used a delightful old Chinese phrase: he said that he would allow no man to snoop alongside of his bed! But the wisdom and humour of the old classics, though they taught a serene confidence and a magnificent fortitude in misfortune, were not enough to repel the foreigner.

The Treaty of Nanking opened the door to Britain in China. But Britain was not going to have all the fat plums to herself. France and the United States stepped in and also made commercial treaties with China. China was helpless, and this compulsion
exercised on her did not make her love or respect the foreigner. She resented the very presence of these "barbarians." The foreigner, on his side, was still far from content. His appetite for exploiting China grew. The British again took the lead.

It was a very favourable time for the foreigners, as China was busy with the Taiping Rebellion and could offer no resistance. So the British set about to find a pretext for war. In 1856 the Chinese Viceroy of Canton had the Chinese crew of a ship arrested for piracy. The ship belonged to the Chinese, and no foreigner was involved. But it flew the British flag because of a permit from the Hongkong Government. As it happened, even this permit had expired. None the less, as in the fable of the wolf and the lamb at the river, the British Government made this the excuse for war.

Troops were sent to China from England. Just then the Indian Revolt of 1857 broke out, and all these troops were diverted to India. The China War had to wait till the Revolt was crushed. In 1858 this second China War began. The French, meanwhile, had also discovered a pretext for taking part in it, for a French missionary had been killed somewhere in China. So the English and the French swooped down on the Chinese, who had their hands full with the Taiping Rebellion. The British and the French Governments tried to induce Russia and the United States of America to join them, but they did not agree. They were quite prepared, however, to share in the loot. There was practically no fighting, and new treaties, extorting more privileges, were signed by all the four Powers with China. More ports were opened to foreign trade.

But the story of the Second China War is not yet over. There was another act to the play, with a still more tragic sequel to it. When treaties are made it is customary for the governments concerned to ratify or confirm them. It was arranged that this ratification of the new treaties should take place within a year at Peking. When the time came for this, the Russian envoy came direct to Peking, overland from Russia. The other three came by sea and wanted to bring their boats up the river Peiho to Peking. This city was being threatened by the Taiping rebels just then, and the river had been fortified. The Chinese Government therefore asked the British, French and American envoys not to come by the river route, but to travel by a land route farther north. It was not an unreasonable request. The American agreed to it. Not so the British and French envoys. They tried to force their way up the Peiho river in spite of the fortifications. The Chinese fired upon them and forced them back with heavy losses.

It was being overthrown government after government, which would not even listen to a request from the Chinese Government to change their route to travel, could not tolerate this. More troops were sent for to take vengeance. In 1860 they marched on the old city of Peking, and their vengeance took the form of the destruction and looting and burning of one of the most wonderful buildings in the city. This was the Imperial Summer Palace, the Yuen-Ming-Yuen, completed in the reign of Chien Lung. It was full of rare treasures of art and literature, the finest that China had produced. There were old bronzes of great beauty, and amazingly fine porcelain, and rare manuscripts, and pictures and every kind of curio and work of art for which China had been famous for 1000 years. The Anglo-French soldiery, ignorant vandals that they were, looted these treasures and destroyed them in huge bonfires which kept burning for many days! Is it any wonder that the Chinese, with a culture of thousands of years behind them, looked upon this vandalism with anguish in their hearts, and considered the wreckers ignorant barbarians who only knew how to kill and destroy? And memories of the Huns and the Mongols and many other old-time barbarian wreckers must have come to them.

But the foreign "barbarians" cared little what the Chinese thought of them. They felt secure in their gunboats and with their modern weapons of war. What did it matter to them that the rich and rare treasures which had been collected during hundreds of years were no more? What did they care for Chinese art and culture?

"Whatever happens,
We have got
The Maxim gun,
And they have not!"

