

# THE POLITICAL FUTURE OF INDIA

A Study of the  
Aspirations of  
Educated Indians











THE POLITICAL FUTURE  
OF INDIA



# THE POLITICAL FUTURE OF INDIA

A STUDY OF THE ASPIRATIONS  
OF EDUCATED INDIANS

A PRIZE ESSAY

BY

H. P. MODY

BOMBAY

WITH TWO OTHER ESSAYS COMMENDED BY  
THE ADJUDICATORS

HODDER AND STOUGHTON

LONDON MCMVIII 1918

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## PREFACE

THE leaders of current political movements in India focus their aspirations upon SELF-GOVERNMENT, and all thoughtful people—except a few who, prompted by personal or what they conceive to be British interests, find it convenient to trample upon all aspirations—ask themselves if it be possible that the heterogeneous races of India can be welded into one community capable of successful autonomy. If so, how and when? Recent deplorable events prompt the further inquiry how violence and outrage, the greatest hindrances to progress, can be effectively suppressed. With a view to obtaining expressions of opinion on these points from all sections, I offered, while on a recent visit to India, a prize of two thousand rupees to be competed for under the conditions stated on another page.

The essays received in accordance with these conditions were carefully read and adjudicated upon by the following gentlemen:—

Mr. James Kennedy, formerly of the United Pro-

vinces Civil Service, Treasurer of the Royal Asiatic Society, and well known for his Indian historical researches. He was a contributor to the recently published historical volume of the "Imperial Gazetteer of India." (14, Frognal Lane, Finchley Road, London, N.W.)

Mr. C. E. Buckland, C.I.E., formerly Chief Secretary to the Bengal Government, author of "Bengal under the Lieutenant-Governors," and compiler of "The Dictionary of Indian Biography." (61, Cornwall Gardens, South Kensington, London, S.W.)

Mr. F. H. Brown, who has been in Anglo-Indian journalism in connection with leading papers both in this country and India for many years. (Dilkusha, Westbourne Road, Forest Hill, London, S.E.)

My own views as to newly-awakened aspirations in India are of little moment, and I do not propose here to define them in any detail. I would only say that I have lived too long in the Dependency to approach these difficult problems otherwise than as a humble inquirer. I have known something of our great Indian Empire at first hand for over thirty years, and many of its people with whom it has been my lot to come in contact I shall ever regard with feelings akin to affection. I have from an isolated position been able to watch impartially

the working of the Government machinery on the one hand and the lives of the people on the other. In all lands and in all ages education has given a broader outlook to its recipients, and with an enlarged horizon has come a keener sense of power and a fuller and juster estimate of personal and collective possibilities. India is no exception to this rule. The "movement" which we find in India to-day, in common with other countries in the East, is closely connected with a very natural development of the human mind. It is but the awakening to self-consciousness of minds emancipated from the darkness of ignorance, minds brought into the glare of noonday, with the whole world, past and present, suddenly brought within their ken. The map of a new world has been spread before the East. The movement inspired by this new world vision has been mothered by education and vivified by the flash of the Japanese sword which repelled Russia, and is fanned by uplifted hands that stretch out after liberty and progress in China, Turkey, Persia, and Egypt.

We cannot go on turning out thousands of highly educated men from our schools and colleges without rendering inevitable far-reaching changes in the social and political life of the people. The man with his back to the wall ready to thrust aside

all progressive movements must be regarded as hopelessly blind and deaf to all the teachings of history. There can be no justification for a desire to keep the Oriental for ever in swaddling clothes just because he is an Oriental, or because the enlightened and capable are a mere fraction of their race. The existence of millions of illiterate Indians is no reason why we should be oblivious to the claims of the literate ! It is hard to say which is the more dangerous amongst our countrymen—the man with his back to the wall, or the warm-hearted enthusiast who would travel towards great constitutional changes in a sixty horse-power motor regardless of the condition of the road or of the many gardens destroyed by dust.

There is ample room between these extremes for moderate men both in this country and India to help forward great reforms on safe and permanent lines, and it must be a great satisfaction to all such to find that the hand of the present Secretary of State is neither being forced nor hindered by extremists. Our business in India to-day, while suppressing crime, is not to check political movements, but to guide them into proper channels. "Wise men hasten slowly," but has not the time fully come for us to discard the *ekka* and the bullock-cart ? A fifteen horse-power car may



suffice for the present to carry us safely along the path of progress, and before we attempt to exceed the speed limit we must be sure that there are no awkward bends in the road and no obstructions in the way.

The questions propounded, with conditions of competition, are followed by an able and interesting report by the adjudicators. The essay of Mr. Mody, the prize-winner, is published with two others of special merit. It should be explained that while the arguments adduced are unchanged, the essays have all been subjected to editorial revision by an expert, and repetitions or redundancies and points of altogether minor interest have been eliminated or curtailed, while misconceptions or mis-statements of fact have been editorially noted. In this slightly abridged and revised form the essays are published in the hope that they may help in some small degree to enlighten inquirers in this country as to the nature of the great problems which are to-day agitating the minds of so many of our educated fellow-subjects in India, and that they may encourage those of the latter who believe that good political progress can be obtained on strictly constitutional lines.

R. LAIDLAW.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*December 5, 1908.*

## THE COMPETITION

The following notice was sent to intending competitors :—

A prize of Rs. 2,000 is offered for the best reasoned answers to the following three questions :—

1. Is it possible for the diverse races of India to become one united self-governing community ?
2. By what steps and in what period of time can this consummation be attained ?
3. How can encouragement best be given to legitimate political aspirations, and sedition most effectively suppressed ?

### RULES AND CONDITIONS.

1. Papers must not exceed sixty thousand words. Must be typewritten on one side of the paper only, and must reach the undersigned not later than July 1st next.

2. Papers must not be signed by the writer, but bear a *nom de plume*, and a sealed envelope containing the full name and address of the writer must be securely attached to the paper.

3. The papers will be judged and award made by three Europeans of long Indian experience and of no specially pronounced political views. Their decision to be final.

4. The undersigned will be at liberty to publish the successful paper in book form or otherwise; the name of writer will, however, not be disclosed without his permission. No other papers will be published without the consent of the writers, and in any such case a fee will be paid. No unsuccessful manuscripts will be returned.

5. Decision of the judges will be announced in the *Pioneer*, *Times of India*, *Madras Mail*, and *Statesman*, Calcutta, at earliest possible date.

## REPORT OF THE JUDGES ON MR. LAIDLAW'S COMPETITION

The competition has elicited nearly 50 essays, but only 35 of these have complied with the prescribed conditions and been considered by the judges. The essays range from 2,000 to 50,000 words, and vary as greatly in ability as in length. One is exceptionally able ; several are excellent ; others are merely dull ; a number are confused in thought and defective in expression.

The value of the essays consists in their illustration of the currents of political thought which are at work among certain sections of Indian and Anglo-Indian society. The identity of the essayists was, of course, unknown to us, but they usually state or betray their nationality, and it is easy to infer from the technical use of words or the special knowledge displayed with what part of India the essayists are acquainted. Fifteen appear to be Englishmen or Eurasians, while the twenty Indian writers include three Mahomedans, one or two Parsis, three Theosophists, a follower of the Arya-Samaj, and at least one Indian Christian. Some

of the Indian essayists are thoroughly Anglicised, but the majority belong to the less educated middle class which knows some English. The Bombay Presidency and Hindustan proper contribute the larger number. The fighting clans have no representative. Burma is excluded from the discussion. It is therefore apparent that while Anglo-Indian opinion is well represented, the expression of Indian opinion which is reflected in these essays must be taken with some reservations.

The competitors are all agreed on certain points.

1. With the exception of a single Extremist writer, not one of them intentionally desires to be revolutionary. The more simple-minded expressly say that they do not propose to drive all Europeans from the country, and one essayist who thinks all railway employes should be natives propounds a scheme for turning Europeans into agriculturists, to be settled at Lyallpur in the Punjab under the supervision of the clergy.

2. All are agreed that any form of government which may supersede the present "bureaucracy" must be maintained in its place by the British army.

3. All are very loyal to the Crown. We are assured that the Hindus are king-lovers by nature, and worship their kings as deities. One gentleman naïvely says that when the millennium (shortly to be expected) comes, "the only thing the people will have to do is to adore the Sovereign, not as a ruler, but as a deity who does not interfere with

men's thoughts, words, or actions." A Theosophist remarks that "the population (of India) are reforming themselves as brethren of one united family under one common white king of England, the emblem of the blessed Vishnu"; and he looks back with gratitude to the day when "Bharat Varsha, under the inspiration of her divine patron, Vishnu, threw the garland of her espousals round the neck of England." A third gentleman, more practically minded, proposes a handsome contribution from India to the King's civil list.

4. Even the best of the essayists, European and Indian, display remarkable political inexperience. They draft paper constitutions lightheartedly, without any recognition of the difficulties in the way or any conception of how their schemes would work.

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With these preliminary explanations we proceed to summarise the answers to Mr. Laidlaw's questions.

I. The first question deals with three things—the idea of Indian nationality, the possibility of political union with or without it, and the idea of autonomy.

The European and a number of the Indian essayists deny the possibility of Indian nationality, of Indian political union, or Indian autonomy. It is argued that the peoples of India are separated from each other by creed, caste, language, history, and inherited antipathies; they have nothing in common except submission to British rule and Asiatic prejudice against foreigners.

On the other hand, a small and able minority of the essayists contends that an Indian nationality is already in existence and the possession of a party, few indeed in numbers but full of self-confidence, and prepared to act as the political leaders of the people. The members of this party are united by European education, English ideas, and the habitual use of the English language; also by a common faith in the future of India, a common colour, and a common Asiatic origin; above all, by opposition to the present form of government. They argue that the disruptive factors of caste and religion are falling into the background and becoming mere secondary matters—matters of private life and personal belief; and they add that the Mahomedans have much more reason to unite with them than with the English. The Mahomedan essayists take up a somewhat different position, but they are not quite agreed among themselves. They, too, have an enthusiasm for the future of India, and would certainly prefer Mussulman rule to the rule of a foreigner; but since that is impossible, they have no belief in Indian autonomy, and are somewhat sceptical of parliamentary institutions. One essayist in particular points out that since the days of Lord Ripon the party of Young India is much more divided than it was formerly, and that the prosperity of Mysore and Baroda and the successful working of the Bombay municipality are due to

the energy and tact of individuals, and not to any corporate form of government.

So far we have followed the Anglicised Indians, who are mainly dwellers in the Presidency towns. But the essays also show that, scattered throughout the country, there are many individuals whose English is imperfect, whose thoughts are crude, but who are true patriots after a fashion, each with his favourite nostrum. These we need not here discuss; sufficient to say that all competitors, high and low, are agreed on certain facts. It is admitted that the upper classes, the *Rajas*, *Raises*, big landholders, and *Darbaris*, are conservative and averse to any national movement. One essayist goes so far as to say that their action will always be retrograde, and that they should therefore never be entrusted with real power or get beyond the status of an advisory council. It is further universally admitted that British rule suits the masses, and that there is no enthusiasm for either municipal or local self-government. The demand for self-government comes from a small but growing number of professional men who have sprung up under British rule and British training. One Indian writer points out that they gain their importance by their access to and power of appeal from those very "bureaucrats" whom it is their object to replace, and without whose help it is impossible that they should succeed. They do not reflect that they are not the natural heirs to the authority which they would overturn.



II. The second question is virtually determined by the first. The majority are agreed that Indian nationality is a chimera, and autonomy under British suzerainty an impossibility. On the other hand, one hopeful gentleman guarantees Home Rule in a couple of years, if the English are subjected to a firm, though friendly, boycott. Another points out that it may easily be obtained by passing a law, whereby only Indians shall be eligible for Government appointments. The Congress essayists think that autonomy may be obtained in a couple of generations, the Theosophists in a thousand years.

There is a general agreement that education must be the chief instrument for improving the condition of the people, and the preliminary of any possible union. On this subject, of which they have had experience, the Indian essayists usually talk excellent sense. They dwell mainly on three things—religious, technical, and vernacular education. The chief want of India at the present day is the encouragement of native industries, and the writers urge the importance of technical education.

European and Indian competitors are agreed that the neglect of religious training has done much harm, and they would make religious teaching at school and college compulsory. Several demand a minimum age for conversions—a man should not have independent religious convictions of his own until he is thirty. Lastly, the more thoughtful essayists dwell

on the importance of vernacular literature, and the study of the vernaculars. Of course, even here we have an instance of the shoemaker and his last. A Bombay schoolmaster advocates the suppression of all grants in aid, the abolition of most vernacular schools, and the establishment everywhere of free English schools, secondary as well as primary. It is noteworthy that the only Government department which Indians do not profess a desire to monopolise is the educational.

III. The third question deals with the measures to be taken for improving the political position of the people and the suppression of sedition. This last must come first, since suppression of disorder must not follow, but precede or accompany reform. Sedition is easily got rid of, says one writer ; it is due to the fact that the discontented are not granted what they want ; satisfy, therefore, he says, their demands, and repeal the Acts of Lord Morley and Lord Minto. The moderates of the Congress camp part from the extremists with some apologies, and desire a very tender treatment of the vernacular press. The majority, however, of the essayists, Indian even more than European, call for firm government, and approve of drastic measures towards the press. The vernacular press has admittedly been the chief instrument in bringing about the present agitation and inflaming popular passions ; it ought therefore to be bound over in heavy securities, and be subject to severe penalties.

For the rest, we have a number of suggestions which may be classified under three main heads.

1. The establishment of Parliaments, Imperial and Provincial, with certain reservations regarding the army, foreign policy, and finance, but with a non-official majority. Regarding the details there is no unanimity—some doubt the advisability of an Imperial Parliament, and would have provincial Parliaments tried as an experiment in one or two selected provinces. Some would provide the provincial Parliaments with a cabinet, subject to the Governor's control and veto. Others wish the district officer to be regarded as the Parliament's executive. Most of the Indian competitors, including those of the Congress, regard it as the future Parliament's chief business to put a curb on the Collector. One writer proposes a representative from every district in order that he may report on the Collector's doings; and another proposes to reduce the Collector to the rank of "a simple citizen." The ablest of the Congress essayists says: "All our efforts are concentrated towards breaking down the ramparts behind which the bureaucratic forces are at work."

Although there is much talk of Parliaments, there is the greatest diversity of opinion as to their composition. The Congress writers resent every restriction which would prevent them from getting all power into their own hands. The claim of the Congress men to be the leaders of the people

is vehemently denied by others. They insist on the representation of every class by genuine members of that class, and the recognition of the rights of minorities, including native Christians; they declare that the rule of a small educated and Anglicised class would be intolerable, and tantamount to the enslavement of the whole body of the people; that the civilisation of India is in its own way as great as that of England, and for Indian purposes the more important; and they deny that an English education gives any right or ability to rule. We may add that the protesters are not Mahomedans, but Hindus. It is the protest of the non-Anglicised against the Anglicised party.

2. The second suggestion put forward by several essayists is the redistribution of the present provinces into smaller groups. This redistribution should be based on the historic nationalities which exist, and the administrative arrangements should be suited in each case to the character of the people. Much may be said in favour of this proposal, but only one writer has worked it out in detail. He gives an outline sketch of a model State, with an English Governor and a few European administrators, an executive recruited almost entirely from the province, an official language which every one can understand, and an impartial representation of minorities, the English element to be reduced in proportion as the province advances in civilisation and capacity for self-administration. Moreover,

every attempt of any one province or party to interfere with its neighbour should be severely repressed. For instance, racial and religious disputes often take the form of a dispute over the official language, and our essayists afford an illustration. Those who are Anglicised desire English, the Mahomedans advocate the use of Urdu, some half a dozen wish to make Hindi compulsory, and only one stands up for the local language.

3. The great majority of the essayists argue in favour of a much larger employment of Indians in the higher official posts. On this subject little need be said, since the principle has been conceded by the Government of India. Some writers look only to the Civil Service, and demand that one quarter or one half of the appointments over Rs. 1,000 a month should be reserved for Indian officials. Others desire a larger share in all the Government services except the army and education. Several essayists, both Europeans and Indians, urge the appointment of an Indian Legal Member in the Viceroy's Executive Council.

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We do not consider that it comes within our province to criticise the suggestions which we have surveyed in this report, and we must expressly dissociate ourselves from implying approval of, or, indeed, any opinion on the views put forward by the

writers whose essays we recommend. In making our award we have looked to sanity of judgment, moderation of tone, general practicability of suggestion, cogency of argument, literary merit, and careful and exhaustive treatment. Judged by these standards, we are unanimous in considering the essay which bears the signature of "*Dum spiro, spero*" to be the best. It is a singularly able presentation of the views of the moderate party in the Congress. On its publication some small mistakes of fact should be corrected. But although it is certainly the most powerful and "best reasoned" of the essays, it is scarcely advisable to publish it without any indication of other points of view.

It appears to us to have much special pleading, many false analogies, assumptions which will not hold, and obliviousness of some fundamental facts, while the writer appears to know little of India outside certain limits, and much of what he asks is impracticable. The chief value of these essays consists in their evidential and educative significance. We would therefore recommend that with the prize paper some others be published which represent a different standpoint. We have selected "Moghal" and "Action Front" as representatives of two opposite schools. "Moghal" has a wide, but not, we think, a very profound or always practical, grasp of the question, and is somewhat wordy. "Action Front" displays a much surer knowledge of Indian ways, but he ignores too much

the position of "Young India" and the force of English sentiment. Along with these we have placed a very different paper by "A. M. I.," written in halting English, and far down the list as a literary composition. We have selected it because of its obvious sincerity, its pathetic pessimism, and its grasp of certain elemental facts overlooked by the writer's more brilliant compatriots, which make it the best representative among these essays of the large and voiceless class of conservative Hindu patriots.

Among the remaining essays "Garuda's" is the most noteworthy; as an essayist he is equal to "Moghal" or "Action Front"; he appears to occupy a position midway between the Mahomedan and the moderate Congress party, but his views are covered to a considerable extent by those of "*Dum spiro, spero.*"

F. H. BROWN.

C. E. BUCKLAND.

J. KENNEDY.





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THE POLITICAL FUTURE  
OF INDIA

By H. P. MODY, BOMBAY



## INTRODUCTION

**I**N the annals of history it will be hard to find a parallel to the romantic story of India. The traces of its civilisation lie deep in the misty past, when the West had not yet emerged from its primæval barbarism. Kingdoms rose and fell in this ancient land ere the foundations of the Roman Empire were laid. The home of great religions, of science, ethics, law, and politics—in the region of thought its influence was unbounded. Its ancient sages taught the world the wisdom and the philosophy of the East. For centuries India maintained its supremacy in the domain of thought and the arts of civilisation. Then the tide turned. The country was given up to bloody feuds, anarchy, and misrule, and darkness settled over the land. Successive dynasties swept over it, and at each cycle of change it stood where it was—lifeless and unprogressive. Once in a while the victorious arm of a strong ruler subdued disorder and restored peace and good government. Then the country would again plunge into confusion and chaos. Thus India lived

on for well-nigh two thousand years, while her strength was being exhausted and her vast resources drained. Then came a small band of white traders from the West, attracted hither by wondrous tales of the fabulous wealth of the East. The story of the long struggle which ended in the conquest of this vast empire by the white traders can hardly be surpassed in dramatic interest by anything the imagination can conceive.

It can be easily perceived that while the country was given up to anarchy and misrule individual consciousness had not manifested itself, and under a long succession of despots the identity of the individual was lost in that of the State, which meant the king. When the English came they found the people disunited, disorganised, and demoralised. They evolved order out of chaos, and to their eternal credit be it said, they set about the task of uplifting the masses. In an auspicious hour they decided upon educating the natives, and through the blessings of higher education to bring about their moral and material regeneration. That wise and beneficent policy has been steadfastly pursued for more than half a century. And now the inevitable has happened. Education has brought to life ambitions and aspirations for which there was no scope while the people were under the heels of the oppressor. But when good government was established, and security of life and property assured, men's minds turned away from mere mate-



rial pursuits towards higher things. Hence has sprung up the intense desire among the people to have a share in the administration of the country which has been their home from times immemorial. "Good government can never be a substitute for government by the people themselves,"<sup>1</sup> and the educated native has come to realise with much force the truth of this statesmanlike dictum.

With the realisation of the truth has sprung up a host of complicated issues. What Macaulay prophesied with the vision of a seer has come to pass. Speaking from his place in Parliament on the occasion of the passing of the Charter Act, he said :—

"It may be that the public mind of India may so expand under our system as to outgrow that system ; that our subjects, being brought up under good government, may develop a capacity for better government, that being instructed in European knowledge, they may crave for European institutions. I know not whether such a day will ever come, but when it does come it will be the proudest day in the annals of England."

Nobler words were seldom uttered. That day which Macaulay dreamt of has at length arrived. Is England ready to respond to the call ? Or does she refuse to recognise the conditions which the policy of her own statesmen has brought into being ? Herein lies the problem of India. It is the great mission of Englishmen in India to solve this problem in a spirit of broad statesmanship, and

<sup>1</sup> The late Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

thus carry to its logical conclusion the policy that was inaugurated some fifty years ago. The phenomena that are to-day observed throughout the land are of England's own creation. Does she stand aghast at her handiwork? Will she not instead courageously shape and direct the forces she herself has brought into being? The path of duty is plain, and therein also lie the safety, the prosperity, and the honour of England. In the following pages I shall endeavour to answer the questions set before me with an open mind. They touch some of the most burning topics of the day, and on their right treatment by the British authorities depends the stability of their rule and the happiness of their subjects.

## CHAPTER I

### NATION-BUILDING

THE question before us is, Is it possible for the diverse races of India to become one united self-governing community? I propose to treat it under two distinct heads. Under the first I mean to discuss the possibility of the various races of India forming themselves into a compact, united nation; under the second I shall deal with their capacity for self-government.

Probably one-half of those who talk about the diverse races of India do not realise how much that means. No other country in the world can afford so many varying types of civilisation. It is necessary to emphasise this fact in order the better to grapple with the difficulties before us. For this purpose I shall quote at some length the words of the late Marquis of Dufferin. Making due allowance for the gorgeous imagery in which that brilliant statesman delighted to indulge, the picture given to us may be considered as fairly

accurate. Speaking at St. Andrew's Day dinner,<sup>1</sup> he said :—

“Well, then, gentlemen, what is India? It is an empire equal in size, if Russia be excluded, to the entire continent of Europe, with a population of 250 million souls.<sup>2</sup> This population is composed of a large number of distinct nationalities, professing various religions, practising diverse rites, speaking different languages, and many of these nationalities are still further separated from each other by discordant prejudices, by conflicting social usages, and even antagonistic material interests. Perhaps the most patent peculiarity of our Indian ‘cosmos’ is its division into two mighty political communities—the Hindus, numbering 190 millions,<sup>3</sup> and the Mahomedans, a nation of 50 millions.<sup>4</sup> But to these two great divisions must be added a host of minor nationalities, who, though some are included in the two broader categories I have mentioned, are as completely differentiated from each other as are the Hindus from the Mahomedans. Such are the Sikhs, with their warlike habits and traditions and their theocratic enthusiasm; the Rohillas, the Pathans, the Assamese, the Baluchis, and the other wild and martial tribes on our frontiers; the hillmen dwelling in the folds of the Himalayas; our subjects in Burma, Mongol in race and Buddhist in religion; the Khonds, Mairs, and Bhils, and other non-Aryan peoples in the centre and south of India; and the enterprising Parsis, with their rapidly developing manufactures and commercial interests. Again, among these numerous communities may be found at one and the same moment all the various stages of civilisation through which mankind has passed from the prehistoric ages to the present day. At one end of the scale we have the naked savage hillman, with his stone weapons, his head-hunting, his polyandrous habits, and childish superstitions; and at the other the Europeanised native gentleman, with his refinement and polish, his literary culture, his Western philosophy, and his advanced political ideas; while between the two lie, layer

<sup>1</sup> Calcutta, 1888.

<sup>2</sup> 294 millions in census of 1901.

<sup>3</sup> Now 207 millions.

<sup>4</sup> Now 62½ millions.

upon layer, or in close juxtaposition, wandering communities, with their flocks of goats and moving tents; collections of undisciplined warriors, with their blood-feuds, their clan organisation, and loose tribal government; feudal chiefs and barons, with their picturesque retainers, their seignorial jurisdiction, and their mediæval modes of life; and modernised country gentlemen and enterprising merchants and manufacturers, with their well-managed estates and prosperous enterprises. The mere enumeration of these diversified elements must suggest to the most unimaginative mind a picture of as complicated a social and political organisation as ever taxed human ingenuity to govern and administer."

Is it possible for this confused mass of humanity to emerge into a united community with definite ideals and definite aims? The question is one of great difficulty, involving a consideration of complex factors in political and social evolution. At the outset it will be necessary for us to analyse carefully the conception of nationality. We shall then be in a position to state definitely to what extent the diverse races of India have the making of a nation in them.

What is a nation? It is generally understood to denote a distinct homogeneous race of men, united by the ties of common origin, language, and manners. It is here the confusion between a "people" and a "nation" comes in. Bluntschli, in his great work on "The Theory of the State," has clearly distinguished between the two. Community of race and community of religion may be essential elements in the formation of a

people. But it is quite possible to believe that a nation may grow up where these two conditions do not exist. By a nation we generally understand a society of all the members of a State as united and organised in the State. To put the difference between the two conceptions shortly, "it is the consciousness, more or less developed, of political connection and unity which lifts the nation above the people."

Seeley, in his "Expansion of England," after stating that it is not every population that constitutes a nationality, goes on to discuss some of those uniting forces which go towards the formation of a nation. He assigns the first place to community of race. Now, it may be at once conceded that it is much harder to establish and maintain the unity of a nation if it is composed of several peoples each fighting for power and place, than if it is a single people descended from a common stock. But it is submitted that community of race, though a very helpful, is not an indispensable factor. It is difficult to understand why racial differences should stand in the way of political unity (which is all we are concerned with) if other conditions favouring its growth exist. Now what are these conditions which make possible the union of the heterogeneous communities of India? The answer is to be found in the following definition of a nation :—

"It is the aggregate of those who are citizens of one country, subordinate to one Power, subject to one supreme

legislature, taxed by one authority, influenced for weal and woe by one system of administration, urged by like impulses to secure like rights and to be relieved of like burdens."

In other words, common grievances and common aims, a common country and a common system of government, supply the defects of diversity of race. I shall now consider one by one the value of these factors in combating the adverse influence of racial differences.

Where a body of people suffer under a sense of injury, there is formed between them a bond which far transcends mere community of race as a moral and political force. Now it will not be denied, even by the Anglo-Indian official, that the people of India have grievances and are discontented. Whether we have to thank "pestilential agitators" for this, or "sun-dried bureaucrats," this is not the place to inquire. Sufficient for us is the fact that the unrest in India is not confined to one community or to one district. All over the land a ceaseless campaign is being carried on against the policy of the Government. From the press and from the platform a flood of criticism, valuable or worthless, is being poured upon the methods of British rule in India. Bengali and Sikh, Rajput and Brahmin, Madrasi and Parsi, all are united in one common endeavour to ameliorate the lot of the people of this country. There is not a single measure affecting a district or a province which does not evoke an active and sympathetic interest

throughout the whole land. Even a purely provincial question such as the Partition of Bengal produced a commotion which was felt by Bombay, Madras, and the Punjab no less than by the divided province itself. Of course, the intensity of feeling in Bengal was not manifested to an equal degree in the other provinces. That is but natural. Similarly, the Punjab Colonisation Bill was impartially condemned everywhere, though it affected the Land of the Five Rivers only. These are signs which he who runs may read. Here we have practical demonstrations of the power of common grievances in uniting widely divided peoples. A significant passage in a recent issue of the *Fortnightly Review* amply supports my contention. Says the writer: "It is a matter of life and death for our *régime* in the East that no artificial unity of the Indian peoples—Bengalis with Sikhs, Pathans, Rajputs, Mahrathas, and the rest—should be created by the burning sense of a common injustice." By "artificial unity" I suppose the writer means a unity based on other factors than community of race. If that is the interpretation, I have nothing to say to it; but the word is otherwise apt to mislead.

If common grievances have the power to unite people, community of aims is no less instrumental in doing so. It is another stimulus to co-operation and combination. The leaders of thought all over India are animated by a single purpose, and that is the moral and material advancement of the



country and the larger association of the people in its government. Methods may differ, but the ultimate aim of all is practically identical. Extremist or moderate in their opposition to Government, and in their desire to have a substantial share in the administration, they are all at one. I shall have occasion to dwell on this topic further on.

For the present, I pass on to another factor of importance in breaking down the barriers of race, and that is a common country, which includes common laws, common rights, &c. Whether we are Hindus or Mahomedans, Gurkhas or Sikhs, we are the children of one soil. Mr. Seeley has contended that India is not a political name, but only a geographical expression like Europe or Africa. This is but a half truth, which generally is worse than palpable error. I am prepared to admit that before the advent of the British the word "Indian" had no meaning, and India was only a geographical expression. But circumstances have altered, and what was formerly a conglomeration of scattered principalities is now a single country dominated by a single Power. No longer is the south the country of the Hindu and the north the dominion of the Moslem. We are all British-born subjects, living under the same flag, enjoying the same rights, and suffering the same disabilities. India is equally the home of the Pathan in the North and the Tamil in the South. The population is the same as before, the geographical boundaries are the same, but the

dividing forces are no more. We are all the inhabitants of British India. This has added one more bond of sympathy between us, and thus helped to break down further the demoralising influence of racial diversity.

My last argument deals with the part played by the Government in bringing about the same end. It is a commonplace in politics that where there is a centre of resistance round which all the moral, political, or social elements cluster, there will be found a powerful incentive to organised effort. This pivot of opposition is supplied by the British Government. However divided the people may be, the division between one community of India and another is not so great as between the Indian and the Englishman. There is much that is common between the various races of India, but what community of interests is there between the rulers and the ruled? Here, the consideration of the beneficence or otherwise of British rule does not enter at all. Even if it was a perfectly organised machinery, the interests of the rulers on the one hand and the aspirations of the subject races on the other must inevitably produce a conflict which would drive the two forces into opposite camps. All our efforts are concentrated towards breaking down the ramparts behind which the bureaucratic forces are at work. We constitute, so to say, a permanent Opposition, and just as in English politics there is a combination while in opposition

which was lacking in the days of power, so our combination grows vigorous and intense. A Liberal in power occasionally declaims against his own party; in opposition he is a staunch and consistent enemy of all that is Conservative. Thus we are never demoralised by victory, but always united by constant reverses.

But, letting alone the political aspect of the question, what are the ties that draw us to our rulers? Do they lie in the Anglo-Indian's ill-disguised contempt for the "nigger," or in his arrogant behaviour towards all and sundry, irrespective of class and education? <sup>1</sup> Is the over-sensitive native to be won over by being socially ostracised and continually reminded of the blackness of his skin? Does it tend to better relations when institutions all over the country are labelled "For Europeans only," with the "Eurasian" also thrown in at times? A Mahratha and a Sikh, a Rajput and a Gurkha may not have much in common, but the connection between them and the nation which conquered them all is still less. The victor of Plassey and Argaon, of Khirkee and Sobraon can hardly be more acceptable to the Indian than a compatriot and fellow-countryman. Specially is this the case when the conquerer never forgets his racial superiority. It is unfortunately forgotten

<sup>1</sup> It is to be regretted that the writer does not here discriminate, but charges Anglo-Indians as a class with an attitude and spirit observable in a small minority only.—ED.

that "In India bad manners—overbearing manners—are a crime." But then every Anglo-Indian is not a Morley. Thus it comes to pass that the division is not between the Hindu and the Moslem, but between the Hindu and the Moslem on the one hand and the Englishman on the other. Mr. Sydney Low, who has hardly much sympathy with Indian aspirations, thus observes in his book on the Royal tour :—

"What did not seem to me a small matter by any means was that all these Anglicised, de-Orientalised natives had a certain common national feeling as against the alien ruler. Differing as they do among themselves in origin, race, and language, they yet manifested a consciousness that *vis-à-vis* the British they were all 'Indians.' It was a sentiment the existence of which most Anglo-Indians would emphatically deny, but I have seen other evidence that it prevails even in Europeanised Bombay, which is perhaps the last place where one would expect to find it."

I have so far attempted to show that racial diversity is not an insuperable obstacle to the attainment of political unity. Perhaps, if we find some illustrations from history in support of our view, our case will be very much strengthened. The most striking instance is that of Switzerland, which has succeeded in retaining different nationalities side by side without injuring the unity of the State. It has maintained a vigorous patriotism in spite of its three languages and two religions. French, German, and Italian elements there co-exist without any quarrel or conflict. In a lesser degree, the same

may be said of modern Germany, whose different peoples have merged their petty differences and by their union created a strong and militant Fatherland. How many discordant elements, again, have gone to the making of the American nation, since the days when Europe first poured her human cargo into the New World. So, while we reflect upon the diversity of races in India, let us not despair of their political unity. A united India is not a fond visionary's dream, but quite within the range of practical politics. And what, after all, does this diversity in substance amount to ? Underlying all these various manifestations of civilisation there is an essential unity of Indian life and ideals. A shrewd observer has remarked :—

“Compare the most dissimilar Indian sects, and if a few wild tribes at a lower stage of civilisation be left out of account, striking similarities will at once appear, while the differences of both from the civilisation of Europe on the one hand, or of China and Japan on the other, will be very marked. To take only one point, it will be found that the ideal of sanctity is the same throughout India ; so that there are saints who are held in veneration by men of all religions in India.”

But the casual observer is of course more struck by superficial differences than by the underlying similarities.

I have attempted to demonstrate that a common origin is not an essential condition of political unity, if there are other circumstances conducive to its growth. I now proceed to discuss what has been

regarded as another indispensable element in the formation of a nation, and that is a common religion. According to Seeley, it is the strongest and most important of all the elements that go to constitute nationality, and he thinks this element exists in India. The latter part of this remark is, of course, not correct (though it is an admission in my favour), for Hinduism and Mahomedanism have nothing in common, and there are absolutely no indications of the one absorbing the other. In ancient times, religious belief had immense influence over the thought and life of man. The principle of toleration was practically unknown, and religious liberty amounted to a "permission to believe what I believe." Those were the days when heretics and unbelievers were tortured and burnt. In the first days of man's faith, religious belief brought with it an intolerance and bigotry which almost amounted to fanaticism. Human life was not so sacred then, and our forefathers had rather vague notions of its value. Respect for individual conscience there was little, and as the Greeks called all others barbarians, so difference of belief was termed unbelief. The statutes of civilised countries bear witness to the spirit which dominated the religious convictions of men down to within recent times. Our modern civilisation can boast of no prouder achievement than the triumph over religious bigotry and fanaticism. We are not

totally free from their influence, but the old fury will never again take possession of men's souls. No longer will a Bartholomew massacre disgrace the annals of mankind. No more will the militant faith of Islam carry conviction at the point of the sword. Not in our day will an imaginary Popish Plot unhinge the minds of men. Never again will adherence to the ancient faith of Persia be purchased with exile from hearth and home. The dictates of a man's conscience we value above religious unity, and we have too much respect for the human mind to make of it a slave. Freedom from dogma has enabled us to grasp with clearer perception the essentials of religion, and its teaching of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood and equality before God of men.

Thus it has come about that religious differences have ceased to be the disruptive influences that once they were. Outside of our beliefs, we find much that brings us into close communion with our fellow-creatures. As Mr. Wells observes in one of his essays :—

“One man may be a Swedenborgian, another a Roman Catholic, another a Calvinistic Methodist, another an English High-Churchman, another a Positivist or a Parsi or a Jew ; the fact remains that they must go about doing all sorts of things in common every day, and may meet unanimously in the market-place with a desire to shape their general activities to the form of a public-spirited life, and when at last the life of every day is summed up, to leave the world better than they found it.”

This is, of course, an ideal held before us, and it has not yet succeeded in directing the public life of any country. But we are gradually progressing towards this ideal, and the day is not far distant when our religious differences will be entirely merged in a higher conception of the essential unity of all religions. In Protestant England, it was found possible for a Jew to attain the highest position in the State, and a French Canadian and a Catholic could become Prime Minister of Canada.

In India, this spirit of broad-minded tolerance has been specially inculcated by the wise policy of the British Government, which has emphatically declared that it regards all religions alike. Hence the violence and animosities of earlier days have ceased to exist, and the acuteness of our dissensions is considerably diminished by the lesson of tolerance thus taught. Of course there are occasional outbursts of ill-feeling between the Hindus and the Mahomedans, but to represent these solitary instances as a chronic condition of things is too ridiculous to need refutation. Since the British occupation there have been very few instances of any serious conflict between the two races. The recent breach between them in Eastern Bengal is due to political reasons, and religious differences have not contributed thereto. Of their general relations I shall have to speak shortly. For the present I shall content myself with one or two notable illustrations in support of my contention



that diversity of religion is not such a disruptive influence among Indians as it is represented to be. The premier Native Prince of India, a staunch Mahomedan, has for his Prime Minister a Hindu gentleman, and the enterprising Parsis have monopolised in that State some of the highest positions in the gift of the Nizam. The Gaekwar of Baroda, a devoted Hindu, and the most enlightened of all the Native Princes, has had more than one Parsi at the head of his State. Similarly, in other Native States, important posts will be found to have been distributed irrespective of caste or creed. This is an encouraging sign of the times, and a happy augury for the future. Bluntschli's opinions are always deserving of respect, and this is what he has to say on the influence of religion :—

“Now that religious freedom is valued more highly than unity of belief, the influence of religion upon the formation and separation of peoples becomes weaker. Germans have become conscious of their unity as a nation apart from the question whether they are Catholics or Protestants, Jews or Pantheists, and they maintain their distinction from foreign peoples, although many of these are of the same religion with them.”

A third element in the formation of a national spirit is community of language. Unlike the other two elements we have just discussed, it is an essential condition of political unity. For unless there is a common language which serves as a medium of intellectual intercourse, there cannot be a com-

munity of ideas. Common language is the special characteristic of a nation, so that those who speak the same language have a mutual recognition of each other as members of the same people. It must not be understood that community of speech always denotes nationality; for the English and Americans both speak the same tongue, yet are two distinct nationalities. But it is essential that there should be a common instrument for the diffusion of ideas before there can be a community of interests. Now, India has more than a hundred dialects, and it would appear that here is an insurmountable obstacle to our ultimate unification. But the spread of English education has partially removed this obstacle, and the gradual diffusion of the language among the masses will ultimately supply us with that common speech which is so necessary for our progress. Already, all over India, the educated classes find in it a common medium for the expression of ideas. How much it has done for us can best be realised by an attendance at the annual meeting of the Indian National Congress. Here will be found the Bengali and the Sikh, the Brahmin and the Moslem, the Mahratha and the Parsi conversing with each other in the language that threatens to supplant their mother-tongues, and voicing their grievances through the medium of a common speech. It will be urged that the English-speaking portion of the population is very small, and that the masses

of the people cannot even write their own dialects. But so far we have been considering the educated classes only, and it must be admitted that whatever unity exists at present exists among them alone. It is remarkable, however, with what facility Indians have adopted a tongue which is not their own. The foreigner stands amazed at their command over the English language. There are hundreds of natives who can speak and write it as well as Englishmen themselves, though the eloquent Babu sometimes butchers the idiom. To one who is a resident of this country the fact needs no demonstration. Attend a political meeting or read a native journal, and no further proof will be required.

