CHAPTER III

Iraq and India: from the beginning of Modernization of Iraq under Midhat Pasha (1869 - 1872) to the beginning of First World War 1869 - 1914.

Mosul had emerged finally as a wilaya (Wilayat, Vilayet: province) in 1879, and Basra in 1884. Baghdad had always held easy primacy over these two renowned cities of Iraq, and the Wali (Governor) of Baghdad was by every standard the senior of the three governors. Eventually the governors of Mosul were subordinates to Baghdad's governors, and they usually follow instructions from Baghdad in important matters. From the downfall of Dawood Pasha in 1831 to the accession of Midhat Pasha in 1869, the Sultan appointed 11 governors in Baghdad. Some of these were distinguished for their attempts to introduce some reform and to make some improvement in the economy of the country. At the beginning of Ali Ridha Pasha's accession (1831 - 1842), the past privileges of the British East India Company were cordially and specifically renewed by the Pasha himself on 2 November 1831. In return, the British Ambassador to the Sublime Porte requested the

1. Longrigg, Stephen Hemsley: IRAQ, 1900 To 1950, A Political, Social And Economic History, Oxford University Press, GB., 1953, p.1
British Political Agent at Baghdad; Major Taylor*, to offer (3) the Pasha every possible help for well establishing his rule. Muhammad Rashid Pasha (1853-1858), nicknamed 'Geuzlikli' (the Spectacled), who stayed in France for a long time and was educated there; established the Ottoman river-marine in Iraq by purchasing from Belgium two steamers (Baghdad and Basra) for commercial transportation of goods between Baghdad and Basra. He improved the agriculture, and encouraged some nomad tribes to settle down by offering them vast tracts of land. Muhammad Namiq Pasha, in his second term as Governor of Baghdad 1861-1868, tried to do his best in making some reforms. He was a courageous soldier, truthful, straightforward, and at home in Arabic, French and English. According to Sulaiman Fa'iq; a contemporary eye-witness, he was an excellent governor. He purchased from Belgium five steamers for river-navigation in Iraq.

* Successor of Claudius James Rich.

** These dates were given by Seton Lloyd (Twin Rivers - p.177). Azzawi mentions that the accession of Muhammad Rashid Pasha occurred in 1852, and he died in Baghdad in 1857. (cf., Azzawi: IRAQ Between Two Occupations, Vol.7, Events of the year 1852).

3. a. Longrigg: Four Centuries ..., op.cit., p.276.

During this period (1831-1869) there were many British projects aiming at cementation of their influence in Iraq. In 1830-1860, the Government of Bombay dispatched several missions for surveying and mapping out the valley of the two rivers to find a communication-route between the East which and the West supplements the route passing through the Cape of Good Hope. The military officer F. Chesney performed an exploratory study about the Euphrates and the (Gulf of Basra), and prepared a detailed report in which he opined the suitability of the Euphrates for Steamship-navigation, and the necessity of making it the route of communication between the Mediterranean and the Gulf. His assistant; K. B. Lynch, examined the Tigris during 1837-1839, and surveyed the river from the North to Shatt al-Arab. From 1850 to 1852, J. F. Jones of the Indian Navy made a very vast and detailed study about Iraq. His report to the Government of Bombay contained detailed charts concerning social, economic and political conditions of Iraq, in addition to a topographic survey. He proposed that proper measures ought to be taken to bring in capitals as well as immigrants to colonize Iraq. All these schemes represent in reality the far-reaching colonial policy which led to the firm establishment of the British influence in Iraq.

Viewed in world-politics, 'Iraq had its share of the increasing attention paid to Turkey by the statesmen of...

Europe. It lay on a suggested route to India, it contained an important British diplomatic agent. International commissions on the Iraq-Persian frontier— the mission of high inspecting officials from the Capital— the growth of foreign trade, a river-marine, and the telegraph—archaeological research— such were external means tending to bring Iraq into the modern world.

In 1850 a Frontier Commission of British and Russian, Turkish and Persian, representatives started work from Muhammarah; but its operations were stultified by the claims and antics of Darwish Pasha, and resulted in a vague status quo. Surveying and inquiry were continued along the frontier by British officers, and the preparation of maps dragged on in Moscow. Conditions remained similar until the Crimean War, by causing Turkey to fear a Persian alliance with Russia, aggravated the mutual suspicions. When in 1869 the Anglo-Russian maps were complete, a Convention was adopted repeating the status quo. This convenient phrase, however, covered conditions still hopelessly fluid with grazing nomads and asylum-seeking marauders; and a settlement based on consent and on permanent features seemed as remote as ever.

Within Iraq, the passage of the country from a medieval to a modern international plane increased its points of co-operation and friction with foreign representatives. On
the one hand, British enterprise was asking the security for its growing trade; and on the other, the bigoted Iraq rulers resented but could not prevent the presence, the privileges, the tribal friendships of these foreigners whose Resident could break careers by a word in Istanbul. While eighteenth-century trader-consul had humbly asked nothing but the Capitulations, the nineteenth-century Resident was the spokesman of steamship companies, telegraph construction parties, archaeologists, and charitable funds. The occasional application of tribesmen for British protection did not fail to annoy the Pasha. The idea indeed was not wholly absent either from shaikhs, Effendis, or some British officers, that the future of Great Britain in Iraq was likely to be important and possibly paramount.