CHINA IN DIFFICULTIES

December 24, 1932

In my last letter I told you of the destruction by the British and French of the wonderful Summer Palace of Peking in 1860. This was done, it is said, as a punishment for a Chinese violation of a flag of truce. It may have been true that some Chinese troops had been guilty of such an offence, but still the deliberate vandalism of the British and French almost passes one's comprehension. This was not the act of a few ignorant soldiers, but of the men in authority. Why do such things happen? The English and the French are civilized and cultured peoples, in many ways the leaders of modern civilization. And yet these people, who in private life are decent and considerate, forget all their civilization and decency in their public dealings and conflicts with other people. There seems to be a strange contrast between the behaviour of individuals to each other and the behaviour of nations. Children and boys and girls are taught not to be too selfish, to think of others, to behave properly. All our education is meant to teach us this lesson, and to a small extent we learn it. And then comes war, and we forget our old lesson, and the brute in us shows his face. So decent people behave like brutes.
This is so even when two kindred nations, like the French and Germans, fight each other. But it is far worse when different races are in conflict; when the European faces the races and peoples of Asia and Africa. The different races know little of each other, for each is a closed book to the other; and where there is ignorance, there is no fellow-feeling. Racial hatred and bitterness increase, and when there is a conflict between two races, it is not only a political war, but something far worse—a racial war. This explains to some extent the horrors of the Indian Revolt of 1857, and the cruelty and vandalism of the dominant European Powers in Asia and Africa.

It all seems very sad and very silly. But where there is the domination of one nation over another, one people over another, one class over another, there is bound to be discontent and friction and revolt, and an attempt by the exploited nation or people or class to get rid of its exploiter. And this exploitation of one by another is the very basis of our present-day society, which is called capitalism, and out of which imperialism has emerged.

In the nineteenth century the big machines and industrial progress had made the western European nations and the United States of America wealthy and powerful. They began to think that they were the lords of the earth and that the other races were far inferior to them and must make way for them. Having gained some control over the forces of Nature, they became arrogant and overbearing to others. They forgot that civilized man must not only control Nature, but must also control himself. And so we see in this nineteenth century progressive races, ahead of others in many ways, often behaving in a manner which would put a backward savage to shame. This may perhaps help you to understand the behaviour of European races in Asia and Africa, not only in the last century, but even to-day.

Do not imagine that I am comparing the European races to ourselves or to other races to our advantage. Far from it. We all have our dark spots, and some of ours are pretty bad; or else we might not have fallen quite so low as we have done.

We shall go back to China now. The British and French had given a demonstration of their might by destroying the Summer Palace. They followed this up by forcing China to ratify the old treaties and extorted fresh privilege out of her. In Shanghai the Chinese customs service was organized under foreign officials by the Chinese Government in accordance with these treaties. This was called the "Imperial Maritime Customs".

Meanwhile the Taiping Rebellion, which had eneabed China and thus given an opportunity to the foreign Powers, was still dragging on. At last, in 1864, it was finally put down by a Chinese Governor, Li Hung Chang, who became a leading statesman of China.

While England and France extorted privileges and concessions out of China by terrorism, Russia in the north achieved a remarkable success by more peaceful methods. Only a few years before, Russia, hungry for the possession of Constantinople, had attacked Turkey in Europe. England and France were afraid of Russia's growing strength, and so they joined the Turks and defeated Russia in what is known as the Crimean War of 1854-56. Defeated in the west, Russia began to look towards the east, and had great success. China was persuaded by peaceful means to cede to Russia a province in the north-east, adjoining the sea, with the city and harbour of Vladivostok. This triumph for Russia was due to a brilliant young Russian officer, Muravei. In this way Russia gained far more by friendly methods than England and France had gained after their three years' war and insensate destruction.

So matters stood in 1860. The great Chinese Empire of the Manchus, which by the end of the eighteenth century covered and dominated nearly half Asia, was now humbled and disgraced. Western Powers from distant Europe had defeated and humiliated it; an internal rebellion had almost upset the Empire. All this shook up China completely. It was obvious that all was not well, and some effort was made to reorganize the country to meet the new conditions and the foreign menace. So this year 1860 might almost be considered the beginning of a new era when China prepares to resist foreign aggression. China's neighbour, Japan, was similarly occupied at this time, and this also served as an example. Japan succeeded far more than China, but for a while China did hold back the foreign Powers.

A Chinese mission, under an American named Burlingame, who was a warm friend of China, was sent to the treaty Powers, and he succeeded in getting somewhat better terms from them. A new Sino-American treaty was signed in 1868, and it is interesting to find that in this the Chinese Government agreed, as a favour and a concession to the United States, to permit the emigration of Chinese workers to the States. The United States were busy then developing their western Pacific States, especially California, and labour was scarce there. So they imported Chinese labour. But this became the source of fresh trouble. The Americans began to object to cheap Chinese labour, and there was a dispute between the two governments. The United States Government later stopped Chinese immigration, and this humiliating treatment was greatly resented by the Chinese people, who boycotted American goods. But all this is a long story which brings us into the twentieth century. We need not go into it.