Nor will proof be needed to demonstrate the immense influence of language and literature in bringing about a feeling of nationality. A common literature is the means whereby community of thought and feeling is engendered, for it is the vehicle by which ideas are exchanged and acquired. To this result the periodical press has contributed not a little. If the Elizabethan age was the age of poets and dramatists, the twentieth century may aptly be said to be the age of newspapers. Within the past fifty years the press in Western countries has acquired and wielded an influence which has been felt by princes and cabinets. This is not the growth of a decade or a generation. It is the result of a long struggle against neglect, opposition, and oppression. To-day, its position as the spokesman

of the people and the moulder of public opinion is unchallenged. The press in India had no such difficulties to encounter, though it, too, has had its share of abuse and ridicule. With a magnanimity which deserves the highest commendation, the Government of India, some twenty-five years ago, granted the complete freedom of the press. To this may be ascribed the birth and growth of native journalism, for its position as a power in the land dates from that time. At the present day it performs the difficult task of voicing the aspirations of the people and criticising the methods of the Government. In a country of vast distances, it has been the only means of bringing the people of the different provinces into communication with each other. It has created and shaped public opinion, and, in voicing the aspirations of the diverse races of India, has helped to bring about a common feeling of nationality.

Of all the various shapes which political activity has taken in this country, I am inclined to attach the greatest importance to the efforts of the native papers. Their influence is being slowly recognised by the Government, and by none more so than by the present Governor of Bombay, who has borne public testimony to their usefulness and importance. Their influence has not been confined to the educated classes only. The vernacular papers have their own sphere of activity. But, it will be urged, the people of India have no common vernacular.

True ; but whether the papers are printed in Gujarati or Hindi, Bengali or Mahrathi, Tamil or Arabic they are all directed towards the same object, and that is the education of the people in political principles and improvements in the methods of administration. They are conducted with an ability and energy of which those who have not seen them can have no idea. Their integrity, too, is unquestioned ; and if they adopt a too partisan tone it may be excusable under the peculiar circumstances of the case. For the matter of that, a Tory journal has seldom a good word to say of the Liberals. Of course, there are black sheep everywhere, and the man who wrote that Lady Curzon's death was a visitation from God on the late Viceroy for partitioning the province of Bengal cannot be too severely condemned. But, despite occasional lapses from good taste and common sense, the native press as a whole is doing yeoman's service to the cause of the country.

Here, then, we have a mighty instrument at work in forming a national spirit. And for this we have to thank the language of our adoption. Without its aid nothing could have been achieved. With its aid, there is being slowly formed a feeling of nationality all over the country. As has been well said :—

“ Even strange races, entering on the heritage of a new language, are gradually transformed in spirit by it until their nationality is changed. Thus the German tribes of the Ostro-

goths and Lombards in Italy became Italian ; the Celts, the Franks, and the Burgundians in France became French ; the Slavs and Wends in Prussia became Prussian."

And so it may come about that the diverse races of India, entering on the heritage of the English language, may be so transformed by it in spirit that they all may be able to call themselves Indians in the real sense of the term.

A fourth element of nationality consists of what Renan styled "community of historical antecedents." This element exists in India, though its force is rather weak. It is natural that people who have been associated with each other in the past should develop strong tendencies to unite. In spite of what may be said to the contrary, the people of India have historic associations. Whatever rulers they had, they remember at least the ancient glory and prosperity of their fatherland. Nor have the alternations of Hindu and Mahomedan rulers tended to impair this sense of historical associations in the past, if it be remembered that the distinction between a Hindu and a Mahomedan is not so great as that between them and a foreigner. On the other hand, the rule of a universal benefactor like Akbar has handed down glorious traditions which are the common property of all. Just as the dark episodes of the Mutiny excite no bitter feelings in the breast of the Englishman now, so the scenes of their early conflicts do not conjure up bitter memories in the descendants of those who fought and died for their

faith. The racial hatred which brought about the conflicts has been forgotten ; but the brave deeds and heroic sacrifices which distinguished them remain as treasured recollections of the gallantry of their countrymen.

It might be urged that the country is too large, and the connection between its various divisions too little, to admit of associations growing up round it. This argument overlooks one or two material particulars. It is generally forgotten that the division between India and the rest of the world is much greater than that between one part of India and another. The attitude of Seeley towards the question of Indian nationality is very uncompromising. But even he is forced to admit that despite ethnical and local divisions, some vague conception of India as a possible whole has existed from very ancient times. And if the conception of a single political whole exists, there is bound to be a community of historical antecedents. The veneration in which Akbar's name is held throughout India, and the cult of Sivaji, the great Mahratha warrior, in far-off Bengal, are remarkable illustrations of the unity of historical traditions among the people of this country.

I have now discussed some of the elements which go to constitute nationality. Of these, I have admitted that community of race and community of religion are wanting in India. But I have argued that their existence is not essential, though it would

vastly facilitate the growth of a national feeling. In their place, I have pointed out, there are several conditions which are favourable to the formation of political unity among Indians. They are community of grievances, community of aims, community of historical antecedents, and last, but not least, a partial community of language provided by the gradual adoption of the English tongue. These are some of the factors which are responsible for whatever political unity there exists among us, and which make us hope with confidence for that complete unanimity of feeling which our common lot ought to create. Having discussed the subject in the abstract, I shall now cite concrete instances which will afford proof that racial and religious barriers have broken down to a certain extent, and are in process of gradual but inevitable annihilation.

But let us first ask, What is Unity? The ideal standard was aptly and pithily put centuries ago: "In essentials—unity; in non-essentials—liberty; in all things—charity." In other words, there should be a uniformity of essential principles, a toleration for differences of opinion in matters of detail, and an attitude of charity towards all men and measures. Thus unity does not mean a dead uniformity, but a common recognition of certain definite principles, whatever differences of opinion there may be as to the means to be employed. In human affairs, it is absolutely impossible to expect complete unanimity on all points. Progress is



always achieved through conflict, and stagnation follows a spirit of dull contentment. In a well-regulated State, all that we can expect is that certain principles which affect the very existence of the State and the welfare of its members as a whole shall be accepted by all. Beyond these limits, it is permissible to hold a variety of conflicting opinions without danger to the continued existence of the body politic. It is necessary to bear this in mind while judging of recent events in India. In some quarters there has been much ill-disguised jubilation over the split in the Indian National Congress at Surat. Much solemn nonsense has been spoken and written about our differences and divisions, and the claims of the Congress to voice the unanimous feelings of the educated classes in the country have been contemptuously laughed out.

Those who criticise in this vein forget that the difference between the Extremists and the Moderates is one of degree only, and is not inconsistent with their agreement on essential principles. Both parties are equally anxious to see the introduction of radical improvements in the existing machinery of government. Both are united in their desire for a substantial share in the administration of the country. But their methods differ. The Extremist would have nothing to do with the alien ruler. The Moderate believes in co-operating with the Government. The Extremist has no faith in gradual advancement towards the desired goal. The

Moderate considers (and rightly too) that India is not yet ripe for the wholesale introduction of representative institutions. The Extremist's methods are apt to be violent at times. The Moderate is always constitutional. This, in short, is the difference between the two parties. Does it, then, argue that Indians are disunited and disorganised? Let us take the case of England. The administrative machinery of the most perfectly governed country in the world is controlled chiefly by two great parties, the Liberals and the Conservatives. Besides them, there are the Radicals, the Labourites, and the Nationalists. These various parties have hardly anything in common except their loyalty to their King and country. Their opinions on most questions differ radically from each other. Even the Navy, on which the very existence of England depends, gives rise to eager controversies. The Radical and his kin call loudly for a reduction of armaments. Their opponents would not have anything less than the two-Power standard. One would have thought that the voice of the nation would be unanimous on a question so vital to its existence. But the "free Briton" is highly pugnacious, and never sacrifices his opinions. Thus it is that there is a difference of opinion on almost every question. The Boers fight with the English, and up spring a host of pro-Boers in England. Russia treats with England, and soon a fierce controversy is raged in the press as to the merits and

demerits of the peace settlement. But suppose Germany threatened England to-morrow. All these acute differences would vanish as with magic, and the nation would rise as one man to resist the common enemy. So it is with us in India. We will fight tooth and nail over Swadeshi, or Swaraj, or the Congress presidentship. But let the Universities Bill be passed into law, and we are up in arms together. Let Lord Curzon revile the educated classes, and the Extremist and Moderate will equally protest against it. This is all as it should be. It is foolish, then, to argue that there is no political unity among Indians. As I have shown, there exists a substantial unanimity of feeling, though it is at present confined to the educated classes.

An oft-repeated argument in favour of the theory that the diverse races of India can never become united is that the masses are blissfully ignorant of any national awakening, and that the educated classes who exhibit this sentiment are "a microscopic minority." Hence the existence of such unity must be disregarded, as it does not touch the mass of the people. This reasoning is based upon ignorance. The educated classes in all countries are the natural leaders of the people. They voice the hopes and fears, the grievances and aspirations of the dumb millions. It is to them that people look for guidance and support ; and a wise government will always take their peculiar position into account. A foreign government specially needs

their co-operation, for where the masses are illiterate, it is generally out of touch with them. In any case, the educated classes are in a better position to know the wants of vast numbers of their own kith and kin than an alien bureaucracy. Their position as the interpreters between the rulers and the ruled is one of great importance and influence. What the educated classes are thinking to-day, the masses will be thinking to-morrow. Just as the mountain-tops catch the light of the rising sun first, and then the plains, and lastly the valleys—so the light of knowledge must first shine on those whom Nature has placed in a higher sphere than the rest, and then extend itself to the labourer in the field and the artisan in the workshop. But as when once the sun has risen high up in the heavens, mountains and plains and valleys alike pulsate with life and vigour, so when education has spread its beneficent influence over rich and poor alike, the whole people will throb with one impulse. Thus it will not do to take refuge in the fact that the feeling of nationality is confined only to the few, and that the many are divided and disorganised. The same forces that have achieved so much for the few are also slowly but surely at work among the many. Perhaps not in a year nor in a generation will the transformation be brought about. But look upon the educated classes as the indicators of the prevailing tendencies, and there will hardly be room for doubt that the evolution of the diverse

ances of India into a politically united community must come in the fulness of time.

I am bound to admit that the Mahomedans have more or less kept themselves aloof from the political tendencies of the age. But at the same time I maintain that their differences with their Hindu brethren have been painted with more vivid colours than the facts of the case warrant, and if we go to the root of the matter we shall find that there is not much cause for despair at the somewhat strained relations between the two communities. Before the British conquest the Mahomedans lorded it over the greater part of India. Except for a few offices, all the great positions of the State were in the hands of their own kith and kin. The great House of Baber had made them masters of the peninsula, and such they remained till the British came. The Mahomedan power then vanished, as also did the Hindu dominion over the South. But whereas the supple Hindu quickly adapted himself to the changing conditions of the times, the Moslem stood sullen and refused to recognise the new order of things. He slowly sank into a moral and intellectual torpor. The Hindu, who had served him for generations, now became his master, for he monopolised all the offices that were at the disposal of the natives of the soil. Generations have gone by and the followers of Islam have not yet emerged from that lethargy into which they sank at the time of the British conquest. It is human nature to

envy that which one cannot attain, and the shrewd Hindu has thus become an object of suspicion and jealousy. The force of racial differences has been strengthened by the success of the one and the failure of the other.

In the early 'eighties, when the new India came into being and the Mahratha and the Babu clamoured for political privileges, the Mahomedans kept aloof from them. They saw that with their intellectual inferiority they stood no chance of sharing proportionately with the Hindus the privileges thus demanded. They fell back upon the Government. They protested their great loyalty and invoked the protection of their rulers. Hitherto the British had been strictly impartial in their treatment of the various communities. But now they became impressed with the preponderating influence of the Hindus, and as the Mahomedans were unable to hold their own through their backwardness in education, they extended a protecting hand to the latter. However well-meaning the effort may have been, the inevitable consequence was that the Mahomedans saw the advantage of throwing in their lot with the Government and against the Hindus. They perceived that in their present stage of development it was not possible for them to derive any advantage from a campaign of political agitation. Thus the cleavage deepened.

Unfortunately, events have of late occurred which are calculated to widen the breach still further.

I much regret to have to state it, but the recent policy of the Government has been to show a distinct preference towards one community as against the other. I am not an opponent of the much-debated Partition of Bengal. As an administrative measure it aimed at greater efficiency in the machinery of government. But, inasmuch as the consequence has been to set the two communities by the ears and to place them in a situation of open rivalry to each other, the partition is to be condemned. Nor was this result unforeseen, and hence more than the measure itself is to be condemned the policy which lay behind it. In pursuance of the same policy special favours have been granted to the Mahomedan community in the proposed measures for the expansion of the Legislative Councils. It will indeed be an evil day when the Government pins its faith to the principle of "Divide et Impera." I for my part fail to see why the interests of the Mahomedan minority are to be specially safeguarded when the minority are unfit for the exercise of the powers proposed to be vested in them.

If it were a fact that the preponderance of numbers which the Hindus possessed tended to exclude even capable Mahomedans from the enjoyment of political privileges, no one would question the wisdom of specially protecting the minorities. But it has never been so in this country. Wherever a capable Mahomedan has been found his merit

has been recognised by his own countrymen. For instance, the non-official members of the Madras Legislative Council, who are nearly all Hindus, have for years been sending a Mahomedan gentleman as their representative to the Council of the Viceroy. Similarly, Bombay and the United Provinces have been represented in times past by members of the same community. The landowners of Behar have displayed an equally catholic spirit. Again, take the instance of the Parsis. They have long been wielding an influence out of all proportion to their numbers. This has been due solely to their intellectual superiority and Western culture. The non-official members of the Bombay Legislative Council—mostly Hindus again—for a number of years sent a Parsi gentleman to the Imperial Council. This proves that merit has been recognised wherever found. It is, then, deplorable to find special protection being extended to one community, which has the effect of sowing dissensions in all quarters. Herein lies one reason of the differences between the Hindus and the Mahomedans.

The backwardness in education which has won for Mahomedans the special favour of the Government is also the reason of their hesitation to share the political activities of the other races of India. Commercial and industrial occupations have weaned them away from intellectual pursuits. The class of petty traders and artisans has driven the educated few into a hopeless minority. In the learned pro-



fessions the followers of Islam are found to be few and far between. In Government service, too, their number is very limited. This low level of education is the prime cause of the general indifference of the Mahomedans to the attractions of politics. The class of petty traders and artisans have neither the time nor the capacity to take an intelligent interest in the fortunes of their country. Where there is no education there are no aspirations. This is almost a truism and hardly needs proof. If half a century of high education had not taught the natives to think for themselves there would have been no more unrest in India than there is in Brighton or Blackpool. It is precisely because we are instructed in European knowledge, as Macaulay says, that we crave for European institutions. Let there be no delusion, then, that when the Mahomedans as a class have raised themselves from their intellectual torpor they will refrain from joining their Hindu brethren in the cause of Indian emancipation.

In spite of the teaching of their great leader, Sir Syed Ahmed, in spite of the attractions of Government protection and favour, the educated among the Mahomedans have sufficiently testified their devotion to the cause of their country to kindle in us a larger hope for the future. I am not here throwing out vague generalisations. Read the proceedings of the Indian National Congress, and you will find a sufficient sprinkling of Mahomedans

therein to support my contention. Two of their number have enjoyed the distinction of being its president. The one was the late Mr. Justice Tyebji, of the Bombay High Court, and the other the late Mr. Sayani, a member of the Imperial Legislative Council. Then again, if you look over the reports of public political meetings during the past quarter of a century, you will find many eminent Mahomedans among the speakers. A notable recruit to the ranks of Indian politicians has lately been found in the person of a retired Mahomedan Judge of the Calcutta High Court,<sup>1</sup> who, in his position as president of the English branch of the All-India Moslem League, lately declared that the objects of the League were the creation of a united India, and were not hostile to those of any class or community. The straw shows which way the wind is blowing, and these are indications of the conditions that will prevail when this backward community has received the blessings of high education. I will close this topic by citing a quotation in support of this contention. In a Conservative review, the *National*, a writer observes :—

“The supposed rivalry between Mussulmans and Hindus is a convenient decoy to distract attention and to defer the day of reform. I do not wish to affirm that there is no antagonism between the adherents of the two faiths ; but I do most positively assert that the antagonism has been grossly exaggerated. Every municipal improvement and charitable work finds members of the two faiths working together and sub-

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Syed Ameer Ali, C.I.E.

scribing funds to carry it out. Every political paper in the country finds supporters from believers in both creeds. Just the same is witnessed in the proceedings of the Congress. The members of the Congress meet together as men, on the common basis of nationality, being citizens of one country, subjects of one Power, amenable to one code of laws, taxed by one authority, influenced for weal or woe by one system of administration, urged by like impulses to secure like rights and to be relieved of like burdens. If these are not sufficient causes to weld a people together into one common alliance of nationality, it is difficult to conceive what would be sufficient."

Let me now cite a few instances of actual unity in the public life of this country. I can give no better example than that of the Corporation of Bombay. The municipal government of the city deals with vast and varied interests. It collects and disburses a revenue that is close upon three-quarters of a million pounds. Who are the administrators of this important organisation? There are 72 members, about a fourth of them being nominated and the rest elected. Among these 72 are representatives of all the communities in Bombay. There are Europeans, Mahomedans, Parsis, Hindus, Native Christians, and even Jews. Yet these heterogeneous communities are working together with a single eye to the good of the city. Their administration of its affairs is conducted with an energy and ability that are worthy of the best-managed county councils of England. The elections to this body are contested with admirable zeal and vigour, and are free from many of the disagreeable features of English and American elections. Here it is not

unusual to find Hindu constituencies returning Parsis or Mahomedans to the Corporation, and *vice versa*. This is a practical illustration of harmony and good-feeling among the various communities of India.

Let us now illustrate the force of common grievances in effecting the same object. Take the case of the famous Ilbert Bill. If ever there was a hard-fought battle between the united forces of the Englishmen on the one hand and the Indians on the other, this was one. Throughout the country the natives rose as one man to protest against the iniquities of a law which was a standing reproach to British justice, and which the Bill now sought to remove. This unanimity of feeling was provoked by the determined opposition which the Bill encountered from the Anglo-Indian community. It is impossible at this distance of time to realise the intensity of feeling among all classes. This was the birth of New India. It is in the fitness of things that it should have been born during the *régime* of a Viceroy whose name is venerated to this day throughout the length and breadth of this vast continent—I mean the Marquis of Ripon. Since that day every measure calculated to affect injuriously the interests of Indians has met with a united opposition from all communities. Not to mention the Partition of Bengal, the Universities Bill, the Official Secrets Act, the Bombay Land Revenue Bill, and a host of other executive and

administrative measures, the unhappy Convocation speech of the late Viceroy evoked a chorus of condemnation that is fresh in all memories. The Indian Mutiny is an ugly subject to discuss, but its lesson is most significant. The Native Army, recruited from all communities, rightly or wrongly thought it had grievances. It believed the Government was wounding the religious susceptibilities of Indians. Some administrative blunders added fuel to the fire. The result was a blast which shook the British Empire to its very foundations. The bitter memories of the Mutiny have passed away, but to this day it must provide us with food for reflection.

Another manifestation of unity is found in the homage paid to Indian leaders irrespective of caste and creed. The name of Dadabhai Naoroji is a household word among Indians, and the remarkable enthusiasm which has greeted the occasional visits of the Grand Old Man to this country has been without any parallel in her history. I am not using the language of hyperbole when I say from personal observation that the extraordinary outburst of popular feeling which manifested itself on his last arrival in Bombay was such as princes might envy. And yet Dadabhai Naoroji belongs to a community which is as a mere drop in the ocean of Indian humanity, and which outside Bombay and a few places in Gujerat can be counted on one's fingers. A highly honoured figure in the public life of this country was the late Mr. Bad-

rudin Tyebji, a staunch Mahomedan, but an equally staunch Indian. Such was also the late Mr. Sayani, sometime member of the Viceregal Council. A remarkable man was the late Justice Ranade, a high type of the cultured Brahmin. So was W. C. Bonnerji, the leader of thought in Bengal. Not less talented are the men of the moment, Sir Bashyam Iyengar, Sir P. M. Mehta, Mr. Gokhale, and others. The respect paid to these leaders, who represent the various communities, is irrespective of caste, creed, or place, and is a proof of the growing unity among educated members of the various races of the Empire.

The Indian National Congress affords the best example that can be given of the practical unanimity of native feeling. This much-abused and much-ridiculed body has gathered within its fold representatives of all the communities in the Indian Peninsula. Here you will find the Punjabi from the north meet the Madrasi from the south, and the Babu from Bengal in animated discussion with the Brahmin from Poona. In spite of discordant elements within, the Congress maintained a vigorous existence for well-nigh a quarter of a century. The split came last year, but it cannot be too strongly insisted that it was not due to racial jealousies. In fact, the wreckers of the movement are as widely divided in caste and creed as those who still cling to the old organisation and the old methods. The fight was not between the Babu

and the Brahmin, or the Moslem and the Sikh, but between the Extremists on the one hand and the Moderates on the other ; and it was precipitated by personal ambition on the part of the leaders of the Extremists. You can no more argue from this incident that the people of India are divided among themselves, than you can argue that the Nationalists and Labour party wish to ruin the Empire because they press for a reduction of armaments. The Indian National Congress still remains the representative of the cultivated intelligence of the country, as Sir Charles Dilke puts it, in spite of the split among its followers. The quarrel has no more wrecked the movement than Tariff Reform and Irish Home Rule have wrecked the Conservative or the Liberal party respectively. No adequate idea can be gathered of the national character of the Congress except by a personal attendance at its annual deliberations. When you realise the vast distances that have to be travelled in order to reach the place of meeting, and the sacrifice of time and money entailed thereby, you will understand that it is no mere academic interest or idle curiosity that draws together these various people from the four corners of this great continent, but the consciousness of a national awakening which shall triumph over petty prejudices and minor differences.

My arguments will not be complete without some reference to the influence of the rise and growth of

Japan on modern Indian thought. The success of the Island Empire of the East has opened up a vista of glorious possibilities. It has shattered the old-time belief in the invulnerability of Western might and power. Men gaped with astonishment when they saw a Power which had dominated the councils of Europe crumble into dust before the vigorous arm of a nation of patriots. This stirred into activity the East that was slowly awaking from her slumbers. What Japan has done, India can do—thus men argued. The wish is often father to the thought, and what men wish to believe they accept without critical examination. Thus the success of Japan has created a spirit of emulation in the breast of every Indian patriot—not the aspiration to rival her feat of arms, but to imbibe somewhat of that spirit which has created heroes and statesmen. This is but in harmony with the general spirit of restlessness which is stirring the Eastern world, slowly emerging from its dreamy moods into the bustle and turmoil of every-day life. The East was too introspective and other-worldly ; it is fast becoming logical and practical.

Hence the problem of the future will be the problem of the dark races. Unless better statesmanship is displayed in grappling with the difficulty than has hitherto been shown, the future will see a vast conflict between the white and the black races. In India the tendencies of the hour are visible in the dim consciousness of a national existence. No one



who has not lately visited the country can form an idea of the great change that has taken place within the last ten years. That ill-fated measure, the Partition of Bengal, has marked a new stage in its existence. The India to which Lord Curzon came in 1898<sup>\*</sup> is not the India which is taxing the patience and trying the resources of the Radical philosopher. On every hand signs are visible of the new order of things. Caste is slowly but surely crumbling down, and the veil that hides the zenana is being torn away. There is even a talk of a ladies' congress in the coming months. Many and varied are the phases of this new-born activity. The old Anglo-Indian revisiting the scenes of his early labours will find himself in a world which has cast off its old idols. He will stand amazed at much that is new and inexplicable to him, much that has transplanted discarded ideals and worn-out traditions. Maybe he will sigh for the days when the country was jogging along peacefully under the easy guidance of a paternal government.

I have now come to the end of my discussion of the possibility of India becoming a united nation under the auspices of British rule. Having analysed the constituent elements of nationality and assigned to them their relative importance, I have shown which of these exist in India and to what extent. I have adduced instances which indicate the actual awakening, however partial, of a national

<sup>\*</sup> Lord Curzon landed in Bombay December 30, 1898.—ED.

consciousness among the people. Care has been taken to avoid mere vague generalisations unsupported by argument. Moreover, I have studiously refrained from citing the opinions of manifest partisans, however high their position and whatever the value of their testimony, as, I am aware, they carry little weight as an argument. Had I not been thus deterred I could have quoted volumes of opinions favourable to my case from men of the type of Sir Henry Cotton or Sir William Wedderburn, who are the *bêtes noir* of the bureaucracy. Instead, I have always sought to strengthen my points by the testimony of neutral and even hostile witnesses. And, having done so, what is my position ?

I hold that there is nothing in the political or social condition of India which will effectually prevent her people from forming themselves into a united community ; that we are still far away from the complete realisation of that ideal, though forces are already at work in that direction ; that at present the educated minority have developed a national spirit, which, however, does not quite extend to the masses ; but that with the diffusion of knowledge will come the same awakening among the people which has been felt by those who have enjoyed the blessings of higher education. I shall close this branch of the subject by the citation of two or three authorities. The late Sir William Wilson Hunter, one of the ablest of English officials, in an article

dealing with the effects of a strongly constructed and vigorously enforced system of Western instruction upon an Asiatic population, says :—

“India is now going through a quicker and more striking metamorphosis. We sometimes hear its marvellous awakening compared to the renaissance of Europe four hundred years ago. But in India the change has not only taken place on a greater scale ; it also goes deeper. It derives its motive power, moreover, not from the individual impulse of isolated men of genius or of cultured popes and princes, but from the mighty centralising force of a government which, as an engine of human unification, has had nothing to compare with it since the days of Imperial Rome. English rule in India is, however, calmly carrying out processes of consolidation that never entered the brain of Roman statesman or emperor. While maintaining a policy of cold non-interference towards the rival religions, the domestic institutions, and the local usages of the Indian peoples, it is silently undermining those ancient separatist influences which made for the isolation of races. It has created a new nexus for the active intellectual elements in the population—a nexus which is beginning to be recognised as a bond between man and man and between province and province, apart from the ties of religion, of geographical propinquity, or of caste, a nexus interwoven of three strong cords, a common language, common political aims, and a sense of the power of action in common, the products of a common system of education.”

These words were written some years ago. Much has since happened, specially during the stressful *régime* of Lord Curzon, to strengthen and support this remarkable expression of view. In his recent admirable book on the people of India Sir Herbert Risley examines at length the problem of Indian nationality. He discusses the various elements which commonly bring about unity, and comes to

the conclusion that they do not exist so far as India is concerned. Yet he is forced to recognise the existence of Indian nationality within certain limits. In his opinion the result has been achieved through the common use of the English language and the participation in a common system of government. Besides, he notices a certain uniformity of life beneath the manifold diversity of physical and social type, language, custom, and religion. Sir Herbert's official attitude is well known, and gives added weight to his admission of the existence of Indian nationality. No less remarkable is the testimony of Sir Charles Elliot, once Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. In a series of articles on Indian problems recently appearing in the *Westminster Gazette* he observes<sup>1</sup> :—

“One of the most remarkable changes in these general politico-social conditions of India is the growth of an Indian feeling—that is, of a feeling of Indian nationality. In India itself the idea and word “India” hardly existed in pre-European times. . . . No external fact was sufficiently important to call forth by contrast a feeling of internal union. This has been supplied by the presence of Europeans. Great as may be the difference and even the hatred between Hindus and Mahomedans, it is felt by all that the division is Europeans on one side and Hindus and Mahomedans on the other, and not Europeans and Mahomedans *versus* Hindus. And that in spite of the omen of the Mutiny is certainly a good thing ; the European is impartial.”

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<sup>1</sup> The essayist has fallen into an error of identity. The writer of the articles was not the former Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, but Sir Charles N. Eliot, lately Commissioner of the British East Africa Protectorate.—Ed.

## CHAPTER II

### SELF-GOVERNMENT IN INDIA

WE have discussed the possibility of the various races of India becoming a united nation. The question now before us is, Is it possible for this heterogeneous mass of people to become a self-governing community? In other words, it is asked how far Indians are capable of managing their own affairs. As a preliminary, it will be necessary for us to inquire what self-government means.

What is self-government? To put it shortly, it means the government of the people for the people and by the people. Within the limits of this definition there is a variety of forms which popular government may take. The form of government enjoyed by England differs much from that enjoyed by Germany, and the constitution of political society in Switzerland or France presents features that are not to be found in Canada or the United States. Yet all these are self-governing countries. We must therefore hold before us a definite ideal, and

then we shall be able to state whether we can realise all that we have set before us. What, then, does India ask? Does she want a constitution like that of Canada or Australia, or does she want an Imperial Duma, as a too ardent champion would have it? The question is easier put than answered. Self-government not being within measurable distance of attainment, he would be a bold man who would predict what particular form of it this country would be fit for when the proper time arrived. What is good for Canada may not then be good for India, and he who takes no account of the peculiarities of each case is a visionary, if not a fool. Let us therefore consider what it is precisely that young India wants to-day.

As students of Indian affairs know, there are two political schools in this country. The followers of the one are known as Extremists, or, as they like to call themselves, Nationalists; the adherents of the other profess themselves to be Moderates. Now, which of these shall we take as our guide? I have no hesitation in pronouncing in favour of the Moderates. All the men of light and leading in this country, almost without exception, are to be found in their ranks. They have a strong following in the country. The Congress, which is representative of public feeling, has also shown its preference for constitutional methods. It was wrecked at Surat not because the Extremists were in a majority, but because they were in such a hopeless minority that

to gain their ends they had to resort to illegal obstruction and violence. It was due to the leaders of the Moderates that the Extremists were not given a severe handling by the vast assemblage which had gathered to voice the grievances of the country in a temperate manner. At the present moment the existence of the Extremist party may be absolutely disregarded. How the future may shape the two elements, no man knows. We shall now concern ourselves only with the aspirations of the Moderates. Their demand for self-government consists in a considerable substitution of the Indian agency for the European in the administration, in the increase of the powers of the district and the local Boards, in the transformation of municipal bodies into wholly popular assemblies, in the larger introduction of the popular element in the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils, in short, in the "living representation" of the people in the government of this country. This is far, far from being the complete autonomy which Canada, Australia, and South Africa enjoy, an autonomy so complete that an Imperial Government is powerless to obtain for three hundred millions of its loyal subjects the barest rights of citizenship in one of these self-governing colonies.

Having understood what the cry for self-government in relation to India means, we shall discuss some of the requisites of self-government, and see how far Indians possess these. We shall then be

able to state whether Indians are capable of managing their own affairs.

What are the requisites of self-government? They are unity, intellectual capacity, and character. The possession of these three is necessary before a people can justly claim to govern itself. I have already shown that there are signs of a national spirit among Indians, and that the complete welding of the various elements is in sight. On the strength of the arguments I have advanced in the preceding chapter I shall assume the existence of a rapidly growing national feeling among the natives of India, and proceed to discuss their intellectual capacity.

Are Indians wanting in intelligence or ability? Let Englishmen themselves give the answer. Speaking on the Indian Bill as far back as 1853, Cobden said :—

“I have been particularly struck with the overwhelming evidence which is given as to the fitness of natives of India for high offices and employments. Nothing comes out clearer before the Committee than this, that the natives are well fitted to hold the higher class of offices. All the great authorities in Indian matters, Munro, Metcalfe, Malcolm, and Elphinstone, advocate the distribution of patronage to the natives.”

Even more emphatic is the testimony given five years later by Bright. Said he: “There are thousands of persons in India who are competent to take any position to which the Government may choose to advance them.” This was fifty



years ago. What wonderful strides the country has taken since that time! Education has made such rapid progress that the universities are turning out every year hundreds of capable graduates. Alongside with the education imparted by our schools and colleges has come the wider culture acquired by a stay in Western countries. An Indian student in London, Edinburgh, and at other centres is a common enough figure. Facilities of travel have placed within our reach means of knowledge not available before. An able press keeps us abreast of the times, and does valuable services in educating the people in political principles. Above all, participation in the deliberations of Legislative Councils and municipal bodies, and enjoyment of positions of trust and responsibility, have tested and improved the general capacity of Indians during these fifty years. Indians have been so far considered fit that they have been given the highest judicial positions in the gift of the State, and in the discharge of their duties they have earned the confidence of the Government and the people alike. More than once a Bengali has acted as the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court, than which no higher position exists in the Judicial service; and a Mahomedan and a Madrasi have enjoyed similar distinctions in Bombay and Madras. In the postal department, natives have become postmaster-generals of whole divisions. In the revenue line, an Indian distinguished himself as the commissioner

of a division. In the customs service, the collectorates of Bombay, Karachi and other places have been held by natives. In the Civil Service examinations, students from India working under special difficulties can hold their own with the pick of English youth. Above all, English electorates have thought fit to send two Parsis as their representatives to the "Mother of Parliaments." In divers ways the abilities of Indians have been thus recognised, and in none more remarkably than in the selection of two natives last year to sit on the India Council.

After this practical testimony, it is absurd to say that the educated native is not capable. India has produced administrators of the genius of Salar Jung and Madhav Rao ; judges of the calibre of Telang and Mahmood ; jurists of the learning of Ghosh and Ameer Ali ; economists of the ability of Dutt and Ranade ; scientists of the eminence of Gajjar and Bose ; scholars of the erudition of Bhandarkar and Mookerji ; publicists of the integrity of Phirozeshaw Mehta and Gopal Krishna Gokhale ; reformers of the daring of Kursondas Mulji and Byramji Malabari ; religious teachers of the fire of Keshub Chunder Sen and Ram Mohun Roy ; orators of the attainments of Lal Mohun Ghose and Surendranath Bannerji ; and last, but not least, patriots of the worth of Dadabhai Naoroji and W. C. Bonnerji. These are men of whom any country might be proud, and as long as India produces such sons she has nothing to fear. Be it said in justice to English-

men, that, even while refusing practical recognition of the abilities of the educated natives, they have never failed to acknowledge them. I have before me volumes of testimony as regards the fitness of Indians for the highest positions in the State. Said Sir Bartle Frere: "Wherever I go I find the best exponents of the policy of the English Government, and the most able coadjutors in adjusting that policy to the peculiarities of the natives of India among the ranks of the educated natives." Not less generous was the praise Lord Dufferin bestowed in his jubilee speech, though he often expressed his disagreement with the views of Indian politicians. Even Sir John Strachey, an official of officials, was constrained to admit the intellectual capacity of the sons of the soil. I do not think I need pursue the subject any further.

The third essential condition of self-government is character. In the expression I include all those qualities of alertness, self-reliance, self-abnegation, and integrity which constitute a vigorous and healthy nation. Do the natives of India possess this moral backbone? Here I find myself arrayed against all the forces of prejudice and ignorance. To these, nothing has contributed more than the appellation "native" as applied to the people of India. This designation is particularly unfortunate. It conjures up a vision of the Red Indians of America, or the aborigines of Australia, or the blacks of Africa. It is a contemptuous term used to designate people

who are low down in the scale of civilisation. I do not suggest that the British Government desired to attach to the word any such meaning. The term was primarily used to distinguish the children of the soil from their English masters. But it carries with it associations which the uninformed mind finds it hard to dispel. The use of this designation has been deplored by many eminent Anglo-Indians, and Mr. Theodore Morison, in his book on "Imperial Rule in India," rightly remarks on its misleading tendency. "Give a dog a bad name and hang him," says a well-worn proverb. Thus a "native" has come to stand for a human being vastly inferior in the scale of civilisation, and different in his moral character from the inhabitant of the West. To this view the hasty generalisations of writers like Macaulay added considerably. Macaulay's brilliant and scathing criticism of the Bengali character stands to this day among Englishmen as a faithful and accurate delineation.

It may be observed, in the first place, that all sweeping international condemnations are more of a caricature than a correct description. The Englishman is set down as a hypocrite on the Continent, and we are all familiar with the phrase "perfidie Albion." The Scotch have a name for hard-fistedness, and the humourist has had many a fling at them. The Frenchman is known as hysterical and insincere. The Germans are described as a hard-headed, beer-drinking lot, and

Uncle Sam bears an evil name for business methods. All these international courtesies must be accepted with a good deal of reserve. Nobody who reads "The Unspeakable Scot" or "The Egregious Englishman," and books of that type, thinks of taking them seriously. When, therefore, you hear the "native" spoken of in terms of contempt, pause before you judge. In any case, unless you are personally acquainted with the people of this country, subject the criticisms that you come across to the strictest scrutiny. I am now going to attempt a vindication of my countrymen, and here, as elsewhere, I shall studiously refrain from vague generalisations. But at the same time I shall have to make large use of quotations, for that is the only way in which I can meet the charges flung against Indians from time to time. I cannot hope to answer these satisfactorily if I rely on mere contradictions unsupported by independent testimony. Instances and examples are very difficult to adduce in this connection. Hence the necessity of falling back upon the testimony of impartial witnesses.

Now, the most constant charge brought against Indians is that they are liars and perjurers. This is an opinion which has become an article of faith with a certain class of Englishmen. It may be admitted that the people of India are not particularly distinguished for truthfulness. But then they are no more untruthful than any nation of the West. In most cases their seeming lies proceed from

ignorance, or misconception, or thoughtlessness. Sir John Malcolm, whose authority is undisputed, writes :—

“ I have hardly ever known where a person did understand the language, or where a calm communication was made to a native of India, through a well-informed and trustworthy medium, that the result did not prove that what had at first been stated as falsehood had either proceeded from fear or from misapprehension. I by no means wish to state that our Indian subjects are more free from this vice than other nations that occupy a nearly equal position in society, but I am positive that they are not more addicted to untruth.”

This is amply corroborated by the statement of a Civilian of the older generation. He once declared that he had heard one of the most eminent of English judges doubt whether the perjury that went on in his court could be surpassed in India. This will perhaps shock the English conscience, but I have no desire to advance this view in a spirit of exultation, as I have no means of knowing how much perjury goes on in England. What I am here attempting to do is to supplement my own observations by impartial evidence. And there can be none more impartial and emphatic than that of Colonel Sleeman, who in his “*Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official*” says: “ I have had before me hundreds of cases in which a man’s property, liberty, and life has depended upon his telling a lie, and he has refused to tell it.” Max Müller follows in much the same strain, and is even more generous. But it is no use flogging a dead

horse, and I have quoted enough in support of my contention. The fact is that this defence would not have been necessary had it not been for Mill, and some other writers who have blindly followed him. As real genuine intercourse between the European and the native is unfortunately rare, much that passes current for a correct delineation of the native character is not based on first-hand knowledge. To misunderstand is to misjudge, and once a man is misjudged, there is ample opportunity for dislike and distrust.