In 1831 the navigation of the Iraq rivers was confined to crafts which were time-honoured before Herodotus saw them. Skin-borne rafts of the Zabs and upper Tigris, flat wooden rafts from Birijik to Fallujah, pitched coracles at every ferry and fishery, reed and wooden skiffs in the marshes, sailing and rope-drawn crafts on lower Tigris and Shatt ul Arab, and the hundred-ton sea-going muhailahs of Faw - these would still have held the field had not invention and opportunity gone hand in hand. The steamship was new to the world; and Great Britain was eagerly seeking a faster route to her growing interests in India.

* Governmental officials wearing European dresses with fez on head.
The appearance in Iraq of the scout-screen of modern transport - the surveyors - occurred under Dawood. Two officers of the Indian navy were busy in Iraq in 1830. Captain Chesney descended the Euphrates from Al Qa'im to Fallujah in the last days of that year. Thereafter all three spent some months in initial survey of almost the whole river-system, and all were impressed with its navigability. Chesney, encouraged by the personal interest of King William IV gave such evidence before the "Steam Committee" of the House of Commons in 1834 as led to an expedition, financed partly by government and partly by the East India Company, under his own command. Meanwhile the Slave Government had vanished from Baghdad, and Ali Ridha had in 1833 advocated steam enterprise on his rivers. In the early days of 1835 he received the farman issued - in grudging terms - to permit the Chesney expedition.

In 1839 the component parts of four iron steamers were disembarked at Basrah. For over a year the flotilla navigated and surveyed the rivers unquestioned, though no farman appeared till 1841. Authority was then given to Lynch (by name) to maintain two steamers. In 1842 three were removed to India. The (Nitocris) alone remained, attached to the Residency, and was later replaced by the (Comet). The period was one of great activity in mapping.

* The Mamluk Government.
To the surveys of those days, the work of Lynch, Felix Jones, Selby, Collingwood, Bewsher, are owed the accurate maps which held the field till 1914.

The Euphrates line as the mail-route to India had been abandoned, when it appeared from the loss of the steamer (Tigris) and other accidents that, for fast and regular sailings, the river would never be adequate. British government enterprise after 1842, therefore, was limited to surveying, while in other fields the Turkish government took its place. Rashid Pasha Geuzlikli was quick to see the great possibilities of the steamboat. In 1855 he called a meeting of merchants and formed a Company, wherein half the capital was to be found by government, half by the public. An order was placed at Antwerp for two steamers, the (Baghdad) and the (Basrah). The former was assembled in Iraq just before the death of Geuzlikli, the latter after. In spite of the public's half-interest, the two succeeding governors would not accept private freights. In 1867 Namíq Pasha organized the service as the Oman-Ottoman Administration, placed his Director of Medical Services in charge, and built a repair-shop. But he had no monopoly. In 1861 the Lynch Company, whose place on Iraq waters had been earned by that family, obtained a farman for the use of the (City of London). Namíq Pasha offered strong opposition, but the farman was confirmed. Objection was renewed in 1864 when the (Dijlah) appeared. But the Pasha was powerless to prevent this
further invasion of Iraq by modern craft, far superior to his own and destructive of Oman-Ottoman profits. He retaliated by the greatest local opposition and by increasing his own fleet, for which the steamers (Mosul), (Furat) and (Rasafa) arrived in 1867. From the earliest days, however, in spite of good profits, the repairing and fueling of this fleet, with corrupt officials and unpaid crews, presented difficulties which remained unsurmounted. The two Lunch boats were well kept and profitable.

Turning to land transport, there was the long absence of wheeled vehicles from Iraq. The flat open country, the greater economy, might well have led to adoption of a form of conveyance elsewhere evolved by and for similar conditions. A closer view shows that this lack of enterprise is to be explained if not excused. General stagnation, fear of the social results of innovation, small funds at the disposal of small ideas, need not be emphasized. There are more particular reasons. The transport must be able to deliver at a destination in towns and these had no streets for carts: Baghdad itself, to the end, had but a single street where wheels could move. The merchant, from whose (Khan) the transport-cart must stop at a great distance, will prefer the ubiquitous donkey and the Kurdish porter. Outside, on the main routes, the obstacles were other.

* godown.
The first suggestion of better road transport came from abroad, and came to nothing. In 1865 a Frenchman, the Conte de Fertheris, journeyed from Damascus to Baghdad and proposed to open up this route for carriages. Of the desert shaikhs en route he foresaw no trouble in buying the protection. In Baghdad merchants were found ready to float his company; but Na'iq Pasha, already bitter against foreign boats on the Tigris, would not see possible plums of the land route also snatched by strangers. He forbade participation, and warned the Conte against meddling with the tribes.