The Taiping Rebellion had hardly been crushed when another revolt broke out against the Manchus. This was not in China proper, but in the far west, in Turkestan, the centre of Asia. This was largely inhabited by Muslims; and the Muslim tribes, under a leader named Yakub Beg, rose in 1863 and drove out the Chinese authorities. This local revolt has interest for us for two reasons. Russia tried to take advantage of it by seizing Chinese territory. This, of course, was a well-established European manoeuvre whenever China was in difficulties. But, to every one's surprise, China refused to agree, and ultimately made Russia disgorge. This was due to an extraordinary campaign by the Chinese General Tso Tsung-tang in Central Asia against Yakub Beg. This general
took matters in a most leisurely fashion. He marched slowly, allowing year after year to pass by before he reached the rebels. Twice he actually halted his army long enough to plant and reap a crop of grain to provide for its use. The problem of providing food supplies for an army is always a difficult one, and this must have been formidable when the Goli desert had to be crossed. So General Tso solved it in a novel way. He then defeated Yakub Beg and put an end to the rebellion. His campaign in Kashgar and Turfan and Yarkand, etc., is said, from a military point of view, to have been a wonderful one.

Having settled satisfactorily with Russia in central Asia, the Chinese Government soon had trouble in another part of their wide-flung but disintegrating empire. This was in Annam, which was a vassal State of China. The French had designs on it, and there was fighting between China and France. Again, to every one's surprise, China did rather well, and was not cowed down by France. There was a satisfactory treaty in 1885.

The imperialist Powers were sufficiently impressed by these new signs of strength in China. It seemed as if she were recovering from her weakness of 1890 and before. There was talk of reform, and many people thought that she had turned the corner. It was because of this that England, when annexing Burma in 1886, promised to send every ten years the customary tribute to China.

But China was far from having turned the corner yet. There was still a great deal of humiliation and suffering and disruption in store for her. What was wrong with her was not merely the weakness of the army or navy, but something which went far deeper. Her whole social and economic structure was going to pieces. As I have told you already, it was in a bad way early in the nineteenth century when many secret societies were formed against the Manchus. Foreign trade and the effects of contact with industrialized countries made matters worse. The appearance of strength which came over China after 1860 had little reality behind it. There were some local reforms by energetic officials here and there, especially by Li Hung Chang. But these could not touch the roots of the problem or cure the disease which enfeebled China.

The chief reason for the outward showing of strength by China during these years was the presence at the head of affairs of a strong ruler. This was a remarkable woman, the Empress Dowager Tzu Hsi. She was only twenty-six when power came into her hands, as the nominal Emperor was her infant son. For forty-seven years she ruled China with vigour. She chose efficient officials and impressed them with some part of her own vigour. It was largely due to this and to her that China made a braver show of strength than she had done for many a year.

But meanwhile, across the narrow seas, Japan was performing wonders and changing out of all recognition. To Japan, therefore, we must now go.

116

JAPAN RUSHES AHEAD

December 27, 1932

It is long since I wrote to you about Japan. Over five months ago I told you (in letter 81) of the strange way in which this country shut herself up in the seventeenth century. From 1641, for over 200 years, the people of Japan lived cut off from the rest of the world. These 200 years saw great changes in Europe and Asia and America, and even in Africa. Of some of the stirring events that took place during this period I have already told you. But no news of them reached this secluded nation; no breath from outside came to disturb the old-world feudal air of Japan. Almost it seemed as if the march of time and change had been stayed, and the mid-seventeenth century held captive. For though time rolled on, the picture seemed to remain the same. It was feudal Japan, with the landowning class in power. The Emperor had little power; the real ruler was the Shogun, the head of a great clan. Like the Khattriyas in India, there was a warrior class called the Samurai. The feudal lords and the Samurai were the ruling class. Often different lords and clans quarrelled with each other. But all of them joined in oppressing and exploiting the peasantry and all others.

Still, Japan had peace. After the long civil wars which had exhausted the country this peace was very welcome. Some of the great warring nobles—the Daimyos—were suppressed. Slowly Japan began to recover from the ravages of civil war. People's minds turned more to industry and art and literature and religion. Christianity had been suppressed; Buddhism revived, and later Shinto, which is a typical Japanese worship of ancestors. Confucius, the sage of China, became the ideal to be looked up to in matters of social behaviour and morals. Art flourished in the circles of the Court and the nobility. In some ways the picture was similar to that of the Middle Ages of Europe.