Another opinion that generally prevails is that the natives are servile. This charge, like the other, is not quite unfounded. Successive despotisms left no room for the development of that manly self-consciousness which distinguishes a free people. When life and property were not secure, servility and flattery were the only conditions of a peaceful existence. In pre-British days there was no public opinion, no free press. The orator who spouted eloquence from the platform would shortly find it the nearest cut to heaven, or "the other place"! Once the British conquered the country, the task of government was comparatively easy. They found the people docile and submissive. If it had not been so, no power on earth could have subdued all these three hundred million souls,<sup>1</sup> specially when

<sup>1</sup> The population must have been far below the present figure when British rule was established. The first general census, taken as recently as 1871, showed a population of 239 millions.—ED.

the conquering nation was small and far away. With the blessing of a civilised government came the necessary change in the temper of the people. A government that allowed the freest latitude of public opinion slowly roused the slumbering sense of self-respect. When people saw that an attitude of independence was no longer a passport to the gallows, they began to look up. Thus the old habits of flattery and servility began to die away. The process, however, has necessarily been slow, for various reasons. The might of England has always inspired awe and respect, and the Anglo-Indian, the living symbol of that might, has an imperious temper. Besides, his superior civilisation has always inspired something akin to a sense of inferiority. Then he is the absolute master of this vast continent, though he is far from being a tyrant. It is true, the young Civilian does not punish disobedience with death or imprisonment, but then he has a funny way of using his hands and feet.

Thus the growth of a manly spirit has not been very rapid in the past. But within the last few years, along with the great increase of political activity, a remarkable change has taken place in the temper of the people. They are no longer to be trifled with, and are not slow to return physical compliments. Indeed, from a spirit of servility they have passed into a spirit of truculence, which is scarcely less deplorable. The Mahomedan has never been a very docile character to deal with.



But the mild Hindu is exhibiting signs of independence—which is truly astonishing. More than half a century back, referring to Bengalis, Macaulay wrote: "There never, perhaps, existed a people so thoroughly fitted by habit for a foreign yoke." This read in the light of present events savours almost of a joke. These very Bengalis are now proving a veritable thorn in the side of the Government. They are making the administration of Bengal a task of immense difficulty for the Anglo-Indian officials, who dare not trifle with, though they may despise, the Bengalis. Personally, I consider the attitude of the people of Bengal as unduly hostile and truculent. But the change among them is symptomatic of the metamorphosis the people of India are generally undergoing. Let not Englishmen regret this. Instead, let them be proud that they have roused the instincts of manliness and self-respect in a fifth of the human race.

Another charge laid at the door of Indians is that they are as a rule corrupt, and scarcely to be trusted in positions of responsibility. I shall not devote much space to the refutation of this calumny. Within the last fifty years natives have enjoyed some of the most responsible positions in the administration of the State. Both in the Revenue and the Judicial services they have held posts which have put their integrity to severe tests. Leaving out of consideration a few black

sheep, such as are to be found in every community without exception, will it be said that Indians have proved themselves unworthy of the confidence placed in them? If any one has the hardihood to say that, will he have the courage to substantiate his statements by facts and figures? Until these are supplied, we may safely ignore all reckless allegations. It is enough that the Government of India has the fullest confidence in the honesty and incorruptibility of the natives, despite what may be said by prejudiced critics. This is fully evidenced by the increasing employment of educated Indians in the public services. The governing authorities have never doubted their integrity, though they have been slow to recognise their capacity. Herein lies the best refutation of the calumnies indulged in by narrow-minded observers. I need not pursue this topic any further, but will close with a remark made by Mr. Bennett in his "Introduction to the Oudh Gazetteer." Speaking of the various peoples with whom he had come in contact, he says, "Their whole system postulates an exceptional integrity."

We have seen that the natives of India are not habitually addicted to untruth any more than the nations of the West; that they are not so servile as they used to be, but are becoming every day more courageous and independent; and that they are as honest as civilised people generally are. All these are qualities which are essential for the

administration of a vast empire. There is another, the possession of which is no less necessary, and that is self-abnegation. Akin to this is the conception of a sense of responsibility. If we hope to govern our country, we must learn to govern ourselves. We must cultivate a sense of what we owe to ourselves and to our motherland. We must cast aside our all-absorbing interest in self, and learn to look a little beyond us. Until we do that, all our political progress is a mere delusion. Hindu and Mahomedan alike must work with a single eye to the good of the country, rising above all petty prejudices. Are we possessed of this loftiness of purpose? Have we divorced all considerations of self in the battle for our cause? Are we prepared to make genuine sacrifices for the sake of our principles? I wish I could emphatically say yes. I regret to state that the sense of civic responsibility has not yet been keenly developed among us. We are fervent in our protestations of love for our country, but many of us have shrunk from the sacrifices this involves. Of course, there are scores of noble-minded men who have dedicated their lives to the common cause. Many among them have incurred heavy pecuniary losses and undeserved obloquy. For their high-minded endeavours no praises are extravagant.

And here it must be remembered that the temptations for a public man in India are far

greater than for those in England. There, whether you are on the side of the Conservatives or the Liberals, your services to your side are always recognised when your party is in power.<sup>1</sup> Here you have on one side offices and dignities; on the other the bare applause of a fickle multitude. Hence no small credit is due to those who have not only rejected the smiles and favours of a powerful Government, but have also turned aside from lucrative pursuits in order to serve their country. All honour to such sterling patriots. But this spirit of self-sacrifice must extend itself to the generality of our politicians before we can say that we are fit for governing ourselves. At present there is much wild talk and little to show by way of achievement. The love of a cheap notoriety makes some of us forget our responsibilities both to the Government and to the people. We have not yet learnt to efface ourselves in our political controversies. We must remember that principles are everything; individuals do not count for much. If the leaders of the Extremists had realised that the good of the country must be placed above personal considerations, the last session of the Congress would not have proved a miserable farce. The Congress has survived the blow and will possibly be the stronger for the purging of the undesirable elements from it. But

<sup>1</sup> Many disappointed party politicians in Great Britain will read this statement with surprise.—ED.

the revelations of the inner workings of the minds of some so-called patriots have left bitter memories behind. Such irresponsible politicians and notoriety-hunters cannot be too strongly condemned. It is a very hopeful sign that the vast majority of the people have dissociated themselves from these self-seeking patriots. While this is the case, there is hope for the country.

The same phenomena that are observed in India to-day have, perhaps, manifested themselves in the infancy of all political communities. Just as "it is liberty alone that fits men for liberty," so the enjoyment of political rights is the essential condition of the fitness of a community for the exercise of political functions. There is no occasion for despair. Our political education is only a generation old; and what we have achieved both on the moral and the practical side makes us very hopeful for the future. After all, the black sheep among us are not so numerous as to cause much anxiety. The large body of our patriots remain unshaken in fidelity to principles, and firm in their application in practice. As we grow older, we shall undoubtedly adopt as our own a high standard of public virtue. We have on more than one occasion shown the stuff of which we are made. The much-despised Bengali has astonished every one by the dogged persistence of his resistance to the Partition of Bengal. At great sacrifice, he has striven to keep

the boycott movement alive. Economically, the movement is a blunder. But as indicating the spirit of the people it is worthy of note. This is but one aspect of the great mental and moral upheaval that is shaking to its foundations the slumbrous East. When she came into contact with the vigorous West, it would have been strange indeed had she remained what she had been for centuries. It is absurd to imagine that the vivifying influence of a younger and more advanced civilisation should not make itself felt. All historical estimates of the Indian people must now be recast in the light of the new influences that are transforming the national character. The dreamy East is slowly turning away from metaphysical speculations to the strenuous pursuits of our modern life. But it is impossible to impress the unimaginative Briton's mind with this fact, so long as the tendency prevails to regard the native character as something beyond comprehension.

I attach no little importance to this subject, for I hold that a high state of morality is an essential condition of all progress, social or political. If it is once held that Indians are generally deficient in their moral character, then neither their unity nor their intellectual capacity is of any avail. A vast country governed by liars and cowards would indeed be a phenomenon. A tribe of Red Indians may govern itself without the possession of any virtues. But a country rich in all the arts of civilisation can

never hold for a day without a firm moral basis. That that basis is not wanting I have already shown. For further proof I may refer to the views of Elphinstone, Bishop Heber, Warren Hastings, Thomas Munro, John Malcolm, Professor Wilson, and a host of other distinguished men. They came into contact with the natives before the light of the West had sufficiently dawned upon the latter. The lapse of nearly a century has brought to an inherently upright moral character political principles which have been exclusively the property of self-governing countries. No one will have the hardihood to assert that Indians have deteriorated since the period at which the eminent authorities mentioned came in contact with them. That would indeed be a miserable compliment to the civilising influence of England. But there is no ground for the suggestion. Scores of later administrators and non-official critics have recorded their praise of the people of this country. I shall select only one of the numerous testimonies, and that will close this subject. The late Sir Richard Temple, once Governor of Bombay and a Civilian whose experience embraced every part of this country, says in one of his works :—

“The native character, as a whole, may be disparaged by some whose experience is short, and whose knowledge is not profound. But with an Englishman who lives and labours in the country, the wider his acquaintance with the natives and the deeper his insight, the greater is his liking for them. He who has the best and longest acquaintance with the natives

esteems them the most. Probably every Englishman without exception, who has during a lengthened residence been brought much into contact with the natives, parts from them with sincere regret, remembers them with the most kindly regard, and breathes heartfelt aspirations for their welfare and happiness. He who has the best data for an opinion regarding them and the firmest ground on which to found his belief will have the most hopeful faith in their mental and moral progress."

We have laid down three conditions for a nation which aspires to govern itself. It should have unity, intellectual capacity, and character. I have attempted to show that, within certain limits, the people of India possess all these three requisites, and that it is merely a question of time when their progress in all directions will fit them more completely for governing themselves. They are not ripe for it yet, but then no one has claimed for them the immediate grant of self-governing institutions. Of course, there are some hare-brained fools who will say almost anything. These we may safely ignore. We never look for political wisdom in that quarter. Our attention must always be focussed on that overwhelming body of sober politicians who are the real leaders of the people. All that they claim is that the natives of this country have attained that degree of fitness when a beginning might be made of granting them real representation in the councils of the Empire. Is the claim extravagant? Are Indians utterly incapable of governing themselves? Those who suggest it have not read history. Perhaps it will be news



to them that the people of this country have been managing their own affairs with success from times immemorial. But it is a fact. The village punchayets, unhappily done away with by the British, afford the best examples of self-governing bodies to be found anywhere. In every village a small number of the most influential residents were formed into a governing authority, to which the whole village paid homage. These men decided all questions affecting the welfare of their little republic. The headmen were selected by the people, and were under their control in so far as they dared not go against the sentiments of the majority.

Dynasties came and vanished into nothingness, Moghal followed Afghan and Mahratha followed Moghal, but the village system lived and survived them all. The mighty events which wrenched the sceptre from one contending party and placed it in the arms of another left the village untouched. It lived on, oblivious of Panipat, which saw in turn the rise of one and the extinction of another Power; oblivious of Plassey, which laid the foundations of an empire greater than the Great Moghal's. Provided it paid its due contribution to the imperial authority, the village remained unmolested and managed its own affairs. Taxation in money or in kind was its only link with the sovereign power. For the rest, it was an autonomous self-governing republic. Of course, the system had its defects. What human institution is perfect? But taken all in all, the

village communities were particularly suited to the genius of the people, and it was a sad mistake on the part of the Government to sweep them out of existence. Recently the authorities have been reconsidering the question, chiefly at the instance of Mr. B. M. Malabari, a very eminent Indian publicist, and one who stands high in the favour of the official classes. There are indications that some steps will be taken to give the system a fresh trial. What Lord Lawrence said in 1864 is noteworthy, both as regards the village communities and the capacity of the natives for self-government :—

“The people of India are quite capable of administering their own affairs ; the municipal feeling is deeply rooted in them. The village communities, each of which is a little republic, are the most abiding of Indian institutions. Holding the position we do in India, every view of duty and policy should induce us to leave as much as possible of the business of the country to be done by the people.”

It was due to the sympathy and statesmanship of Lord Ripon that general urban local self-government and district boards came into being. The experiment was given a trial with the noblest of objects—that of educating the people by degrees in the art of governing themselves. As the Viceroy himself explained it, he did not expect in the first instance that the municipalities would be better governed by the people than by the State. But the measure was desirable chiefly as an instrument of popular political education. In course of time these

local bodies, it was expected, would justify their existence. The results so far have in a few cases belied the expectations of the founder, but not through any shortcomings in the instruments employed. It has been found that failure in such cases has been mostly due to hasty application of the principle to areas not suited for its operation. In the mofussil, moreover, the inclusion of the official element was an effectual bar to the independent expression of views. But in places where local bodies have been so constituted as to be really representative institutions, the vindication of Lord Ripon's policy has been complete. I do not mean to suggest that those who can look after drains and gutters can also manage the vast affairs of an empire. What I do say is that, given a liberal education and a gradual training in the affairs of the State, the possibility of the diverse races of India becoming a self-governing community is not too remote.

From all that has preceded it must not be supposed that I advocate the immediate grant of representative institutions. On the contrary, I hold that such a step would be positively inimical to the best interests of the country. We are not yet ripe for it. As we stand at present, whatever our abilities, character, or political unity, if the English were to leave the country to-morrow there would be disorder and confusion. Lord Morley was quite right when he talked of carnage and confusion if

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India was left to itself. But, as an argument, it was hardly worthy of "Honest John." His conclusions were based upon a borrowed premise. He had no right to assume that the natives wanted the English to leave the country bag and baggage. Of course, there are people who have set no limits to their demands. But they certainly do not constitute "the better mind" of India. And it is a great injustice to the educated classes to assume that they want to be left to themselves. The position of an overwhelming majority of Indian politicians is simply this, that they consider that the time has arrived when a definite step should be taken to give the people a real voice in the administration of the country. The Congress is the representative of the aspirations of the people. Read the Congress speeches and see if you find anything there that is at variance with the position indicated. Of course, it is the cherished hope of every true Indian that the time may come when India can take her place as a self-governing unit within the Empire. To that goal, however distant, our efforts are steadily tending. We have resolutely set out on a long journey, the end of which no one can foresee. There are difficulties and dangers on the way, but if our progress in the past be any indication, we have no reason to despair of our future. Only let us remember that no civilised nation, either in the ancient or in the modern world, ever achieved its political emancipation in a day or in a generation.

## CHAPTER III

### THE PRESENT TASK

HOW long will it be before the diverse races of India can become a united community, and what are the steps by which the consummation can be attained? In the preceding pages I have admitted the absence of some of the elements of cohesion among Indians; at the same time I have indicated the existence of other co-ordinating influences, and have pointed to signs that a spirit of unity is developing among the various races. What now remains to be done is to detail the steps by which a complete fusion may be brought about of diverse and discordant elements.

In the first place, the unfortunate differences between the Hindus and the Mahomedans must be settled in a spirit of broad statesmanship. These differences have been greatly exaggerated, but their existence cannot be denied. To remain idle in a spirit of optimism is not the part of wise statesmanship. We must strive to remove those differences which have their root in causes other

than want of education. Mahomedan leaders will pardon me for saying that the salvation of their community will not be brought about by an eager zeal to take shelter under the Government umbrella. "Deserve before you desire" is a motto they might well bear in mind. Instead of whining and grumbling, it will be more to the purpose to remove the woful ignorance of the great mass of Indian Moslems. The loaves and fishes of office secured for the few will not bring about the regeneration of the many. Titles of honour will not lift the community out of its miserable plight. First look to the mental, moral, and industrial welfare of the masses, and you will certainly not be left behind in the race. Remember the proud position occupied by your countrymen for countless centuries. If the traditions of your nation count for anything, they ought to open your eyes to the pitiful depths to which you have fallen. I do not suggest for a moment that you should develop an attitude of hostility to the ruling Power. But what I do say is, that an attitude of cringing is not manly, and is unworthy of the glorious traditions of your race.

A great task lies before you. Follow in the footsteps of that great co-religionist of yours, the late Sir Syed Ahmed. He was a staunch opponent of the Congress movement. Indeed, it was mainly due to his efforts that the Mahomedans as a rule kept aloof from it, and the influence of his doctrine is still at work. But he was the first to recognise the

value of education, and in founding the Mahomedan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh, he laid his community under a debt which can never be adequately repaid. Follow the work of the great reformer, and help to kindle the torch of learning in every nook and corner of this land. Imitate the example of another great countryman, the late Mr. Justice Badrudin Tyebji. In the field of politics, education, and social reform he has left behind him a name for sobriety and breadth of view which future generations will cherish with affection and respect. Let the memories of these and other great men spur you on to fresh efforts. Let not their work perish after them. There is no greater task before you than that of uplifting the masses who look up to you for guidance. Official smiles and favours are all good in their own way, but they will not bring about the salvation of your countrymen. Help must come from within and not from without. When education spreads among your community, there will be no talk of safeguarding the interests of the minority. Be sure you will not then be left behind in the race. "Palnam qui meruit ferat." Keep that as your watchword.

You have before you the splendid example of the Parsis. The little community to which I have the honour to belong numbers less than a hundred thousand souls in all India. This is but a mere drop in the vast ocean of Indian humanity. Yet there is not a corner of this country where the

pushing and energetic Parsi has not made his presence felt. The only Indian members ever returned to Parliament have been Parsis. The life and soul of the Congress movement is a Parsi. The "Grand Old Man" of India is a Parsi. A Parsi is the acknowledged leader of the Municipal Corporation of Bombay. In the service of the State, some of the highest positions have been held by Parsis. Whether in the strenuous atmosphere of the University Hall and of the Council Chamber, or in the peaceful paths of commerce and of industry, this little community is always in the forefront. Even in the matter of official honours and decorations, it has received recognition out of all proportion to its numbers. It possesses the only two baronetcies<sup>1</sup> conferred upon Indians. Even beyond the country of its adoption it has made its influence felt. Twice the freedom of the City of London has been conferred upon representatives of this community—an honour for which there is no parallel. Surely these are achievements of which any race may be proud. But the greatness of the achievement becomes even more remarkable when it is remembered that in their dealings with the Government the Parsis have always maintained an attitude of fearless independence. Loyal to the core, they have never truckled to the gods in authority. Radicals in the matter of social reform, they have maintained a tone of moderation in politics which

<sup>1</sup> A third was bestowed in the last Birthday honours.—ED.



has given Bombay—the stronghold of the community—an enviable reputation for political sobriety. To what may this remarkable success be attributed? To the rapid assimilation of all that is best in Western culture. This, and this alone, is the key to their success.

When the Mahomedans have realised this, there will be no more attempts on the part of some of their leaders to repudiate ostentatiously the political tendencies of the other races of India. Let it be remembered that the interests of the various communities of India are identical. What injuriously affects one injuriously affects the rest. Every privilege gained is a gain for all. Let this identity of interests be always kept in mind, and differences and jealousies will vanish. As I have demonstrated in a previous part of the work, the bulk of the educated Mahomedans are in sympathy with the national movement. But this sympathy must become general before we can hope for the complete unification of India. I look upon education as the instrument by which this result will be brought about. When the Mahomedan community enters the arena of politics, it will infuse a healthy tone in our political life. The Mahomedan mind is better balanced than that of the Hindu, and it can more easily keep itself clear of the mists and fogs which gather round political controversies.

If the Mahomedan leaders have a duty to perform the Hindus have no less tasks before them. They have

their own share of the responsibility for the present state of things. In the first place, their attitude is often truculent and hostile. They require to be toned down a little. They must show more consideration for the feelings of the sister community than they have hitherto done. In short, they must mend their manners. Secondly, their attitude towards the Government is often one of unreasoning hostility. No good can come out of indiscriminate criticism of the official policy, even when expressed in temperate language. To overrate the merits and underrate the defects of our enemies, though eminently pious, may not be a workable principle in politics. But, in my opinion, the opposite tendency is much worse. A tone of extreme partisanship is the tendency of modern politics. Perhaps it infuses a vigour without which a well-governed State cannot live. But it detracts a little from honesty of motive and sincerity of purpose. Hence Hindu politicians, if they wish to make themselves respected by the Government and trusted by the people, must infuse into their criticisms a more generous recognition of the good work done by the British administration. They will thereby also draw to themselves the sympathy of the Mahomedan community, whose political tendencies are generally on the side of constitutional agitation. At present the Mahomedans are not so much repelled by apathy towards political agitation as by aversion to the methods of criticism

of the Government. An extravagant programme will not appeal to a community which has yet to receive its preliminary schooling in politics.

Having said so much of the duty which lies on the leaders of the two races, it is agreeable to notice that the relations between them are getting smoother every day. Where they have been left to themselves the Hindu and the Moslem have lived in peace and amity. But where, as in Bengal, the Government has thought fit to interfere, friction and unpleasantness have resulted. With the exception of the partitioned province, all over India the two communities have maintained cordial relations. Even in Bengal there are signs of a returning common sense. A circular issued lately by the Hindu and Mahomedan leaders to bring about a better understanding indicates a desire to work in peace and harmony. As I have already pointed out, the fortunes of the Hindus and Mahomedans are more closely bound up with each other than those of either with the Government. This fact is being realised more vividly every day, and Sir Syed Ahmed himself was not slow to recognise it, as the following remarks will show. Said he :—

“Mahomedans and Hindus are the two eyes of India. Injure the one and you injure the other. We should try to become one heart and soul, and act in unison ; if united we can support each other ; if not, the effect of one against the other will tend to the destruction and downfall of both.”

On another occasion he said: "In the word 'nation' I include both Hindus and Mahomedans, because that is the only meaning which I can attach to it."

The settlement of the differences between the two great communities I consider as the first step in the creation of a united India. Another step in the same direction consists in educating the masses. To hope for unity among ignorant people divided in race and religion is to expect the impossible. By ignorant people I mean those who are utterly illiterate, unversed even in their own vernaculars. Of this class, the number still is very large.<sup>1</sup> Until something is done to lift this huge mass from superstition and ignorance, we cannot lay claim to a national spirit to its fullest extent. Ignorance is no bar to a feeling of nationality among people who have a common origin. There is always a sort of fellow-feeling due to the ties of blood and kinship. But where, as in the case of India, there are no ties of race or religion, but only the welding influences of common aspirations and common grievances, it is necessary that people should understand their own best interests before they can co-operate. And this can only be achieved through education. It is due to that alone that a large

<sup>1</sup> The last census return shows that 277 $\frac{3}{4}$  millions out of the total population of 294 millions are unable to read and write, and that the number of the population literate in English (including, of course, English residents) is only 1,125,000. —Ed.

number of Indians, comprising the most diverse racial elements, are to-day united in thought and action. And the instrument which has brought about this partial unity will also be the means whereby the complete unification of India will be achieved in the fulness of time. Education will teach us our duty to ourselves and to our country. It will teach us that the interests of the individual must be subordinated to those of the State, and that the welfare of the latter predicates the happiness of the former. In short, it will instil into us those higher ideals of citizenship without which no real progress in politics can be achieved.

But education alone will not achieve everything. The rising generation must be imbued with the spirit of genuine patriotism, and must be taught the value of discipline. Without discipline, society cannot hold together. Indian students, with half-digested fragments of Mill and Burke in them, are sometimes apt to carry to an unreasonable extent the doctrine of individual freedom in word or deed. This tendency must be severely repressed. There can be no unity where there is no discipline, and whatever detracts from discipline must be condemned. The participation of schoolboys in political controversies is therefore highly undesirable, and those who encourage it are the enemies of their country. The aim of our leaders should be to infuse into our young men a spirit of self-abnegation and genuine patriotism. They must be

taught that the primary duty of a man is not towards himself or his particular community, but towards the country of his birth. In a word, our youths should be inspired to lay aside all sectarian considerations and to "think imperially." When such ideas have been instilled into the minds of our countrymen, we shall have gone a long way in the making of a strong and united India.

Besides all this, our social system must be overhauled, root and branch. The barriers of caste must be broken down and our women brought out from the seclusion which saps their mental growth. At first sight this appears a task of tremendous difficulty. But in the light of recent events there is little to fear and much to hope. Here, too, as in our political ideals, the beneficent influence of Western education has effected a transformation of ideas. The old order is fast changing, yielding place to the new. Whereas formerly Indian women seldom stirred out of the seclusion of their homes, they are nowadays not only seen in society, but found on the platform also. Nothing surprises the foreign observer so much as the vast upheaval the social constitution of India is undergoing. The debt we owe to our English rulers for planting the civilisation of the West in the hoary soil of the East will never be amply repaid. The results may sometimes be disappointing, but it is not for our generation to judge of the wisdom of the policy. That Indian politicians are suffi-

ciently alive to the benefits of Western civilisation is demonstrated by the social and educational conferences that are being continually organised throughout India. But the work is necessarily slow and cautious. Prejudices always die hard, and particularly so in a conservative country. The path of the reformer is strewn with difficulties. Ridicule and abuse are often his lot. But no cause that was worth the winning was ever won without a struggle. The battle must be waged in a spirit of resolute courage, and there should be no yielding or faltering. Our political emancipation is bound up in no small degree with our social regeneration, on which, again, depends the happiness of vast numbers of the human race.

There is yet another way by which Indian nationality can be brought into vigorous existence. Sir Herbert Risley believes that a genuine form of self-government might draw together, by the force of the common interests which would be created, the great majority of the people of India. This is identical with my contention that community of interests is a factor of great value in the formation of unity. We are enjoying to some extent representative institutions, and I have shown the beneficent results achieved thereby. When we are blessed with a larger form of self-government, the interests of the various communities will be bound up more closely together. Thus self-govern-

ment will have brought to the people of India not only peace and contentment, but will have achieved for them that which none of their own emperors even remotely succeeded in bringing about—a healthy and vigorous spirit of nationality.

To set down a definite period for the creation of a United India would be to take a big jump into the future. The action of the forces of evolution is seldom constant. Periods of progress are sometimes followed by periods of inactivity. All that I can say is, that, taking into consideration the vastness of the population and the diversity of its elements, *at least* half a century must elapse before we can expect complete unity among the diverse races of India. To expect the result earlier is to overlook the complexities of the problem. A vast amount of work has to be done before a great and diversified population can be inspired with a single purpose. Not many of us will live to see the realisation of our hopes. But that need not deter or dishearten us. We are but a link in the long chain of progress. Our task is to hand over to our successors, strengthened and ennobled, the political traditions we have received from our predecessors. The Revolutionists in France thought they would bring about the millennium in their own generation. How grievously they failed all the world knows. Let us then advance cautiously, though firmly. The day is distant, but if it arrives within half a century, our fondest hopes will have been realised.



## CHAPTER IV

### INDIAN DEMANDS

AS self-government is a boon to be granted by the ruling power, and is not to be wrung by force of arms, its gradual attainment must largely be the work of the Government. Of course, the people, and chiefly the educated classes, have their own duty in the matter. They have to fit themselves for the task. They must learn to help themselves and to rely on their own efforts. They must bring about the industrial development of the country and the social regeneration of the masses. They must lift the peasantry from its depths of ignorance and elevate the condition of the outcasts and pariahs of society. They must emancipate their womankind from the fetters which now bind them, and thus help them to take their proper place in the development of the nation. And lastly, they must infuse in the mind of every true Indian a sense of pride in his Motherland and a burning desire to serve her best interests. But when all this is done, self-

government would be as far away as ever if our rulers did not think it proper to grant it to us. If Indians even had the capacity, they would shrink from enforcing it at the point of the sword, such is the deep-seated loyalty of the people towards their rulers. Hence in considering the steps by which self-government can be attained, I shall now confine myself to the measures by which the Government can pave the way for the ultimate emancipation of the Indian people, always assuming a desire on its part to do so.

Before passing to the subject, I should like to say a word on the moral side of the question. The claims of Indians to govern themselves have been held by many to be wildly extravagant and unjust. It has been tacitly assumed in some quarters that India can never be a self-governing country, and that the grant of representative institutions is bound to be attended with failure. It will be therefore useful to remind Englishmen that not only has self-government been considered possible for this country, but that a long line of illustrious statesmen has declared that England owes it to us as a moral duty. Nor can those who have propounded this view be classed as "amiable cranks" or "disappointed Civilians." Said Macaulay in 1833 :—

"It would be on the most selfish view of the case far better for us that the people of India were well-governed and independent of us than ill-governed and subject to us. We shall never consent to administer the 'pousta' to a whole com-

munity, to stupefy and paralyse a great people, whom God has committed to our charge, for the wretched purpose of rendering them more amenable to our control."

These words were not uttered in a fit of post-prandial oratory. They were not meant for foreign consumption—to gain the applause of the natives. They did not come from the lips of a statesman who was "inebriated with the exuberance of his own verbosity"; they were the studied utterance of a man whose nobility of heart was not less remarkable than the vastness of his genius. In the same strain are the remarks of Sir Frederick Halliday, who declared that it was England's mission in India to qualify the natives to govern themselves. A long line of great statesmen has corroborated and confirmed these declarations of the policy that ought to govern the relations of England towards India. It has been repeatedly affirmed that the principles of self-government are the glorious heritage of the British nation, and that Great Britain will abide by those principles in the government of this country. Mr. Gladstone, writing to the *Nineteenth Century* in 1877, thus observes :—

"The question who shall have supreme rule in India is, by the laws of right, an Indian question ; and those laws of right are from day to day growing into laws of fact. Our title to be there depends on a first condition, that our being there is profitable to the Indian nations ; and on a second condition, that we can make them see and understand it to be profitable. It is the moral and not the military question which stands first in the order of ideas, with reference to the power of

England in India, as much as with reference to the power in England itself of the State over the people."

When England embarked on her mission of educating the natives, few among her statesmen foresaw the far-reaching consequences of the policy. There were a few people like Macaulay who in dim prophetic vision saw the direction of the current. But whither it was to lead them, no one could say. Within a short time the legitimate and necessary consequences of the policy began to manifest themselves. It became at once apparent that the strong hold of England over India was loosening. The blind unquestioning obedience of the subject races was being replaced by a spirit of enlightened criticism. The measures of the Government ceased to carry the stamp of infallibility as soon as the light of knowledge was brought to bear upon them. Inquiry replaced ignorance, and a general awakening of the people was everywhere visible. The Government saw the effects of its policy and became alarmed. Those among the officials who were opposed to Indian progress closed their eyes to what was happening. They ridiculed the aspirations of the people. Far better had it been for them to have avowed, with the boldness of Lord Ellenborough, that the spread of education was incompatible with the maintenance of British rule in India. Instead, they countenanced the existence of the cause and ignored its effect. If they wished to see the Indians for ever following obediently at the

heels of the rulers, their best policy was to shut all schools and colleges. They did not do that. On the contrary, education was increasingly encouraged, and when the necessary consequences followed they imitated the good old lady who attempted to drive back the tide with a mop. Instead of taking in hand and guiding the new forces that were coming into existence, they attempted to stifle the national movement by calumny and ridicule. But it is satisfactory to note that this handful of men did not constitute the Government of India, and in the ranks of the bureaucracy there were men who sympathised with and encouraged the natural desire of the people to share in the administration. They declared in substance that the new-born spirit was the direct outcome of British policy, and that England held fast to her traditions of liberty and freedom.

Thus it will be seen that the demands of the natives rest on a moral basis. They claim to govern themselves, firstly, because England is preparing them for it ; and secondly, because she believes in the principles of self-government. Speaking at Bradford some years ago, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman declared :—

“We believe in self-government. We treat it not as an odious necessity, not as a foolish theory to which unfortunately the British Empire is committed. We treat it as a blessing and as a healing, a sobering, and a strengthening influence.”

Lord Morley before he went to the India Office was of the same opinion, and the Premier, Mr. Asquith,

has often delivered himself in a similar strain. After this, I hope it will not be said that the demands of Indians are wholly extravagant and unjustified. Whether they are not a little hasty and premature is a matter which will be considered hereafter.

Granted the moral right to self-government, by what steps can it be attained? In the front rank I would put the education of the people as a step of paramount importance. The educated classes, as they stand now, do not constitute the bulk of the people. It is true they are the real leaders of the masses, and as such their influence is very great. But representative institutions cannot be granted to a nation in which the educated classes form a decided minority, and the bulk of the people is ignorant and illiterate. There should be a certain level of culture before any country can be entrusted with its own destinies. It may be that even in advanced countries like England, France, and others, vast numbers of people may be without the blessings of education. But then the scale of civilisation is higher among the people of the West than among those of the East, and the general intelligence brought to bear upon the affairs of the country is consequently greater. Besides, among Western nations the proportion which the illiterate classes bear to the educated is much smaller than in India. The primary duty of the Government is therefore to educate the masses. As Sir George Clarke in his Convocation address lately observed, it is only by

the diffusion of education among the mass of the population, and thus creating gradually the environment which stimulates and inspires, that India can be raised to her rightful position among the nations of the world.

At present, there are in this country four villages out of five without any school, and seven men out of eight without any education. Poverty has hitherto been the greatest obstacle in the diffusion of knowledge. The native is an apt and willing student, but he is generally without the means to satisfy his desire to learn. Consequently, the Government must come to his aid. It is satisfactory to note that increasing provision is made every year in the Budget for educational purposes. But considering the needs of the country, I believe more might and ought to be done if the three hundred millions of India are to be rescued from ignorance and its concomitant evils. I do not advocate a sweeping reduction of the military forces of the Empire. But I believe a million or two less spent on armaments will not imperil the safety of this Dependency, specially in view of our happy relations with Russia and Afghanistan. The money thus saved will go a long way towards satisfying our intellectual wants. Care must be taken to adapt the methods of education to the peculiar genius of the people.

Primary education should be made free, but not compulsory, except in a few selected areas. I do not think the time has arrived for compulsory

methods of schooling. Let there be a free diffusion of knowledge before applying the principle of compulsion. In the Presidency and other towns, primary education might be made compulsory with advantage. In course of time the system might be extended to the whole of India. In his ideal Republic Plato rejected all compulsion. He says, "A free spirit ought to learn no piece of learning with slavery. No piece of compelled learning is lasting in the soul." All this is very fine, but we are no longer living in the days of Plato. The race is now to him who is best equipped, and those who stick to the old ways will be left behind. India aspires to self-government, but while the masses are steeped in ignorance she might as well ask for a piece of the moon. The efforts of both Government and the leaders of the people must therefore be directed towards the great task of education. Inasmuch as the ignorance of the people arises from poverty, it is the duty of the Government to come to the rescue. Inasmuch as it is due to the apathy and indifference of the masses themselves, it is the duty of the popular leaders to demonstrate the blessings of education, and thus remove the obstacles that lie in its path. Let the aim of all be that which is set forth in the Educational Code of Japan. It is there recited that "it is intended henceforth that education shall be so diffused that there may not be a village with an ignorant family, nor a family with an ignorant member."



The second step towards self-government lies in the gradual admission of natives to the high offices of the State. The proportion of natives in the highest ranks of the service is very small, and the recognition afforded to native talent is not very generous. If you wish the Indians to be trained in the art of governing themselves, you must entrust them with positions of trust and responsibility. In face of the overwhelming testimony of impartial critics, you cannot with justice assert that the natives are not fit for high offices in the State. And if they are, it is the duty of the Government to accord a more generous recognition of their merits. You cannot on a sudden transform a nation of clerks and munsiffs into a nation of legislators and administrators. Hence the necessity of a gradual advancement of the natives to positions of dignity.

The third step consists in the gradual introduction of popular representation in the Imperial and Provincial Councils. It was a favourite saying of Gladstone that "it is liberty alone which fits men for liberty." In the same way, it is only through the gradual enjoyment of representative institutions that Indians will become fit to govern themselves. To take a homely instance, no man can learn to swim unless he has dipped into the water. To this it might be replied that unless he knows how to swim he will be drowned. We might rejoin that it is for this very reason that the man should be first taken into shallow water, and then by degrees into

the river, and lastly into the stormy waters of the ocean. Thus, Indians should be trained for self-government first through municipal bodies, secondly through Legislative Councils, and lastly through Executive Councils. "Wait till they are fit" is a bad maxim when applied to the art of government. Fitness for administration is not a theoretical acquisition. It only comes through first-hand acquaintance with the problems of government. The right attitude to adopt towards the question is that which was taken up by Lord Ripon with regard to local self-government. In a Resolution published in 1882, he expressed the view that it was not primarily with a view to improvement in administration that the measure was put forward, but it was chiefly designed as an instrument of popular political education. The Viceroy was well aware that there would be many failures at the start which would discourage exaggerated hopes, but he doubted not that efficiency would follow as a matter of fact when local knowledge and interest were brought to bear more fully upon local administration. This is the spirit which ought to animate English statesmen in their attitude towards the question of popular representation in the Councils of the Empire. They must not expect that we can conduct the affairs of the Empire, in the first instance, better than those whom long training and hereditary instincts have fitted for the task. But there is every reason to expect that the

duty will be equally well performed when our political education has advanced to a certain stage.

It is unnecessary, perhaps, to point out that in the regeneration of a nation help must come from within as well as without. While we criticise the Government, it will be well if we turn the search-light of criticism occasionally on ourselves. Let the Brahmin who rails against the aloofness and hauteur of the Anglo-Indian not lay himself open to the same charge in his relations towards the outcasts and pariahs of society. Let the Indian who clamours for social recognition throw open his doors to his fellow-men, irrespective of caste or creed. Let the Babu who inveighs against the Government for killing the industries of the country manifest his practical sympathy with industrial regeneration. Let the politician who delights to call the officials "irresponsible" be imbued with a sense of his own responsibility. Lastly, let the reformer who lectures the Government on its duty towards the people understand his own obligations towards them as regards their social and moral condition. It is a magnificent task, the uplifting of helpless and ignorant men from political and intellectual slavery. Whether we are English or Indians, let us all unite in moulding in a spirit of firmness and righteousness the destinies of a fifth of the human race.

As to the period within which it is possible to attain self-government, I should hesitate to say any-

thing definitely. The complexities of the problem are so great that one might well pause before assigning a definite period. Political forces alternate between progression and retrogression, and continuous progress cannot be predicated of any community. Our political life is but in its infancy, and our expectations must not be very high. We have singularly misread history if we believe that a generation or even a century is sufficient for the complete emancipation of a down-trodden people. England herself has attained her liberty by the slow and patient toil of centuries. Canada and the other colonies had to wait for long and weary years before they achieved self-government. Not till the last century had well advanced did France rescue herself effectually from the tyranny of kings and nobles. Ireland has been clamouring for decades, and Home Rule appears as far away as ever. Let our expectations be chastened, therefore, by the light of history. Taking everything into consideration, I am inclined to believe that India will be ripe for self-government some time by the end of this century.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It will be noted that the author draws a distinction between the unification of the Indian people, which he expects to be achieved in half a century (see end of Chapter III.), and the attainment of ripeness for self-government, which he believes will occupy not less than nine decades.—Ed.