In Europe meanwhile greater and stranger schemes had been mooted. In 1742 an Irish manufacturer had planned a railway from Calais by Istanbul to Calcutta and Pekin — the "Atlas Railway" of William Pane. In 1843 Alexander Campbell proposed an England-to-India railway by the Euphrates valley — a scheme duly /propounded/ to the East India Company, elaborated and mapped. In 1849 John Wright advocated another Euphrates valley alinement. In 1851 Dr. J.B. Thomson died at Istanbul, a martyr to zeal in the same cause. Three years later, W.F. Andrew, for years the protagonist of this route to India, gathered a distinguished group of scientists and pioneers — Lynch, Chesney, Macneill, and others, who formed a Company to construct a railway from Mediterranean to Gulf. The track was by Seleucia, Antioch, Aleppo, "Ja'ber Castle", Hit, Baghdad, and thence
to Qurnah or Basrah. This group was content first to construct only the Seleucia-Euphrates section (of eighty miles), thereafter utilizing the Euphrates by suitable steamers. They emphasized the fear of Russian influence in the East, Iraq’s great potential riches, the boon to India and to Turkey, the expected trade with the Far East, the Engineering simplicity of the scheme, and the readiness of materials in Syria. The enterprise secured official support, including that of Palmerston and Sir Stratford Canning; the Turkish government were favourable; after fifteen years’ efforts, however, it was not possible in the end to obtain the necessary finances, and the scheme was abandoned. Local enterprise still showed no life. That of Europeans was stilled in this field, for the time, by the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869.

Postal services were absent from Iraq throughout the period, but steam navigation was soon followed by the appearance of the telegraph. This was a recent invention in itself vulnerable and requiring a considerable volume of traffic to maintain it economically. For both reasons Iraq might for the whole nineteenth century have remained without it; but as part of a larger whole, and still more as a land-bridge, the country was to profit by advantages scarcely deserved. Turkey had emerged from the Crimean War prosperous, a member of the European "Concert", and a guaranteed
sovereign state. Her war experience had shown the need of better communication within her empire, while to England, after the Mutiny in India, any scheme of quicker contact with the East was welcome. Schemes had already been put forward for a submarine cable from India to Basrah, and thence in the bed of the Tigris to Baghdad. In 1856 the Turkish government were approached by the East India Company regarding a land-line from Syria to the Gulf. Istanbul refused the funds necessary for a guarantee, without which the Company (behind whom was the European and Indian Junction Telegraph Company) would not proceed; and the granting of a foreign concession was in itself distasteful. In 1857, the Turkish and British governments agreed on the erection of lines by British engineers, but as a purely Turkish enterprise; and in the summer of 1861 communication by land-line was in fact established between Istanbul and Baghdad.

Discussion followed on the connection of Baghdad with the Gulf. The Resident was allowed by Namiq Pasha to survey the Euphrates line in person. A route was selected and work begun late in 1863. Simultaneously a Baghdad-Khaniqin line was commenced. This was working by the next autumn, and that of the Euphrates a few months later. The telegraphs of Iraq were now linked with those of Turkey, of Persia (at Khaniqin), and of the Gulf and India (at Faw). Lines were extended successively to Karbala and Najaf, by the Tigris to Kut and Amarah, to Badrah and Mandali, and by the
Karun to link again with the Persian system at Ahwaz. By the end of the century offices at all the principal towns had been opened. With many shortcomings—decaying instruments, untrained linesmen, constant interruption by the ignorant or malicious operators to whom official secrecy was unknown, the system worked. What had been strange became indispensable. Better tribal control became possible by quicker concentrations of force, though easy and vulnerable objectives were offered to tribal resentment.

MIDHAT PASHA (1869-1972):

The majority of the Iraqi historians consider that the governorship of Midhat Pasha marked the beginning of modernisation of Iraq. He was born in Istanbul in 1822. His father, Hafiz Muhammad Ashraf, was a religious judge (Qazi, Qadhi of Sharî'a). He named his newly born son as Ahmad Shafeeq who in his youth was initiated into the Hymayuni Diwan where he learnt the Humayuni calligraphy. Traditionally the graduate of this Diwan was to be given a new name, and, therefore, the young Shafeeq was re-named as Midhat by which name he was known to the world. He meritoriously progressed in his governmental career until he became one of the most prominent figures in the Ottoman Empire. He travelled in Europe and admired the constitutional systems of the Continent.

6. Longriff : Four Centuries..., op.cit., Chapter XI.
* Customarily the Muslim who performed the pilgrimage to Ka'aba in Makka (Mecca) is called : al-hajj; the pilgrim.
Sultan Abdul-Majid (Majeed) borrowed from the European countries £25 million sterling to spend on his own pleasures. After his death in 1861, his brother Abdul-Aziz (Azeez) became the new Sultan who by sheer extravagant expenditure on his pleasures increased the debt to £250 million sterling. In 1875 the Ottoman government declared its inability to pay back the debts. This resulted in formation of the Public Debt Administration which was controlled by an international board. Consequently the European powers got a free hand in the internal affairs of the Empire. Some Ottoman Thinkers and leaders, foremost among them was Midhat Pasha, tried to put an end to this state of anarchy. On the night of 30th May 1876, Abdul-Aziz was dethroned and his nephew Murad chosen to be the new Sultan. Six days later the former committed suicide, and the latter, out of fear, lost his balance and became mentally sick. On 30 August 1876, Murad was removed from power and his brother Abdul-Hamid (Hameed) enthroned as the new sultan on the condition that he rules according to the constitution. In 1881, Sultan Abdul-Hamid accused Midhat Pasha, and his group, of murdering Sultan Abdul-Aziz. The trial of Midhat Pasha and his friends was a farce, and they were sentenced to death. Bowing to outraged world opinion, Abdul Hamid commuted the sentence to one of banishment to Taif in Arabia, a country under the Sultan's firm jurisdiction. Yet, even so, the Sultan still dreaded Midhat more than any man alive, and after biding his time for two years he had the great Turkish reformer strangled.
on the night of 10 April 1883. Even that was not enough. Abdul Hamid needed proof, and was not satisfied until the victim's embalmed head was sent to his palace Yildiz. (According to one version, the head arrived from Taif in a packing-case addressed, 'Japanese Ivories—To be personally delivered to His Majesty the Sultan').