But it is not so easy to keep out change, and though outside contacts were stopped, inside Japan itself change worked, though more slowly than it might otherwise have done. As in other countries, the feudal order moved towards economic collapse. Discontent grew, became the ideal to be looked up to in matters of social behaviour and morals. But meanwhile, across the narrow seas, Japan was performing wonders and changing out of all recognition. To Japan, therefore, we must now go.
century the United States of America became especially interested in this. They had just spread out to the west in California, and San Francisco was becoming an important port. The newly opened trade with China was inviting, but the journey across the Pacific was a long one. So they wanted to call at a Japanese port to break this long journey and take supplies. This was the reason for America’s repeated attempts to open up Japan.

In 1853 an American squadron came to Japan with a letter from the American President. These were the first steamships seen in Japan. A year later the Shogun agreed to open two ports. The British, Russians and Dutch, learning of this, came soon after and also made similar treaties with the Shogun. So Japan was open again to the world after 213 years.

But there was trouble ahead. The Shogun had posed as the Emperor before the foreign Powers. He was no longer popular, and a great agitation rose against him and his foreign treaties. Some foreigners were also killed, and this resulted in a naval attack by the foreign Powers. The position became more and more difficult, and ultimately the Shogun was prevailed upon to resign his office in 1867. Thus ended the Tokugawa Shogunate which you may or may not remember, began with Ieyasu in 1603. Not only that, but the whole system of the Shogunate, which had lasted for nearly 700 years came to an end.

The new Emperor now came into his own. He was a boy of fourteen who had just succeeded to the throne as the Emperor Mutsuhito. For forty-five years he reigned, from 1867 to 1912, and this period is known as the Meiji (or “enlightened rule”) era. It was during his reign that Japan forged ahead, and, copying western nations, became their equal in many respects. This vast change brought about in a generation is remarkable and without parallel in history. Japan became a great industrial nation and, after the manner of the western Powers, an imperialistic and predatory nation. She bore all the outward signs of progress. In industry she even advanced beyond her teachers. Her population increased rapidly. Her ships went round the globe. She became a great Power whose voice was heard with respect in international affairs. And yet all this mighty change did not go very deep down into the heart of the nation. It would be wrong to call the changes superficial, for they were far more than that. But the outlook of the rulers still remained feudal, and they sought to combine radical reform with this feudal shell. They seemed to succeed to a large extent.

The people who were responsible for these great changes in Japan were a band of far-seeing men of the nobility—the “Elder Statesmen” they were called. When the anti-foreign riots in Japan were followed by bombardment by the foreign warships, the Japanese saw their helplessness and felt bitterly humiliated. Instead of cursing their fate and tearing their hair, they decided to learn a lesson from this defeat and degradation. The Elder Statesmen chalked out a programme of reform and they adhered to it.

The old feudal Daimios were abolished. The capital of the Emperor was taken from Kyoto to Yedo, which was now renamed Tokyo. A new constitution was announced with two Houses of Parliament, of which the lower House was elected, the upper nominated. There were changes in education, law, industry, and in almost everything. Factories grew up, and a modern army and navy were formed. Experts were sent for from foreign countries, and Japanese students were sent to Europe and America, not to become barristers and the like, as Indians have done in the past, but to become scientists and technical experts.

All this was done by the Elder Statesmen in the name of the
Emperor, who in spite of the new Parliament and all else, remained in law the absolute ruler of the Japanese Empire. And at the same time as they pushed ahead these reforms, they spread the cult of emperor-worship. It was a strange combination: factories and modern industry and a semblance of parliamentary government on the one side, and a medieval worship of the divine Emperor on the other. It is difficult to understand how the two could go together even for a short while. Yet they did march together, and even to-day they have not separated. The elder Statesmen utilized this great feeling of reverence for the Emperor in two ways. They forced the reforms on the conservative and feudal classes who would otherwise have resisted them but were cowed down by the prestige of the Emperor's name; and they held back the more progressive elements who wanted to go faster and get rid of all feudalism.