## CHAPTER V

### A PRACTICAL PROGRAMME

**I** NOW come to what is perhaps the most difficult part of the work, viz., a consideration of the ways and means by which encouragement can best be given to the legitimate political aspirations of the people. The subject requires constructive criticism, and it is here that we find the difficulties that always arise when we descend from the general to the concrete. The orators of Bengal have been for years teaching the Civilians how to run the Government. If they were asked to formulate a definite practical scheme, I am afraid they would not find it so easy. The fact is obvious that destructive criticism is very easy. Mr. Balfour in the latter days of his Ministry made a rather bad muddle; yet in Opposition he has no difficulty in pronouncing to the world that the Liberals are ruining the Empire. Conscious of these difficulties, I shall attempt to formulate a programme at once, I hope, moderate and practical. Before I do so, a little explanation is necessary. While I assume

the fitness of natives for high administrative work, I think it necessary to disclaim all unreasonable and extravagant aspirations. Not only do they provoke opposition, but they throw discredit on our legitimate claims. The late Lord Salisbury once asked :—

“Is there any man who will have the hardihood to tell me that it is within the range of possibility that a man in India should be appointed Lieutenant-Governor of a province, or Chief Commissioner, or Commander-in-Chief, without any regard whatever to his race?”

The noble lord need not have had such fears, for no sober politician has ventured to advance such claims. Of course, in politics one sometimes hears things which make the angels weep. But then a single swallow never makes the summer. Hence, the claim advanced by a few politicians that all the posts in India, except a dozen or so, should be in the hands of natives must not be taken too seriously. If political capital is sought to be made out of such talk, that is another thing. Otherwise, the statement must be regarded as the product of a diseased imagination or the vapouring of an unguarded moment.

Having admitted this, it is but fair to say that except in the highest places room should be found for natives of talent whenever practicable. The case against the larger employment of Indians is not at all so strong as against the grant of self-government. For the latter, long political training

and a general diffusion of knowledge are necessary. As regards the former, it will be sufficient if there is a large number of educated and talented men fitted by their position to occupy places of trust and to act as interpreters between the rulers and the ruled. To regard these men as a "microscopic minority" unworthy of serious attention is neither just nor politic. Let it be remembered that the British Government has to labour under peculiar difficulties. The late Professor Wordsworth once remarked :—

"It seems obvious that in addition to the difficulties which are common to all despotisms, their isolation, the imperfection of the instruments through which they work, the paralysis of public spirit which neutralises their best intentions, their ignorance of the new social and intellectual forces which are coming into existence around them, the heedless unthrift which seems inseparable from that form of government, they have a whole class of special difficulties in the want of attachment, in the inevitable suspicions and mistrust of their subjects, in the privation of that reciprocal cordiality which is so considerable an element in the strength of governments."

When these things are taken into consideration it is obvious that there is need for a more enlightened policy towards the educated classes. By their intellectual superiority and intimate acquaintance with the wants and feelings of the masses they constitute the real leaders of the people, and exercise an influence over them which no wise Government will ignore.

The measures by which encouragement can best be given to legitimate political aspirations may be considered under three heads: (1) by the larger employment of natives in high positions; (2) by introduction of the popular element in the Councils of the Empire;<sup>1</sup> and (3) by the removal of some of the difficulties which block the way to the public services. There is yet another way of satisfying Indian aspirations, and that is by opening out careers in the Army. I shall not say anything on this last point, as, to use a well-worn phrase, it is not within the range of practical politics. India is loyal to the core, but an alien Government which does not understand the people over whom it rules may well be pardoned for being cautious about its military supremacy. For a long time past it has been apparent to Englishmen that their rule, justly or unjustly, is not popular. The unrest in Bengal and other parts of India has confirmed the notion. Moreover, the vastness of the population has added an element of anxiety. It is not surprising, therefore, that even those who flout the pernicious doctrine of India being held by the sword should hesitate to give even a partial control of the Army into Indian hands. Of course, their fears are totally ungrounded. Our loyalty has been testified by the highest authorities, both civil and military. The Government has declared that the idea of the

<sup>1</sup> The writer means a larger infusion of this element, which already exists.—Ed.



subversion of British power is abhorrent to the people of India. But there is a deep-seated misunderstanding which nothing can remove, and which will ever stand in the way of our military ambitions. Hence it is no use pursuing the subject any further.

Let us now consider the question of the larger employment of the natives of India in high posts. The Act of 1833 declared:—

“That no native of the said territory, nor any natural born subject of His Majesty resident therein, shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office, or employment under the said Company.”

The next great declaration of policy on the subject took place when the echoes of the Mutiny were ringing in the ears of Englishmen. The horrors of Cawnpore were still fresh in the minds of men. The spirit of vengeance was abroad. Loud and long were the cries to avenge the blood of thousands of helpless women and children. The policy of Lord Canning was being assailed with a vigour and determination which would have broken down the courage of a lesser man. It was at this period of bitterness and anxiety that the great Charter of our liberties was proclaimed in language that breathed the magnanimity of a great and Royal woman. Among other things it said:—

“And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects of whatever race or creed be freely and impartially

admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity duly to discharge."

These pledges were repeated and confirmed on another solemn occasion. Lord Lytton at the Delhi Durbar of 1877 told a brilliant assemblage that the natives of India had a recognised claim to share largely with their English fellow-subjects in the administration of the country. The claim was founded in the highest justice, and was recognised by the Government as binding on its honour and consonant with all the aims of its policy. After this there is no room for doubt as to the benevolent intentions of the sovereign power. Lord Curzon, in a thoughtless mood, tried to explain away these pledges, but it is satisfactory to note that Lord Morley expressly disclaimed the attitude taken up by the late Viceroy.

The question now remains, how far has the Government followed the declared policy of the Crown. We have been told that within the last few years the number of natives employed in the Government service has increased out of all proportion to the increase in the European element. That may or may not be. What we are concerned with is to know the proportion which the native element bears to the European in the higher branches of the service. That is the real point at issue. We have never complained that there are not enough native clerks or mamlatdars in

the Government employment. Our contention all along has been that, in the higher grades, natives of capacity have not been given those opportunities which the repeated declarations of the sovereign Power have led them to expect. Under existing arrangements, there are well-defined limits beyond which no Indian, whatever his claims, can go. It is only in the judicial department that the highest appointments are open to the children of the soil, and even there there is room for a more generous recognition of talent. If we say that all real power and authority rest in the hands of Englishmen we shall not be far from the truth. Lord Curzon, with the thoroughness and zeal characteristic of him, compiled figures in 1903,<sup>1</sup> from which he attempted to refute the charge that the natives were given an inadequate voice in the administration of the country. These figures were afterwards embodied in a resolution of the Government of India, and I shall refer to them in support of my contention.

At the date in question, the total number of Government posts in India with a salary above Rs. 75, equivalent to £5, a month was 28,278. Of these 58 per cent. were held by natives and 42 per cent. by Europeans and Eurasians. To these figures Lord Curzon triumphantly pointed as the best vindication of England's generosity. I am afraid I cannot go into raptures over this condition of

<sup>1</sup> 1904.—ED.

things. The Viceroy divided all appointments into three classes: those ranging between Rs. 75 and Rs. 200 a month; those over Rs. 200 and below Rs. 1,000; and lastly those carrying more than Rs. 1,000 a month. Now, more than half of the appointments in India have always been on posts less than Rs. 200 a month. It is evident that very few Europeans can be found to fill these low-paid offices. They simply cannot manage to live on such a pittance. Therefore it is a matter of absolute necessity that these places should be filled by natives. As a fact their percentage in this class is ninety. But as you go higher up, the proportion grows less and less, so that when you come to positions of real power and responsibility the native element becomes insignificant. The following table illustrates my meaning:—

From Rs. 200 to Rs. 300, 60 per cent of Indians.

„	300	„	400, 43	„	„
„	400	„	500, 40	„	„
„	500	„	600, 25	„	„
„	600	„	700, 27	„	„
„	700	„	800, 13	„	„

It will be seen how the percentage diminishes as we go higher up the scale. But it is in posts carrying more than Rs. 1,000 a month that the policy of England shows itself best. In 1903 there were 1,370 such appointments, out of which only 92 were filled by natives. These figures speak for themselves. These 92 men represent, then, the

sum total of India's cultivated intelligence. Beyond this paltry number the Government of India does not expect administrative capacity among Indians. And yet we have been told times out of number that the highest positions are open to all, irrespective of caste or colour. Lord Curzon was at least frank. He was good enough to declare that—

“The highest ranks of civil employment in India, those in the Imperial Civil Service, though open to such Indians as can proceed to England and pass the requisite tests, must, nevertheless, as a general rule be held by Englishmen, for the reason that they possess, partly by heredity, partly by upbringing, and partly by education, the knowledge of the principles of government, the habits of mind and the vigour of character which are essential for the task, and that the rule of India being a British rule, and any other rule being in the circumstances of the case impossible, the tone and standard should be set by those who have created and are responsible for it.”

The assumption underlying this argument ignores not only the great statesmen and administrators India has produced in times past, but also those who have contributed to the making of modern India. The native principalities of Baroda, Mysore, Travancore, Gondal, and others are among the model States of India. In some matters they set the standard to British administrators. Baroda, particularly, can teach a few things to them. Unfortunately for Lord Curzon's dogmatic assumption, these States are managed chiefly, if not altogether, by the children of the soil. But let me not quarrel

with his lordship. He at least has spoken straight and square, and we are thankful to him for that. It is enough that Lord Morley has expressly disclaimed the attitude taken up by him. The facts and figures given demonstrate that the question of the higher employment of the natives of India is in as unsatisfactory a condition as it was a generation ago. The position, then, is briefly this : either the natives are not capable or the Government is unwilling to recognise their claims. In the first case British statesmen lay themselves open to a charge of inconsistency ; in the second case they are guilty of "breaking to the heart the words of promise they had uttered to the ear."

Both expediency and justice demand that there should be a change of policy as regards this vital question. Let us consider the ways and means by which it can best be effected. I must content myself with indicating in general the lines on which improvements should run. To take the judicial branch, it has never been doubted that the natives make excellent judges. At the time of the Ilbert Bill agitation all manner of hard things were said about the ability and integrity of native judges. But that was not a time for sober reasoning. Even in those days there were not wanting men who were not afraid to give merit its due. The Earl of Selborne, the then Lord Chancellor, from his place in Parliament declared that the natives made quite as good judges as Englishmen, whatever way

one looked at it. Apart from mere testimony, there has been a practical recognition of the judicial attainments of natives. It is due to the Government to observe that it has acted honourably in this matter. The supreme judicial post in Bengal, Madras, and Bombay has often been given temporarily to Indians, and a recent appointment has created a Bengali gentleman the Advocate-General of Bengal. But it may be urged that a little more might be done with advantage. In the four High Courts it should be provided that at least half the judgeships should be reserved for the children of the soil. At present in Bombay, Madras, and Allahabad only two out of seven judges are natives, and in Calcutta only four out of fourteen. Then the Civilian element should be reduced. The Bar can produce scores of talented men, and their ability should meet with a fitting recognition. The claims of the subordinate judiciary must also not be forgotten. Then as regards the various posts attached to the courts of justice the Indian element might be increased. I should also like to see more natives exercising magisterial and judicial functions in the districts. Taking the figures of 1903, I find that out of a total of 239 posts carrying Rs. 1,000 and more only 49 were in the hands of the natives. This, considering the peculiar fitness of Indians for exercising judicial functions and the amplitude of the materials that lie at hand, is not a result with which we can long remain satisfied.

In the Revenue department there is much less cause for satisfaction. In the department of Land Revenue there are 278 posts of Rs. 1,000 and more, out of which only 19 are enjoyed by natives. Why it should be necessary to man this department almost wholly with Englishmen I cannot understand. The native is capable of making a good revenue officer. In the Customs, Opium, and Salt departments, among the 26 high-paid officials not a single native is to be found. Every reasonable man will admit that there is no justification whatever for this state of things. Indians should have at least a fourth of these appointments. The Imperial Customs service should be thrown open to all, and must not remain the exclusive preserve of English civilians. If Indians are thought fit to sit on the Council of the Secretary of State I think a [Customs] collectorate ought not to be beyond their powers to tackle. As we dip further into the official tables we find some interesting revelations. In the Forest and State Railway departments there are 120 high-salaried positions; the native element therein is nil. As before, one stands amazed. Apparently there are wide limitations to the capacity of educated Indians. The Postal and Telegraph departments are beyond their capacity too. There is a solitary native among 32 Europeans.

Similarly, in the other departments of State the Indian element is conspicuous by its absence. Taking all the services together, it is a bare



7 per cent. in the higher branches. Is this the response which England gives to the claims of the educated classes? Is this the fulfilment of solemn pledges given by the sovereign authority and reiterated by a generation of eminent statesmen? Is this the recognition of the new spirit which is transforming the thought and attitude of the East? The latest of our political philosophers has said :—

“In regard to the question of the employment of Indians in the higher offices, I think a move—a definite and deliberate move—ought to be made with the view of giving competent and able natives the same access to the higher posts in the administration that are given to our own countrymen.”

Then, referring to the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 and emphatically rejecting the construction that was sought to be placed upon it by Lord Curzon, he declared that he did not believe that one of the most memorable documents in English history was to be construed “in a narrow, literal, restricted, or pettifogging sense.” Let Lord Morley courageously put into practice what he has so admirably preached. I for one have great faith in our Radical philosopher, and fully appreciate the difficulties which surround him. To expect him, on the strength of previous utterances regarding Ireland, to dance to the tune of the Extremists of Poona and Bengal is simply ridiculous. We must represent our grievances in temperate language and with convincing logic, and the fight is ours.

Let it be understood that we have no desire to monopolise the higher branches of the Imperial Service. But between that and a paltry 7 per cent. there is a vast ground to be covered. In my opinion, a fourth of the higher appointments should be filled by natives. Even then, there are several departments which we are content should remain in the hands of Englishmen. It is but just that the political service should be manned by the ruling caste. Political officers have to deal with a variety of questions touching various interests, and it is desirable that the European element should there predominate. Even in the Educational Service I should not for the present consider a large infusion of native blood desirable, though I cannot agree to the necessity of having only one Indian as against forty-eight Europeans. It is necessary that English education should be imparted by men who have been born and bred in the spirit of a noble and inspiring literature. Mere book-work is not everything. The spirit is the essence of the thing, and it can only be imbibed by familiarity with the sights and scenes among which the great writers lived and moved. Of course, this proposition, like everything else, is subject to exceptions. But the general principle that the arts and science of the West can best be imparted by the men of the West holds good. Conspicuous merit, however, must be fittingly recognised wherever found, and it is hard

to believe that there is only one man with the necessary qualifications among more than a million of educated natives.

Leaving these and like departments aside, there are many others affording ample scope for the exercise of native talent. Such are the Public Works, the Railways, the Excise and Customs, the Posts and Telegraphs, Jails, Forests, Salt, Stamps, Opium, Police, &c. In these non-political departments at least a fourth of the appointments should be in the hands of natives. There is no reason to exclude them therefrom on the false pretext of incompetence or dishonesty. The report of the Public Service Commission has favoured a generous policy as regards these appointments. It has expressly recommended the inclusion of native officers in the higher ranks of the Police. Yet among forty-nine officers in its ranks, not a single Indian is to be found. It will be observed that I have all along been speaking of high offices, such as carry more than Rs. 1,000 a month. But it is precisely with regard to these that the Government has given us its solemn pledges. It is here that we look for real power and responsibility, initiative and authority. What avails it, then, to point out the preponderance of our numbers in subordinate positions? If mamlatdars and tehsildars can by any stretch of imagination be considered as the rulers of our Empire, then certainly we can be said to be associated in the task of government. As matters stand

at present, it is not unjust to say that Englishmen hold the monopoly of power. I have no desire to put forward Government employment as the be-all and end-all of an educated man's existence. But is it not an absurdity that you should train men for the discharge of high duties and then let their talents run waste? Mr. Theodore Morison, member of the India Council, once declared that British rule had crushed Indian talent and emasculated the native character. How far that is the case is beyond my purpose to inquire.

The second measure for encouraging the political aspirations of the people consists in the introduction of the popular element in the Councils of the Empire. The expansion of the Legislative Councils effected at the end of the last century<sup>1</sup> has been productive of much good during its short career. If the Councils have not provided any efficient check over the actions of the Government, they have at least kept before the officials the fear of wholesome criticism. If they have not brought about beneficent measures, they have in some cases mended mischievous ones. And as the training-ground of Indians for self-governing institutions, their value cannot be overrated. But they have outgrown the conditions which brought them into being, and the new spirit that is abroad demands new institutions. The educated classes are no

<sup>1</sup> The enlargements were made by an Act passed in 1892.—ED.

longer content with the privilege of criticising the acts of the Government twice or thrice a year. The opportunity of shining forth on Budget day has lost its attractions, and something more substantial is wanted.

In response to the insistent demands for reforms in the constitution of the Councils, Lord Morley in conjunction with the Government of Lord Minto has proposed certain measures and invited criticism on them. They consist in the institution of a Council of Notables and in the enlargement of the numbers and powers of the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils. Without any desire to indulge in carping criticisms, I may say at once that these proposals are very disappointing. The Imperial Advisory Council<sup>1</sup> is to consist of sixty members, including ruling chiefs and territorial magnates. To invest ruling chiefs of independent territories with the right of advising the Government on matters pertaining to British India, about which they know nothing and care less, is perfectly absurd. As to the territorial magnates, it will be no injustice to them to say that neither by inclination nor by capacity have they afforded any justification for their selection for the proposed task. Besides, the interests of property and capital are not often identical with those of the agricultural and labouring classes. Then again, membership will be by

<sup>1</sup> It is understood that this portion of the draft scheme is not to be proceeded with.—Ed.

nomination by the Viceroy. How far that will ensure independence of views scarcely requires to be told. So much with regard to the constitution of the Council. As regards its status, it is to receive no legislative recognition, and will not be vested with any formal powers. It is to be consulted at the will of the authorities, who will not be bound in any way to adopt its advice. Its deliberations are to be secret, and this will scarcely contribute to freedom of opinion, public criticism being withheld from it. Lastly, this body is only to deal with matters specially referred, and will have no powers of initiative. Needless to say, such a Council is a mockery. The same remarks apply, with some modifications, to the Provincial Advisory Councils.

As regards the Legislative Councils, it is to be regretted that the framers of the proposed measures seem to have been actuated by an ill-disguised hostility to the educated classes. An attempt has been deliberately made to discount their influence and to set up a counterpoise. This is apparent both in the constitution of the new Councils and in the prefatory remarks of the Government of India. The Imperial Legislative Council is to consist of 54 members, made up as follows:— 9 members ex-officio, including the Viceroy, 20 official members, 18 elected members, and 7 members nominated by the Viceroy. Out of this number, the elected members are only 18, and

of these, two are from the Chambers of Commerce, which will return Europeans only. The rest are to be either official members or nominated by the Viceroy. These will almost always side with the Government, which will thus have a majority of 38 to 16. This is an excessive disproportion, and wholly without justification. Then out of the seven members nominated by the Viceroy, two are to be Mahomedans, who have already been provided for by two seats among the elected members. I have elsewhere spoken of the folly of giving special preference to classes and communities, and have shown how the interests of the Mahomedans have not suffered at the hands of the other communities. But evidently the Government thinks otherwise. As regards the constitution of the elected members, there are to be two from the Chambers of Commerce, seven from the non-official members of the Provincial Councils, seven from the nobles and great landowners, and two from the Mahomedans. I need not comment on the policy of reserving eleven seats for minorities and special interests, as against only seven for the representatives of the non-official members of the Provincial Councils, who may be styled the true spokesmen of the dumb millions. The same number of seats is given to the nobles and landowners, who, according to the qualifications laid down by the Government, represent an electorate of about a thousand men,

as is given to the representatives of the vast masses of India. Yet it is chiefly to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the people that these measures have been framed ! Besides this unequal distribution of seats, there is a proviso that the members elected to represent a class must themselves belong to it. Why should the landholders, for instance, be precluded from selecting proper and capable men from outside their ranks ? If they cannot find a suitable representative from among their own class, must they elect an incapable man simply because he happens to belong to it ?

If these things are taken into consideration, the scheme will be found to be disappointing. Its greatest drawback is its scant recognition of the elective principle. We have heard much of late that the principle is not suited to the peculiar conditions of India. Unfortunately for the advocates of this theory, the operation of the principle in local bodies and in the Councils has been attended with satisfactory results. I am willing to admit that conditions exist which make it necessary to provide room for membership by nomination. There are certain elements in Indian society which need to be included in all assemblies that claim to be representative, but which would otherwise be left out. It is for this reason that wholesale election is not demanded. But the principle holds good in spite of its partial applica-



tion. In his speech during the debate on the Councils Bill of 1892 Mr. Gladstone observed :

“ It is evident that the great question—and it is one of great and profound interest—before the House is that of the introduction of the elective element into the Government of India. That question overshadows and absorbs everything else. It is a question of vital importance. What we want is to get at the real heart and mind, the most upright sentiments and the most enlightened thoughts, of the people of India.”

Now it is this very element which has not received due recognition in the constitution of the proposed Councils. For this and other reasons mentioned, I do not consider that the scheme is entitled to the unqualified approval of any right-thinking man. Of course, it does not deserve the severe condemnation it has received from most quarters, as some of its provisions, notably those regarding the Budget debates, are a welcome response to long-felt grievances. The chief cause for dissatisfaction is that the Councils are not to be of a representative character. The measure is still on the anvil, and we may hope for considerable modifications. It may be permissible for me to offer some suggestions as regards the constitution of the Councils. I should like the seats to be distributed as follows :—

His Excellency the Viceroy	...	...	...	1
Ex-officio Members	...	...	...	8
Nominated Officials	...	...	...	16
Nominated Non-Officials	...	...	...	5
Representatives of the Chambers of Commerce				2

Representatives of the Indian Mercantile Communities ... ..	2
Representatives of the 8 Provinces and Presidencies (Bombay, Bengal, and Madras sending two each) ... ..	11
Representatives of the Mahomedan Community	2
Representatives of the Landholders ... ..	3
Representatives of the Universities ... ..	4

The Councils as thus constituted would be fairly representative, and would at the same time guard the interests of the Government. I have suggested the raising of the number of elected members from 18 to 24. Considering that out of the 30 nominated or ex-officio members almost all would vote with the Government, which can also count upon the support of some at least of the elected members, I submit that the Government majority would be duly ensured. As regards the proposed rules for Budget debates, I have nothing but praise to record. Under the old system, a rambling criticism of the Government policy was all that the members were able to give. Under the rules now proposed the Budget will be discussed in the first instance under separate heads, to be followed by a general debate. This will concentrate attention on each head of expenditure, and will prevent a loose criticism embracing all the groups. The power to vote and move amendments might be added with much advantage. The Viceroy will in any case have his veto, but the moral effect of dividing the Council will be very great. I have other suggestions to offer,

both as to the Imperial and Provincial Councils, but as they enter into details and do not touch the substance, I refrain from putting them forward.

The Legislative Councils exist for the purpose of making laws and regulations. But the laws that come into being almost always emanate from the officers of the Government, who are ex-officio members. In this sense they are the work of the executive authorities, who have thus all power centred in their own hands. The members of the Executive Councils wield an enormous influence, and the ruler of the presidency or province is often a tool in their hands. Sometimes proconsuls of the type of Lord Curzon turn up, and then the bureaucracy has a hard time. But otherwise it is supreme. It is this stronghold of authority and power that it is the ambition of Indian politicians to storm. Of their capacity impartial judges are convinced. Lord Morley himself lately declared it as his opinion that the Indian is perfectly worthy of being given a share in the councils of the paramount Power. But leaving opinions aside, the admission of two natives to the Council of the Secretary of State is a signal proof of the ability of the children of the soil. Since the India Council has opened its doors to natives, the Executive Councils ought no longer to remain the exclusive preserves of Englishmen. A beginning might be made in the Legislative department. As Law Member the Indian would not be unworthy of taking a place

in the Council. If he can honourably discharge the high duties of a Chief Justice, there is no reason to suppose he would not do justice to the functions of a Law Member. As occasion offered, an Indian might be placed in charge of the Revenue and Agricultural departments. Men of the stamp of Mr. Gokhale or Mr. Dutt would prove an accession of strength to any Government.

I do not suppose the bureaucracy will readily yield to the demand for giving up some of its most cherished possessions, and that is but natural. But in the irresistible march of time the expediency of to-day becomes the necessity of to-morrow. It is the part of a wise statesman to lead and direct the new forces that spring up everywhere. "Bis dat qui cito dat" is a maxim that is not without its application to politics. The clamour of legitimate demands must be met by timely concessions if the ferment is to be allayed. A reform tardily introduced loses much of its grace and utility. There cannot be a better illustration of this than the way in which the appointments of two Indians to the India Council were received. Lord Morley complained that he had not received a word of thanks from anybody for bringing about the most important constitutional change within the last fifty years. I am in full sympathy with him, as it has always seemed to me peculiarly ungracious to receive such an important privilege with coldness and indifference. One reason of it was that the nominations were singularly ill-

made. But merely to have established our right to enter the India Council is a great thing in itself, whoever be the men selected in the first instance to exercise it. The fact is that the privilege came at a time when the demands of the natives, too long neglected, had increased in volume and intensity, and were not to be satisfied by being met half-way. It may be hoped that the lesson of current events will not be lost upon the Government of India.

Side by side with the reform of the Councils, the recruitment for the Indian Civil Service should be placed on a more satisfactory basis. This is at the root of all questions touching the association of the people in the task of administration. The time has come when the rules and regulations of the service must be radically changed. I have no cheap sneers for the Civilian. I believe that, taken all in all, the Indian Civil Service constitutes the most remarkable public service the world has ever seen. It has produced administrators of whom any country might be proud. It has during half a century maintained an efficiency rarely to be found in any other body of men. But the service has outgrown the conditions that brought it into being. It clings to old traditions and old ways of thought. It is wedded to methods long since discredited. In an age of democracy it believes in a paternal Government. In short, it has grown out of touch with the needs and sentiments of the masses. Among many causes that

have brought about its deterioration may be mentioned the system of frequent transfers of officials, and their occasional absence from the country on leave. Formerly, Civilians were posted to certain districts for long periods, during which they came to study and know the people among whom their lot was cast. They thus acquired a knowledge and influence to which the Civilian of the present day, with his perpetual transfers, is a stranger. Besides, for want of facilities for travel, they spent their holidays in the country. Their interests were thus largely centred in the scene of their labours. Nowadays, the weary Anglo-Indian pines for the day when he can snatch a three months' leave in England. These and other causes have contributed to the steady decline in influence and popularity of what was once the finest public service in the world. Hence the necessity arises of leavening it with the native element in order to bring it in touch with the new order of things. If the administration is to retain its hold over the minds and affections of the people, it must seek to govern them to a certain extent by means of the people themselves.

Now this cannot be done so long as the present system of recruitment for the Civil Service is in force. A long stay in England at a heavy expense is not within the competence of most Indians. Besides, the uncertainty attached to a severe test

makes it impossible for any but a favoured few to attempt the experiment. For these reasons, it often happens that the most talented youths of the country are shut out from the service. The only solution of the difficulty lies in the institution of simultaneous examinations in England and in India. The House of Commons in 1893 actually adopted a resolution to that effect, but the organised opposition of the Indian Government and the retired Anglo-Indian officials reduced it to a dead-letter. Now the objections that are usually urged against the holding of simultaneous examinations are twofold. In the first place, it is contended that those who discharge high administrative positions requiring great capacity and liberal training should receive their mental equipment in the healthy atmosphere of England. Secondly, if the proposal were carried into effect, it would result in the swamping of the English element in the service which is necessary for the proper maintenance of British supremacy. The first objection may be met by the provision that selected candidates, after passing their examination in India, should be required to undergo a two years' stay in England. This would help to give them the intellectual stamina and breadth of outlook without which mere book-learning is nothing. If during their stay they were placed on honorary duties in connection with the India Office, there would be a resultant benefit to all

concerned. As regards the second objection, the remedy is very simple. Let it be provided that only a fourth of the vacancies every year should be at the disposal of the natives in India, and the limit thus imposed would be an effectual bar to the preponderance of the Indian element in the service. Besides, is it not an unworthy fear on the part of Englishmen that the Brahmin or Babu would beat the best and the ablest of the youth of England out of the race? What becomes then of your boasted mental superiority? The Indian is certainly not competing with you on equal terms. Your infinitely superior training in early life gives you an advantage over him which cannot be lightly estimated. Besides, he has to cope with the difficulties of a foreign tongue. Why, then, should you fear competition from the "dull-witted" Indian?

The first obvious advantage of simultaneous examinations would be that the administration, by the admixture of Indians, would become vastly more popular and alive to the needs and aspirations of the people. Besides, I fail to see how the Government can fulfil its pledges as regards the higher employment of natives unless the Civil Service is more within their reach. Outside the covenanted service there are few appointments of dignity and responsibility. And it is clear that unless simultaneous examinations are instituted the number of native Civilians will be very small.



Again, with the larger employment of Indian agency, the administration could be made much cheaper. For that, several changes would be necessary. Under the present system the salary of both Europeans and natives is the same in the same grades, though the native promotion is slow and restricted within certain limits.

Now it would not do to make an invidious distinction, and give the European a higher salary than an Indian on the same grade. But it is perfectly just that it should be so. I am afraid it seems a startling proposition to come from the pen of one who himself belongs to India. But I do not see either the absurdity or unreasonableness of the suggestion. Why should the Indian be paid the same salary as is paid to the Englishman in consideration of an exile from hearth and home and work in an inhospitable climate? The Indian works among his kith and kin in a climate to which he has been accustomed from birth. Surely there is nothing wrong in paying him less than his English brother. The best way to arrange this would be to have a uniform scale of pay, but on a lower basis than at present, and to allow the Englishman a special allowance in recognition of his peculiar position. But this should only be done when, through simultaneous examinations or otherwise, the native element is fairly conspicuous in the Civil Service. If it were not so, it would not be wise to disturb

existing arrangements in order to save a few hundreds a year.

Further, given simultaneous examinations, there would be an improvement in the material of the service. At present, the disparity of marks between the first and the last student selected is very great. If marks be any criterion of merit, then it may reasonably be supposed that there is generally a great disparity of merit between the candidates at the top and the candidates at the bottom. Now, if a wider field of selection were opened out by holding examinations in India as well as in England, there would be less of this disparity, for the necessity for taking the man at the bottom would vanish. Thus, it may be argued that simultaneous examinations, apart from their other advantages, would add to the efficiency of the service by widening the field of selection. Side by side with the change in the existing conditions of the Civil Service there should be a reform of the other services, the Forest, Medical, and Engineering services among others.

I have attempted a general sketch of the methods by which encouragement can best be given to the legitimate aspirations of the people. If it is contended that it is an ambitious programme considering the present development of the country, I would suggest a perusal of Professor Thorold Rogers's book called the "British Citizen." He there says that a hundred years ago not more

than one man in ten or one woman in twenty knew how to read and write. In the days of the Stuarts the ignorance of the general body of people was amazing. Yet there was a House of Commons in those days, and England was a free, self-governing country. There is, then, no reason to defer the day of reform, simply because the educated classes form only a small portion of the people. If there is a small minority (though not so small as is generally believed) capable of exercising high functions, it is neither wise nor just to make it wait until the masses are duly qualified. It is opposed to all common sense, let alone statesmanship. Let English statesmen, then, courageously advance a few paces further on the path of reform. Let it be remembered that the advancing tide can only be kept back for a space. The East has risen from its long slumber, and it will yet achieve its lofty destiny. Whatever else it may mean for the rest of the world, to England the problem of the dark races will present no difficulty, if she learns to treat her subject races with the same justice and impartiality with which she treats her own people, and if she recognises that, as M. Chailley-Bert has said, her true *rôle* in India is not to administer, but to control the administration of native leaders.

## CHAPTER VI

### SEDITION AND UNREST

IT is a singular commentary on a century and a half of British rule that the most talked of subject in Indian politics at the present moment is connected with sedition. The topic presents a host of difficulties which are not at once apparent. In the first place, what is sedition? The meaning varies with the point of view of the one who uses the word. The "sun-dried bureaucrat" is ready to detect a seditious purpose in every outspoken criticism of the policy and attitude of the Government. He is over-sensitive to pin-pricks, and apt to misconstrue them. The extremist of Bengal and Poona believes in incitements to disorder and rowdyism, and calls it patriotism. To him the word "sedition" is a technicality of law which operates with particular hardship upon high-minded and high-spirited patriots. To the sober politician the term defines the limits beyond which criticism ceases to be legitimate and justifiable. Lastly, to the ultra-loyalist, all that the Indian National Congress says

and does is sedition. Amidst such a conflict of views it is not exactly easy to find one's way to a proper definition. To add to our difficulties, we have it on the authority of a learned judge that disaffection is "want of affection." This was perhaps a joke, and we will not stop to discuss it. What, then, is the proper meaning of sedition? By the Indian Penal Code, whoever "excites, or attempts to excite, feelings of disaffection to the Government established by law in British India" is guilty of sedition. Taken by itself, this definition is vague and confusing. The explanation which follows makes the matter clearer. We are told that mere disapprobation of the measures of the Government is not disaffection, unless there is a tendency to incite men to subvert or resist the authority of the ruling power. Judicial decisions have made the law still clearer. No criticism of the Government, however severe or strongly expressed, is to be reckoned as sedition if it takes the form of free and fair discussion. The object should be to point out grievances with a view to their removal, and not to stir up active opposition to the ruling authority. There should be no incitement to insurrection or rebellion, and language which has this tendency is taken as seditious. The essence of the offence consists in the intention of the person accused, and that intention must be judged solely by the language employed.

Thus, the definition is narrowed down to well-

defined limits, and there should be no difficulty in comprehending it. But in an age of freedom men's views express themselves in a variety of forms, and in some cases it becomes an exceedingly nice question whether the limits of the law have or have not been transgressed. In such cases, the legal definition of the crime fails to elucidate the knotty points at issue. Fault is then found with the law, and various suggestions are made, which have nothing but their novelty to recommend them. Recently, a well-meaning champion of India's cause asked the Secretary of State for an alteration of the existing law on the subject. The reason alleged was that the law, as it stood, was a bar to the free and unrestrained expression of views, and was calculated to draw within its pale the doctrines of the Nationalist school of Indian politicians. Now, I cannot help saying that the proposal was rather silly, whatever the motives of its author. No reasonably possible definition of sedition will meet every case, and in certain circumstances there must inevitably be room for doubt and uncertainty, unless the scope of the offence is made too wide or too narrow. Neither unrestrained licence nor harsh repression being desirable in the interests of free government, the law has to take a middle course. It prescribes the limits within which grievances may be freely ventilated. If any one steps outside these, he does so at his peril. Now, it seems to me, upon a view of all the circum-

stances, that the section in the Penal Code relating to sedition (124A) has served its purpose well, and I know of very few instances in which there has been a miscarriage of justice. No one can justly complain that the existing law is harsh and restrains liberty of speech. I am a constant reader of native papers, and I find that their tone is as severe as any reasonable man could wish.

Of course, it is absurd to draw any analogy from the tone of the press in England. There the various rival factions are all in a position of equality. Here the relations are different. We are a conquered people, owing allegiance to a sovereign Power whose authority must be maintained. We cannot, therefore, indulge in language calculated to subvert it. With us, the overthrow of the Government in power would not mean the overthrow of a particular party, but that of the sovereign authority itself. What is therefore right and proper for the press of England or Ireland is not so for the press in India. But outside wild and reckless language there is a wide scope for severe and independent comments on public affairs. I do not see the necessity of going beyond this. The writers in the native press are able to understand where to stop. As long as judges in India observe the letter and the spirit of the law, so long there is no fear of oppression or misconception.

It is the fashion in some quarters to represent India as seething with sedition. It is impossible to

imagine what purpose can be served by such wild and foolish talk. If the whole country is disloyal and discontented, does it reflect any credit upon British administration? Would it not be singular if the educated classes in a body were opposed to British rule? But no one who knows them has put forward such a suggestion, which has only emanated from the fevered brains of a few scaremongers. No less a critic than Lord Curzon has declared that the unrest in India is "skin-deep." Recent events have not affected the substantial truth of this verdict. It is true that there is a widespread feeling of discontent with British rule. But it is the inevitable awakening of the national consciousness, which has been fed and fostered by the "pax Britannica." In the history of the people there comes a time when commerce, industry, law, and good government cease to satisfy men's minds. There rises up then a vague feeling of dissatisfaction and a healthy restlessness. To call it sedition is preposterous. Lord Morley, before he was frightened into deporting respectable people, in his memorable Budget speech of 1906, proclaimed that he did not believe there was any disaffection in India worth speaking of. He expressly warned his hearers against over-readiness to scent evil and disaster. Unfortunately, it is the very thing that often happens, through lack of intimate acquaintance with the native character. It is useful to bear this in mind, when we come to consider the ways and means by which



sedition can most effectively be suppressed. The remedy must always be proportioned to the disease, and much evil results from unduly exaggerating the danger.

There are various ways in which sedition can be met. Bacon, in his essay on the subject, wisely remarks : "It is a thing well to be considered ; for the surest way to prevent seditious is to take away the matter of them. For if there be fuel prepared, it is hard to tell whence the spark shall come that shall set it on fire." Then he sets forth two causes that lie at the root of all trouble. Now, the remedy he prescribes is too obvious to require much argument. But it is generally the least thought of. It is plain that if we take away the matter of sedition it ceases to exist. Yes, but the question is, How shall we do it ? Here we enter upon large questions, and it would seem that the idea of changing the whole policy of the Government to suit the requirements of a few malcontents would be rather funny. But sober reasoning will tell us that as long as there is material for trouble there will always be trouble. Provided there is proper fuel, a spark will soon burst into a flame. In so much, therefore, as disaffection has materials to go upon, those materials must to some extent be removed. This need not involve such a change in the administration as may on first thoughts be supposed.

The prime cause of trouble is the want of confidence between the rulers and the ruled. As a first

measure, then, the people must be taken into the confidence of the Government. There should be no secrecy about its aims and policy, except under special circumstances. Nothing affords a better handle to the mischief-maker than an attitude of closeness and secrecy on the part of the authorities. He has then all the tools of his trade to work with : exaggeration, misrepresentation, calumny. Why should the Government fear to work in the open ? Let it submit its policy to the searchlight of public criticism before it is finally decided upon. Such a course would be of advantage both to the officials and to the people. Would it not have been better, for instance, to have consulted the wishes of the people before the Punjab Colonisation Bill was passed, rather than to have withdrawn it afterwards in deference to the popular will ? By that time much mischief had been done, and the Government had lost its prestige. This is but one of many instances in which deplorable results have ensued from working "in camera." Is it asking too much of the bureaucracy that they should let the people into their confidence, and thus prevent misconception and ill-feeling ? Surely it is a better preventive of sedition than deportations under an obsolete Regulation.

