



Ross's travel books and then we have often had a chance of admiring Mr. Gandhi and his countrymen in the pages of the illustrated weeklies. I shall therefore confine myself to a few observations. At the Afghan consulate I was informed that the Peshawar route had really been closed down by the military. It would be necessary to alter my travelling plans. I must travel by way of Lahore through the Punjab desert and Beluchistan. The train raced with such velocity that one had the sensation of floating through the air. Imagination soared to kindred heights. Every moment one expected to enter jungle fastnesses or encounter a tiger out for a morning walk. But nothing dangerous happened. The train rushed on for hours and hours without a sign of even the most insignificant station. Thirty hours after our departure we reached Delhi, and half a day later, Lahore. The journey through the desert seemed endless. Near Sippi in Beluchistan we approached the mountains and at last arrived at Quetta, an English fortress which already lies as high as 5,400 ft. This was the end of the journey, for the English railway police-sergeant demanded my pass as certain formalities must be fulfilled. These formalities lasted for over a fortnight. I received no permission to continue the journey, as King Aman Ullah had meantime been deposed, succeeded by his brother whose reign lasted only a few days and now the throne was occupied by one of the most notorious rebel leaders. It was difficult to ascertain whether this new lord and master even knew what a European art academy might be, but one thing was certain, that the English considered such a state endowment to be one of the most dangerous institutions imaginable. Their initial politeness was soon transformed into commandeering decisiveness and finally my companions and myself were treated as waifs and strays, since we were no longer able to cope with the hotel bill which we had run up during our enforced detainment. The German consul in Bombay finally arranged for our retreat in comparatively good order. The youth of Afghanistan will therefore have to grow up in the future as in the past without any European art education, but when I remember the many extraordinarily clever and industrious Indian craftsmen whom I had the opportunity of observing at their work—then I am almost glad of it.

Trans. by E. T. S.