The contrast between China and Japan during this last half of the nineteenth century is remarkable. Japan rapidly westernized herself; China, as we have seen and shall see even more later on, got involved in the most extraordinary difficulties. Why did this happen? The very vastness of China, her great population and area, made change difficult. India also suffers from this seeming source of strength—huge area and population. China's government was not sufficiently centralized—that is to say, each part of the country had a great deal of self-government. It was thus not easy for the central government to interfere and bring about big changes as had been done in Japan. Then again, China's great civilization had grown up in thousands of years and was too closely intertwined with her life to be easily discarded. Again we can compare India to China. Japan, on the other hand, had borrowed Chinese civilization and could more easily replace it. Another reason for China's difficulties was the continual interference of European Powers. China was a great continental country. She could not shut herself up, as the islands of Japan had done. Russia touched her territories to the north and northwest; the British Empire in the south-west; France was creeping up in the south. These European Powers had managed to extract important privileges from China and had developed great commercial interests. These interests gave them plenty of excuses for interference.

So Japan shot ahead, while China was still blindly struggling on and trying, with little success, to adapt herself to the new conditions. And yet there is another strange fact worth noting. Japan took over European machinery and industry, and, with a modern army and navy, put on the garb of an advanced industrialized Power. But she did not take so readily to the new thought and ideas of Europe; to notions of individual and social freedom; to a scientific outlook on life and society. At heart she remained feudal and authoritarian and tied up to a strange emperor-worship which the rest of the world had long outgrown. The passionate and self-sacrificing patriotism of the Japanese was closely allied to this loyalty to the Emperor. Nationalism and the cult of the divine

Japan rushes ahead

Emperor went side by side. China, on the other hand, did not take readily to big machinery and industry; but the Chinese, or at any rate modern China, welcomed western thought and ideas and the scientific outlook. These were not so far removed from their own. Thus we see that although modern China entered more into the spirit of western civilization, Japan outstripped her because she put on the armour of it, ignoring the spirit. And all Europe praised Japan because she was strong in this armour, and they made her one of their fellowship. But China was weak and unprovided with Maxim guns and the like. So they insulted her and preached to her and exploited her, caring little for her thought and ideas.

Japan not only followed Europe in industrial methods, but also in imperialistic aggression. She was more than a faithful pupil of the European Powers: she often improved on them. Her real difficulty was the discordance between the new industrialism and the old feudalism. In her attempts to carry on with both she could not establish economic equilibrium. Taxation was very heavy, and people grumbled. To prevent trouble at home she had recourse to an old device—distracting attention by war and imperialistic adventures abroad. Her new industries also forced her to look to other countries for raw materials and markets, just as the Industrial Revolution had forced England, and later other western European Powers, to look abroad and conquer. Production increased and there was a rapid growth of population. More and more food and raw materials were required. Where was she to get them? Her nearest neighbours were China and Korea. China offered opportunities for trade, but she was a thickly populated country. In Manchuria, however, which formed the north-eastern provinces of the Chinese Empire, there was plenty of elbow-room for development and colonization. So to Korea and Manchuria, Japan looked greedily.

Japan also saw with concern the western Powers getting all manner of privileges from China, and even trying to get territory. She did not like this at all. If these Powers became well established on the mainland opposite to her, her safety might be imperilled and, at any rate, her growth on the continent would be checked.

In less than twenty years after her opening to the outer world, Japan began to be aggressive towards China. A petty dispute about some fishermen, who had been shipwrecked and were murdered, gave Japan an opportunity to demand compensation from China. China refused at first, but then, threatened with war and occupied at the time with the French in Annam, she gave in to Japan. This was in 1874. Japan was elated by this triumph and immediately looked round for further conquests. Korea seemed inviting and, picking a quarrel with her for some petty reason, Japan invaded her and forced her to pay a sum of money and to open some ports for Japanese trade.

Korea had long been a vassal State of China. She looked to China for support, but China was unable to help. The Chinese Government, fearing that Japan might acquire too much influence,
advised Korea to give in for the moment and also to make treaties with the western Powers to checkmate Japan. So Korea was thrown open to the world by 1882. But Japan was not going to be satisfied with this. Taking advantage of China's difficulties, she again raised the Korean question and made China agree to a joint protectorate over Korea—that is, poor Korea became a vassal State of both. This was obviously a most unsatisfactory state of affairs for all concerned. There was bound to be trouble. Japan, indeed, wanted trouble, and in 1894 she forced a war on China.

The Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95 was a runaway affair for Japan. Her army and navy were up to date; the Chinese were still old-fashioned and inefficient. Japan won all along the line, and forced a treaty on China which put her on the same level as the western treaty Powers. Korea was declared independent, but this was only a veil for Japanese control. China was also forced to give Japan the Liaotung peninsula in Manchuria, with Port Arthur, as well as Formosa and some other islands.