What I have suggested above is not a remedy, but a prevention. How, then, shall we meet sedition when we are confronted with it ? There ought to be no two opinions on the subject. Every one—

whatever his political views—must agree that sedition should be ruthlessly stamped out. If England is to retain her hold over this country, she must come down with a firm hand on those who attempt to subvert her authority. No Government, however powerful, can afford to ignore the open preaching of pernicious doctrines. A policy of indifference would be attended with serious consequences. We have lately tasted the fruits of the neglect of the Government to deal promptly and firmly with malcontents. The horrible atrocity in Muzaffapur showed the lengths to which miserable weak-minded men can go when once their minds have been worked upon by seditious doctrines. That retribution, then, should be swift and sure admits of no discussion. The problem is how to effect this object so that the ends which justice has in view may not be frustrated. On the one hand, there is the danger of making martyrs of insignificant persons; on the other hand, there is the grave risk to society of leaving dangerous criminals at large. To steer a middle course is the part of a wise statesman. Upon mature consideration, it will appear that what seems at first a difficult task admits of easy solution.

As sedition in India is more generally disseminated from the press than from the platform, I shall leave the latter out of consideration. What, however, applies to the one will, with certain modifications, apply to the other. To turn to the native press, then, within the last ten years the number of native

papers has greatly increased. The tone of Indian journalism has suffered much thereby. The taste for reading not being much cultivated in this country, new journals often have to cater for support by violent and sensational writings. Much of this is undiluted nonsense. Apart from that there is enough that is dangerous in character. Effusions of this kind must be severely dealt with. The offender must be warned twice, and if he still persists in his ways he must be brought before the regular tribunals of justice and dealt with according to law. On a second conviction he must be debarred ever afterwards from owning or editing any journal. The prosecution must not be conducted in a spirit of revengeful hostility—as was done in a famous case some years ago, when the Crown engaged all the leading talents of the local Bar—for this is calculated to bring discredit on the Government and attract undeserved sympathy towards the accused. Let Justice take her course, and if the offender is guilty he will assuredly pay the penalty of his misdeeds. When he has been tried and convicted, the journal which served to disseminate his views must be warned that its publication will be suppressed in case it transgresses again. If the Government has not this power, it must be acquired by special legislation.<sup>1</sup>

Under present conditions, insignificant persons

<sup>1</sup> This has been done, since the essay was written, in the case of press incitements to violence.—ED.

are often put forward and made the wretched tools of clever, designing men who manage to keep outside the pale of the law. When these poor victims pay, as it were, for the sins of others, their places are taken up, and the guilty journal continues in its career of sedition. This is not a fancy picture, but based upon hard facts happening before our very eyes. Now, it is obvious that if persistently seditious papers are allowed to exist, the punishment meted out to their conductors fails to have a deterrent effect on the evil which it was meant to check. There are people who make light of a few months' imprisonment, provided they can again start on their career, specially as the circulation of their journal vastly increases after their supposed martyrdom. It is, therefore, necessary that such papers should be totally suppressed. Nor is it harsh to visit sedition with such consequences, if it is borne in mind that the prosecution of the offender takes place after two warnings, and the suppression of the paper only on a second conviction. People who are not deterred by repeated warnings or prosecutions must be so dealt with as to be rendered incapable ever afterwards of propagating mischievous doctrines. The higher the influence and position of the offender, the greater relatively must be his punishment, which should in no case be very severe. Insignificant persons should be dealt with lightly, as harsh sentences serve to give them an importance which they do not deserve. In all cases there should be a full and

free inquiry, and a prosecution must never be undertaken unless upon the clearest proofs. I think these provisions would go a long way towards checking a growing evil. There is nothing in them to which any reasonable man can take exception. They alter the existing arrangements but slightly, though in a much-needed direction. It has been suggested that all persons intending to start new journals should be required to furnish a substantial security. The suggestion has much to recommend it, but I am afraid it is not practicable.

I have now indicated some of the methods of suppressing sedition. There is one point, however, on which I cannot too strongly insist, and that is, that harsh repression can never achieve the object in view. Now that a new Press Act is said to be in contemplation, this note of warning cannot be too strongly sounded. At this critical juncture, the calm deliberation and ripe statesmanship of a Canning are needed. In the hour of danger, a policy of repression is apt to be mistaken for a policy of firmness. Let the Government of India beware of this. There should be no unreasonable checks on the safety-valve of public opinion, "for he that turneth the humours back, and maketh the wound bleed inwards, endangereth malign ulcers and pernicious imposthumations."<sup>1</sup> It is too often forgotten that intrigues carried on in secret are far more dangerous to the peace of the State than acts

<sup>1</sup> Bacon.

of open hostility. The Government of India lately acted in a manner which showed that they had not quite grasped this obvious fact. Finding that a regular campaign of sedition was being carried on from the platform, they passed a Bill which unreasonably restricted the right of public meeting itself. They did not reflect that what was publicly forbidden might be easily done in private, considering the difficulties under which a small number of police must labour when confronted with a vast population of various nationalities. The natural course for the Government to take was to bring to book such of the speakers as transgressed the limits of legitimate criticism. This could have been easily effected by a provision that at every public meeting official reporters should be present. The detection and punishment of seditious harangues would thus have been easy enough, and a few exemplary sentences could have effectually checked the evil. Instead, vexatious and unnecessary restrictions were placed upon the right of public meeting, and widespread dissatisfaction was caused thereby. What is more, the preaching of sedition continues as before, despite the industry of a corrupt and inefficient police.

These and like considerations will help us to understand the popular detestation of harsh and repressive measures. Very few people in England realised the intensity of public feeling evoked by the deportations some time ago of Lajpat Rai and

Ajit Singh. But such was the indignation felt by people at the injustice done to men against whom nothing was proved, that the Punjab was at one time on the brink of a revolt. It was rightly felt that to deport men without a trial under the sanction of an obsolete Regulation was a blot upon the fair name of British justice. The Regulation was passed at a time when England had not established herself firmly on Indian soil. It was a remedy suited to meet the exigencies of the period in which it was established. To revive it under conditions vastly different was to violate every canon of civilised jurisprudence. If the men were guilty, why were they not put on their trial? "Reasons of State" may be a convenient refuge, but they will not alter public opinion on the subject. Under such pretexts the Government could do away with any and every person who proved himself obnoxious. To supersede regular tribunals of justice is at all times dangerous, and particularly so at a period of unrest and ferment. It shocks our conscience to think that a man should be condemned without being heard in his defence. It is a great pity that the most odious act of the Indian Government for many a day should have received the approval of a philosopher who has worshipped at the shrine of Burke and Mill. But "Honest John" has put on many hues and shapes since he came to the India Office, and the irony of Fate was complete when he entered the House which he wanted to mend or end.



This subject would not be complete without some reference to a question closely related thereto and which promises to have a profound bearing on the course of Indian history. Of late, men have been asking whether our system of education has not contributed to the prevailing unrest and agitation. An instructive debate on the subject recently took place in the House of Commons. The question presents many points of difficulty, and to deal with it adequately would involve an inquiry into the net results of a system that has formed part of our Indian life for half a century. Looking at it from a critical standpoint, it must be admitted that our education policy has grievously failed in some respects. Inasmuch as it has done little for the growth and formation of character, it stands convicted of having shared largely in the shaping of the present state of affairs. In the zeal born of a noble cause, the statesmen of the earlier generation desired to engraft Western culture root and branch on Indian soil. Education was made too academic, too literary. The moral aspects of the question were overlooked. In the olden days the defects of the system were not apparent. The number of boys being very small, the influence of the professors could make itself felt. There was room for that personal factor on which so much depends. Thus, whatever was defective in the system was balanced by the hold which the professors had over the minds of their students.

But in these times of stress and activity such a thing is no longer possible. With the advance of culture we have found that our Universities have not quite realised the ideal of sending forth a healthy, level-headed, and manly set of young men to fight the battle of life. With the realisation of the fact has come the desire to alter the system responsible for these shortcomings. This is not the place to inquire into the merits or demerits of Lord Curzon's scheme of reform. Whatever may be involved by this and other schemes, education must be such that the imagination of the East may be schooled, not destroyed, by the learning of the West. It should aim at the development both of intellect and character. Without discipline, mere book-learning becomes useless and even dangerous. In India we are already realising the truth of this. Much of the sedition now rampant is a schoolboy affair. The recent dastardly outrages have been committed by hare-brained youths intoxicated with the pernicious doctrines of the scum of Western countries. I am far, far from saying that education is solely responsible for the present state of affairs. But it has prepared the soil on which cunning and intriguing persons have set to work with disastrous results. The minds of students have been inflamed to an extent which is scarcely credible. No wonder the poor fools play into the hands of clever agitators.

A powerful blow dealt at sedition will be to wean away schoolboys from bad influences. Whatever measures are framed to prevent their participation in politics must command the sympathy of every true Indian. Young minds are apt to be carried away by foolish notions of freedom and independence, specially when they devour without digesting Burke, Mill, and writers of that stamp. A true reading of history acts as a corrective to ill-formed notions, and I believe more attention might be paid to the subject than has hitherto been done. An attentive study of history will dispel many of the delusions under which ill-trained minds are apt to labour. It will be an evil day for India when her youths turn aside from the engrossing pursuits of arts, science, and literature to the dangerous attractions of politics. They who foster and encourage this tendency are the real enemies of the country. The men responsible for the recent dastardly outrages are not so much actual culprits but the infinitely more dangerous persons who spurred and egged them on. It is much to be regretted that the real criminals will escape the punishment that will be meted out to their less guilty brethren.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE OUTLOOK

THROUGHOUT this essay I have studiously refrained from mere loose assertions unsupported by argument, and have attempted to state my case with fairness and moderation. I should now like to supplement what I have said by a few general remarks, which, I trust, will not be considered out of place.

The dawn of the twentieth century has witnessed a new era in the history of this country. It has marked a distinct stage in our political progress, and has opened out before us new paths and fresh fields of work. What the future has in store for us no man can foresee. The Indian problem presents features that no country either in ancient or in modern times has hitherto presented. We have before us a vast heterogeneous population in all the various stages of civilisation, coming for the first time under the vivifying influence of Western civilisation and Western modes of thought. Whether the mingling of the speculative and imaginative

mind of the East with the logical and practical intellect of the West will ultimately produce a type superior to both, would be a very interesting question, but one with which we have no concern. What we are concerned with is to trace the results of implanting English institutions and English modes of government in the hoary soil of India. These results have falsified all expectations. It was perhaps anticipated that, being imbued with Western learning, the native would clamour for Western institutions. But the congresses and the conferences, the extremists, the seditionists, the anarchists, and all the rest of the various manifestations of political activity—these were not foreseen.

But these phenomena are of England's own creation. If the Government of India had moved with the times there would have been no unrest, no sedition. If it had recognised and encouraged the disinterested labours of the popular leaders the extremists and the anarchists would not have been produced. If it had respected the voice of the people the cult of the bomb would not have developed. It may be admitted that much of what goes on in India at the present time is inexcusable. But once dissatisfaction is allowed to grow, can it be directed and confined within well-defined limits? It would be futile to expect this. But the past is irrevocable, and let us spare our regrets. Instead, let us look to our future policy and shape it to suit the new forces at work. It is necessary that

England should pursue her great task in India in a different spirit from that which has dominated her hitherto. It is no longer possible to govern this country on the old hide-bound theories. We have outgrown the system of government on the Napoleonic principle of "everything for the people and nothing by the people." Why does the bureaucracy persistently ignore this glaring fact? The extreme unwillingness of British statesmen to comprehend the signs of the times is truly deplorable.

So acute a critic as Seeley has declared that the day Indians are united England must begin to pack her things, and make up her mind to march out of the country. He considers it impossible that a handful of Englishmen can stand against the patriotic union of three hundred millions of human beings. Recent events have shown that a united India is a living possibility. Must we then follow Seeley, and say that the end of English dominion is in sight? I refuse to accept any such view. The stability of English rule in India depends not upon the valour of British arms, not upon the physical force which England can command, but upon the firm basis of justice, sympathy, and righteousness. Any other relation between the two countries is impossible. England will be digging her own grave if she pins her faith to the pernicious doctrine of the sword and leaves out of account that moral force which is the greatest

asset of an empire. The military strength of a nation is an inconstant factor. Greece, Rome, Babylonia, Persia, Turkey, Spain, each rose and fell in the inexorable workings of Fate. Will England continue to rule the greater part of the world with her own unaided strength? How long will she hold Canada, Australia, South Africa, India and a host of other possessions with the might of her armies and her fleet? Already the moral factor—the feeling of kinship and loyalty—is beginning to be the dominating influence in the relations of the mother-country with her daughters across the seas. The ominous example of the American colonies is exercising its influence over British statesmen. It is being slowly recognised that the colonies have become too powerful and independent. Very recently a Canadian judge declared that Canada will soon be recognised as an ally instead of a unit of the Empire. How long, then, does England expect to govern India by the sword in the face of the growing forces of nationalism?

These and like considerations make it imperative that England should banish from primacy the military factor. India has never been and will never be held by the sword. This has been fully recognised by all who are competent to judge. But it is not sufficient merely to acknowledge the principle. It must be acted up to in a manner calculated to make it a living force. Now, if it is held that the stability of England's rule in India depends

upon the willing allegiance of her subjects, it follows that no reasonable efforts should be spared to maintain and foster that allegiance. This can only be effected by a wise policy of reform, by a generous response to Indian aspirations, and by a just recognition of Indian subjects as citizens of the British Empire. If you continue to govern on the old cast-iron system, if you refuse to encourage the just aspirations of the people, and if you allow your Indian subjects to be trampled upon by your own colonies, then you are seriously undermining the deep-seated feelings of gratitude and loyalty which are so characteristic of the Indian people. Lord Curzon did not exaggerate when he said that India was the mainstay of the Empire. What a vast accession of strength she would be to the old country is but dimly realised.

And this brings home the sad reflection that the English people as a rule know very little and care still less about the affairs of this country. Whatever interests them beyond their own concerns pertains to the colonies. This may be partly natural; but it is none the less deplorable. Many of even the ablest of English statesmen are blissfully ignorant of what takes place in this country. The Indian debates are carried on in a nearly empty House. Crores of rupees are voted away with as much unconcern as if only the parish pump was in question. While this state of things continues there is little hope for this country. As long as English public opinion



is not brought to bear upon Indian policy, so long will the administration remain lifeless and soulless. No praise is too great for the disinterested labours of men like Sir Henry Cotton and Sir William Wedderburn, who are doing so much to enlighten public opinion in England. If only they were listened to with the attention they deserve, how much could be achieved! But unfortunately the British public has other mentors as well, notably Mr. Rees, who is playing the heroic *rôle* of the champion of the bureaucracy. Thus it comes to pass that India is often either ignored or misunderstood.

However that may be, of this I am convinced, that, when once the conscience of England is roused, the sacred trust which an all-wise Providence has placed in her hands will be nobly discharged. The nation which has carried to the uttermost corners of the world the principles of justice and liberty will ultimately not fail in their application to the governance of a fifth of the human race. The present situation is one of great difficulty, but I do not believe that General Gordon was right when he said that India would never be reformed until she was in the throes of another revolt.

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REGENERATION ON A  
RACIAL BASIS

By ACTION FRONT



## CHAPTER I

### AN ALLEGORY

BEFORE entering into the questions framed by Mr. Laidlaw it will not be inappropriate to preface this essay with the following story of how the tiger became the king of the Indian forests, holding despotic sway over the lives of all the other jungle folk. The fable was related to me at the conclusion of a discussion I had with a shrewd native politician, whose comment at its close was : "Wisdom may be acquired even from little things. Let us hope the British Lion will profit by the fate of his fabled prototype."

Once upon a time there was a great and beautiful jungle-land which stretched from the north to the south and from the east to the west, and the lord of it all was the noble lion. He ruled over his subjects as a benevolent despot, and was admired and respected by all. He only took from the jungle that which was his due and what was absolutely necessary to maintain his regal position. He was a terror to evildoers, but the bulk of his subjects lived in peace and amity, increased and multiplied, and grew fat on the land. There was no danger to apprehend, as good King Lion guarded them all from both internal troubles and foreign foes.

They lived for a long time in such peaceful conditions ; but eventually the very peace brought forth grumblers, who knew nothing of the outside world, and began to think that their peaceful and happy condition was due to their own innate good qualities and had nothing to do with the fact of the lion being their King. They grumbled and groused and made much mischief, and at last decided that there should be a general meeting of all the animals to discuss the situation. On the occasion the leading grumblers explained in their own way that there was no necessity to have a King over all ; that it would be better if all the different animals governed themselves, and lived in their own way, and used the jungle as it best suited them. A good number of the foolish creatures were led away by the plausible arguments, and gave a " No King " vote. But a very much larger number remained neutral, and said they would wait and see what would happen, as they feared the lion's wrath.

At this stage the wolf, the hawk, the cobra, and the scorpion formed themselves into a committee of ways and means, and informed the beasts and birds that they would rid the forest of the lion, provided the others promised to support their efforts either actively or by passive resistance.

The disaffected quartet talked much, but were unable to combine for an open attack on the lion, for they feared his might, and, what is of much more consequence, they distrusted each other. Failing in this direction, they decided that it would be safer to try to worry the lion, and make his life henceforth such a burden to him that he would of his own accord abandon the jungle and go and live elsewhere—they did not care where, as long as they had the jungle to themselves. This plan appealed to them, for besides entailing less danger, it brought them a certain amount of cheap notoriety among the rest of the jungle denizens.

So it came to pass that henceforth the lion was subjected to all sorts of petty annoyances, and his rule in the forest was thwarted and upset in many little ways. When the lion went out for his dinner, the wolf would howl round him and frighten all the game away. The hawk would circle screaming round his head, and occasionally peck at his eyes. The cobra would suddenly rise out of the grass and puff himself

out and threaten to bite him ; and the scorpion used to nip at his large paws and threaten to sting him ; and so on, day by day and week by week, the proud lion was pestered by these contemptible tormentors, and he was very unhappy in mind at the base ingratitude of these creatures, whom he had fostered and protected for so many ages. He could have wiped them out by one sweep of his powerful paws ; but he was sorry for them, and felt that it was their ignorance of the world that made them so disrespectful and foolish. He thought he would gently reason with them and convince them of the folly of their ways. But his equanimity had the opposite effect, for they said, " Behold, the lion is afraid of us, or he would not speak to us like this. If he really was strong he would punish us ; so courage, brothers—let us renew our efforts to drive him out. He will soon go, for is he not already showing signs of weakness and despair ? "

So things went on in the forest from bad to worse. Occasionally the lion growled and slapped a few of his tormentors, and they got hurt and some died ; but he was too magnanimous to slaughter them all, as he could easily have done, and thus put a final stop to these evil doings. He just looked on with contempt, tempered with a great deal of pity for his misguided and foolish subjects. As a matter of fact, he was far too good a King, and as he had no evil thoughts against the other animals, he in his benevolence thought that they also were too noble-hearted to do him any real injury. But his magnanimity and compassionate heart were his undoing. He gradually became careless as well as contemptuous and pitiful. One day, after a hard day's work, he came home and lay down to rest. He slept heavily, and was therefore not as conscious as usual of the noises round him. This was the opportunity the disaffected were waiting for, and they fell upon their slumbering monarch.

The cobra sneaked up and inflicted a poisonous wound ; the hawk swooped down and pecked at his eyes ; the wolf flew at his throat ; while the scorpion crawled round and stung the dying lion wherever he could safely make an attack. Taken by surprise by those he still trusted, the poor lion was unable to defend himself, so he was cruelly done to death and his carcase was thrown out into the sea. The four

miscreants then devastated the lion's home and slaughtered all his loyal adherents. After that they went and bathed, and cleaned and perfumed themselves, and put flowers and coloured paints on their foreheads, and then presented themselves to all the other animals and announced that henceforth they were free and could do whatever they liked in the forest. There were great rejoicings, and old enemies embraced each other and promised eternal friendship, and the wolf and the lamb played together, and for a time they all revelled in their freedom.

But the wolf, the hawk, the snake and the scorpion, having tasted power, were loath to come down to the common level for ever, so they decided among themselves that they should combine to rule the others. By the latter there was much weeping and gnashing of teeth and lamentations over the happy past. But it was too late, they could not resist their persecutors; the good old time had gone for ever. This state of affairs did not last long, however, for the wolf and the hawk and the snake and the scorpion—bred in suspicion and distrust—began to quarrel among themselves. Then they fell upon each other, and they and their followers fought and killed and slaughtered and looted by day and by night, and the forests rang with the pain and anguish of the wounded and dying, and the streamlets flowed red with the blood of the dead.

The smell of the blood and the cry of the dying were noticed in north, south, east, and west, and there was much comment and agitation among the animals of the world. At last, however, a mighty tiger, who roamed about in a spirit of adventure, seeking whom he could devour, decided to go to the forest and see whether he could do anything for himself in the commotion that was raging. But he was wise in his generation and took no risks; so he invited the leopard and the monkey and the mongoose to join him in the expedition. On arriving at the forest they saw it was a good place to live in, so they decided to conquer the other animals and possess themselves of all that was therein. To the leopard the tiger said, "Go thou and wage war on the wolf and all his tribe." To the monkey was allotted the freedom of the trees and the task of eating up the eggs and



young of the hawk and all feathered creatures. The mongoose was told to kill the cobra, and hereafter to spare no kind of snake.

And so it happened that the tiger established his terrible reign over the forest—and you will find him there to this day, and none of the jungle inhabitants have since known what safety or peace means. For every animal is against every other animal, and the tiger reigns supreme, taking his toll from all. The mournful cry of the koel is heard in the forest to this day lamenting over the happy days when he sang in the mango-tree over the peaceful lion, and the jackal howls dismally of a night, calling on the lion to return to his kingdom; but there is no lion now to hear either cry. As they have sown so they have reaped, and the night of death is over all.

This is the legend of how the lion, through his own thoughtless benevolence, disappeared from India, and how the shortsighted animals of his great kingdom returned once more to primitive savagery and desolation under despotic King Tiger and his ruthless followers.

## CHAPTER II

### ETHNIC TYPES

“**I**S it possible for the diverse races of India to become one united self-governing community?” Before answering this question it is necessary that we should survey the histories of other portions of the globe and see whether we have any analogous examples to base our theories on. The only modern instance of a variety of peoples forming one self-governing community is that of the United States of America.<sup>1</sup> There we have seventy-eight million people under one law and one government, speaking the same language, and practising one fundamental religion. Of this population the bulk are descendants of British colonists and immigrants. A comparatively small proportion are of Latin, German, and Scandinavian origin, and the balance is made up of ten million negroes and

<sup>1</sup> The writer probably means the most striking instance, for he must be aware of both German and Italian unification in the last century.—ED.

about half a million or so of aboriginal Red Indians.

It will be seen the preponderating factor is the Anglo-Saxon element. This virile and robust stock has imposed its language and its government on all the minor races, whom it has also absorbed, with the exception of the negro and the Red Indian. The latter race is already doomed to extinction because of its inability to conform to the life and ethical standards of the superior white majority. The negro population, on the other hand, is steadily increasing in numbers, but it has always formed a separate and distinct nationality in the United States. Though for ages the negroes have had the same government, language, and religion as the white Americans, they cannot be assimilated by the latter, and there is no doubt if they were able to do so they would separate entirely and evolve some form of kingdom or republic of their own. What is it that prevents the negro and the Red Indian from becoming one united community with the rest of the American nation? It is not the religion, language, or government of the country, for all these have already been adopted more or less by both these races; and yet they remain separate and antagonistic to the true American—and will do so as long as they exist.

To get a true appreciation of this problem one must go back to the origin of races. Ethnology teaches us that the different races of the globe

are products of certain climatic, geographical, and natural conditions—that the food they eat, the water they drink and the air they breathe, and the general environment of their habitation, go to form the peculiar physical and mental characteristics of each race. We also know that each portion of the earth's surface produces its own particular type of fauna and flora, and that these arrive at their highest limit of development in the land of their origin. There are a few apparent exceptions to this rule ; but even these are explainable by later discoveries, which show that in instances where a vegetable or an animal has been transplanted to a new country and has thriven better there, it has really in the dim past originated there, or in a land with identical conditions. Its present home is simply due to some accidental circumstance, brought about by some great natural cataclysm or by unavoidable human agency, which has changed its previous favourable conditions of existence. The exotics have eventually adapted themselves to a changed environment, but have continued their species with a lesser degree of vitality and development. They therefore exist in a modified form and are no longer identical in every way with the original type.

The negro, for instance, attained his highest state of physical development in the land of his origin, namely Africa ; and his mentality, if it ever develops beyond its present stage, will be developed in

Africa and not in America, and will be of a dissimilar standard to that of Europe. The Red Indian, on the other hand, is entirely the product of American environment, and he has long since arrived at his highest state of development. Brought into contact with a more virile race, the product of European evolution—he is bound sooner or later to succumb to changed conditions of life. Being the ultimate human product of his own country, the natural laws of his environment effectually prevent his ever becoming a European or African ; his extinction is therefore only a question of time. While the Red Indian cannot become a European in his own country, it is conceivable, on the other hand, that an American of European descent might in the course of time conform to the type of the Red Indian. It is a very remarkable fact that this reversion to the aboriginal type is already noticeable to a certain extent in Americans of pure white descent. It is conjectured that if America could again be absolutely isolated from the rest of the world, in a million, or it may be only a few thousand years, the whole population would physically and perhaps mentally resemble the extinct Red Indian. This conformity to an aboriginal type has also been noticed in China and Africa, where children born of white residents have frequently shown distinct traces of the Chinese and African cast of features.

It follows that if the American and the negro are ever to fuse into one race, it will only be

when they, after many æons, have evolved into the aboriginal Indian type. But this can never be, because the American population has a constant inflow of white blood from Europe, while the negro, coming originally from a distinct type in Africa, and now living in a somewhat similar tropical climate in America, will tend to remain a negro for an incalculable and indefinite period.

The reason why the immigrant European races have hitherto partially fused into the Yankee type is because the latter is the preponderating factor, while all are more or less of the same stock. This tendency to racial fusion is, however, already showing signs of abridgment, as the later immigrants are forming distinct colonies of their own, where their own language, customs, and characteristics are being perpetuated. If this continues, there can be no doubt that the United States of America will eventually be formed of many separate nationalities. The question will then arise as to whether these races will remain as integral portions of the United States or separate therefrom and form independent governments of their own.

Two distinct inferences may be drawn from what has already been said. They are, first, that an aboriginal conquered race can never change its typical racial characteristics and rise entirely to the new standards of its superior invading conquerors; while on the other hand it is quite possible for the latter, in the course of time, to

gradually conform to the aboriginal type and thus lose their own distinctive qualities. That is to say, given a set of conditions, nature will always produce the same result as often as the conditions are repeated. These results may be artificially modified for a time, but they can never be radically altered in essentials. The second inference is that even under favourable circumstances diverse races do not naturally coalesce to form a united self-governing community. The tendency, on the contrary, is for different races to separate and for each to work out its own salvation independently.

This latter fact will be now clearly elucidated as we survey the races of Europe, where we have at the present moment over a score of separate and independent governments, many of which are gradually but surely splitting up into fresh racial divisions. The original empire of Turkey in Europe has, for instance, within the last century been divided into Turkey proper, Bosnia, Servia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, and Roumania. Norway and Sweden separated only the other day. In the United Kingdom itself Ireland has always agitated for independent government, and Wales is asserting its distinct nationality. Russia shows the same tendency to disintegrate and form many separate nationalities. And there can be no doubt that, if the Hungarians were in a position to do so, they would strike for absolute independence from Austria. In cases where two or more races have

formed one government this may as a rule be traced to *force majeure*; for instance, the Danes and Poles would not be factors in the German Empire if they could possibly avoid it.

There are practically only three great families of human speech in all Europe, namely the Slav, the Teutonic, and the Latin, and there is only one religion throughout, and that is Christianity. Yet no reasonable person has ever suggested the possibility or even the desirability of fusing the whole of Europe into one self-governing community. If such a doctrine were preached its promoters would be classed among the wildest of visionaries, and their retrograde and unpractical scheme would be laughed to scorn by all thinking men. All civilisations, on the contrary, have proved that rivalry and racial competition have been the essence of progress. Without such incentives a nation stagnates and eventually degenerates. The continuity of progress in Europe proves that the independent development of each race is the best means of perfecting the highest attributes of mankind. Europe would not be what it is but for the individual development of each of its component parts.



## CHAPTER III

### A LAND OF CONTRASTS

**B**EFORE applying our previous deductions to India, let us analyse the factors which go to the composition of that vast continent.

In area India is 1,766,557 square miles, and therefore greater by 12,000 square miles than the whole of Europe, excluding Russia. Of this area 61·5 per cent. is under British administration and 38·5 per cent. under native government. In the last census (March, 1901) the total population was roundly 294 million persons, or about one-fifth of the whole world, of whom 232 millions were enumerated in British territory, and 62 millions in the Native States. These figures held good seven years ago, but considering the rapid increase of the population, the present numbers are computed to be over 300 millions, and this is the enormous total that should be borne in mind when Indian problems are discussed.

However, for the sake of absolute exactness we will deal only with the actual figures given in the

1901 census. Of the total population 70 per cent. or 207 millions were returned as Hindus of various degrees and denominations. About 21 per cent. or  $62\frac{1}{2}$  millions were Mahomedans, who therefore amount to a fifth of the people of India. Over three per cent. or about  $9\frac{1}{2}$  millions were votaries of Buddhism. Nearly another three per cent. (over  $8\frac{1}{2}$  millions) were classed as Animists, who are mostly wild tribes with no particular known religion. In 1901 about one per cent. or 2,923,241 were Christians, of whom 2,664,313 were natives, and the remainder Europeans or those of European descent. The Sikhs of the Punjab slightly exceeded two millions, and the Jains numbered about 1,350,000. The Parsis only formed a small section of the population, about 80,000 all told. The balance was made up of numerous small communities that could not be classed among any of the above principal religious divisions. The whole European population of India in 1901 only amounted to 249,721, of whom about 80,000 were of mixed European and Asiatic descent.

Of the 207 millions who are votaries of some form of Hinduism, it is impossible in the limited space available to describe the innumerable castes, sub-castes, and distinct sects and sub-sects, which go to make the above enormous aggregate. There are four main castes or divisions, namely, Brahmins or priests, Kshatriyas or warriors, Vaisyas or traders, and Sudras or menials. These four castes are again

subdivided into an infinite number of sub-castes. They are separate communities, more or less antagonistic, and do not intermarry or live together in any way; in fact, members of different castes cannot eat, drink, or smoke together.

The 62½ millions of Mahomedans, though essentially of one religion, are divided into two great sects, namely the Sunnies and the Shias. These may roughly be compared to the division in Christendom of Protestants and Roman Catholics. There are within them many minor sects. But though the Mahomedan sects may differ on certain doctrinal points, they as a whole are far more united in their faith than the Hindus, to whom they are opposed not only in religious and social matters, but also in politics and racial feelings.

Of the total population of India only 53 per thousand, that is, one male in 10 and one female in 144, were able in 1901 to read or write more or less in some vernacular tongue. Of 10,000 persons of each sex only 68 males and seven females had any knowledge of English. And if all Christians are excluded the proportions fall to 56 males and one female. Nearly two-thirds of the whole population relies on some form of agriculture as a principal means of subsistence. It is worth while noting here that there are five million professional beggars in India, who are supported and fed as a matter of religious duty by the rest of their countrymen. Forty-seven per cent. of the people work for their living,

and 53 per cent. are directly or indirectly dependent on others. When we review the subject of language we find there are five distinct families of human speech which have their homes as vernaculars in India. There are the Aryan, the Dravidian, the Munda, the Mon-Khmer, and the Thibeto-Chinese. To these might be added in a smaller degree the Semitic and Hametic. These seven families of speech give birth to over 30 separate languages and nearly 200 dialects spoken in this vast continent.

It is when we bring thought to bear on the myriad peoples, the diverse races, the conflicting religions, the multiplicity of tongues, of this vast continent, that we begin to realise the insuperable difficulty of generalising in any way about the Indian Empire. What, for instance, might be welcome to a fiery Pathan in the north would be repellent to the mild Madrasi in the south. What might appear a matter of necessity to the volatile Bengali in the east would probably be looked upon with contempt by the Maharatha in the west. The proud intolerant Brahmin has absolutely no sympathy for the other sects beneath him in the Hindu hierarchy. He can break bread with none of them: their touch is a sacrilege, the very fall of their shadow a pollution. The warlike Kshatriya defies the Brahmin and despises the Vaisya or trader; and these in their turn consider the Sudras preordained to slavery. The Mahomedans lump the whole Hindu population as infidels and idolaters. The peaceful Jain asks for

nothing but to be left alone. He is an unqualified vegetarian, and abhors bloodshed of any kind. It is his belief that no form of life should be destroyed, not even that of vermin. Conversely the dignified Sikh is a born soldier of a militant church. He glories in battle and the slaughter of his opponents, whoever they may be. Again, the sturdy Mongoloid Goorkha on the north-east, and the bellicose Pathan on the north-west are invaders by instinct, and consider India their rightful looting ground. With few exceptions the rest of India would get very short shrift from these two hardy races were British rule ever removed. Lastly, we have between eight and nine millions of Animists or barbarous jungle tribes who have no friends amongst the other peoples of India. For countless ages preceding British rule these poor folk were despoiled and slaughtered by every Indian race that has come in contact with them. There are many scattered tribes of these primitive and nude savages still living across Bombay Harbour, within a few miles of the second largest city in the British Empire. Such are some of the vivid contrasts to be found in juxtaposition in India—contrasts that defy all idea of nationalism, and have only to be stated to demolish the sentimental theories of the armchair faddist.

## CHAPTER IV

### POPULAR FALLACIES

INDIA has been from immemorial antiquity the land of conquest, subjugation, and colonisation. At the present time the wild aboriginal jungle tribes are probably the only real Indians in existence. The rest of the inhabitants are merely the product and residue of numerous invasions from every point of the compass. The greatest invasions have come from the north and north-west, and the next in importance are those from the north-east and east. There are races of negroid origin in the south-west, of Mongoloid descent in the north-east, and a mixture of Scythians, Bactrians, Aryans, Greeks, Persians, Turks, Afghans, Baluchis, and other races all over the north and west. The invaders entered the peninsula not as humanitarian philanthropists, but with the lust of conquest and the sole intention of possessing the land, the previous inhabitants of which they either exterminated, drove out, or reduced to menial servitude. These latter when driven out pressed in turn on the neighbouring

racés, who had likewise to move further on. Practically every conquering host left its hordes in India, and thus in the course of time very nearly the whole peninsula has been re-peopled by foreigners and their descendants. Besides the conquerors, many minor races have entered India as suppliants and fugitives, fleeing from persecution in their own countries. Of these may be mentioned the Jews in the extreme south and the Parsis in the west.

There are many pleasing fancies about the phrase "our Aryan brother," and we indiscriminately use it as if all India was peopled by none other than Aryans. Now these, it is well known, came from Central Asia in two separate waves of invasion, and never got much beyond the north-western portion of India, where alone their descendants can be found in any considerable numbers. But they were a virile, energetic white race who impressed their characteristics, religion, and language, in more or less modified forms, on their indigenous neighbours of those days. These latter looked upon the Aryans as a superior celestial people; hence the Aryan cult spread, and when a certain amount of this was absorbed they flattered themselves with the idea of being Aryans also. Consequently, obviously distinct races in various parts of India call themselves Aryans, who have no more Aryan blood in them than have the Chinese or Patagonians. Comparisons are odious, so it is not

necessary to mention who these pseudo-Aryans are. We may, however, still have feelings of pride and kinship for our real "Aryan-brothers." It is unfortunate, however, they number only from eighteen to twenty millions of the myriads of India.

That non-Aryans did in the past call themselves Aryans has long ago been logically and scientifically proved, and it is not necessary for me to recapitulate the proofs here. The assumption by an inferior race of the religion, language, and designations of a superior race is a common practice in India to this day. The most modern instance of it is that of the Mainpuris on the east of Bengal. These are pure Mongols of Thibeto-Chinese origin, but have in comparatively recent times been converted to Hinduism, and have now all the Hindu castes and religious mythology, and actually claim descent from some fabulous Aryan ancestors !

To revert to our original argument, it will now be obvious that the present-day Indians are not one people, any more than all Europeans can be reasonably called one people. In fact, it may roughly be computed that quite two-thirds of India's inhabitants are of diverse foreign origin. The only right these foreigners have to Indian soil is the right of the conqueror ; and the only difference between them and the British conquerors is the difference of time. We happen to have come after others, and that is all that can be said. But we have just



as much right to call India our country as the descendants of early invaders, while we have still greater claim to govern the country, because, as a vernacular paper was candid enough to explain to its readers, "the British are the only conquerors who have hitherto governed India in the interests of its people."

While on the subject of aliens in India it is interesting to know that of the many Native States a large proportion are ruled by dynasties of foreign origin. That is to say, the ruling classes are often of totally different race, religion, and language to the ruled. And it is still more remarkable that many of these ruling dynasties were established by conquest, and that they only received fixity of tenure in consequence of the establishment of British sovereignty over the land. Before that period the founders of these dynasties were pure adventurers, more often of no family or lineage, only holding what they could by the ancient law of might being right.<sup>1</sup>

There is, in fact, no homogeneity even in the so-called self-governing parts of India. If this question were thoroughly gone into it would be found that instances of "swaraj" or independent government of a race by its own people are extremely rare, if not wholly unknown, in present-day India.

<sup>1</sup> In illustration of this point the writer mentions Hyderabad, Kashmir, Gwalior, and Indore. The paragraph is omitted to save space.—ED.

A common fallacy is that Hinduism is one organised form of religion, exactly alike for the 207 million so-called Hindus. Nothing could be more erroneous. Hinduism comprises innumerable separate sects and sub-sects, all more or less in opposition to each other, worshipping different gods and having fundamental differences in belief. Even among the highest Brahmin caste there are vast divergencies in sentiment and religious belief, and often bitter racial antagonism. The Maharatha Brahmin of Poona has very little in common, except the name, with the Dravidian Brahmin of Madras, whom he heartily despises. The Brahmin of Benares would consider it a personal pollution to have to consort with a Brahmin from Lower Bengal. Other sects are similarly out of sympathy with each other, and by no stretch of imagination can it be said that there is an organised Hindu church for all Hindus. One can describe what Mahomedanism, Buddhism, and Zoroastrianism are as religious systems, but no one, not even the Hindus themselves, can give an adequate and comprehensive description of Hinduism. Each Hindu caste differs in its beliefs, and each race accentuates the differences. The priestly Brahmin caste have a philosophic cult comprising some of the sublimest spiritual conceptions of the human intellect; but it does not follow that they either practise or preach these altruistic doctrines. Still, they have them, and if you assail a Brahmin the

philosophical aspect of his religion at once confronts you, and you are told that his ordinary every-day religious practices are only for the edification of the ignorant multitude ! Hence Brahminism may be considered a religious edifice with foundations of idolatry, walls of superstition, and an ærial superstructure of eclectic philosophy.