He became Grand Wazir in 1872 under Sultan Abdul Aziz and again under Abdul Hamid in 1876. He led, in these years, the Progressive and Liberal party, and was Father of the abortive Ottoman Constitution of 1876. The clash of his and Abdul Hamid's theories of government ruined him.

On the 30th of April 1869 Midhat Pasha entered Baghdad as Wali. His past career suggested, his present professions verified, that he had come from Europe to this remote province as reformer, modernizer. He was one of the best Ottoman administrators; he brought justice and security to Iraq and established several educational institutions, among which were the Military Rushdiya School, the Civil Rushdiya School, the Hamidiya School, and the Technical School; he also founded the Ghuraba Hospital. Having completed all these schemes, he directed his attention towards administration, which he reorganized, and established in Baghdad departments of education, census, and municipality; moreover, he built

military barracks and established a factory for weaving soldiers' uniforms (known as Abakhana), and he was the first to import a printing press, which was called the Villayet Press. He also published the first newspaper, which he called 'Al-Zawra'. In short, he did all in his power to benefit Baghdad and the other Iraqi cities, and his name is still held in great respect in Iraq.

In the very numerous measures which he instituted in these years of absolute power, civil and military, it is not difficult to find traces of hasty ness, of economic considerations mistaken or ignored, of excessive confidence in the catch-words of progress, of a preference for the spectacular to the judicious. In his land-registration system, he permitted the use of official machinery from which an infinity of error, vagueness, and corruption must necessarily result. His river-reclamation schemes were condemned to disastrous failure by lack of preparatory study. His river fleets achieved far less than his hopes; the Shatt ul Arab dredgers never worked; the sea-going steamers did not endure. His projected railways never appeared. His industrial machines, ordered from Europe, failed to arrive. He could not accomplish a darling project of using the treasures of Najaf for public works. He failed entirely to suppress corruption. His town improvements feebly survived him.
Yet his vision, his patriotic energy, his absolute integrity performed greater works than his imperfect education could mar. In public buildings, he completed and exceeded the works of Namık Pasha. A newspaper, military factories, a hospital, an alms-house, an orphanage, numerous schools, a tramway to Kadhimiyah—these in themselves, and in the associations of beneficent modernity which they connoted remarkably enlightened and enlivened Baghdad. Reforms, military and civil, were under Midhat applied for the first time to Baghdad after long use in other provinces. He enforced conscription, founded municipalities and administrative councils, and applied the new wilayat system in its entirety. The towns of Nasiriyyah and Ramadi were (for different reasons) his creations.

Turkish Iraq in its latest years was a country so backward and misgoverned that it may seem dubious praise to assign to Midhat Pasha a paramount influence upon it. Such praise is not unqualified; yet those who would withhold it should reflect on the difference in the relations of government and tribes before and after his Pashaliq—on the comparative security of routes, the spread of primary education, the expansion of the provincial mind. The Iraq governorship was but an incident in his career, and he left his office in Baghdad early in 1872, selling his watch—the story goes—to pay for his travelling
expenses to Istanbul.

Abdul-Hamid II's tyranny covers the two grants of constitutional government to his subjects, which marked the beginning and the end of his reign. His rule lasted thirty-three years, until 1909 when he was deposed also.

Abdul-Hamid came to the throne at a moment when the outlook for the Ottoman Empire seemed unusually gloomy. The Powers were loud in their insistence on reforms in the provincial administration. An influential group of his subjects, led by Midhat Pasha, were pressing for the introduction of constitutional government. Abdul-Hamid began by appearing to live up to his reputation, revealing at the same time a foxy talent for subterfuge. He made Midhat Grand Vizir, granted a constitution, and chose to have it announced, with a fine show of ceremonial, on the very day (December 23, 1876) on which the representatives of the Powers were assembling in conference to draw up proposals for the better government of his empire.

The constitution was originally the work of Midhat himself and was stamped with his liberal ideas. One of his deepest beliefs was that a check on the autocratic power of the Sultan was indispensable to the welfare of the empire, and indeed to its existence.

The victory, however, was short-lived. Abdul-Hamid's democratic leanings, seemed less pronounced after his accession, and it soon became evident that he was granting a constitution not because he desired or believed in that form of government, but because circumstances had made some such gesture necessary, both as a sop to his subjects and as a torpedo to fire at the European conference. Both those aims had now been achieved: the Sultan had become the idol of his people, and the conference, badly winded, had broken up. He set out to destroy the constitution. The only serious obstacle that remained was Midhat. Early in February, Abdul-Hamid abruptly dismissed him and sent him to Europe in exile. Then, having early in March inaugurated the new Parliament with a grandiloquent speech from the throne, he seized the pretext of Russia's declaration of war to decree the suspension of the constitution. It remained suspended for thirty-one years.