This crushing defeat of China by little Japan surprised the world. The western Powers were by no means pleased at this rise of a powerful country in the Far East. Even during the Sino-Japanese War, when Japan was seen to be winning, she was warned by these Powers that they would not consent to Japan annexing any part of China's mainland. In spite of this warning she took the Liaotung peninsula with an important port—Port Arthur. But she was not allowed to keep this. Three great Powers—Russia, Germany and France—insisted on her giving it up, and, much to her annoyance and anger, she had to do so. She was not strong enough to face these three.

But Japan remembered this slight upon her. It rankled and made her prepare for a greater struggle. Nine years later this struggle came with Russia.

Meanwhile Japan, by her victory over China, had established her position as the strongest nation in the Far East. China had appeared in all her weakness, and all fear of her vanished from the western Powers. They swooped down on her like vultures on a dead or dying body, and tried to get as much as possible for themselves. France, Russia, England, and Germany—all scrambled for sea-port on the China coast and for privileges. There was an unholy and a most unseemly battle for concessions. Every little thing was made an excuse for claiming additional privileges or concessions. Because two missionaries were killed, Germany seized by force Kiauchau in the Shantung peninsula in the east. Because Germany took this, the other Powers insisted on their share of the booty. Russia took Port Arthur, of which she had deprived Japan three years previously. England took Wei-hai-wei to set off Russia's possession of Port Arthur. France took a port and territory in Annam. Russia also got permission to build a railway across North Manchuria, an extension of the Trans-Siberian railway.

It was extraordinary—this shameless scramble. Of course China did not enjoy parting with territory or granting concessions.
There was one great Power, however, which had so far taken no part in this scramble for concessions in China or the plans for partition. This was the United States of America. They had kept away not because they were more virtuous than the others, but because they were busy developing their vast country. As they spread westwards to the Pacific Ocean fresh areas required development, and all their energies and wealth were poured into this. Indeed, a great deal of European capital was also invested in America for this purpose. But by the end of the century Americans began to look abroad for investments. They looked to China, and saw with disapproval that the European Powers were on the point of dividing it up into ‘spheres of influence’, with a view perhaps to eventual annexation. America was being left out. So America pressed for what is called the ‘open-door’ policy in China. This meant that equal facilities should be given to all for trade and business in China. The other Powers agreed to this.

This continual aggression thoroughly frightened the Chinese Government, and convinced them that they must reform and reorganize. They tried to do so, but they had little chance to succeed on account of the continuous demands for fresh concessions. The Dowager Empress Tzu Hsi had been living in retirement for some years. The Chinese people began to look to her as a possible saviour. The Emperor at the time, suspecting some intrigue, wanted to put her in prison. But the old lady retaliated by removing him from power and taking control herself. She took no steps for radical reform, as Japan had done, but she concentrated on building up a modern army. She encouraged the formation of local bands of militia for defence. These bodies of local militia called themselves ‘I Ho Tuan’—Bands of Righteous Harmony. Sometimes they were also called ‘Bands of Righteous Harmony’—I Ho Chuan. This latter name reached some Europeans in the port towns, and they translated it into ‘Boxers’, a crude translation of a graceful phrase.

These ‘Boxers’ were a patriotic reaction against foreign aggression and the innumerable insults which had been offered to China and the Chinese by foreigners. It is not surprising that they did not love the foreigner, who seemed to them the embodiment of evil. In particular they disliked missionaries, who had misbehaved greatly, and, as for the Chinese Christians, they considered them traitors to their country. They represented old China making a last effort to protect herself from the new order. The attempt was not likely to succeed in this way.

There was bound to be friction between these patriotic, anti-foreign, anti-missionary, conservative people and the Westerners. Conflicts occurred; an English missionary was murdered; many Europeans and a large number of Chinese Christians were killed. Foreign governments demanded the suppression of the patriotic Boxer movement. The Chinese Government punished those who were guilty of killing, but how could it suppress its own child in this way? Meanwhile the Boxer movement spread rapidly. The foreign ministers, alarmed by it, summoned troops from their warships.

and this again made the Chinese think that the foreign invasion had begun. Soon there was conflict. The German Minister was killed, and there was a siege of the foreign legations in Peking.