From the Brahmin's heights of philosophical theology you come to other branches of Hinduism, and by ever-varying degrees you find less and less of philosophy and more and more of superstition and idolatry, till you descend to the grossly libidinous rites of the numerous Sakti sect in Bengal, and the revolting practices of female infanticide, widow immolation, and human sacrifices, still believed in by many of the votaries of Hinduism. The differences in the religious sects of Christianity are small compared to the infinite differences that exist between the various sects of Hindus. In fact, there is just as much divergence in religious beliefs between the highest class of Brahmins and the lowest sects of so-called Hindus as there is between the High Churchman in England and the fetish worshipper in the heart of Africa. It is therefore obvious that Hinduism is not one religion, but a complex agglomeration of a medley of beliefs and practices more or less in antipathy to each other. We realise the hopelessness of the Christian sects, with their comparatively slight differences, ever coalescing to form one

universal Church. But when we survey the infinite variety of Hindu beliefs, any conception of their union into one religion becomes a mere phantasm of the visionary. India is a small cosmos of the world's religions. All the forms of worship and religious thought in the rest of the earth's surface will be found in this country. There is no more chance of the Hindu, the Mahomedan, the Sikh, the Buddhist, the Animist, and the Christian amalgamating in religious beliefs than there is of our solar system combining to form one perfect and harmonious abode of humanity.

The average Englishman at home has generally a vague idea that the Indian climate is "hot for three months and hotter for the other nine." But he will be surprised to hear that this land possesses as great a variety in climate as it does in peoples, religions, and languages. He will find frozen snow and everlasting ice in the north, and equatorial heat in the south ; desiccated deserts in the west and miasmatic swamps in the east ; the flattest and most monotonous plains and the loftiest and grandest mountains on earth ; bracing and delightful uplands and submerged and malarious sea coasts ; pine and oak forests with the soaring eagle and agile ibex, and the lowland palm and cane-brake with the proverbial tiger and snake. I have myself had the experience of being nearly frozen in a snow blizzard at one time, and at another of feeling my blood dry up and my skin crack in the

heat of the desert. Again have I trudged over arid rocks without a drop of moisture and squelched through tropical swamps with the leech and the mosquito extracting my life-blood. On each of these occasions it was almost impossible to realise that the other conditions existed, and that I was all the while in India.

Such enormous differences in climate and environment must necessarily produce a variety of life. It can therefore now be realised that the peoples that inhabit these various regions cannot all be alike in either physical or mental characteristics. The dissimilarity in the diet of the people is as marked as the dissimilarity in the various races themselves. The Punjabi Sikh, for instance, lives entirely on wheat and millet, the Bengali Hindu on rice and fish, while the Mahomedan, especially in the north, adds beef and mutton to his vegetable food. The flesh-eating Mahomedan, partly from his diet and partly from inherent racial qualities, is known to have more vitality and to be more prolific than the rice and fish consumers of Bengal. Some will eat the flesh of almost any animal, others only of certain definite animals, and others only fish. A vast number are total vegetarians; but even here the races differ, as some will only eat one kind of grain, some another. Cooking also is often based on racial prejudices. Some will only use animal oils or fats, others only butter, others again only vegetable oils.

A description of the effects of food, climate, and environment on a few typical diverse Indian races will substantiate these statements. We will deal with the Punjabi Mahomedan of the north-west first. He is of Turko-Iranian descent, probably formed by a fusion of Turki and Persian elements, in which the former predominate. He is a flesh-eater, and his bread is comprised principally of wheat and Indian corn. He is a teetotaler by religious conviction. He lives in a dry climate, varying from intense heat to severe cold. He inhabits a country of treeless plains, bleak rocks, and towering mountains, where only the fittest can survive. The result is a physically well-developed and hardy, tall race of born fighters, who prefer to settle a quarrel by force rather than by argument, by the sword rather than by the tongue. An army of such men, supplemented by their kindred across the frontier, could not be resisted by the other races in India. The Punjabis have, as a matter of fact, often led the vanguard of Mahomedan invaders in the past, and would do so again but for the British.

We next come to the Maharatha of Western and Central India, who is a Scytho-Dravidian, formed by a mixture of Scythian invaders and some Dravidian sects of the south-west. He has adopted certain bigoted forms of Hinduism as his religion. He is of a wiry build, but of lower stature than the Mahomedan of the north-west, from whom he differs in many other physical qualities. His food

consists principally of rice and millet and small quantities of fish and goat's flesh, and he is addicted to spirituous liquors. He lives in an equable though semi-tropical and somewhat enervating climate. His language is distinct from that of any other race. He has a keen intellect, generally misapplied towards destructive rather than constructive criticism. His instincts are predatory rather than warlike. He abhors permanency and prefers fishing in troubled waters. On the destruction of the Moghal Empire he, like his Scythian ancestors, roamed about India and looted and devastated a considerable portion of the country. He resents responsible authority, even that of his own countrymen, and is consequently much given to political intrigue. If British sovereignty were removed, the Maharatha would at once resume his predatory and destructive propensities, to the detriment of all neighbouring races.

Our last typical example of race differences is the Bengali. He is mainly of East Dravidian descent, modified by a strong strain of Mongoloid blood from former conquering invaders of the north-east. In Bengal many forms of Hinduism are practised, from the loftiest philosophical conceptions of the spiritual down to the grossest superstitions and libidinous rites, to be found nowhere else in India. The Bengali lives in a moist, steamy, and wholly enervating climate,

and in consequence he is physically weak and unenergetic. He is very voluble in speech and excitable and hysterical in temperament, and much given to mischievous intrigue and interference with others' affairs. A Bengali not long ago excitedly informed me that his nation meant to declare war against the British Government. On my pointing out that that might be a somewhat dangerous pastime, he exclaimed, "God forbid that we should be made to fight with lethal weapons ; I only meant fighting with our *lingua franca*—by tongue and pen !"

To compensate for his moral and physical weakness a kind Providence has endowed the Bengali with the quickest and subtlest intellect in all India. He can acquire almost any mental knowledge, which, however, he is generally unable to assimilate. He is now suffering from an acute attack of mental dyspepsia brought on from a surfeit of European education. His language is distinct from that of the Maharatha or the Punjab Mahomedan, neither of whom understands him, while both wholly despise him for his effeminate characteristics. His food consists entirely of fish and rice, both of which his country produces in superabundance. A plentiful supply of such sustenance and a relaxing climate have made him a verbose talker, with a strong aversion to all forms of physical exertion. He is the opposite of all that is warlike. In the whole of India, neither in the British service nor in the armies of the Native



States is a single Bengali soldier to be found. He has as a consequence never been able to protect himself or defend his country against invaders, and has therefore, since the dawn of history, always been under some form of subjection to other stronger races, both Indian and foreign. He is the natural product of an unfavourable climate and environment. But he is also the unfortunate victim of our misguided policy. Our illogical system of education, and the absence of all moral and disciplinary restraints in his upbringing, have produced the unhappy results we see before us. Instead of gradually building up his character and teaching him how to be self-respecting and self-reliant, we have destroyed the guiding and beneficial influences of his religion, caste, and community, effaced the good in him and accentuated the evil, and then cast him loose on the ocean of life like a damaged and rudderless ship.

We have poured rich new wine into old and weak bottles ; we have given irresponsible freedom to those who required strong but sympathetic guidance, and we have in our folly wilfully neglected to cultivate the rich mental inheritance of the East. There is much that is admirable and likable in the Bengalis. Under other methods and other ways they, with their high mental capacity, might now have been the brilliant leaders of all arts and sciences in India. Let us hope it is not yet too late to apply the breaks and call a halt all round.

Let us hope our Government will cease to pander to the notoriety-hunting political mountebank, and that the Bengalis will themselves justify the good opinions their real friends still have of them by giving up childish politics and seriously applying their undoubted mental abilities to the regeneration of their country in the arts and sciences, in industrial developments, in trade within and commerce abroad, and, last but not least, in internal, social, and religious reforms. Let them be assured these are not only the most practical and laudable, but also the easiest means of attaining that self-respecting freedom and nationality which we all sincerely wish them.

If the reader carefully studies the brief epitomes of the three typical races here depicted, he will at once realise the vast diversity of speech, religion, dietary, climate, environment, and racial blood that go to make the Mahomedan of the north-west, the Maharatha of the west, and the Bengali of the east. Is it possible to imagine that three such absolutely distinct human factors can ever fuse into one nation, having one common sentiment and one impartial system of self-government over all? I have only described three races by way of example, but scores of others might aptly be mentioned just as distinct and even more opposed in every way towards each other.

## CHAPTER V

### THE WAYS OF THE PEOPLE

**A**NOTHER and a very common fallacy is the belief among homestaying Englishmen that India is a poor country. Some colour is lent to this idea by the low standard of living among its inhabitants. But what is not remembered is that a great part of India has a tropical climate, where all but the lightest clothing is a luxury and not a necessity. A light covering of cotton cloth is often worn more for decency's sake than from any desire for warmth and comfort. It is a country, too, where a light vegetarian diet is preferable to strong meat. Of the three hundred millions of people, over two-thirds are connected with agriculture in some form or other ; these live scattered over the whole peninsula, often in wild and remote parts where they live in primitive yet peaceful conditions. The villager's wants are few, and ambitions, as a rule, he has none.

A self-satisfied globe-trotter, nurtured on the British Constitution, unimaginative and insular, and

with very exaggerated ideas of the rights of man, comes touring round India. He travels luxuriously in a well-appointed train, and while being whisked through the land he notices a village ryot ploughing with two slender bullocks out in the broiling sun, and with hardly a scrap of clothing on. "Poor fellow," says our comfortable tourist; "how hard his lot! He evidently cannot even afford a decent covering to his weak body. And we call ourselves a Christian Government and allow the people to be reduced to such a pitiable state! I must take a note of this, and speak about it in Parliament on my return." While in this frame of mind, he next day meets some natives who have already heard of his biassed tendencies. He asks them some direct questions about the wretched ryot, and is volubly told harrowing tales of the great injustice done to the poor villager by our Government. He thinks now he has ample corroborative evidence against the Government officials, and Anglo-Indian brutality generally. He straightway sits down and writes a perfervid letter to his pet paper at home, drawing on the imagination he may possess to make his story have the desired effect on the credulous British public.

But what are the facts of the case? Our hypothetical ryot prefers to go about practically in a nude state; he is more comfortable in that condition. He ploughs in the sun in perfect contentment, as his ancestors have done for thousands of years.

His cattle are small and lean in appearance because the indigenous breeds in India are mostly of that type. He has enough cotton clothes in his hut for his simple wants. His wife may even have some silver trinkets and a gala dress of bright colour for village festivals. He has a pair of shoes and an umbrella for such occasions. These two latter are absolute luxuries, but he can afford them. He is, in fact, a hundred times better off now than he was when the British first put foot in India. Within my own experience in this country the standard of living among the lower classes has risen by leaps and bounds. Thirty years ago it was the exception to see the ordinary villager wearing shoes. As for umbrellas, they were considered marks of distinction which only the rich could venture to use. And now, well, it would be hard to find anybody who did not wear some sort of foot-gear ; and as for umbrellas, the very coolies use them when working. Such a change does not prove increasing poverty or decadence.

As regards the corroborative evidence the globe-trotter obtains from his native friends, if he only knew his India like the much abused Anglo-Indian does, he would realise that you can get any imaginable kind of corroborative evidence you like there. False witnesses are procurable around any court at fourpence each ! And it is well known that the average native is an adept at guessing your wishes. If you asked him directly if he did not think the

ryot a poor man, he would reply as he felt you wished him to, and he would swear by all his gods that the Indian ryot was the most miserable wretch in existence, and would straightway call upon his fertile and agile imagination, and narrate many examples to show how pitiable was the condition of the gentle, suffering ryot.

If on the other hand our globe-trotter had, we will suppose, said in all sincerity to his native friends, "I am so pleased to see the happy, contented ryot; don't you think he is well off?" the answer would have been, "Oh yes, sahib; under the benign British Government the ryot is indeed a favoured individual. No other country can show such happy, contented, and well-to-do ryots. It is all due to your honour's love and care of them," &c. The natives among themselves, and those experienced in their ways, avoid asking a direct question when exact information is wanted. One has to be tactful and dissemble one's intentions. After a multitude of indirect questions, and much patience and waste of time, one may eventually be able to glean the few grains of truth, and by analytical deduction arrive at some fairly correct conclusions.

I have sometimes when shooting in the interior of the country lost my bearings, and not knowing which path to follow to get back to a camp, I have had to question those I happened to meet. In my callow and inexperienced days I used to ask the direct question, "Does this path lead to the village

of Jhutpore?" "Yes, your honour," was the prompt reply. "How far is it?" "Only the distance of two gun-shots." Such information invariably sent me in the wrong direction and generally further from my camp! Afterwards, when I learnt discretion, I put the question as follows, "Where does this path lead to?"—speaking as if it really didn't concern me. The reply came, "This path—oh, it goes down to Rampur." "What sort of village is that?—many people, good crops," &c. Then I heard the good or bad history of Rampur. "And how," said I, "do the people of Rampur get to Jhutpore?" "Oh, Jhutpore, that is not near Rampur at all; it is over there," pointing in the opposite direction. "You see that hill? Jhutpore is just beyond it, about seven gun-shots from here." "Is there good drinking water over there?" "There is only one good well in the village, but it belongs to the headman. But he will doubtless give your honour some milk to drink." "All right, salam." "Salam, sahib." At last I know my way and reach my destination safely.

Now, it must not be inferred from the above that the natives of India are as a rule a set of liars. The villagers on the whole are simple and confiding, and, taking their lives into consideration, a truthful folk. But you must speak their language, and be friendly and sympathetic, before they will be frank towards you. For hundreds, nay, thousands of years they have been ruthlessly treated by the

many Asiatic conquerors, as well as by their own people in power, and have been used to seeing the strong always tyrannise over the weak. Unable to hold their own, they have been compelled through force of circumstance to resort to misrepresentation and deception as a means of self-defence. And these have now become a part of their nature. If the villager does not know you, his first impulse is to tell a lie and avoid having anything further to do with you.

Unfortunately, I cannot speak as favourably about the town folk. They have in many places raised misrepresentation to a fine art, and this is not done in self-defence, as in the case of the villager, but as a means of attaining some object in view. The end, it is considered, justifies the means. A very telling instance of this came under my observation after Lord Curzon's famous Convocation speech in Calcutta, on which occasion he advised the Bengalis to be more exact in their statements. Always ready to find fault and abuse the Government, the Bengalis started indignation meetings, wrote pamphlets, &c., to prove they had been maligned and were the most truthful people on the earth. I came across one of these pamphlets, which was being widely circulated throughout India for the purpose of getting up further indignation meetings among other races, whose veracity, mind, had not been impugned by Lord Curzon. In one pamphlet were given a number of extracts alleged



to have been taken from various Anglo-Indian papers, proving that they also considered the Bengalis truthful and Lord Curzon wrong in his statements. One of these extracts purported to have been taken from a leading Anglo-Indian journal of a certain date. As at the time I was a careful reader of this particular paper, I was astonished at not having seen the alleged extract. I searched the files in vain. I inquired, and found that nobody else had come across any such paragraph in the paper. Subsequently the journal itself took up the matter. The authors of the pamphlet were written to, pointing out that the said paper had never published the paragraph quoted in its name, and demanding that the alleged extract should be deleted from the pamphlet. No reply was received to the remonstrance, and the pamphlet continued to circulate in increasing numbers. Now, here was an appeal made to the native public to support the Bengali contention that they were a truthful people, and yet this very appeal was based on a deliberate falsehood !

Now, it must not be understood that I make these statements as evidence to show that there is no honesty in India, and that all Indians are untruthful. I have no such purpose. I merely desire to explain that superficial impressions about Indians are extremely misleading, and that the so-called corroborative evidence tendered by interested parties is as a rule utterly unreliable.

To revert to my thesis that India as a whole cannot seriously be considered a poverty-stricken country:—it may be a land of easily satisfied and unenergetic people, but it can never be called a poor country. My contention will be amply borne out by the following extracts from a speech by a learned native gentleman, Mr. Shapurjee Broacha, the President of the Bombay Native Share and Stock Brokers' Association, at the annual meeting in 1906. He remarked :—

“It is the conviction of brokers, merchants, tradesmen, and captains of industry that India is slowly but steadily advancing in material prosperity, and for the last few years it has taken accelerated pace. Opposed to this is the opinion of the pundits, that is, the professors, the lawyers, and the pedagogues with assumption of universal knowledge, who have made it a business to arraign the shortcomings of the Government, that India is steadily retrograding deeper and deeper into poverty. . . . If the Indians are poor, they are poor in the sense the Red Indians were poor when the white men took possession of their country. If the Indians are poor, they are poor in the sense the Zulus and other races of South Africa were poor with gold clinking under their heels, with King Solomon's mines spread out to the view in all their variety, and their land flowing with milk and honey. India was considered the richest country by the ancients and moderns. She was the cynosure of all eyes, and no traveller or adventurer has left a record that his expectations were not realised. She was the cynosure of all the marauders from the North. . . . India is capable of yielding all the crops and all the textile fibres of the world, besides some special products of her own ; she has all the fauna and flora of the world ; her bowels are bursting with all the liquid and solid mineral wealth ; her spaces are strewn with diamonds and gems ; her shores are encrusted with pearl oysters, and her seas and rivers are teeming with fish. If India is so rich, and

the Indians are poor, it is because they are just being roused from a deep encrusted lethargy of more than a thousand years of anarchy, misrule, oppression, and insecurity, under which they could call neither their bodies nor their property their own. They are just being lifted on rough carts, on rough ruts of rough roads, until the roads are macadamised, and new carts built and greased to make their passage quicker from poverty to wealth. Putting aside higher politics, and the still higher aspirations of a democracy, which is not in being—for when in being its spirit will brook no superior—I would say that when the Mahar (of low caste) has asked, and the Brahmin has accepted, his right to the same table, India will have welded itself into a nation, and then what India asks shall be given. But until then, for the development of the wealth of the country the present Government are the best. India is endowed with great natural wealth, and we are handicapped with very light taxation in the race for wealth."

Mr. Broacha went on to prove this by showing the incidence of taxation in various countries. In India it is only Rs. 3 per head per annum, while in Great Britain and France it amounts to between Rs. 53 and Rs. 54. The average taxation for Europe, bar Russia, comes to Rs. 43 or Rs. 44 per head. In Russia it comes to Rs. 21s. or Rs. 22; in Egypt to Rs. 15 or Rs. 16 per head. In Japan, also an agricultural country with cheap labour, the taxation per head comes to Rs. 9, or just three times more than in India. Considering only land taxation in India, it comes to Rs. 1 per head, in Japan about Rs.  $2\frac{1}{2}$ , in Egypt Rs.  $7\frac{1}{2}$ . The taxation of India is light in all conscience. Mr. Broacha calculates that as compulsory taxes "the upper middle, the middle, and the lower middle classes pay 6 annas per head for

the Government of the country." These, he says, "bellow the loudest about the grinding taxation."

Another item it is necessary to call attention to is the incalculable amount of the precious metals that lie buried, hoarded, and useless all over India. Abdurrahman, the late Amir of Afghanistan, once remarked that if the Afghans ever joined Russia in the invasion of India, it would be only for one definite purpose : not dislike of the English or love of the Russian, but solely to loot the vast hoard of treasure known to exist in almost every native town ! It is a characteristic of the inhabitants of the peninsula to hoard money rather than lay it out in industrial developments. The coolie with a few rupees a month saves as much as he can, and either ties these savings in a knot round his loins or buries them under the fireplace in his hut. The trader does the same, only on a larger scale, while the native Raja seals up the bulk of his revenue in vaults below his zenana.

Statistics go to prove that four hundred lakhs of rupees' worth of gold, and five hundred lakhs of rupees' worth of silver bullion and coined rupees are absorbed annually by India. That is to say, the precious metals to the value of nine hundred lakhs of rupees, or £6,000,000 sterling, are every year being hoarded by the people. Add to this the import of jewellery, pearls, and precious stones, and you will have an incredible total of unused and unproductive wealth. The figures given represent only the annual

hoarding at the present time. But to this accumulating store must be added the untold millions' worth of gold, silver, and precious stones that have been lying buried in every town and village for countless ages back. It is only when one gets some mental conception of this fact that one realises the vast wealth of India which is available for India's welfare, but which for all practical purposes might just as well be lying in the bottom of the Indian Ocean. India may be likened to an ignorant miser, who lives in rags and apparent poverty, but who might, if cured of his hoarding propensity, live in a palace with every modern comfort and luxury.

Only one inference can be drawn from these facts and figures, and that is that India actually and potentially is one of the wealthiest countries in the world. The reasons why the Indians appear to be poor are, first, because of their own free choice they have hitherto preferred a low standard of living; and secondly, because of oppression in the past they have till now preferred to hoard their wealth, rather than lay it out, after the manner of Europeans, in opening up their country and developing its trade, commerce, and industries.

## CHAPTER VI

### SOME PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

**I** TRUST from what has already been said it will be realised that the various races of the Indian continent can never fuse into one nation, nor can they have self-government on the one-nation basis. The present absolute rule of Great Britain over all the peoples is the nearest approach to such an ideal. Under existing conditions the Indians as a whole must in self-defence for a long time to come put up with an impartial arbiter, who will protect the weak against the strong, maintain internal peace and personal freedom, and guard all from foreign invasions by land and sea; and the only conceivable authority who can fulfil these conditions is Great Britain. But the fact that a powerful arbiter is necessary for an indefinite period does not do away with the possibility of establishing some form of local self-government based on other principles than those already tried.

I have shown in a previous chapter that the modern tendency of all races as they advance in

civilisation, stability, and self-reliance, is not to coalesce and fuse and form self-contained new races, but, on the contrary, to diverge from each other and assert their own individuality as separate peoples. Hence the plausible attempts that are being made by political cranks and faddists to make all Indians into one nation must necessarily be futile and retrogressive, such action being contrary to known natural laws. If I were an irresponsible despot with absolute sovereignty over all India, I would, to maintain my absolutism, consistently encourage the propagation of the one-nation idea. For as long as the misguided Indians pursued this phantasm I would feel safe in my power, as the stupid would always be dragging down the intelligent, the backward would retard the progress of the more advanced, and the pace of the whole movement would be that of the slowest and least developed race. Æons of ages would elapse before even a semblance of union emerged from such chaotic elements. The very futility of such unpractical efforts would be the mainstay of my despotism for an indefinitely remote period.

But, on the other hand, if the day dawned when each one of my subject races started a propaganda for separate racial self-development, *apart and distinct from each other*, I would have to recognise that the beginning of the end of my despotic rule had come. This conclusion would be forced on me

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for the following reasons :—(a) As each separate race advanced independently in civilisation it would gradually become self-reliant and self-contained, and would strongly resent being dragged down, or even retarded in its progress, by its other less enterprising neighbours ; (b) as a practical man, though a despotic ruler, it would be to my interest and advantage to placate and help on the development of the inherent good qualities of such a progressive race till it could, metaphorically speaking, stand on its own feet ; (c) the same procedure would be followed with successive races as they showed tendencies towards self-improvement, till at last a time would come when all the races in India would form separate self-governed States, acknowledging one suzerain power over the Indian continent.

It is possible in the far dim future, when all the Indian races have separately developed a high state of civilisation and self-government, that they may for purposes of defence against foreign aggression form themselves into the Confederated States of India, and so in an indirect way eventually become a community, internally dissimilar, but one in union against the outside world. But this consummation is so infinitely remote that to pursue the idea further would be a useless incursion beyond the realms of present-day politics.

The idea of unity on an equality basis is wholly foreign to the Indian mind. Indians always have been



and always will be aristocratic rather than democratic in their ideas of government. India is a land where no sentiment of equality exists. Every man, from the moment of his birth to the end of his life, has a place allotted to him by race, religion, caste, and hoary custom. If he is above in any way, he domineers over all below him; if below, he is abjectly subservient to those above. Equality in the European sense has not yet been grasped by the Indian mind. The one-nation idea is entirely a Western importation, introduced by certain Englishmen when incubating the so-called "National" Congress, which represents no nation in India. I speak from personal experience, as I joined the movement at its inception, hoping in some way to help my Indian fellow-subjects. I represented nobody and nobody represented me. We all elected ourselves, and my colleagues talked impractical and childish politics, which a third-rate debating society at home would be ashamed of. I soon realised that no good purpose could be served by such an amorphous institution, while it was eminently calculated to unsettle ignorant and weak minds and hamper the work of Government. So I gave up electing myself and consequently ceased to be a member.

Were it not that the sincerity of the faddists who introduced the "one-nation" idea is well known, one could not help coming to the conclusion that they had deliberately planned a Machiavellian

scheme for retarding the progress of the Indians and keeping them in perpetual subjection to our rule. The natives, as is ever their way when impossibilities are promised, blindly followed the lead of these misguided enthusiasts, and have ever since been wasting their opportunities in vainly chasing a chimera. There is more disunion, discord, and diversity of opinion now among the Indians than there was twenty-three years ago, when the Congress propaganda was first started. The disintegrating influences are obvious to all : the sole factor of the cohesion among the Congress partisans is an ungrateful and senseless opposition to Government. Yet if the Government were abolished to-morrow, it would be followed next day by the extinction of the Congress, the component parts of which would immediately engage in an internecine war of extermination all over India.

I need not expatiate on the ethics of the "National" Congress party. The abuse of all constituted authority in and out of season is their only ideal. Their criticisms are purely destructive. They have not only hindered good government, but have thrown back the progress of their country by quite half a century. They may be given the credit of introducing a new pastime into India—and that is how, with safety to oneself, to bite the hand that feeds you. It is not only a safe, but a cheap way of attaining a much desired notoriety. It is, however, an amusement that can only be indulged in in the

British territory, as the atmosphere of the Native States instantly blights it. Only a determined suicide would attempt to abuse, or even mildly criticise, a Raja in his own territory ; such folly would automatically cause not only the complete disappearance of the individual himself, but that of his family and belongings as well ! We have much wisdom to learn from the Native States in such matters. The prestige of constituted authority is consistently and uncompromisingly maintained by the Indian Raja, who is fully aware that too much freedom among his countrymen in their present condition rapidly degenerates into irresponsible licence, which in its turn produces "wind in the head," as the natives aptly express it. For such a mental disease the ruler of a Native State wisely considers that timely prevention is better than a subsequent doubtful cure.

One deplorable defect which militates greatly against any stable form of self-government is the growing desire on the part of many Indians to achieve cheap and meretricious fame amongst their countrymen, regardless of the means used or the ill-effect of their examples on the rising generation. The substance is neglected and the shadow grasped. Real earnest, unobtrusive, and self-sacrificing work which makes for substantial progress and formation of national character is neglected, while notoriety is eagerly sought after for personal gratification. And what is still more deplorable to those who have

the country's welfare at heart is that hitherto Indian public opinion has not condemned such men and their methods.

Here are one or two out of many instances that might be given to illustrate this trait. In a large town in Upper India there lived an individual who was locally considered one of its prominent citizens. He was a man of neither family, influence, education, nor riches ; still he was great in his own estimation and that of his countrymen. And for what, forsooth ? Well, simply because he had instituted a lawsuit, and a discreditable one, against the head of a Government department. He had been a contractor and had tried to bribe the official to pass inferior work, but the only result was a rapid and forcible ejection from the irate official's house. Then followed a charge of assault and battery, the result, it was stated, of the official demanding a half share in the profits, which the honest contractor indignantly refused ! Every one in the town was aware of the utter falseness of the charge, as the inner history of the incident was known even to the commonest coolie. Yet Government in its folly suspended the official and curtly ordered him to clear his character. At great inconvenience, expense, and mental worry he eventually was able to expose the whole conspiracy against him, and much more besides ; and the contractor and his confederates and false witnesses were duly sent to gaol or fined. Another blunder

was committed by Government at this point. Instead of allowing the official to resume his post, and instead of publicly recognising his worth, as would in similar circumstances have undoubtedly been done in a Native State, he was weakly transferred to another district. When the contractor had completed his period of incarceration he was received by the native community as an envied hero. And ever after, up to the day of his death, he was pointed out with whispered admiration as the man who had the famous court case, and had driven out a great official from the district !

Another instance occurs to me of an educated Indian who was really an intelligent, peaceful, and law-abiding individual, but whose craving for notoriety eventually mastered his otherwise worthy character. He started in a modest and earnest way by writing and preaching on social reform, industrial development, the advantages of a strong and peaceful Government, the necessity of loyalty to constituted authority, and so on. He really did a good deal of genuine patriotic work, and earnestly practised what he preached. He expected recognition from Government, but none came, and this was a tactless official blunder. At this stage a word of praise, a small recognition of his public services, would have satisfied his ambition, as it would have brought him great "izzat," or honour, among his countrymen ; and, what is more, would have perpetuated his loyalty to the British Government.

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But the practical thing was not done. On the contrary, year by year an ungrateful Government overlooked him, and honoured and decorated with a lavish hand those who generally gave the most trouble to our administration. The result was a complete *volte face* on the part of my friend. He saw which way the wind blew recognition and fame, so he boldly transferred himself to the Congress party, and there he used his undoubted talents to vilify the very Government he had hitherto been praising ! His activities were so great that Government soon recognised his ability, and it was not long before he received his much coveted official honours ; but it was too late to make a good citizen of him, and he became after that what the native proverb aptly describes as “ *na ghur ka, na ghat ka.*” That is to say, like the washerman’s dog, which belongs neither to his house nor to the ford where he washes, but meanders aimlessly between both.

Such incidents are not uncommon in India, and truly patriotic Indians are much to blame for not openly condemning those who court notoriety at the expense of national degradation. Great leaders are never made of such stuff, and no nation can hope for progress when selfish ends are followed under the guise of pseudo-patriotism. On the other hand, however, rightly or wrongly, a feeling prevails among the native community that open loyalty to the British Government does not pay—that name

and fame are more easily attained by blatant opposition to all things British. There are many good men and true who are now in opposition to us, and an infinitely larger number all over the country who have adopted a neutral attitude towards us, because of this unfortunate feeling. They speak with contempt about a Government which does not know how to discriminate between its well-wishers and its enemies.

Another defect which must be eradicated from the Indian character before real and solid progress can be hoped for is the deplorable absence of moral courage. I have seen a notoriety-seeking agitator with a few vagabond accomplices cow a whole district, every man in which knew that the agitator was wrong and that his preaching would end in trouble and disaster. Yet not a man moved a finger against the firebrand ; some actually went so far as to make a pretence of agreeing with him ! In any self-respecting European community such an agitator would promptly have been mobbed, ducked in a pond, and literally kicked out of the place. And if the mischief-makers could not effectually be dealt with in this rough-and-ready way, the whole population would immediately have sided openly with constituted authority, and thus any disturbing movement would promptly have been suppressed, to the advantage of all. Not so with the average Indian. From time immemorial he has been in the habit of siding with the strong, or those who appear to be

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the strong for the time being, without any consideration for the rights or wrongs of the situation. This trait is an inheritance from the past ages of conquest, rapine, and oppression, when the only safety for the weak was to place themselves at the mercy of the strong, whoever they might be. It therefore follows that whenever a native sees a political agitator openly preaching disloyalty and opposition to our Government, his peculiar process of reasoning can come to only one conclusion, namely, that the Government is weak and impotent and unable to protect him. Government being weak, the other party must be the more powerful of the two. Hence it is wise to appease the other party and let Government take care of itself.

A peculiar incident happened in my own experience which will aptly illustrate this trait in the native character. A few years ago I had the honour of commanding a well-known Volunteer Corps in India. A Hindu landed proprietor from a neighbouring district was very keen at one time on joining my corps. He was a well-to-do, intelligent individual and an admirable character all round. I greatly valued his friendship, and as we were on intimate terms we discussed public matters without the slightest reserve. Many a time have I learnt wisdom and enlarged my Indian experiences from his instructive conversations. On one occasion we were discussing the question as to whether it would be politic to have native volunteer corps in India.



His verdict was that in peaceful times it would be a good move, as it would bring natives and Europeans together in friendly rivalry, and would greatly please the personal vanity of the former by placing them in this respect on an equal footing with the latter. But he said with great emphasis, "In war-time you would have to disband nine-tenths of them, as these native corps would be the first to be tampered with by foreign agents ; and the members of such corps would be the first to feel the enormous pressure exerted by race, religion, caste, and family. If a race or caste became disaffected towards the British Government, every volunteer of that race or caste, whether he wished to or not, would *ipso facto* have to be against you."

I replied, "Do you mean to say that members of such volunteer corps would not have the moral courage to maintain their own convictions as to what is right and what is wrong ?—that they would betray their Government if caste or family pressure was brought to bear on them for such a purpose ?"

"Yes," he sadly remarked ; "though I am sorry to have to admit it. You Europeans cannot even faintly realise what this overwhelming deadly pressure means. For instance, if there was rebellion in India and my caste and family were opposed to you, I would have to desert you in the hour of need, and make a pretence of being disaffected even when I was really not so. If I did not act the part allotted to me, I should soon be outcasted, my

family would disown me, my life would be endangered, my property, my land, all would be taken from me by clever and unscrupulous forgeries, intrigues, and false evidence. Your very courts of justice would have to decide against me, as not a man would be found to speak the truth in my favour. My former associates would stand aside and remain neutral, my friends and partisans would in their own interests do likewise, or be cajoled, intimidated, or forced in self-defence to do likewise. No, it would not pay me to be loyal. As you rightly say, we have not got the moral courage to maintain the right against the wrong. There lies the greatest weakness in our national character. If we would overcome this defect we would be within measurable distance of being a self-governing people. Many of those among us who now outwardly assume a hostile attitude towards you are secretly praying to their gods to maintain your Government. They are playing a part—want of moral courage again.”

Last but not least come the two most deplorable defects in Indian character, and these are the universal propensity for bribery and intrigue. Bribery is in fact not considered a crime, and under various euphemisms it is held to be even praiseworthy and natural. I once witnessed a bet between two natives, that any native could be bribed. The bet was taken up and a prominent native official named as the one on whom the experiment was to be tried. To my astonishment the bet was easily

won. The money was accepted and the purpose for which it was offered was duly carried out. It was cleverly done, and nothing could be proved, but it was obvious the bribe produced the result. On another occasion I was in a Native State and was present when the Raja was offered a "*nazzur*," or present of Rs. 5,000, to cancel an obnoxious order of his own. The *nazzur* was accepted as a friendly offer, and the order withdrawn. But the sting of it appeared subsequently. Within six months the same order was reissued under some new pretext, but the Rs. 5,000 were never returned !

As regards intrigue, this bulks, if possible, even larger than bribery. As there is no sense of equality, every one who is in any way below considers it absolutely essential for his own welfare to intrigue and bring about the downfall of those who happen in any way to be above. This passion for intrigue has brought about universal suspicion and distrust, and is one of the chief causes of India's helplessness and degradation. They range from palace intrigues for power, place, or the throne, down to petty little intrigues between miserable coolies. It is everywhere the same, and has to be reckoned with in every walk in life as the great disintegrating factor in Indian life. The worst culprits in this respect are said to be the Bengalis, who are so expert in this line that, on the principle of set a thief to catch a thief, they are often employed in Native States to confound the intrigues of the Raja's own subjects !

There is a native saying that "The Bengali is the brother of the white ant, which builds nothing, but undermines palaces." Ninety-nine per cent. of the present political unrest in India is the outcome of Bengali intrigue. The pity of it all is that Indians as a whole do not yet realise that by intriguing they proclaim their own inferiority—equals do not intrigue against each other as a rule, and there is no occasion for a superior to intrigue against an inferior. And further, it would be well for them if they understood that their present low position in the scale of nations is due mainly to this propensity for intriguing against constituted authority. So it was in the past, and so it will be in the future, until they learn to be frank, trustful, and helpful to each other and the Government of the country, be it British or native.

These are some of the characteristic defects noticeable throughout India, and which will undoubtedly hamper to a very serious extent the advancement of the country on Western lines; but, knowing the people as I do, I am sanguine under a really strong and impartial Government, and with the advance of education, all such defects will gradually disappear, especially when the Indian fully realises that true patriotism does not mean illogical, insensate hostility to all things foreign, nor a mongrel pseudo-sentiment towards other Indian races with whom he has nothing in common. When he understands that patriotism

means a sincere and unselfish love and attachment to one's own land, race, religion, language, and literature—an attachment that will be self-sacrificing, all-absorbing, and helpful to his own people—then alone will the renaissance and regeneration of India begin on true patriotic principles.

## CHAPTER VII

### ETHNOLOGICAL PROVINCES

WITH such ideals in mind, I believe the following scheme to be the best suited for the moral, social, industrial, and political development of the various Indian races, and the one most likely to encourage autonomous government in this country. But it is essential for the success of the scheme that each race should work out its own salvation, independent, unconnected, and untrammelled by its neighbours. This is a *sine qua non*. Any interference in each other's affairs and intrigues and combination for the purpose of silly abuse and hampering of the paramount Power will pre-doom the whole scheme to failure.

Granting these premises, I propose that a new map of India be constructed on an ethnological and linguistic basis. Boundaries should be demarcated round the habitat of each race. For instance, the Sindhi-speaking people should be separated from the Punjabis on the north, and the Rajputs and Cutchis on the west and south. There should

be a Punjabi province, a Maharatha province, a Tamil province, a Telegu province, and so on throughout India. The above are only a few of the leading divisions, but they will serve to explain my meaning. Each such division, according to its size and population, would be presided over for the present by a British Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, or Commissioner. They would have adequate British and native staffs under them. The native staff would be entirely composed of people of the division. That is to say, you would not have Bengali officials in the Punjab or Maharatha officials in Bengal.

When a division was composed of entirely one race, there would be no difficulty of forming a simple system of self-government on a national basis. But there are some portions of India which would be difficult to divide into racial divisions, as two or more races may be living more or less in juxtaposition. For instance, in Orissa, on the east coast, you will find, besides Oryias, lesser tribes of aboriginal Gonds, Khonds, Gadabas, and others. All tracts occupied by such people would form small subdivisions of Orissa, and their interests would be guarded by special officers under the Commissioner of Orissa.

To explain my thesis more in detail it is necessary to take a special people and formulate my scheme round them. We will take, for instance, the supposititious land of Rishiwara. Here the

Rishis would form the bulk of the inhabitants, speaking one language and practising one form of religion. In the country you would also find a small colony of Mahomedans. These would be descendants of, say, Persian and Arab conquerors, mixed up with converted Rishis and the offspring of mixed marriages between all these classes. Their language would be Urdu, though all would use Rishi, and the lower classes would probably use it exclusively. Rishi would therefore be considered the language of the whole country, and in this direction, therefore, all could meet on common ground for purposes of education and government. In religion and racial sentiments, however, a sharp distinction would exist between the Rishi majority and the Mahomedan minority. As our purpose throughout would be to develop each race on its own merits, we would have to carefully guard the racial interests of the minority and thus give them a fair and equal opportunity of attaining to their highest capabilities.

Primary education would be compulsory for both men and women, and would be entirely in the Rishi language. Beyond this, Mahomedans would also be taught to read and write their own language, Urdu. The upper classes would undoubtedly avail themselves of it, as it is the common language of all Mahomedans, and it may be styled the *lingua franca* of all India. English would necessarily for a long time to come be the vehicle of higher



education, as it is the only useful medium by which Western civilisation could be imparted to the inhabitants. Nevertheless, Rishi would be used as much as possible in higher education, and its literature would be encouraged, and text-books in the language would gradually be compiled on matters scientific, industrial, and social. Everything, in fact, would be done to create and foster a national literature. Urdu literature could always be obtained from purely Mahomedan divisions, many of which would undoubtedly come into existence under my scheme.

