

his outreachings toward Tibet as being merely part of the luxurious growth of a marvellously rich mind, fertilised by ambition, heated by the sun of success. That something great might be found among the Himalayan summits, was enough to set his imagination aflame, and in his strong nature, action followed close the heels of fancy. We may safely vault from his day almost a hundred years of Indian history, before finding events which could seriously fix responsible minds upon the Tibetan problem. Within those years, and since France withdrew from the fields where her genius had blazed the way for England's power, that power had been extended over three classes of territories. First are the lowlands—wide-spreading, populous, easily subdued, rich (relatively) in commercial opportunity and in state-revenue payment. Here the motive for conquests is not far to seek; they were made by a commercial company. Next come the first tier of mountain states, difficult to conquer, more expensive to administer (relatively) and not in themselves rich in returns of any kind, save military glory in the first days of blood. They were disturbers of the border peace, and it seemed cheaper to subdue and rule them, than to forefend at the frontier. Last come the outpost countries of the Himalayan region, valueless as commercial fields, not dangerous to their equally valiant and better organised neighbours of the first tier of mountain states. The sole motive for their conquest lies in the fear of Russia, the power which, in Hastings's day, lay so far to the north that it was not within the range of "practical politics."