A great part of China was up in arms in sympathy with the patriotic Boxer movement. But the viceroy of some provinces remained neutral and helped the foreign Powers in this way. The Dowager Empress undoubtedly sympathized with these Powers, but she was not openly associated with them. Foreigners tried to make out that the Boxers were just brigands. But as a matter of fact the rebellion of 1900 was a patriotic effort to free China from foreign interference. A high English officer in China, Sir Robert Hart, who was Inspector-General of the customs there at the time, went through the siege of the legations. He tells us that the foreigners, and especially the missionaries, were to blame for outraging Chinese feelings, and that the rebellion ‘was patriotic in its origin, and that it was justifiable in much that it aimed at cannot be questioned, and cannot be too much insisted on’.

This sudden turning of the worm irritated the western Powers greatly. They hurried troops, as they were justified in doing, to save and protect their own people who were besieged in Peking. An international force under a German commander marched to relieve the legations. The Kaiser of Germany asked his troops in China to behave like Hun's, and probably it is from this order that the English took to calling all Germans Huns during the World War.

The Kaiser’s advice was followed not only by his own troops, but by all the foreign armies. As these forces marched to Peking, the treatment they gave to the people was such that large numbers preferred suicide to falling into their hands. Chinese women in those days feared their feet and could not easily run away. So many of them killed themselves. In this way the allied armies marched on, leaving a trail of death and suicide and burning villages. An English war correspondent, who accompanied the allied forces, says:

There are things that I must not write, and may not be printed in England, which would seem to show that this western civilization of ours is merely a veneer over savagery. The actual truth has never been written about any war, and this will be no exception.

These armies reached Peking and relieved the legations. And then followed the sack of Peking—'the biggest looting excursion since the days of Pizarro'. The art treasures of Peking went into the hands of crude and uncultured people who did not even know their value. And it is sad to note that the missionaries took a prominent part in this looting. Groups of people went from house to house fixing notices on them saying that they belonged to them. The valuables in the house were sold, and then a move was made to another big house.

The rivalry of the Powers, and partly also the attitude of the United States Government, saved China from partition. But she
was made to drink the bitterest cup of humiliation. All manner of indignities were heaped on her: a permanent foreign military force was to remain in Peking and also to guard the railway; many forts were to be destroyed; membership of an anti-foreign society was made punishable with death; further commercial privileges were taken and a huge sum of money extorted as an indemnity; and, most terrible blow of all, the Chinese Government was forced to put to death as "rebels" the patriotic leaders of the Boxer movement. Such was the "Peking Protocol", as it is called, which was signed in 1901.

While all this was taking place in China proper, and especially round Peking, the Russian Government took advantage of the prevailing confusion to send large numbers of troops across Siberia to Manchuria. China was powerless; all it could do was to protest. But, as it happened, the other Powers disapproved very much of the Russian Government taking possession in this way of a large slice of territory. Even more anxious and alarmed was the Japanese Government at this development. So the Powers pressed Russia to go back, and the Russian Government tried to assume a look of virtuous pain and surprise that its honourable intentions should have been doubted by any one, and assured the Powers that it had absolutely no intention of interfering with China's sovereign rights, and would withdraw its troops as soon as order was restored on the Russian railway in Manchuria. So everybody was satisfied, and, no doubt compliments must have been paid by the Powers to each other for their remarkable unselvishness and virtue. But, none the less, Russian troops remained in Manchuria and spread right up to Korea.

This advance of Russia in Manchuria and to Korea angered the Japanese greatly. Quietly but intensively they prepared for war. They remembered the combination of three Powers against them in 1895, when they had been forced to give up Port Arthur after the China War, and they tried to prevent this happening again. They found in England a Power which feared Russian advance and wanted to check it. So in 1902 an Anglo-Japanese Alliance was made with the object of preventing a combination of Powers from upping either Power in the Far East. Japan felt safe now, and took up a more aggressive attitude towards Russia. She demanded that Russian troops be withdrawn from Manchuria. But the foolish Tsarist Government of the day looked upon Japan with contempt and never believed that she would fight.

Early in 1904 war began between the two countries. Japan was fully prepared for it, and the Japanese people, egged on by their government's propaganda and their cult of emperor-worship, were aflame with patriotic fervour. Russia, on the other hand, was wholly unprepared, and her autocratic government could only govern by continuous repression of the people. For a year and a half the war raged, and all Asia and Europe and America were witness to Japan's victories on sea and land. Port Arthur fell to the Japanese after amazing deeds of sacrifice and enormous slaughter.
It was a kind of preparation for the great revolution twelve years later, in 1917, which changed the face of Russia. And it was during this unsuccessful revolution of 1905 that the revolutionary workers created a new organization which was to become so famous later on—the soviets.