Each race would be thoroughly grounded in the history of India, and more especially in its own particular history, truthfully and impartially expounded. Immature and undeveloped minds would not, as is unhappily the case now, be stuffed with English history and that of other foreign races fundamentally different from them in national characteristics. All education would have two principal objects in view : first, the formation of character, and second, the production of practical men, who would turn their attention to the improvement of their own countries in industries, commerce, agriculture, and science. In fact, the national education would be practical instead of theoretical. It would produce level-headed professional men for all branches of work necessary to Rishiwara, and not windy-headed, superficially educated clerks jostling each other for an infinitesimally small number of Government

appointments. In economics the Rishis would be taught the necessity of co-operation and mutual trust. The absurdity of hoarding their money underground and the advantages of laying it out in the industries and development of their native land would also be impressed on their minds. Under such a system of education the appalling ignorance and the pitiful conceit of present-day Rishis would gradually disappear, and a people would be evolved which would be honourable, self-respecting, patriotic, and proud of their country, and whom every Englishman would joyfully welcome as an equal fellow-subject of one great Empire.

Rishiwara would be divided into districts with collectors, magistrates, and deputy commissioners at the head. Groups of districts would be under commissioners, and these in their turn would be under a Chief Commissioner, or Governor, who would be responsible for all departments in the State, and would correspond directly with the Supreme Government of India. His functions would combine those of President of the State and the Agent of the Supreme Government. He would govern with the aid of a representative executive council composed of all classes in the State. The Governor in Council would legislate for the administration of Rishiwara, subject to the formal approval and sanction of the Supreme Government. All the departments of the State would be directly under

the Governor, with the exception of the army, navy, railways, telegraphs, and foreign affairs, which would be controlled all over India by the Supreme Government.

Rishiwara would have a special official newspaper in the Rishi language, publishing general news calculated to educate the people on all that would be useful to the State. But its chief function would be to explain and defend the policy of the Rishiwara Government, to contradict false rumours and misunderstandings, and to expose the machinations of all would-be mischief-makers ; and, last but not least, it should also interpret the wishes of the Supreme Government to the Rishiwara public. Such an official journal in the language of the people would be published in each racial division ; and at the same time there would be a chief official paper for all India published in English under the authority of the Supreme Government. This would explain, defend, and justify Imperial policy throughout India.

The Mahomedans would have one or more representatives on the executive councils, and their rights and interests, as well as those of other minor races in the State, would be strictly guarded against any encroachments by the preponderating Rishi population.

Rishiwara would in fact be practically self-governing and quite independent of all other such States in India. Its internal administration would

not be directly interfered with by the Supreme Government except in matters of Imperial policy, and the inhabitants would be left to progress in civilisation at their own pace. There would be no hustling and no maudlin philanthropy. If they had any virility and capacity for advancement it would come out under such conditions, and if they had not, they would be allowed to go their own pace without any sentimental anxiety on our part. In either case they would be happy in their own way, and would have nobody but themselves to blame if other Indian nations went ahead of them towards the goal of independence.

As an unknown writer has aptly stated: "The paramount executive for the well-being, happiness, and security of the myriad millions must rest for a time, that cannot be measured or computed, in the hands of Great Britain." But though this must be admitted for all India, it is necessary that we should gradually, *very gradually*, hand over the purely internal and local functions of the administration to its advanced inhabitants. The process, however, would necessarily be slow, and the Rishis would have to exercise patience and willingly co-operate in getting the training that would fit them for positions of trust and responsibility in their country. No civilised Government, and least of all that of Great Britain, would ever allow a noisy and self-interested minority to usurp authority for the purpose of misgoverning the inarticulate and helpless masses.

All the various nationalities in India would thus be simultaneously started on the road to self-development and ultimate self-government. Those which advanced rapidly would be given greater facilities and would necessarily be more independent than those that lagged behind. No greater incentives could be given to the peoples of India than the fostering of local patriotism and the consequent friendly inter-racial competition for civilised progress and ultimate autonomy. I also maintain that this scheme is the only means of establishing an *entente cordiale* between the Mahomedans and Hindus of India. Barring religious matters, on which these two sections of the Indian population can never be on one platform, it has been my experience that, in questions concerning their own native land, the mental attitude of both Hindu and Mahomedan is comparatively harmonious. There is a sort of incipient patriotism that brings them together as against Hindus and Mahomedans of another country. For instance, the Hindus and Mahomedans of Sind think more alike than does the Hindu of Sind and the Hindu of Madras or the Mahomedans of Sind and the Mahomedans of Bengal.

In this mental affinity lies the hope of a future solution to the partition question in Bengal. If, for instance, Bengal proper (excluding Oryias, Nagpuris, Beharis, Assamis, and all other border races) could be constituted into a new State on an ethno-

logical and linguistic basis, with a Governor of its own, it is quite possible that a real Bengali nation might eventually be evolved comprising both Hindus and Mahomedans of Eastern and Western Bengal. Such a union of Bengali-speaking people is very desirable, and devoutly to be wished. But two things at present militate against any such consummation. One is the Hindu Bengali's hostile and selfish intrigues against Mahomedan interests, and the other is his childish and imbecile opposition to all things British. The Mahomedans will therefore be wise to strongly uphold the Bengal partition until such time as the Hindus of their own accord genuinely remove the two unfavourable conditions mentioned. When that welcome time arrives the British will be the first to join the hands of Eastern and Western Bengal in a union of mutual respect and attachment, and Britannia will be proud of being the foster-mother of a brilliant race.

It is very necessary that my scheme for racial autonomy all over India should be favourably started and its growth carefully guarded to maturity. This can only be done with a powerful and sympathetic arbiter over all the land—a Government which will see fair play, prevent internal discord, and ward off aggression from without. The only possible Government for such a purpose is that of Great Britain. So the Viceroy in Council will, on behalf of the King-Emperor, be all powerful, and will continue to watch over the destinies of the

Empire. But he will be helped by an Advisory Council constituted of distinguished representatives of all the autonomous States as well as of the existing Native States. At first, and for some time to come, the Council's functions will be purely consultative and advisory ; but in the fulness of time, when all the States have shown a real capacity for self-government on civilised principles, the Council would be transformed into a modified parliamentary institution for the Confederated States of India, with the Viceroy as President. The Governors and Commissioners would then remain in the States only as British political agents. But here we enter into realms beyond the sphere of present-day practical politics, and it is therefore unnecessary to speculate on this final phase of the Indian problem. Sufficient for the present is the realisation of separate racial States, in each of which the inhabitants would speak one common language and be imbued with one common patriotism for their native land.

Let us hope the Indians will fully realise that all this cannot come about in one day. There is no magic in politics. The development of a race must be gradual, steady, and progressive. Perfection will only be attained after years, or may be centuries. It is the slow growing tree that produces the soundest timber : mushroom growth does not last.

## CHAPTER VIII

### A FIRM POLICY

“**H**OW can encouragement best be given to legitimate political aspiration, and sedition most effectively suppressed?” To the first part of the question I answer that the true remedy lies in separate racial development, as already explained in the previous chapters. When a race improves from within as it were and concentrates its efforts on developing its own inherent qualities, it will have ample scope within itself for all legitimate political aspirations. A truly patriotic people will not waste their opportunities for advancement by thwarting the suzerain Power, which helps them along and guards them against outside interference. Their leaders will soon realise that they have everything to lose and nothing to gain by allowing other jealous and perhaps hostile races to interfere with their internal and domestic politics. “Self-help” will be their motto, and “Hands off” their attitude to outsiders.

The greatest folly the Indians have hitherto



perpetrated is the encouragement of the idea that they are all one and the same people, and that therefore they can combine to displace the British Government by an imaginary "national" Government of their own! This idea is the outcome of colossal ignorance of their own history, and their extraordinary inability to logically argue out the sequence of events. They can neither look back to what they were nor look forward to what they might be. Their thoughts and actions are always concentrated in the present, regardless of consequences. It is this defective mental horizon that has produced the political buffoon in this country, and resulted in the sorry spectacle of the warlike Punjabi being dragged at the heels of the effeminate Bengali.

The first thing the various peoples of India must learn is that the word "India" is merely a geographical expression invented by Europeans to designate a vast continent, and that since the advent of the British the term "India" has continued to expand. The map of India has ever since been changing towards the west, north, and east, but it does not follow that, because a borderland is painted red on this map, the indigenous inhabitants of that land thereby immediately by some legerdemain become Hindus—say of the type of Bengal or Madras. The only cohesive factor in India is British sovereignty; remove that factor and its peoples would automatically cease to be

Indians. They would be known henceforth as Kashmeris, Punjabis, Sindhis, Rajputs, Maharathas, Bengalis, Assamis, Telegus, Tamils, Pathans, and an endless number of other distinct nationalities. Until this obvious lesson is thoroughly grasped by the Indians there can be no hope of any genuine political advancement. Self-contained development on a racial basis is the key to the whole problem. The race that first fully realises this, and ceases to meddle with the domestic affairs of others, will easily take the lead in India and soonest attain self-government on rational principles. Such a race will naturally in its own interests range itself on the side of law, order, and peaceful government, and it will therefore have ample scope for legitimate political aspirations in the promotion of the best and highest ideals of its own people.

We come to the second portion of the question : "How can sedition be most effectually suppressed ?" One word answers this, and that is—firmness. Boycotting, picketing of shops by hired ruffians, preaching of sedition, encouragement of race hatred, should all be summarily stopped. And when schoolboys are concerned in such practices they should, as a Japanese friend of mine has suggested, be promptly flogged, and their parents, guardians, or schoolmasters be severely fined, and made to enter into a bond for the future good behaviour of such youths. In India we must to a

very great extent do as Indians do in such matters. In a Native State, if a man preached disloyalty to the Raja, he would be seized, punished, and effaced in a couple of days, and all connected with him would suffer likewise. To act as a deterrent, punishment for political crime must be prompt, severe, and final. Native politicians desire self-government by their people, so they cannot logically object to the adoption of Native State methods for suppressing crime.

The Supreme Government must cease to pander to such plausible and long exploded shibboleths as "the equality of men," "liberty of the subject," and "freedom of the press." Indians, with their present limited range of political thought, do not understand such altruistic ideals. This is amply proved in the conduct of every Native State, where no two men are considered equal, where liberty of the subject is restricted to personal good behaviour, where absolute freedom of the press is not tolerated on the solid ground of expediency. By all this, I do not mean that such ideals should not sway our governing principles. They should always be kept in view, and gradually applied to the people as they attain a proper sense of responsibility. You cannot have absolute equality in a country where you have two such opposite extremes as a twentieth-century educated and polished native gentleman and a prehistoric savage in a state of rude nature—a juxtaposition that may be seen any day in and

around almost any large town in India. You cannot have complete liberty of the subject where the extreme products of the country can never take the same view of anything, and where all the myriad intermediate degrees of civilisation and savagery will differ infinitely in thought, belief, and conduct. You cannot rationally allow a native press—to a great extent ignorantly conducted—to freely preach false and erroneous principles to a still more ignorant public. It is not fair to the Government of the country, and is still more unfair to the unfortunate people, to subject them to the tyranny of an unwholesome press.

In our dealings with the ignorant peoples of India we want less sentimental theory and more practical common sense. The native press requires controlling for the sake of the people themselves. With few honourable exceptions these papers do not give any news at all, and are consequently of no educational value. Their contents are nothing but stupid, illogical, and destructive criticism of all things concerning the Government of the country, vilification of its officials, and advertisements, a considerable number of them obscene. Such papers are mostly conducted by dismissed native officials, or by students who have failed in their exams., and failed, in fact, in everything else. All the mischievous trash they publish is swallowed without judgment or comment by the still more ignorant multitude, whose only arguments for per-

forming this mental gastronomy are, "It is printed, therefore it must be all true. If it was not true Government would have punished the authors and stopped the papers. As they have not done so Government must be in the wrong, and they are afraid to do anything"—and so on.

I have heard such statements made even by so-called educated natives, who in ordinary matters of business are as sensible and level-headed as one could wish. During the late Zaka Khel expedition on the North-West frontier, one obscure vernacular paper gave out that the British soldier could not fight, he was worthless in war; that one whole British regiment was absolutely wiped out by the Zaka Khel, and that this was the real reason why our forces hastily retired from the frontier; that the only thing that saved the entire army from total destruction was the brave front shown by the native troops! All this was conveyed in good faith by letter to me from an educated native gentleman who has travelled over most of the civilised countries of the world, and whom one would naturally credit with greater judgment and discernment. Yet he believed it all because a friend of his had told him he had read it in a vernacular paper somewhere!

It is this sort of unwholesome credulity which it is our bounden duty to control and guide on practical lines, and this, I maintain, can never be done until the present licence of the vernacular press

is curbed, and it is taught to realise its true position as a great educational factor in the country. It is useless to expect the people to move in the matter, as their whole conduct and attitude towards this press has shown conclusively that they have failed to realise how a licentious and untruthful press is destroying their mental equilibrium, undermining their national manhood, and exposing them to the ridicule and contempt of the civilised world. They will not or cannot help themselves, and therefore it is our bounden duty as the rulers of the land to educate the vernacular press and place it on a proper and useful footing.

This, I maintain, would not be difficult to accomplish if every vernacular paper was required to take out a licence for permission to publish. This licence would be given after due inquiries had been made as to the qualifications of its staff and directorate, and after a certain sum in cash or securities had been deposited as an earnest of good conduct. The first time the paper misconducted itself it would receive a warning and a severe reprimand ; the second time, a heavy fine would be inflicted out of the deposit money ; and the third time, the licence would be cancelled and the rest of the deposit money as well as the press itself would be confiscated. I would place the general control of a paper under a vigilance committee, composed entirely of educated and respectable native gentlemen of the locality, and as far as

possible of the same nationality as the staff and conductors of the paper. They would have the power to carry out the first and second sentence of punishment in cases of misconduct. The last sentence would be left solely to the police magistrate, and would be final and without appeal to any higher authority.

Such a scheme would insure the paper starting on a respectable business basis. It would have the advantage of having its conduct under the responsible control of the natives themselves, and lastly its final extinction would be automatic, as the licence would only be cancelled and the press confiscated after all other remedies, applied by the natives themselves, had failed to check misconduct. As the failure would be with the natives themselves, Government could not be blamed as at present for taking drastic and final measures. And lastly Government would have the advantage of always feeling the political pulse, as it were, of the native community, as the attitude of the vigilance committee towards the views of the paper would be an indication of their attitude towards Government. Such a scheme, while allowing for reasonable and dignified criticism of Government, would effectually prevent all political mendacity, scurrilous abuse of officials and native princes, and seditious and disloyal intrigues against constituted authority. No respectable vernacular paper would object to its adoption, as its own self-respect and dignified

conduct would render it immune, as now, from punitive consequences of the law. But it would be impossible for third-rate rags to exist, as they would automatically bring about their own suicide.

Another cause of sedition in India is our irrational system of education, which is superficial and entirely misdirected. What good result can be expected from an ignorant native, a descendant of hundreds of generations of illiterate forebears, who is suddenly caught and rushed through various impractical schools and colleges, on such mental pabulum as Herbert Spencer, Macaulay, Rousseau, and Kant ? The wonder is that there are any level-headed men left amongst the so-called educated. We neglect to teach them their own history, while we cram them with European and American history, and other unsuitable literature. We teach them no religion, no moral principles, no manhood ; and little or nothing is done contributing to the formation of character. We turn out, in fact, a lot of literary prigs and unmannerly cads, instead of solidly educated men and broadminded gentlemen. The need of India is for men who have received a thorough training in commerce, trade, industries, agriculture, mining, mechanics, engineering, and other practical callings.

Again, another cause of disaffection and contempt for Government is the laxness with which we maintain our prestige in India. Nowhere can a peaceful and civilising Government be maintained, and least



of all in India, when the people at large are not taught to respect constituted authority. In India respect for authority has been and always will be the bed-rock of all forms of government. No Native State would for a moment allow the scurrilous abuse and the attacks on its officials that we permit in British territory. A native Prince, referring to the frequent attacks on British soldiers by villagers, once said to me, "You are allowing the foundation-stone of your Government to be shaken. If it goes on much longer your whole administration will fall to the ground. In India we worship power, and despise anybody who does not maintain his *izat* [honour and dignity]. For every soldier that is attacked by villagers, you lose the respect and goodwill of thousands of Indians, who are then willing to believe anything that is said against you." How true all this is can easily be realised nowadays, when rebellion, murder, and anarchism stalk the land as a result of our previous laxness in maintaining order. Every attack on a Government official, from soldier to Viceroy, should be swiftly visited with condign punishment—direct on the actual perpetrators, and indirect on all remotely responsible for the act. We cannot afford to allow even the commonest European to be maltreated because he is a European, or because he is a Government official.

It may here be as well to call the attention of the Indian politicians to the degrading practice of

employing schoolboys to do their dirty and dangerous work for them. When the men of a race sink so low as to demoralise and prostitute their own offspring, they publicly condemn themselves, and proclaim their utter unfitness for any form of self-government. There is nothing that shames the true friends of India so much as this contemptible practice, and until it is wholly given up the Indians can never hope to have the respect and sympathy of any civilised people. Let men meet men, my Indian friends, but for the sake of your own *izat* keep your women and children out of the arena.

Slowness to move, procrastination, and leniency are well-known Oriental defects, and are believed by the native to be the results of weakness and fear. As a native shikari once remarked to me, "When a wounded bear does not come straight down on me as he ought to, I know he is afraid of me, and after that I feel I can destroy him with impunity whenever I feel inclined." When the seditious and disaffected in India have politically wounded the Government, and the latter does not come straight down on them, the absence of prompt action is immediately construed into weakness and fear, and, like the shikari, they come to the conclusion they can destroy Government with impunity. I reiterate, that when there is deliberate mischief against the Government or its officials, the punishment must be swift and thoroughly deterrent; there must be no maudlin sentiment and leniency.

This leads me on to our laws. These in the present condition of the country are too cumbersome, too complicated, too costly, and in many cases a direct incentive to political crime. Our system has bred a multitude of lawyers, who prey on the ignorant multitude and who are generally the leaders of disaffection. It has produced a contempt for our Government, because with its legal technicalities and quibbles, backed up with bribery, corruption, and false evidence, a political criminal can nearly always escape scot-free. For every known criminal that thus escapes his just doom, a hundred more join the ranks of the disaffected ; and so the ball of sedition keeps rolling on, ever increasing in force and magnitude, till it now threatens to overwhelm us altogether. Even in civil matters there is already too much law and too much interference with the people. There ought to be a separate political law, shorn of all legal technicalities and complications, and it should be so framed that its application in all cases would be prompt and decisive ; and, above all, there should be no hesitation in applying it. In saying this I voice the opinion of all peaceful and law-abiding Indians, and they form the vast majority of our fellow-subjects.

## CHAPTER IX

### A RECONSTRUCTED INDIA

TO sum up all that has been said. India must henceforth be considered and treated not as one country with one people, but as a vast sub-continent of Asia, with a congeries of separate nationalities, having different religions, languages, sentiments, and idiosyncrasies. The country must be grouped into racial divisions and governed on that basis. Each race must be allowed to develop on its own inherent merits, and one dead level of uniformity should not be expected. Each racial division should, under British supervision and control, employ its own people as far as possible in governing itself. All education should be practical and cheap and not academic, and should be carried on to a very great extent in the language of the people. Only the higher education should be in English, and this should be paid for at its proper value. The European officials in such racial divisions should spend the greater part of their service in divisions where the same language and customs

prevail, as this is the only way we can identify ourselves with the inner sentiments and aspirations of the people.

These racial divisions would be started on their career with the same European staff as is considered necessary for the Government of the country at present ; but gradually, as the people acquired a sense of responsibility and showed themselves fitted for self-government, the European staff would be removed until the irreducible minimum considered necessary for the maintenance of British sovereignty was reached. In the course of time practically the whole governing staff might be natives of the division ; and there is no reason why there should not ultimately be even a native Governor, with a local Legislative Council. But, of course, such a consummation will be entirely dependent on the growth of education and sense of responsibility to the suzerain Power, which must necessarily be British for an indefinite time to come.

The Supreme Government will be carried on as now by a Viceroy in Council. He will be assisted by an advisory council consisting of representatives from all the racial divisions. The Supreme Government will have absolute authority over the army, navy, railways, telegraphs, postal and customs departments, and will control all the internal and foreign politics of the whole Empire. The prestige of the Supreme Government must be maintained at all costs. There must be no dallying with sedition,

and no maudlin sentiment. Mischief-makers of all kinds should be dealt with promptly and decisively, regardless of what might be said by ignorant busy-bodies at home. The Government attitude should be, on one side, one of sympathy, friendliness, and sincere concern for the welfare of the people ; on the other side, one of unsentimental justice, prompt chastisement, and unswerving determination. There must be the velvet glove and the iron hand, the olive-branch and the sword. There can be no medium course in India. The vernacular press must be brought under control in the manner I have already indicated, as much for the sake of peaceful government as for the rational education of the people themselves.

Our civil laws may be retained as they are in the large towns, but they require considerable cheapening and simplifying throughout the country. The power to appeal should be reduced, and except for grave crimes the judgment of the court of first instance should be decisive and final.

There should be little if any interference with the customary usages and ordinary lives of the people. Their social evolution should be left to themselves. The misdirected zeal for village sanitation should be curbed or wholly checked for the present. Official interference with village government should be discountenanced as far as possible. The people should not be worried to clean out wells and tanks which have been in use from time

immemorial on account of the officious zeal of some sanitary inspector. They must not be forced to cut down hedges and shrubbery round their ancestral homes just because someone sees imaginary cobras in such places. When the people themselves ask for such action to be taken, *then* Government should promptly move in the matter, not before. The inept rewards spent on killing snakes and wild beasts should be discontinued, and the money should be utilised for some more practical purpose. The death-roll ascribed to snakes and animals is for the most part fictitious. The rewards go not to the villager, but to the native official who writes up the record ; to the professional shikari, who makes a livelihood out of the shooting in the neighbourhood, and to the snake-charmer, who mostly breeds the snakes for which the rewards are given ! As for the statistics, I know from personal observation, and from what reliable natives have told me, that a very large number of cases of suicide, infanticide, poisoning, and other secret forms of murder are hushed up with a little expenditure of money and the death entered in the official returns as due to some animal or snake.

All this grandmotherly concern for the protection of the native against himself may appear laudable to goody-goody folk and the comfortable arm-chair critic at home ; but such minute interference with the daily lives of the people is intensely irritating, and often leads on to higher forms of discontent

when the professional agitator mendaciously distorts the intentions of Government. The secret of success in this direction lies in leaving the people alone as much as possible. If the natives of this country are ever to develop higher forms of civilisation, they must be left to develop them in their own way ; there must be no hustling on our part. All we are called upon to do is to give the people a strong and peaceful Government ; for the rest they must be allowed to work out their own salvation in lines they understand and can utilise themselves.

The inhabitants of India, taken as a whole, are peacefully inclined, law-abiding, charitable, and admirable in many of their personal characteristics. Those who have taken the trouble to study them, and understand their customs, beliefs, and racial sentiments, must end by having a kindly respect and liking for them. I have lived a great part of my life among them, and have resided in practically every part of their country, with Rajas in their palaces and with ryots in their mud and thatch huts ; and I personally feel so great an attachment to the land of my adoption that when I retire from active life I mean to settle in it, feeling sure my many native friends will help to make my residence among them welcome in the future as they have in the past.

I mention all this lest it should be inferred from my previous criticism and advice that I am prejudiced against the people and their ancient country.



On the contrary, I have been animated with the friendliest feelings ; and if I have used plain words and stated some unpalatable home-truths, it is because, as the old Indian proverb aptly says, "The enemy flatters, only the well-wisher tells the truth." I may or may not be mistaken in my views. I give them for what they are worth, and therefore trust they will be read in the spirit in which they are written.



# EXPERIMENTAL REFORM

By MOGHAL



## CHAPTER I

### POSSIBILITIES OF SELF-GOVERNMENT

IN considering the question whether it be possible for the diverse races of India to become one united self-governing community we are unfortunately confronted by one of those problems which, intensely interesting as they may be, are yet outside the pale of actual definite conclusion. We may argue as we will with a view to establishing our negative or affirmative, but so long as the subject remains within the realms of controversy at all, we can prove nothing. The dispute, in fine, is of the *solvitur ambulando* order. Once let a united self-governing community become an accomplished fact and the event, it is clear, will answer all doubts and adverse speculations. There will be no further room for discussion. But no disputant can fairly be called upon to logically prove a negative, and in the particular theorem we are considering no mere academic correlation of probabilities will demonstrate a possibility. Personally I should hesitate

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to say that such an event as Indian political homogeneity is impossible ; but this hesitation, I frankly admit, is a mere confession on my part of the limitations of human prescience. I can only deal with what appeals to me as being the reasonable possibilities of such a political cohesion.

It seems to me that the term "united self-governing community" demands some attempt at precise definition. By such a term it would be illogical to postulate too much. All self-governing communities which may logically be termed "united" have yet their very distinct phenomena of political cleavage. And this, indeed, has ever been so, even from the days when Lot and Abraham found it necessary to part company owing to the strife between their herdmen. The antiquity of social and political cleavage might easily be proved, were proof necessary, by references to the history of the Greeks and Romans, or other nations of the past. Plebeian and patrician, oligarch and democrat have their counterparts in socialist and aristocrat, using the latter term not quite in the sense of the Greek *aristos*; and though to-day we may not find so pronounced a Tory as Dr. Johnson, it is certain that our modern Liberals labour under no delusion as to the dual personality which vivifies and controls the State. But these factors of divergence and differentiation are quite compatible, as we know, with a real and national unity; and this being admitted, we may well consider on what basis of solidarity a national

unity as apart from minor political divergencies may rest.

There have been times in the history of mankind when political passion and sentiment have seemed for a time to place the spirit of nationality in a subordinate position. This was so in the great French Revolution and in a minor degree in our own revolution of the seventeenth century. But the careful student of history will recognise that these disturbing phenomena were in reality the great emotions of a national life stirred to depths profound. Without a national soul in France the guillotine would never have disfigured the land of Clovis and Charlemagne with its scarlet stain. Without a national soul in England the axe that fell at Whitehall would never have severed from its royal body that kingly head which, with all its follies, was yet the Lord's anointed. The national soul, indeed, is prepared to stake much where the national honour is concerned. This existence, then, of a national vitality is a prime factor in any scheme of political self-government. Consequently, in any consideration of the question it devolves upon us to inquire whether a national vitality exists in India at the present day, or if not actually now existing, whether there be signs of its genesis and growth.

And at this point we may fitly glance at the historic past of India. Though the Hindus are really a people in whom the historic sense, as we

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understand it, is strangely wanting, we yet know something of their ancient social organisation. From the earliest ages of which any trustworthy records have reached us we find that the Hindus have made communal government the very basis of their social fabric. We can trace the organisation and authority of the village panchayet and the whole system of village administration very far back indeed ; and although the establishment of caste organisation in its modern rigidity is a development of post-Vedic times, here again we can discern the communal idea very practically dominating the life, the ideals, and religion of the people. But are we justified in concluding that the institutions at which we have briefly glanced constitute nationality in the true sense of the term ? I think not. Nationality implies something far more than the existence of a number of small *foci* which, so to speak, are the centre of their own environment. A controlling and co-ordinating force for the whole is essential. But India, I submit, can scarcely be said to have produced such an example of supreme authority. There have, it is true, been kingdoms in India, but the whole country, as we now know it, has never been really united as a homogeneous political organism until we come to the period which is marked by British conquest and dominion. The advent, rise, and gradual establishment of British power in India are imperishably written on the



records of time. But the tremendous vitality and supreme importance of British domination are only now commencing to change the whole thought and spirit of the Indian mind. Herein lies the supreme political interest of the present. For the West, though it has not brought the communal idea to the East, has stimulated the national ideal. The West has ploughed the field with its own political machinery. It has sown with works and blood and tears. It has fertilised the fields with the waters of its freedom, with the spirit of its literature, with the rich self-sacrifice of its concept of duty, with the wealth of altruistic opinions, and over all it has cast the mantle of its protection, the shield of its justice, the invincible prestige, status, and dignity of its citizenship of Empire.

The observant reader will perhaps notice that I have made no reference to religion. This is not at all because I fail to recognise that the spread of Christianity in India has had much to do with fostering the germs of a national ideal; but our proselytising has been unobtrusive. The Christian creed is a gift we have offered to be accepted or rejected. Our scrupulous tolerance of all forms of faith has been to us a great strength, and to the millions whom we rule a great cause for thankfulness. Yet among those Indians who to-day are the most enthusiastic advocates for political reform, they who are Christians are few. The reasons for this need not be examined. The fact is well

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known. But that the spread of Christianity has been an element in fostering aspirations towards nationality I think will be admitted. The general effect of religious ideals on a community may, however, for a moment well claim our attention. A German writer (Dr. Wilhelm Bousset), whose profound analysis of religious evolution is in advance of much of the conventional thinking of to-day, has the following passage which I cannot forbear quoting (Mr. F. B. Low's translation), as touching the bearing of a national religion on national life :—

“National life is created by the union of different tribes. Thus Babylon took its lead of the city communities of the Babylonian plain, and the Babylonian Empire arose. In Egypt the separate districts and provinces were merged into the one Empire, and under the leadership of Moses the tribe of Israel became a nation. Mahomed compelled the Bedouin Arabs to become a national unity. In the transition from the tribal life to the national life the fiction of blood relationship and blood unity, on which tribal life is based, vanishes. The fundamental law of blood revenge and blood feud which has hitherto obtained is replaced by the idea of regulated justice. No longer does the clan, the family, avenge the murder of one of its members ; those in authority, acting in the interests of the whole community, guard the inviolability of the law and the idea of public justice arises.

“New links in the common life are forged, a great expansion in the idea of life in the community takes place. The nation takes over the management of a large number of matters which concern the whole community. Division of labour begins ; the separate occupations—those of the soldier, the peasant, the artisan—become now distinct. Fighting still remains a most important occupation of the communal life, but it is not the only important one. There are also the works of peace—industry, trade, mighty buildings, undertaken by

the many; the beginnings of art, regulations for the administration of justice, social institutions. The nation experiences a history in common and an attempt is made to fix this history in the memory, at least in rough outline. The art of chronology arises, the art of writing is developed in its most elementary form; the events of the past, the great deeds of ancestors handed down chiefly in an oral form, mostly in song, or already written, cement more firmly the common life. The moral, personal, historical relation now enters into the life of man in the community in place of the merely natural one."

It is important to bear in mind that, while a common religion tends to arise from a common nationality, a common religion by no means makes very strongly, if at all, for a common nationality. The Christian States of Europe are to-day all different nations. Nationality we must recognise is really distinct from religion, though a religion common to a community, assuming such community not to be a nation, would naturally possess much synthetic value in the constructive processes of the national ideal.

The truly potent causes in creating a nationality are affinity of interests, racial, social, and commercial, a common theologic ideal, and the existence of a common controlling authority, whether vested in an individual or a corporate body representing and expressing the popular will. We thus see that the national life may truly exist under forms of government as wide apart as an absolute monarchy on the one hand and a democracy on the other, but it is obvious that in the first case the element of self-government is entirely absent.

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It follows, therefore, that if what we have postulated be the true bases for the creation of a self-governing community, India presents many complex conditions and certain anomalies which come into sharp conflict with those conditions we have assumed to be essential. An examination of the conditions which obtain in India leads us to the following classification of their main characteristics, namely :—

(1) The racial factors are heterogeneous and antagonistic. (2) The social and religious customs and beliefs of the people are intensely divergent, and in the community which embraces the largest number of individuals professing one common faith—namely, the Hindu—we find innumerable divisions and subdivisions of caste. (3) The commercial interests may be said to be homogeneous. (4) The common controlling authority exists not in the people themselves, but in a nation of foreigners.

It is clear that before the people of India can weld themselves into a self-governing community a profound modification of the fourth condition is essential. Indeed, the possibility of this modification is really the crux of the whole problem and demands the closest and weightiest examination. The first and second conditions, though presenting many factors which make union extremely difficult, are not of a nature so radically intractable as to render the eventual evolution of self-government

impossible. But the existence of a common controlling authority is an absolute essential, and at present that controlling authority is, so to speak, not of the people themselves. Self-government for India in a national sense, then, implies the renunciation by Great Britain of certain prerogatives which the conquest of India has conferred upon her and the transfer of these prerogatives and obligations to Indians themselves.

And here it may with justice be observed that this ideal of national self-government springs very naturally indeed from the branching life of our past administration. The Company of merchants became in time a body of rulers; from trade and conquest sprang bureaucracy, and this bureaucracy, ever quickened through the years with the fresh and unfolding ideals of our British national life and constitutional modifications, has by degrees, often against its own innate concepts of administration, sometimes in conformity with such concepts, been compelled to delegate power and control more and more to the Indian people themselves.

Students of Keene's History may remember that this author synchronises the new era in India with the period when Lord Mornington destroyed French influence, beat down Tippu, and made all Native States accept the arbitration and control of his Government. This, he is careful to add, was "not a conquest of India," but the foundations were laid for a social and political fabric on which

the various populations of the vast peninsula should hereafter meet in unity and order. But the point upon which too great stress cannot be laid is that what Keene designated as the "advance of the Indian races to a united nationality and a common civilisation" has implied in modern times the control of this country by Great Britain. It means so now. India is not to-day a united nationality, but an aggregation of communities existing under the sovereignty of Great Britain. The measure of self-government allowed to this aggregate of communities is dependent largely on the inclination of Great Britain to meet the growing political aspirations of the people and the capacity of the people themselves to play the part of independent colleagues in the great work of empire. A separate and independent Indian nationality cannot be assumed; that is, a nationality with the power to declare war, to make peace, to possess an independent financial autonomy, to treat independently with the nations of the world. Such an assumption at once sweeps the sovereignty and control of Great Britain aside, and is quite untenable in any argument which professes to deal seriously with political conditions as they exist to-day. We are not discussing the possibilities of a revolution, but the probabilities of a wider and more evenly adjusted balance of power being created, under which new political conditions the Indian shall acquire a larger share of executive and administrative control than he to-day possesses.

Here we are on safe ground, and, as it seems to me, the only logical ground. And not only are we on safe ground, but on soil which has already yielded a harvest.

To make this conclusion clearer, let us summarise as briefly as may be the extent to which self-governing representative machinery exists among the communities of India to-day. Representative organisation in India, then, may be classified as follows :—

(1) Village Panchayets ; (2) Local Boards ; (3) Municipalities ; (4) Chambers of Commerce and Trade Associations ; (5) University Senates ; (6) Provincial Councils ; (7) the Supreme Council ; (8) the Secretary of State's Council.

Although the authority and influence of the village panchayets, or village councils (consisting of five persons), has very largely decayed (more's the pity), these little rural boards do, as a matter of fact, settle many minor problems of local interest and adjudicate on many disputes. As far as their influence extends they may be considered truly representative. I would certainly increase the authority of these ancient and national institutions. The local boards and municipalities exercise the functions of self-government on a more extended scale than that of the panchayets. In the aggregate they deal with and control a vast and increasing local revenue and expenditure, and although certain of their acts are subject to the ultimate sanction of the provincial or Supreme Legislatures, they are in

many highly important matters, very closely affecting the daily life and welfare of the people, true administrative and executive bodies, fairly decentralised and independent. The Government, it is true, may, in the event of gross corruption being manifest or scandalous inefficiency being proved, suspend or entirely abrogate their powers ; but this is very seldom done. Moreover, on those rare occasions when the State deems it necessary to inhibit the popular control of local affairs, the general principles of self-government throughout the country are in no wise threatened.

The chambers of commerce and the trades associations, though by their very constitution outside the realm of politics and established to deal with a special class of problems, are, as a matter of fact, often called upon by Government to tender advice and suggestions on subjects which closely affect the welfare of the people. These remarks are of special application to the chambers of commerce, membership of which is by no means confined to European firms and merchants. These chambers are steadily growing in strength and importance, and count among their members a number of non-officials, both Indian and European, whose influence and opinion carry much weight, while the aggregate value of the decisions of these bodies and the momentum of their concerted action are very distinct factors in influencing not only public opinion, but the acts of the administration.



The senates and councils of the Universities also form strong *nuclei* of opinion. The Government can seldom, if ever, ignore their carefully considered views without incurring at least the charge of grave indiscretion and engendering unpopularity more or less unpleasant. It is unnecessary to observe that the highly educated personal element in these bodies makes itself felt in a thousand different directions throughout the country. Of the Provincial, Supreme, and Secretary of State's Councils it is unnecessary to speak. They constitute the Government in being, the actual administrative machinery of the State in its highest expression. With a decentralisation scheme in process of formulation at the present moment and Lord Minto's scheme on the anvil for the general broadening of the Councils, it should be evident that the higher political forces of India are fairly in the current of administrative change.

We find, therefore, that while the diverse races of India are, at present, not one united self-governing community, the broad principles of unity and self-government have a real vitality and articulate expression through many channels. If the people cannot veto the acts of Government they certainly can and do very largely control the legislative expression in which such acts shall be clothed. It may be pertinent here to remind my readers that in no country in the world can the decision of the legislature be held to be a unanimous expression of the opinion of the whole populace. The vast army of dissentients must always remain. Even

could the referendum be applied to all big political problems, it is obvious that a minority more or less approximating to the recorded majority must of necessity exist. The races of mankind are not unanimous, nor are they ever likely to be.

But a really united self-governing community must be invested with powers which certainly are not yet perceptible in the higher branches of our Indian Administration, so far as Indians themselves are concerned. The people politically possess little or no voice in the great problem of taxation. Their representatives in the Council Chambers are altogether too weak in numbers to outvote an official measure. Moreover, assuming the official element out-voted or overridden, there exists no alternative power for carrying on the business of the country. If our existing organisation of bureaucracy is to be flung on the scrap-heap, what is to take its place? If the relations between Great Britain and India are to be profoundly modified politically, on what lines are we to proceed? It is possible enough that certain elements of bureaucracy may be fused into our new machinery of administration, and that a true ideal of self-government may still be evolved. Nor need this new thing be a mere slavish replica of Western methods, which naturally enough bear the stamp of their own environment. The matrix in which we pour our molten metal may be an ideal suited to the people of India, and in no wise destructive of the cohesion of the Empire. Let us see.

## CHAPTER II

### THE POLITICAL BALANCE

“**B**Y what steps and in what period of time is it possible for the diverse races of India to become a united self-governing community ?” The question is not an easy one to answer. It cannot be replied to by mere dogmatic assertion, by vivid imagination, or by the formulation of any theoretical scheme. This is a kind of riddle of the Sphinx, but far more profound than that solved by *Œdipus*. Assuming, as I hold I am justified in doing, that the concept of self-government, so far as this essay is concerned, does not embrace the condition of political severance between India and Great Britain, it must be clear that we have to deal with a balance of political forces which will demand the extremest delicacy in adjustment. For really there can be no self-government in the highest degree unless the widest authority is placed in the hands of the people themselves. So much, especially of recent years, has been written on this extremely controversial

subject by Indians themselves and by others, that the temptation is strong to examine in detail the suggestions put forward by those who have contributed to the literature of the theme. But on reflection I am quite sure that such a procedure would be more a hindrance than a help to any elucidation of the subject. The babel of voices would be overpowering. From the vast heap of material which has now accumulated we might select much that is good and fitting wherewith to build up the edifice ; but I am afraid that, long before I had done, the reader would be heartily sick at watching the long process of selection on the one hand and rejection on the other.

