

CHAPTER VI.

Gujrat District.

In this district, which is predominantly agricultural and contains a large element of the martial classes, political activity had been at a minimum and the 6th of April passed without any interest being taken in the All-India *hartal* movement.

Gujrat itself being a town of 10,000 inhabitants on the main line was the first place to feel the effects of the neighbouring disorders. On the 14th April a *hartal* was held and crowds paraded about with a black flag giving vent to "cries of lamentation." On the 15th the *hartal* continued and crowds still paraded. A crowd stoned the masters and the windows of the Mission School because it was not closed for the *hartal*. Later on a crowd gathered at the shrine of Shah Husain and thence made for the railway station. Here they broke furniture, panes of glass, and a clock : smashed the telegraph instruments : sacked the booking office and set fire to a quantity of papers and parcels with some tins of oil which they had picked up on the way. The Senior Magistrate and some other officers on hearing of this attack on the station hurried to the spot and, as the crowd would not desist after repeated warning, a police guard was ordered to fire upon it. This caused no casualties, but was effective in dispersing the mob.

Jalalpur Jattan.

At this place, which is about 8 miles from Gujrat, shops were closed on the 15th and crowds went about the streets. At night the telegraph wire was cut in two places. Next day the *hartal* was continued and a meeting of Municipal Commissioners in the Town Hall was broken up by an invasion of the crowd.

Malakwal.

This is a large village about 55 miles from Gujrat. It is a railway junction and has a good many railway employees. These were apparently in a mood to strike for reasons of their own and some speeches which they had heard against the Rowlatt Act were having effect in intensifying discontent. A crowd mostly concerned to bring off a strike went to the railway station on the morning of 15th April, but, seeing troops there, did nothing.

On the evening of the 15th, a party went out and cut all the telegraph wires serving the main railway line at a spot near a village called Kalawal.

As they were returning they were joined by others and some of the combined party went back and pulled up the railway line, throwing the sleepers and rails down an embankment. Next morning this resulted in a train being derailed and two lives lost. These attacks upon the railway were projected by two men who got others to follow them and acted as leaders.