The ascendancy of Abdul-Hamid to the throne coincided with the appearance of Sayyed Jamaluddin al-Afghani who claimed that "His ultimate aim was to raise the Muslim peoples to the status of free and progressive nation by a wide process of education and by the adaptation of the religion of Islam to the conditions of the age; but he

believed that, as a means to the end, revolutionary action was unavoidable. He wanted to see the Muslim countries freed from foreign domination, as a prelude to their moral regeneration, and then united under one universally acknowledged caliph, as in the golden age of Islam."

In general the life of al-Afghani is shrouded in mystery; many details of his childhood, of his actions and travels are not sufficiently available. Some historians opine that he was originally an Iranian from Asadabad; a village in Hamadan, and some other say that he was an Afghani of the village of As'adabad near Kabul. However, Mirza Luft-Allah Khan, who claims to be the nephew of al-Afghani, states that he was born in the village of Asadabad (in Iran) in 1838. At the age of twelve, his father took him to Iraq and left him in Najaf to attend the religious schools there. He stayed in Najaf for more than ten years. In 1854, he visited for the first time India where he studied theology and elements of Sciences. In 1865, he left Iraq for Teheran, and therefrom he went to Afghanistan, and to India for the second time. The Government of India did not allow him to stay for a long time and at its expense he left for Cairo wherefrom he went to Istanbul. Here in Istanbul he was claimed to have said that 'Prophecy' is a profession and not revelation, and therefore some religious leaders agitated,

10. Ibid., pp. 68 f.
and he was deported to Egypt. In 1875, he became a Freemason, and in 1879 he was expelled from Egypt to India where he stayed for three years in Hyderabad. At that time Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the founder of Ahmadiyya was preaching his new interpretation of Islam. Ahmad was one of the opinion that modernisation is not against Islam. Al-Afghani stood against him, and accused him and his followers of being British agents aiming at destroying the Islamic religion whereas the Ahmadis themselves said that the essential purpose of their movement was to reform and revitalize a decadent Islamic condition in Post-Mutiny India. But some Indian Muslim leaders supported the view of al-Afghani by declaring that 'Ahmadis licked the boots of the British'. While being in Russia, al-Afghani expressed the idea that his aim is to rescue India from the British claws. In 1891, he was deported from Iran to Iraq, and in the same year he left for London. In 1892, Sultan Abdul-Hamid invited him to Istanbul to make use of him in supporting the Pan-Islamic movement.

The movement was largely the creation of al-Afghani. It stirred the Muslim world in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and while Jamaluddin was at the height of his powers and his activity that Abdul-Hamid began to lay the foundations of his own Islamic policy.

Abdul-Hamid's policy was in no sense an espousal of

* He died of cancer in Istanbul on 9th March, 1897.
Janaluddin's ideas. In essence, it was an attempt on the part of the sultan-caliph to strengthen his authority as sultan of the Ottoman Empire by a greater display of his prerogatives as caliph of Islam.

RUSSIANS AND GERMANS:

From 1815 to 1870 British imperial interests in the Middle East had been thought to be challenged by France and Russia to a roughly equal degree, and from 1870 to 1900 there is no doubt that the Russian challenge, real or imagined, easily assumed the first place.

Palmerston's fears of a Franco-Russian coalition against Britain had been alloyed by the development of a dispute between those two Powers over the respective claims of the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches to the Holy Places in Palestine. In the first half of the nineteenth century the Russians had established numerous claims which the Ottoman Empire had accorded in previous centuries to the Catholic Church and its French protector, but which had been allowed to lapse during the Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. Napoleon III, however, wishing to win for his regime the support of French Catholics, revived in 1852 all the Latin claims to the Holy Places which had been conferred by the Capitulations of 1740, and demanded that any subsequent

12. Antonious : op.cit., p. 69
concession to the Orthodox Church which conflicted with them should be set aside. The Russian government responded with counter-claims, and went so far as to demand the right to protect all Orthodox Christians of whatever nationality throughout the Ottoman Empire. Such a claim was deemed by the Powers to disturb the European Balance of Power by encroaching on the authority of the sultan over his millions of Orthodox subjects in the Balkans. Negotiations produced agreement on the question of the Holy Places, but on the larger issue Russia remained obdurate. She allowed herself to be diplomatically outmanoeuvred by the British Ambassador in Turkey, and had to fight the Crimean War against an alliance of Britain, France, and the Ottoman Empire. The treaty of Paris which ended the war in 1856 forbade the Russians to launch warships on the Black Sea, and thus removed one potential danger from Britain's Mediterranean route to the East.