From telling you about China and Japan and the Russo-Japanese War I have, as is my way, drifted to the Russian revolution of 1905. But I had to tell you something of this to explain the background in Russia during this Manchurian War. It was largely because of this attempted revolution and the temper of the people that the Tsar came to terms with Japan.

The Russo-Japanese War started with the Treaty of Portsmouth in September 1905. Portsmouth is in the United States. The American President had invited both parties and the treaty of peace was signed there. By this treaty Japan got back at last Port Arthur and the Liaotung peninsula, which, you will remember, she had been forced to give up after the China War. Japan also took a great part of the railway which the Russians had built in Manchuria, and half of the island of Sakhalin, which lies north of Japan. Further, Russia abandoned all claims on Korea.

So Japan had won, and she entered the charmed circle of the great Powers. The victory of Japan, an Asiatic country, had a far-reaching effect on all the countries of Asia. I have told you how, as a boy, I used to get excited over it. That excitement was shared by many a boy and girl and grown-up in Asia. A great European Power had been defeated; therefore Asia could still defeat Europe as it had done so often in the past. Nationalism spread more rapidly over the eastern countries and the cry of "Asia for Asians" was heard. But this nationalism was not a mere return to the past, a clinging on to old customs and beliefs. Japan's victory was to be due to her adoption of the new industrial methods of the West, and these ideas and methods became more popular all over the East.

118

CHINA BECOMES A REPUBLIC

December 30, 1932

We have seen how Japan's victory over Russia pleased and flattered Asiatic nations. The immediate result of it, however, was to add one more to the small group of aggressive, imperialistic Powers. The first effect of this was felt by Korea. Japan's rise meant Korea's fall. Ever since her reopening to the world, Japan had marked out Korea, and partly Manchuria, as her own. Of course she declared repeatedly that she was going to respect the integrity of China and the independence of Korea. The imperialist

Powers have a way of giving fulsome assurances of good will even while they rob the party concerned, of declaring the sanctity of life even as they kill. So Japan declared solemnly that she would not interfere in Korea, and at the same time carried through her old policy of taking possession of her. Her wars with China and Russia both centred round Korea and Manchuria. Step by step she had advanced, and now with the defeat of China and Russia, her way was clear.

No scruple had ever troubled Japan in the pursuit of her imperial policy. She grabbed openly, not caring even to cover her designs with a veil. As early as 1894, just before the China War, the Japanese had forcibly entered the royal palace in Seoul, the capital of Korea, and removed and imprisoned the Queen, who would not do their bidding. After the Russian War, in 1905, the Japanese Government forced the Korean King to sign away his country's independence and accept Japanese suzerainty. But this was not good enough. In less than five years this unhappy king was removed altogether from the throne, and Korea was annexed to the Japanese Empire. This was in 1910. After a long history of over 3000 years, Korea passed away as a separate State. The king who was thus removed belonged to a dynasty which had driven out the Mongols 500 years before. But Korea, like her elder sister China, became fossilized and stagnant, and had to pay the penalty for this.

Korea was given its old name again—Chosen, the land of the morning calm. The Japanese brought some modern reforms with them, but they ruthlessly crushed the spirit of the Korean people. For many years the struggle for independence continued and there were many outbreaks, the most important one being in 1919. The people of Korea, and especially young men and women, struggled gallantly against tremendous odds. On one occasion, when a Korean organization fighting for freedom formally declared independence, and thus defied the Japanese, the story goes that they immediately telephoned to the police and informed them of what they had done! Thus deliberately they sacrificed themselves for their ideal. The suppression of the Koreans by the Japanese is a very sad and dark chapter in history. You will be interested to know that young Korean girls, many of them fresh from college, played a prominent part in the struggle.

Let us go back to China now. We left her rather suddenly after the crushing of the Boxer movement and the Peking Protocol in 1901. China was thoroughly humiliated, and again there was an attempt at reform. Even the old Dowager Empress seemed to think that something should be done. During the Russo-Japanese War, China remained a passive spectator, although the fighting was taking place on Chinese territory—Manchuria. Japan's victory strengthened the reformers in China. Education was modernized, and many students were sent to Europe and America and Japan to study modern sciences. The old system of literary examinations by which officials used to be appointed was abolished.