While Britain embarked upon the Second Afghan War to reassert her authority in this vital quarter, her apprehensions extended also to the Persian Gulf, and Lord Salisbury, the Foreign Secretary, proclaimed that 'The people of this country will never allow Russian influence to be supreme in the valleys of the Euphrates and Tigris'. Britain had for sixty years been steadily establishing her authority over the Arab sheikdoms of the Persian Gulf: first using her good offices to put down piracy and
slave-trade; then arranging for the submission of disputes between the sheikhs to the British Resident at Bushihr, who thus became virtually ruler of the Gulf; and finally in 1869 persuading the sheikhs of the Trucial Coast to undertake not to make any territorial concessions or enter into agreements with any government other than Britain. Following the Russian scare of 1878 this exclusive agreement was extended to the sheikhs of Bahrain and Qatar when treaties with them were renewed in 1890, with the additional proviso that they should not accept any diplomatic or consular representatives, except with the approval of Britain. In 1885, after a further Russian annexation to the very borders of Afghanistan, war between the two Great Powers was narrowly averted, and British apprehensions once more inflamed. Curzon, at thirty years of age a budding British authority on the Middle East, could in 1889 express the moderate view that Russian movements in the direction of India were designed, not for conquest, but to draw British attention from her real objectives in the Balkans; but three years later, having been appointed Under-Secretary for India, he wrote: 'I should regard the concession by any Power of a port upon the Persian Gulf to Russia (that dear dream of so many a patriot from the Neva or the Volga) as a deliberate insult to Britain, as a wanton rupture of the status quo, and as an international provocation to war; and I should impeach the British minister who was guilty of acquiescing in such a surrender as a traitor to his country.' At the same time he applauded
Britain's imposing on the Sultan of Oman the customary prohibition from ceding or leasing any concessions, and commented, 'We subsidize its rulers; we dictate its policy; we should tolerate no rival influence'. While the two Powers were locked in tense rivalry for obtaining preponderance in Persia through loans and commercial concessions, several countries were canvassing plans for a railway connecting the Levant with the Persian Gulf. The Russian Consul at Baghdad was scheming to obtain a Russian port and naval base on the Gulf; and it was learnt in 1898 that an Austro-Russian syndicate had applied to the Ottoman government for a concession for a railway from Syrian Tripoli to Kuwait, the finest natural harbour on the Persian Gulf. Britain had recently declined a request for protection from Sheikh Mubarak of Kuwait, who had come to the throne by murdering his pro-Turkish brother; but in these new circumstances Lord Curzon, now Viceroy of India, sent the Resident in the Persian Gulf to negotiate a secret agreement with the Sheikh, in which he too undertook to grant no leases or concessions without Britain's agreement. Curzon now summed up British policy in this region in a series of 'Olympian rhetorical questions', "Are we prepared to surrender control of the Persian Gulf and divide that of the Indian Ocean? Are we prepared to make the construction of the Euphrates Valley Railroad or some kindred scheme an impossibility for England and an ultimate certainty for Russia? Is Baghdad to become a new Russian capital in
Lastly, are we content to see a naval station within a few day’s sail of Karachi, and to contemplate a (13) naval squadron battering Bombay.

We shall see in the next chapter that the last assault of the Russians to penetrate Iraq Via Iran during the First World War ended in failure when they advanced on Khaniquin (in Iraq) before the downfall of the Tzar regime, and were repulsed by the Turkish Army.

Then came the Germans who well exploited the Islamic policy of Sultan Abdul-Hamid II. During the Second Reich the German commercial firms had been penetrating the markets in all parts of the world. German architects, engineers, and industrialists built railways, factories, harbour installations, and housing estates in all parts of the world, but until 1870 German interests in the Middle East had been confined to missionary activities in Syria and Palestine and to a small volume of trade, and her political influence had been negligible. But the War of 1870 naturally increased her prestige greatly with the Turks. The influence of France in the Ottoman Empire was correspondingly reduced. The steps Britain had recently taken to render her influence in the Persian Gulf exclusive were resented by the Turks as an encroachment on their nebulous territorial sovereignty over the coasts of Arabia, which they were at this time

attempting to make more real; and Britain's occupation of Cyprus in 1878 and Egypt in 1882 prejudiced her further in the eyes of the Turks. Consequently when in 1872 the Ottoman government was seeking an adviser for the construction of the Balkan railway-system, it was a German engineer whom they called in; and in 1883 the German Ambassador had little difficulty in persuading Sultan Abdul Hamid II to invite the Kaiser to send a German military mission to Turkey.

By 1886 the Balkan railways were approaching completion, and the forward-looking Sultan was already contemplating their extension to his Asiatic provinces in order to strengthen his administrative control and assist their economic development. After overtures to British and American financiers had met with no response, a German syndicate undertook in 1888 the extension of the railway to Ankara, under the name of the Anatolian Railway Co. The new company was not exclusively German; more than a quarter of its first loan was subscribed in Britain, and the British chairman of the Ottoman Public Debt Administration became one of its directors. In 1889 Kaiser Wilhelm II, who had succeeded his father in the previous year at the age of twenty-nine, visited Istanbul, and the Deutsche Levant Linie was formed for steamship services between the North Sea and the Levant. This was followed by a German-Turkish trade agreement in 1890.
By 1893 the railway to Ankara had been completed, and the preliminary survey of the further route to Baghdad begun. The first proposal, for a route via Sivas and Diyarbekir, was opposed by Russia on the grounds that it would lie too near her Caucasian frontier and might be used strategically against her; and eventually in 1898 the Anatolian Railway Co. applied for a concession for the route Konya-Aleppo-Mosul-Baghdad. Although there were certain competing interests, German commercial influence was now preponderant in Turkey beyond any doubt, and she was supplying a large proportion of Turkey's armament needs. Consequently the German company obtained the concession, buying out French opposition by an agreement which gave French railway and banking interests an equal share in the undertaking.

At this stage, the British attitude to the German project was still favourable. The threat to Britain's position in the Middle East still came overwhelmingly from Russia and France. In 1892 the British Ambassador in Berlin had urged the Germans to develop a commercial interest in the Persian Gulf as a counterpoise to Russia in that region, and in 1898 the British reaction to the German railway-concession was favourable. Lord Salisbury was reported to have said, "We welcome these concessions, for in this way Germany comes into line with our interests in the Persian Gulf."
In 1900 the German technical mission which was planning the route the railway was to follow visited Kuwait and made a tempting offer to the Sheikh for a concession for a terminus and port. When he resisted their offer in accordance with his secret agreement with the Government of India a year before, the Germans induced the Ottoman Government, which the Sheikh nominally regarded as his suzerain, to send an expedition to assert its authority over him; but the presence of a British gunboat at the head of the Gulf caused them to desist. In other parts of the Gulf German traders were beginning to find the British exclusive agreements an obstacle to their enterprises.

The German capitalist-imperialism adopted the slogan 'Drang nach Osten', (Advance toward East); and, therefore, the Germans supported the Pan-Islamism policy of Abdul-Hamid. In 1898 the Kaiser visited Istanbul for the second time. In Damascus Kaiser Wilhelm II declared that he will be a friend, for ever and in all the times to come, of the three hundred millions of Muslims throughout the world and of their Caliph. One of the outcomes of this visit was the agreement between Germany and Turkey to construct the Baghdad Railway.

16. Saleh, Dr. Zaki: Britain And Iraq Until 1914, A Study in International History and Colonial Expansionism, in Arabic, originally: a Ph.d. thesis introduced in 1941 to the Department of History at the University of Columbia U.S.A., published with the financial aid of Baghdad University, Baghdad, 1968, pp. 228 ff.
In 1899 the German railway and financial interests obtained a concession to construct an extension of the railway in Anatolia to Baghdad and Basra; in 1903 a concession for 99 years was given to a new company whose shares were mostly owned by the railway company in Anatolia. The construction of a port at Basra was included in the scheme.

For some years the phrase 'Berlin to Baghdad' became almost a slogan. It coincided with a period of Anglo-German naval rivalry and aroused strong feelings in some circles in London. Germany was also regarded as a rival in international trade, at a time when Britain was losing some of her initially long lead in the Industrial Revolution in face of the rise of Germany and, behind her, the United States, as industrial powers. In contemporary circles the competitive aspects of Germany's rise were overemphasized to the exclusion of the parallel effects of the expansion of her domestic market. The crude oversimplifications of the popular press aggravated these misconceptions in both Britain and Germany.

"One of the biggest feats of legerdemain performed in recent times is that involved in the formation of a company to build a railway to Baghdad. Commercially such a railway would seem to be of great importance, while politically and strategically its construction might have far-reaching results. The maker of the line is Germany; by its means Germany is to

colonise Asia Minor, reduce Turkey to vassalage, absorb Mesopotamia, oust Great Britain from the Persian Gulf, and finally to extend the mailed fist towards India.

The idea of a railway to Baghdad is a very old one, the first to push the matter . . . being Mr., latterly Sir William, Andrew, an Indian railway official of considerable renown. Sir John Macneill and General Chesney in 1857 reported upon the route between Alexandretta, in the north-east corner of the Mediterranean, and Bussorah, the river port near the head of the Persian Gulf. Their estimate was for 1000 miles of railway, at a cost of £7500 per mile, giving a total of about seven and a half millions sterling. They apprehended no serious engineering difficulties, and were of opinion that the railway must soon pay its way. There was then, of course, no question of a guarantee. For twenty years the enthusiastic Andrew advocated his scheme, writing of it that it will bind the vast population of Hindoostan by an iron link with the people of Europe.' In 1872 Andrew triumphed to the extent of obtaining the appointment of a Select Committee of the House of Commons to examine the question. The Committee went deeply into the matter and finally approved of the idea, the Government of India concurring. Nevertheless the nimble financier was not to be drawn, and funds were never forthcoming. The Egyptian trouble in the early eighties gave the Euphrates Valley Railway scheme, as it was then known, a tremendous fillip, for it was feared that Arabi Pasha would damage the Suez Canal, and break our line of communication

* Basra
with India. Our occupation of Egypt immediately thereafter, and the assurance of the safety of the Canal thereby secured, put an end to all idea of the necessity of an alternative route to India, and Sir William Andrew's hopes were finally blasted. *

In 1903 the Anatolian Railway Co. had carried its plans for the Baghdad Railway to the stage at which it required to raise additional capital for their execution, and invited British capitalists to participate on equal terms with the existing German and French interests. The Balfour government favoured the acceptance of the offer, but the Cabinet was not unanimous, remembering perhaps Curson's dictum of 1892 that 'Baghdad must be included in the sphere of indisputable British supremacy'. The proposal was hotly attacked by the imperialist and big-business section of the press, which was concerned by the progress made by German commercial competition in capturing overseas markets from Britain, and resented the German support for the Boers in the South African War; moreover, German publicists had been tactless and provocative in discussing the opportunities which a war in the Middle East involving Britain would present for German expansion. Consequently the government declined the German offer, and the Foreign Secretary, Lord Lansdowne, redefined Britain's policy in the Persian Gulf: her aim was to promote and protect British trade without excluding the legitimate trade

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of other powers; the establishment of a naval base or fortified port in the Gulf by any other power would be a very grave menace.

IRAQ AT THE CLOSE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND AT THE LAST PHASE OF THE OTTOMAN RULE

A glance at the Iraq of 1900 - nearly four centuries from the first conquest by Turkey at the apex of its power and sway - shows clearly enough that there was almost no progress since the days of Sulaiman Qanooni (Sulaiman the Law-Giver; Sulaiman the Magnificent, Sultan 1520-1566). The country passed from the nineteenth century little less wild and ignorant, as unfitted for self-government, and not less corrupt, than it had entered the sixteenth; not had its standards of material life outstripped its standards of mind and character. Its resources lay untouched and it remained extremely backward in spite of the great advances made simultaneously in Europe and in India, in spite, even, of the material reward which success must have conferred.

To Europeans the country had for a century past become familiar, to some extent, through these same dreams or projects of development, projects whose proportions were better appreciated perhaps in London or Petersburg than in Istanbul, and not without a flavour of international competition. The territory had held for many years its

place in world trade, with its interest for steamship lines
and market-seekers reoriented by the opening of the
Suez Canal. It had long fascinated students of ancient,
biblical, and Islamic history. It had astonished the world
by the revelation of its excavated sites, Assyrian,
Babylonian, Sumerian; it had provided for three centuries
an outlet for missionary enterprise by Catholic and
Protestant; and it was valued by strategists then as now
as the only land approach to the Gulf and, more generally,
as the traditional land-bridge of East and West.

To Britain the territory, or its southern half, formed
part of the Parsian Gulf sphere of interest in which British
diplomacy had for two centuries built up a unique position.
The suppression of the arms, and slave-traffic and piracy,
chart-making and the buoying and lighting of channels,
were achievements of high value; and British statesmen felt
that a fair reward would be freedom from rivalry in the
Gulf waters and coasts and the Shatt al-Arab hinterland.
Trade interests, ocean navigation, a strategic route to
India, were all involved. A high proportion of the traffic
of Basra was in British hands, with nine-tenths of the
steamer-tonnage which used that port. Inland, the oldest-
established river steamers on the Tigris were British;
British and British-Indian firms plied their business at
Baghdad and Basra. Indian pilgrims arrived in hundreds to
visit the ' Iraqi shrines; and money bequeathed long since
by a pious King of Oudh was handed twice yearly by the British Resident at Baghdad for charitable distribution by the Mujtahids of Najaf and Karbala. Englishmen had been pioneers of Iraqi archaeology, as the names of Layard, Rawlinson, Loftus, and Taylor attested for the earliest period, those of Budge and King for the later. A mission of the Church Missionary Society had been established with its church and hospital at Baghdad in 1882, and extended its work later to Mosul. Watchful over all these enterprises, the British Resident, and Consul-General at Baghdad presided over a far more considerable establishment than other foreign representatives. With their own residency surgeon and dispensary, their river steamer the (Comet) of the Royal Indian Marine, their guard of sepoys and their extraterritorial Indian Post Offices, successive Residents had been forced by the jealous disfavour of Malis to fight hard for their privileges. The Resident belonged normally to the Indian Political Service, the Consul at Basra, after 1898, to the Levant Consular Service. A Consular Agent of Indian nationality had since 1893 watched the interests of Indian pilgrims at Karbala and the Oudh Bequest distributions.

A similar post at Mosul was revived in 1893, to be held by a local Christian.

In 1876, Abdul Hamid became sultan of Turkey, and at first appeared to favour the proposals which had been drawn

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20. Longrigg : Iraq, 1900 - 1950, op. cit., pp. 2ff
up by the greatest of the Turkish reformers, Midhat Pasha. But gradually Abdul Hamid abolished the reforms and established his position as an absolute ruler. In 1907, a number of young Turkish officers formed a secret political society called the "Committee of Union and Progress", with the object of establishing constitutional government on the Western model. The movement spread rapidly, and on 23rd July, 1908, Abdul Hamid was obliged once more to agree to a constitution. Further disturbances followed until, in 1909, the sultan was dethroned.

But disintegration had already gone too far to be possible to save the empire. On 28th September, 1911, the Italian army landed in Tripoli and in the Dodecanese Islands, which Turkey, without a navy, was unable to defend. The vultures were everywhere hovering, ready to devour the remains of the Sick Man of Europe.

On 8th October, 1912, Montenegro declared war on Turkey, and six days later Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria followed suit. Fighting lasted for little more than a year, and as a result of this Balkan war, Turkey lost almost all her European possessions. Meanwhile France, Britain and Germany were engaged in rival struggles for concessions in the building of railways and in the development of what was later to be called Iraq. Russia and Austria had been

* CUP.
interfering in the Balkans. Early in 1914, the Young Turks, at last free of wars, made a bold attempt to set their house in order. Negotiations were opened with Britain to resolve the problems of the Persian Gulf. France was approached on the subject of the railway concessions. General Liman von Sanders, with a German military mission, came to train the army. A programme of reforms for the eastern provinces was at last prepared. But on imperial questions, the Young Turks themselves were not entirely of one mind. Some favoured a policy of "Ottomanization" irrespective of race, some of "Islamization", emphasizing the Muslim religious bond which united the great majority of Ottoman subjects. But others adopted the narrower conception of Turkish nationalism, an attitude which, if it continued, could not fail to alienate the many millions of Arabic-speaking Ottoman subjects.

When the First World War began, the Ottoman Empire the sultan and Khalif and the Young Turks were alike swept from the stage.

The occupation of Iraq by the Anglo-Indian forces was a foregone conclusion. After the declaration of the First World War, the immediate reaction of Lenin was that he said, "... and the English capitalists may obtain Mesopotamia."