The highest concept of self-government involves as I have said, the recognition of the principle that the widest authority shall be vested in those who govern. They that rule must possess the power, if only for a longer or shorter period, of enforcing their enactments. Without this power there is no rule. The concept, moreover, means something more than this. It assumes a political ego which, whether it move sometimes towards the realisation of one aspiration and sometimes towards the realisation of another, is yet the same ego. Diverse it may be in its ideals, but one certainly in its general progress in the path of political development. And this again supposes something else. It supposes not only the power to conceive, but the power to translate concept into deed ; to control, and, if

necessary, to defend against internal hostile force or external aggression.

Any endeavour, therefore, to predict the period of time necessary for the consummation of self-government or for the establishment on a firm basis of any radical modifications in the political organisation of India appears to me to be necessarily of a distinctly inconclusive nature. I therefore shall not attempt it. All that, in my humble opinion, can be done is to carefully watch the growing political needs of the country, and bend with a sympathetic ear to the voice of the people. But we must be quite sure it is the voice of the people—the true *vox populi*, the true utterance of humanity echoing the voice of God. We must not mistake the interested clamour of a mere class for that articulate expression which when true and clear comes from the Highest.

## CHAPTER III

### POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS

THE next question is : "How can encouragement best be given to legitimate political aspirations ?" A definition of the term "legitimate political aspirations" would, it is easy to conceive, depend very largely on the personal prejudices or reasoned convictions of him who should make it. Such a definition falls not within the realm of mathematics, and is like the well-known differentiation between orthodoxy and heterodoxy. The term "legitimate" depends much on the point of view. Mr. Gokhale's "legitimate" may differ from that of Mr. Rees. Lord Curzon's "legitimate" I fancy would join issue very sharply with Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee's ; and, in fine, what seems lawful and just to one man may strike another as being entirely opposed to all right, reason, and expediency. However, as the scope of this essay postulates a united self-governing community, it is necessary to form a concept of political legitimacy in any scheme of constructive government that may be considered.

The fact that certain aspirations in the minds of Indians may clash with my own views of what is expedient must not be allowed to prejudice the definition. For instance, it is perfectly legitimate for the natives of any country to desire a ruler of their own blood and lineage. By no process of sophistry can the unlawfulness of such a wish be maintained. The right to a ruler who shall fulfil these qualifications is, in the abstract, a perfectly natural and human one; the wish is legitimate and righteous. That it may not or cannot be gratified will not shake the logic of our postulate one whit. But I think it may be taken for granted that, in any examination of the Indian political problem, we are compelled to read into our concept of legitimacy not only certain factors of expediency, but certain factors of practicability also. We cannot, much as we might wish to, get outside the phenomena of things as they are. The best and wisest of Indians, I believe, see this as clearly as we do. They recognise that in this matter, as in others, the ideal is an abstraction held down and fettered as it were by the forces of the concrete and practical. In politics, as in ethics, the spirit indeed is willing oftentimes while the flesh is weak. And, consequently, the abstractly legitimate, it is seen, must always lie behind and more or less remote from the practically and concretely legitimate. But the practical and concrete, be it observed, is always winning its way towards the

abstract and ideal. Bit by bit it transforms and transmutes the latter into itself, and becomes the practical of any particular present. True, the horizon still remains. Everlastingly the ideal unfolds and beckons us from afar. The future of to-day becomes the present of to-morrow, and so to ever new vistas and boundaries turn the eyes of humanity, eager with hopes and fears.

This being so, the clearest minds in India will discard the impracticable even though it should be legitimate in the abstract. They will, in fine, tend, in the main, to hold the legitimate to be that which is not too far off for realisation. There were kings in India long before there were English viceroys, but that was so because the system was concrete and practical—not abstract. But the Indian who dreams to-day of an Asoka or an Akbar to displace in part or in whole the visible potentiality of Western rule is clearly anticipating a repetition of history because his imagination is undisciplined and his reasoning on existing probabilities and existing data is at fault. What, then, are legitimate political aspirations and at the same time practicable ones ?

It is desirable in considering the question at this stage to recognise once for all that for India two of the great functions of national government must be absolutely retained by Great Britain. Great Britain cannot from the very nature of the relations which exist between the two countries part with



her prerogatives of financial control and military control. Outside these two functions we may do much, and I would submit to the judgment of all fair critics that we are doing much. We cannot have an Indian as Viceroy, or as Governor or Lieutenant-Governor, and an Indian Secretary as the administrative head of one of the great departments of the State would, in my humble opinion, be impossible. It is not at all a question of such a man possessing the intellectual ability and high character necessary for such a post. He certainly would not possess the racial qualifications, and his presence in such a position would be at once a potent cause for the most intractable friction. It is quite useless for the mere abstractionist obsessed by his ideals of theoretical perfection to ask why the racial disability would be overpowering. If such a theorist cannot see why, without argument, no amount of argument will make the thing plain.

I have seen it urged ere now that the Moghals with a free and spacious policy elevated Hindus to the highest offices in the State ; and consequently, so it is contended, we English should do the same. The conclusion is not warranted. The political data are different. The Moghals, let it be admitted, largely affiliated their Hindu subjects with the work of government, and Akbar's able minister Todar Mal is sure of immortality, so long as the stones of history shall hold together. But as Mr. Rees has lately pointed out in his book "The Real

India," though the Moghals "were foreigners as we are, they were Asiatics, and the existence of a solidarity of sentiment wanting in our case may be admitted." Again let me quote Mr. Rees:—

"It seems that the Mahomedan kings of the time were accessible to their subjects, and personal in their rule, though practically absolute authority was delegated to governors of provinces. The army was composed of levies supplied fully equipped by local chiefs, and by individual soldiers who served for hire. The Hindus had to pay the poll tax, but they were generally employed in the administration and sometimes as generals. The Emperor Babar in his memoirs says that the revenue officials, merchants, and workpeople were all Hindus, and much the same might be said at the present day, for the actual government is generally in the hands of Brahmins, who are supervised by a handful of Civil Servants who form a *corps d'élite*."

There is, however, I submit, no real parallel to be drawn between the British Empire in India and that of the Moghals. It may also be profitably borne in mind that the break up of the Moghal power after the death of Aurungzebe was largely due to events in the Deccan, in which territory the Viceroy appointed by the Court at Delhi became open revolutionaries and trucklers to the Mahrathas. That should be a salutary object-lesson to us, for it indicates very clearly the danger of delegating power to Asiatic satraps. By what steps, then, I again ask, are we to proceed? How may we safely encourage legitimate political aspirations?

It has often been urged that municipal government in India is more or less a failure. So it is.

It is often a failure, too, in other parts of the world ; or if not wholly a failure its results are disappointing in the extreme. Perhaps we sometimes expect too much. Certain it is that municipalities often seem to achieve too little. There is no magic in the phrase "municipal government" or "local self-government"—none whatever. I hold that whether local self-government or any kind of government be a success or failure largely depends upon the governed. Intelligent, enterprising, liberal-minded, and high-spirited citizens will have good municipal government—they will insist upon it—they will not rest until they get it. It is the honest, enterprising, and intelligent citizen who is not a councillor who really keeps the municipality up to the mark. As with municipal government, so with provincial government, so with the Supreme Government. But the outside criticism, to be of any value, must be intelligent, well-informed, and, above all, non-partisan and tolerant—wholesomely, healthily tolerant. Such criticism, if properly appreciated, should be of the highest value to the legislature. The thing in India is not only to get it—to be quite sure that it is untainted ; but to focus it—to co-ordinate it—to acquire it in an intelligible form, so that it may be fairly weighed, examined, and analysed. How is all this to be accomplished ? How are we to make these political aspirations the subject of definite material experiment ?

I have no patience with men of the Dr. Rutherford stamp, who parade their profound ignorance of India as knowledge of India ; who come out to this country on a flying visit, accept crude odds and ends of information for the whole information, particles of fact for the whole fact, very often falsehood for truth, and having, so to speak, stuffed this collection of curiosities into their political wallet, return home and exhibit their wares to people so credulously silly and ignorant that they are actually willing to be impressed by such mountebanks of reform. For example, Dr. Rutherford on his return to the House of Commons had the effrontery to tell his hearers that "the officials had captured the universities, the municipalities, the district, provincial, and Imperial Councils, and in fact every public institution, and they had deprived the people of India of the opportunity of taking advantage of the great effort made by Lord Ripon." Now this quotation is an evidence of Dr. Rutherford's utter incapacity to speak on the subject. The municipalities of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Karachi, Rangoon, and the big towns generally, are by no means dominated by Government officials, and the same freedom of action is conspicuous throughout the country. When Dr. Rutherford charges the officials with having "captured" the municipalities, I would remind him, what he seems to have entirely overlooked, that the Indian municipalities were created by the Indian Government—in other words,

by that very bureaucracy regarding which he has hardly a good word to say. There are nearly eight hundred<sup>1</sup> municipalities in the country at the present moment, I should say—I have no figures before me—and the part they play in administration is very fairly put by Mr. Rees. He thus summarises the position :—

“The elected members vary in number, from one half in Bombay to three-quarters in the United Provinces and Madras, and not more than a quarter of the members of the committee may be salaried officers of Government in Madras, Bombay, and Bengal, while considerable powers of control are in all cases reserved to Government and its officers. About two-thirds of the aggregate municipal income is derived from taxation and the remainder from other sources, including Government contributions. . . . The development of local industries in rural areas has been accomplished through the agency of local boards, which in the beginning, like municipalities, partook of a voluntary character. In 1871 Acts were passed in every province dividing the country into local fund circles and creating consultation boards nominated by the Government, with the collector as president. Local taxation was now introduced, and in 1882 Lord Ripon replaced the local committee by a network of boards on which the non-official preponderated, and the elective principle was recognised in the same way as in municipalities, but the degree to which this system has been introduced is not constant, but varies in different provinces.”

If people in England imagine that the representative principle is everywhere in India hankered after they make a great mistake. India is not a land of democrats, but in its ideals of status and authority and what constitutes fitness for rule,

<sup>1</sup> Seven hundred and fifty-six in 1906-07.—ED.

administration, and control, one of the most conservative of countries. I will admit that this characteristic of the people is changing, but very, very slowly, and the change is mainly in the big towns—the ports, where the fusion of the Occident and the Orient is more marked than up-country. Mr. Rees is, broadly speaking, right when he asserts “that no man of any position amongst his countrymen will submit himself, at any rate in rural districts, to the ordeal of election or the chance of having to accept as his colleagues persons of low caste and slight consideration.” There is, too, an indisposition to accept the vexatious and exacting requirements of public life, and little doubt exists that the inhabitants of the districts, if they could be polled, would by enormous majorities vote for leaving all administrative business in the hands of the impartial and professional administrator who represents the British Government and is their local providence.

Whether this be so or not, however, there is not much doubt, I fancy, that we must, to some extent, remodel our administration. And it must be remodelled on lines which will be acceptable to men upon whom is pressed more and more every day the cramping influence and restrictions of bureaucracy. The Simla scheme of reform does not, I believe, commend itself to a single Hindu in the country. The proposal to create Advisory Councils is largely ridiculed, and the methods

suggested for the expansion of the Legislative Councils have been condemned as being distinctly retrograde and reactionary. The *Indian Review*, in an article on the unrest in India published a few months ago, gives what I believe to be a true synopsis of the Hindu ideal, thus:—

“What India wants is a real living representation of the people on a wider scale; a council to which the representatives are elected by purely non-official bodies, with power to initiate legislation, to discuss and to divide on the budget, with such safeguards as may be deemed essential. In fact, the entire scheme of reform should be so devised as to enable the people to take a larger share in the government of their country and to train them to govern themselves. No proposal for reform which has not this objective in view will be popular or conducive to the best interests of the country.”

I do not consider that India is ripe for a Council created purely from the votes of non-officials. While striving towards the attainment of a fuller representation, it is necessary that we should proceed on practical lines and recognise the virtues of a policy of reciprocation. If we are to make this experiment at all (and in my opinion it cannot be much longer delayed) I would say begin with one province only. The experiment would be made in the interests of all provinces. I would make the constitution of the council embrace an equal number of (1) covenanted English officials; (2) uncovenanted English officials; (3) Hindu officials; (4) Mahomedan officials; (5) English non-officials; (6) Hindu and Mahomedan non-

officials. Were the province selected for the experiment to be Bombay, a proportion of Parsis would have to be brought in: for in this province the Parsis, though numerically weak in proportion to the other classes of the population, form a community in which nearly every male is an educated man either commercially or professionally. Few though they may be in numbers, they largely colour the life and thought of the province of Bombay, and in the capital their influence is universal, so to speak. The Council proposed would be brought together by nomination or direct appointment and by popular election. In detail it might be composed as follows :—

Eight covenanted English officials; eight uncovenanted English officials; eight Hindu officials, and eight Mahomedan officials, to be appointed by Government. Eight English, four Hindu, and four Mahomedan non-officials, to be elected.

We should thus have twenty-four English or European members and twenty-four Indian members. In Bombay I would suggest eight Parsi officials and the like number of Parsi non-officials. This, it is true, would give us forty Oriental members as against twenty-four Occidental members, but I do not think there would be much danger of the Hindu, Mahomedan and Parsi members forming a coalition against the European element by reason of racial antagonism, prejudice, or caprice. Any attempt at basing the proportion



of members of each community on the numerical strength of the community they were drawn from would be a mistake. In one province we should have the Hindu vote swamp everything, in another the Mahomedan vote would dominate the franchise. I have merely made eight the number as an illustration ; six, twelve, sixteen, any of these numbers might be selected ; but I would not have the Council too big, and I am of opinion that eight is a good workable unit.

I would give a vote to all European and Eurasian males in our experimental province over the age of twenty-one. They would be entitled to one vote for an English or Eurasian candidate for membership, one vote for a Hindu and one for a Mahomedan or Parsi. Men of other nationalities would be equally entitled to one vote for each candidate ; but the Oriental franchise would be somewhat differently constituted. The Hindu, Mahomedan, and Parsi communities would, I believe, not be entirely satisfied with a mere age qualification among themselves. However, the franchise qualifications for these communities could be easily arranged. The Governor or Lieutenant-Governor, as the case might be, would be the President of the Council. The present Governor's Councils would disappear entirely. Any member would have the power of initiating a Bill which, when brought forward, would have to be passed into committee by a majority vote.

Failing this vote the Bill would have to be dropped for that session. A Bill dealt with in committee would be again brought forward in Council for a second reading debate. If passed it would go up to the Viceroy's Council for ratification. The Supreme Council would have power to suggest modifications or reject. If passed in the Supreme Council the Bill would go on to the Secretary of State for India for final ratification. It is plain that the Secretary of State for India would very rarely indeed exercise his veto on a Bill thus sent up, but occasions might conceivably arise when the Home authorities might not see eye to eye with the Indian legislature. Bills thus carefully prepared would, however, ordinarily receive the Secretary of State's ratification as a mere matter of form.

From the members of Council the Governor or Lieutenant-Governor would select his chief ministers of State, who would fulfil the same functions as do our own Secretaries of State at home. The ordinary departmental system would consequently remain, but it would be subject to a far wider and more searching measure of criticism and control. The Council would have the power of legislating on everything (with one exception) appertaining to its province. That exception would be the army, the control and organisation of which must remain absolutely undisturbed and outside the current of any political dialectics

or polemics. No member of Council would be paid by the State, apart, that is, from the emoluments of any office he might hold. I have elsewhere referred to the subject of financial autonomy. Any unwise interference in this realm would be safeguarded by the vetoing power possessed by the Supreme Government. And beyond this, at present, I hardly think it wise to go. The measure of reform which I have sketched may not satisfy the advanced section of Indian politicians; but these gentlemen may rest assured that if they want nothing less than everything which they have scheduled in their programme, such a change as that implies will be held by the British nation to be quite impracticable. Public opinion at home is already commencing to take alarm at the violent and wicked attempts at terrorism which have followed the vituperative sophistries of Bengali agitators.

The idea of appointing Indians, in any number, to collectorships or commissionerships ignores altogether the facts of the past, out of which have been created the conditions of the present. I do not wish to labour this point. If not obvious to enlightened Indians, I must either suspect their reasoning powers or their sincerity in argument. There is a vast difference between the functions of a mixed and collective legislature and the individual responsibilities of executive officials. To give a concrete illustration: there is nothing

unreasonable or opposed to the principles of rational administration in a body of legislators (among whom, we may suppose, there might not be a single architect or engineer) deciding upon the erection of a public building or the construction of a railway bridge. Expert opinion would be at the command of such a body of men and they could obtain the best advice on all details connected with expenditure, while the best constructive skill and talent would be at their command. They would, however, be regarded as singularly wanting in wisdom if they insisted that to one of themselves should be given the work of construction. Here the disability is ignorance.

The objection to throwing open to Indians the higher executive appointments in India is simply that to do so would disintegrate the whole fabric of the executive which translates into work the administrative command. The Indian may retort, Well, if Englishmen would refuse to take up appointments under these altered conditions, Indians would not. No doubt. But history is not written to be wiped out quite in this manner. The compelling force which brings about such a change must be something more than mere idealism or altruism. It must be power on one side or the other translated into action and authority. At present the action and the authority lie with the British Empire. And that to-day is the sovereign consummation of the whole problem. It would

be well for those persons who talk in a violently patriotic strain about their "motherland" to remember this fact. All kinds of changes may be made, and many changes no doubt will be made, so long as it is believed that this power of action and authority remains unweakened. But once let the potentiality for these essentials be transferred from the British Empire to any other community, State, or nation, and it is clear we should be in the thick of events which at the present juncture are not worth discussing. They will discuss themselves then with the inevitableness of accomplished fact, and a new page will be written in the history of mankind.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CAUSES OF DISCONTENT

THE causes of the "present discontents" in India, to borrow a phrase from Burke, are many. In the main, British policy and individuals of British birth are responsible for them, but responsible in a sense which, regarded broadly, implies no discredit, but quite the reverse, on many years of continuous conquest and administration. In the September, 1907, issue of *The National Review*, the Indian correspondent of that publication, in the opening passages of a very able letter, observes :—

"To understand the present situation it is first necessary to appreciate the various causes of unrest. In my last letter I touched upon some of the more obvious and deep-seated of these causes. The lack of flexibility in the administration, the reluctance to adjust the system to changing conditions, the growing lack of touch between the Government and the people, the vague and unformed aspirations induced by the dazzling rise of New Japan, were, I think, among the points noted. Be it understood that these points are not new. With the exception of the reflex and accidental influence of Japan they have been slowly at work for a long time, but recent events have

served to accelerate and focus them. Foremost among these events may be placed the recent General Election in England and the departure of Lord Curzon."

Thus the writer in the *National*, but there are, in my opinion, many causes other than those set forth by him. They include the Russian Revolution and the birth of the Duma, the strange phenomenon of a constitution being formed with a quite startling rapidity in Persia, the movement towards a like form of popular representation in China, the continual prevalence of the plague in India, the steady upward trend in prices, the bitter tone of hostility towards the British Raj taken up by a large section of the Indian press, the virulent opposition against Anglo-Indian administration which goes on with ever-increasing strength in Great Britain, and, finally, the effect of our educational system in India.

It seems strange at the first glance that lack of flexibility in the administration should be cited as a cause of unrest. In the things that touch him most closely the Indian is one of the most inflexible creatures on the face of the earth. The iron hand of caste and custom in this country holds all men and women in a relentless grip, but where administration is concerned it seems they desire a greater flexibility. Why? There can only be one reason, and it is a distinctly human one. It is a reason which lies at the base of all human action and endeavour. The Indian wants a greater flexibility in the administration because he recognises, what

indeed cannot be denied, that the administration is exclusive. Up to a certain point the road is open to him. Beyond that it is barred. He wants the barrier swept away. "The reluctance to adjust the system to changing conditions" is a kind of corollary to the foregoing. No doubt it exists. It is considered a distinct grievance.

As for the growing lack of touch between Government and people, I have often asked myself whether there ever was a time when the "Government" of India was really in touch with the "people." I am inclined to think there never was. The people are so vast; the Government is so small. Individual Englishmen have been often in touch with the "people" in a way—some more, some less; but the men really in closest touch with the people, I am of opinion, have more often been non-officials, or officials not of the Indian Civil Service. And it will always be so. The Englishmen in India who occupy high official positions, or any "covenanted" position, are not often even in touch with their own fellow-countrymen who may be in what is termed a lower station of life. They either ignore them entirely, or occasionally (very rarely, thank goodness) attempt to "patronise" them. Men whose attitude towards their own countrymen in a foreign land is of this nature can hardly be expected to be past masters in the art of "being in touch" or successful exponents of the grace of political sympathy. Nor are they.



At the same time, so much cant and hypocritical rubbish is continually talked on this subject that it is but fair to the official Englishman to say that it is not all his fault. How can he have any real everyday sympathy, except more or less in the abstract, with communities whose social ideals are utterly different from his own, who regard many of the commonest actions of his life with abhorrence, and in their hearts class him as an inferior, though they may bow down to the earth before him? Again, there is, in my opinion, not much doubt that, were the relations between officials and Indians to become socially more intimate and less conventional, there would be many disadvantages attending such a change. The spectacle of a Hindu or Mahomedan on terms of cordial social familiarity with an English official would give rise to all kinds of rumours. Both would be regarded with the utmost suspicion. For the East is intensely suspicious. The mental attitude of the Oriental is that nothing is ever done out of the common without something out of the common being expected. The result is that all social intercourse is more or less ceremonial—attar, pan, garlands, fireworks, flowery addresses, graceful salaaming—all mere froth, effervescence, theatrical, meaning no more than "my dear sir" or "your most obedient servant" at the head and tail of a letter. The East smiles at the West and the West smiles at the East. But the smile is not half as sincere as the scowl and the frown would be,

were these to appear on those countenances behind the eyes of which rest the soul and the spirit of different creeds and different civilisations.

Then again, if we cannot be profoundly wise, we can at least be frank, unless we be moral cowards. Why should there be much sympathy between Indians and Englishmen? We have conquered their country. Do you think that creates sympathy? Any man who does think so must be an utter fool. We have administered the land honestly and well. Let this even be granted. Will you point me a single nation that was ever yet grateful for benefits which flowed from the hand of the conqueror? Did we Britons love the Romans? Is there much gratitude in Ireland to-day towards Great Britain? No, do not let us delude ourselves. We are not miracle-mongers. We shall not gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles. But I must, to be quite just, qualify the foregoing remarks a little. Between the Englishmen and Parsis, who are, of course, as much foreigners in India—broadly speaking—as we are, there do exist very close ties of real friendship, social and otherwise. Any Englishman who really knows the Parsis will bear me out in this. They are wonderfully intelligent, polite, refined, and in addition to this are actuated by a charity, sympathy, and kindness of disposition which not only wins esteem but arouses true friendship and affection. The only pity is there are so few of them. It is perfectly true that there are

Mahomedans and Hindus with whom very cordial relations can be established ; but these communities are on an altogether different plane. Racial distinctions between the Englishman and the Parsi are often for all practical purposes non-existent.

The vague and unformed aspirations induced by the dazzling rise of New Japan I regard more as a phase of the discontent in India than as a factor in its causation. That events in Japan have produced these aspirations among many people in India there is not the slightest doubt. The result of the last General Election in England and the departure of Lord Curzon have both contributed to arouse feelings antagonistic to the administration, but in Lord Curzon's case the effect was dual. To the Indian people—as distinct from the Anglo-Indian community—the departure of Lord Curzon came as a blessed relief. It was not his “departure” which made them discontented. That filled the articulate portion of them with delight. His presence and influence in the country they had long sickened of, and in my humble opinion with excellent reason. There is altogether too much imagination in the *National's* correspondent when he says, speaking of Lord Curzon's resignation :—

“The public of India regarded it as a downfall, an overthrow, in some sense a degradation. To them it seemed as though the King's vicegerent, the Viceroy who was looked upon as omnipotent, had been hurled from his high place. The forcing of Lord Curzon's resignation was the greatest

blunder made in India for years, not on his account, but on account of his office. Any scheme, however imperative, should have been postponed rather than belittle the office of Viceroy."

All this is absurd. It ignores everyday facts of our Indian administration, and above all it fails to recognise the growing influence of the English press, the British Parliament, and English public opinion on Indian affairs. To read the passage quoted, one would imagine that the right of memorialising the Secretary of State for India as against a decision of the Viceroy in Council did not exist, or that the power of carrying an appeal to the Privy Council against the judgment of the Indian High Court were a fiction. Finally, it may be said with perfect truth that Lord Curzon brought his resignation on himself. If there was a blunder, he was the blunderer. But it is useless to revive (indeed, the scope of this essay will not allow of my reviving) the arguments of a controversy over which the grass is already growing.

To understand, or even to faintly appreciate, the political situation in India, one of two things is essential: (1) a knowledge of the country derived from a study of the written records of its past history, or (2) a residence of some years in the country. It need hardly be added that 1 plus 2 is a far stronger equipment for grappling with the problem than 1 or 2 alone. From these two springs of cognition branch many important streams

of fact: (1) India is not one country but many countries. (2) Religious thought, sentiment, and ideals enter tremendously into the practical, everyday life of the whole people, whether they be Hindu or Mahomedan. (3) There is a permanent and strong antagonism between the two great communities in the country. (4) The Queen's proclamation of 1858 is considered by many—by the majority of educated Indians—as conferring upon the natives of India the full right to hold, so long as they are qualified, the highest posts in the administration. (5) The past fifty years of education have produced an ever-increasing community able to qualify in the highest educational tests which may be laid down for admission to the public service. (6) The increasing number of Indians who now go to Great Britain has led to English ideals of constitutional government and the equality of the individual being regarded as *desiderata* for the East. (7) The rise of prices in India and the continuation of plague are causes of depression and discontent.

It is needless now, unfortunately, to speak of the sedition openly preached in the native press, but I may cite as contributory causes of discontent the irritation caused by suits at law between Europeans and Indians; the growth of a poor white community; the "nexus" between Indian agitators in India and English agitators at home; and the administrative evil wrought by continual

transfers of officials, and the want of continuity in individual control which is caused by leave and furlough. But possibly my readers will think my category of causes is already long enough. You are not going to alter these things in a day. They cannot be cut down as the reaper mows down a field of corn. Yet we must gather in our harvest ; somehow we must separate the grain from the chaff, grind it in our best mills and make the finest and the purest flour we can. The seed is of our sowing—all of us, English, Hindu, and Mahomedan ; and all of us must work together in the great labour of honest production and transmutation. How ? Ah ! that is the question. Well, speaking as an Englishman, I say we are emphatically not going to further the work by striving to reconcile the irreconcilable ; by striving to compound elements the contact of which will merely result in the production of an explosion ; by endeavouring to mix molecules the nature of which is to remain for ever antagonistically apart. It is something gained to recognise the elemental *non possumus*. Were this not so, half mankind might still be trying to solve the quadrature of the circle, to devise a mechanism of perpetual motion, or to discover a universal coefficient. If men would agree they must pay deference to the principle of compromise, they must recognise not only that the ideal is always far off, but that the path to the ideal lies through successive graduations of expediency. Above all,

they might reflect on this fact, that the thing they accomplish to-day may merely give the generation which comes after them all the trouble of undoing. We have heard of men working for posterity. One way of doing so is to give posterity as little unnecessary work to do as possible.

Sedition may be described as a disease which appears in the body politic when discontent, real or factitious, makes itself manifest by unlawful, irregular and violent means among the people of a State or certain sections of the population thereof. Sedition is less violent than insurrection, rebellion, or treason, but it is often the forerunner of these gloomy and tragic conditions of society, and in my opinion is usually more difficult to deal with effectively. For it must be recognised that discontent among the populace may be just and logical enough. A populace has a perfect right to be discontented. It is only when discontent endeavours by illegal methods to force the hands of the lawful authority that it becomes sedition. And it must further be remembered that the authority in being is the source whence proceeds the indictment. And authorities in being are not infallible. The dividing line between a justifiable expression of discontent and acts of sedition is often not clear, and hence the great difficulty experienced by both the legislature and the administration not only in defining sedition but in dealing with it. The discontent which eventually materialises in seditious

expression may, as I have said, be real or artificial. A Government, for example, may make unjust, oppressive, or irritating laws, or the servants of Government may administer even just laws in an oppressive manner. Here the discontent may be very real, natural, and justifiable. On the other hand, a populace may be wrought upon by the machinations of unscrupulous agitators to evince symptoms of discontent with their rulers when really no valid cause for serious discontent exists.

In my opinion the discontent in India is of both varieties. There is a real and natural discontent, and there is a forced and simulated one. The first kind of discontent has been, as we might imagine, exploited and stimulated by those dangerous persons who have created and nourished the second. The result has been that discontent has merged into open sedition, and there are clear indications that if this sedition be not checked, it will, in turn, give place in time to organised rioting and rebellion. It may be a long time, I am willing to grant, before India comes to this latter pass, except for sporadic ebullitions of public sentiment, but I think we may glance at the end of the chain while dealing with the link on which our attention is concentrated.

I have already dealt with the chief causes of our present discontents, but there is one cause for the unrest and sedition in India which is not often



referred to, though, singularly enough, I notice a letter on the very subject to which I allude in the *Times of India* of May 13, 1908. I refer to the fear of the zemindars in Bengal that the Permanent Settlement of Lord Cornwallis may be subjected to substantial revision. Now, I happen to know from certain inquiries that I have made in Calcutta and elsewhere that the belief does actually exist as touching the revision of this historic and ancient settlement. I have pressed natives of India on the point. I have asked them plainly whether this fear is not, at least, one reason for the unrest. Some, a few, have met my question with an unhesitating denial ; but others, the majority, have prevaricated and evaded the question as though it were a subject upon which they preferred to be silent, though finally they have admitted that the shadow of this fear was at the root of much of the existing trouble. I shall make no apology for quoting from the letter I have referred to, bearing as it does so closely on the existing political situation. The writer, who veils his identity under the initials M. N. O., says :—

“Where is the seat and centre of the agitation and the sedition—where but in Bengal? There, too, shall you find the moneyed interest whose apprehensions furnish the cause and motive power of the whole series of manifestations. The Permanent Settlement of Lord Cornwallis has more to answer for than the mere transfer of the gigantic income to the pockets of the undeserving. It has created a class of evil parasites and has endowed them with the enormous power

that a hundred millions sterling a year represent. That their wealth and their worthlessness should have attracted the jealousy of the State it would be idle to deny ; and it would be strange if our statesmen did not cast about for some honourable means of undoing the terrible evil wrought by their predecessor, and of restoring to more worthy channels the wealth so madly diverted in 1793. Whether in the pigeon-holes at Simla there exist developed schemes for the attainment of this end, none may know save the initiated ; but this, at least, is patent to all observers. The mysterious tree-plastering epidemic which took place while the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1898 was upon the anvil withered, like Jonah's gourd, within twenty-four hours of the publication of an article in the *Calcutta Statesman* pointing to its origin in the Bengali zemindar. The anti-partition agitation of three years ago—what was it but the expression of zemindari terror at what was regarded, rightly or wrongly, as the first step towards a serious invasion of the interests created by the Permanent Settlement? Whether Lord Curzon contemplated, whether the present Government contemplates, any such attack upon the zemindar, each may conjecture for himself ; but that the zemindar anticipates and fears the attack, and strives in his terror to divert the Government from their possible purpose by fostering trouble and fomenting sedition, no one can doubt. Unto him there gathers every one that is in debt, and every one that is discontented ; and in him they find a ready paymaster, a means of indulgence of their private spite, and a source of easy and lucrative employment. And here is the whole secret of Indian sedition."

It is quite unnecessary to enter upon an exhaustive analysis of the economic and political effect which in the process of time has been produced by Lord Cornwallis's famous Settlement. That the effect has been bad, however, nobody doubts who is conversant with land conditions in Bengal and the rack-renting proclivities of the zemindars.

Moreover, there is every reason for believing that the Government have from time to time contemplated the revision of the Settlement, and have only been deterred from taking action by the apprehension of the political trouble which such a measure, it is believed, would create. I may here pause to remark that the apprehension is only too well-grounded. To touch the Permanent Settlement at the present juncture would be an act of madness. The Government of India is doubtless fully cognisant of the haunting fear that ever overshadows the imagination of the Bengal zemindar. Nevertheless, no official pronouncement has ever been made to dissipate this fear, nor do I at all see how Government can give an assurance of non-intervention; for to do so would still further weaken the State's freedom of action in the future, even as the original Settlement is a restrictive influence to-day. The continuance of the Permanent Settlement must be regarded as an evil, but its abrogation would just now lead to very grave trouble. The best that can be done is to wait upon the opportunities which the future may present. As I have said elsewhere, one way of working for posterity is to give posterity as little unnecessary work to do as possible. Lord Cornwallis has not only given his successors work to do that should have been unnecessary, but it is a work of a dangerous and dynamic nature.

## CHAPTER V

### SUPPRESSING SEDITION

THE proverbial wisdom which assures us that prevention is better than cure is applicable naturally enough to the seditious movement in India. It may be urged, conceding as we must that sedition springs from discontent, would not the removal of certain causes of discontent wither sedition at the root, or (to adopt another figure) take from the actively seditious much of that fuel with which they make their fire? Possibly, and possibly not. For let it be remembered that we English are not conceding the fruits of national liberty to our own people, but to foreigners. The more we give them the more they will want, and naturally. Whatever we may refuse will in time come to be regarded as an evidence of tyranny and oppression. We may withhold much from a beggar without arousing his hatred. To refuse even a trifle to one who moves much on the same plane as ourselves may easily be construed into an affront and breed the most violent

enmity. And remember, too, that the nearer draws the adjustment of equilibrium between two powers, the greater becomes the possibility of turning the scale in favour of that which previously was the lighter. A wise Government, whether it rule a dependency or its own people, will take heed not to give offence unnecessarily and gratuitously. "It must needs be that offences come, but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh," is a warning which the statesman may not ignore. Let us look to it as far as within us may lie that we give no cause for sedition, and, finally, let us be honest and scorn to brand as sedition that which is, after all, only fearless if drastic criticism—justified by the event—even if the arguments of those who comment on our acts be tempered in the furnace of indignation and sharpened on resentment.

That we have built our modern India of inflammable material, to some extent, cannot be gainsaid. Our Western ideals of government, coming as they do into juxtaposition with the East, produce combustion. Under the British doctrine of equality for all the Brahmin has been robbed of much of his prestige. In theory—in our theory—the Sudra is his equal. There is not a Brahmin in the country but resents this inexorable levelling process which, though it touches not his social life, reminds him ever that prestige is no longer his in all the scheme of being. But this is something we cannot alter. Moreover, our very literature—the thought of

Spencer, of Burke, of Mill, of Bright, of Gladstone, of Milton, of Macaulay, yea, of a hundred others—has given ideas to the East which can bear but one kind of fruit. The potency of the spirit which breathes through English literature is beyond all power of State repression. The educational system we have introduced into India has penetrated too deeply for its growth to be now eradicated. Our land revenue system, I think, might with advantage be revised. Our settlements should be for longer periods, and I am quite at one with Mr. Rees in his contention that land cesses for furthering the services of Western civilisation, such as sanitation and education, are injudicious and bitterly resented by the people. In my opinion, too (an opinion shared by many competent critics of our administration), the income tax is a distinctly unwise measure to have introduced into the financial structure of our rule. It is intensely unpopular, and for this reason, that in the hands of unscrupulous assessors it becomes an instrument of gross extortion and oppression, and is used sometimes for the gratification of private revenge. No wise ruler would keep this tax on the Indian schedule for a day. It makes systematic liars and defrauders of thousands.

Still, none of these things or others that might be cited justify sedition. The problem is, what are we to do with *that*? What, for example, is to be done with the editor of a paper who preaches seditious

doctrines? Is it any good prosecuting him, fining him, consigning him to prison? Personally I am inclined to think it is not an atom of good. All that our prosecutions for sedition have done so far has been to lead to bomb outrages. We move in a vicious circle. The seditious paper inflames the brain of some homicidal fool or revolutionary visionary, and he, in his turn, by his actions, sends up the circulation of the paper that records his doings. Imprison one editor, up springs another. Frankly, I cannot see that State prosecutions of newspapers for alleged seditious writing—whether in Russia, or Ireland, or India, or elsewhere—do anything but intensify the passions of the populace against authority.

There are people who seem to imagine when measures of injustice and oppression are legalised, sanctioned by law, brought on to the statute book, they cease to be unjust and oppressive. Such a doctrine is in my opinion hateful and odious in the last degree. Injustice and oppression are only made all the worse by being legalised. A mode of action which is bad is not made any better by being made what is termed "a law." Why should one set of men in a community oppress their fellows by making bad laws? And if these bad laws and oppressive actions are written about and condemned, why should we brand those who thus write as criminals? Seditious writing is peculiarly a political distemper of countries which have no

popular representation. It must ever be so. And the radical remedy for sedition is to allow the voice of the people to be heard and to carry weight in the councils of the nation. If you can convict an editor of treason or plain incitement to rebellion, it is doubtless better that he should be hanged than that thousands of other people should lose their lives. But then treason and rebellion are not sedition. The biggest tyrant that ever lived, or the most tyrannical oligarchy ever invested with authority, is bound to meet treason and rebellion with armed force. Much greater reason and justice has the non-tyrannical ruler for suppressing these evils with a stern hand.

I have no doubt that the views here enunciated as touching sedition will strike many of my own countrymen in India and elsewhere as absurd. "What," I can hear them exclaiming, "you will allow these wretches to proceed in their campaign of vilification?"—or words to that effect. No, not quite, I reply. For writing to be really seditious it must be of a nature to incite the people to oppose the lawful authority of the State. Actions of public men can be covered with ridicule—but that is not sedition. The unjustness of certain laws can be openly denounced—but that is not sedition. A Government can be criticised with the utmost hostility and rancour—but that necessarily is not sedition. When we English think it is we shall have got too thin-skinned to govern at all. But



when, in the terms of my definition, I came across actual seditious writing in a newspaper I would deal with it severely. And here let me say that the right to own, print, and publish a newspaper should be controlled by licence. The granting of this licence should be a mere matter of form. It should never, except under most exceptional circumstances, be refused. In the event of flagrantly seditious matter appearing in a newspaper, the proprietor, printer, and editor thereof should be warned. A notification of the warning should also be published in every newspaper in the country. In the event of the seditious writing being continued, the offending press should by a simple order of the State be confiscated.<sup>1</sup> Press, machinery, type should be publicly smashed up and destroyed. Any action against the State would lie with the proprietor of the said paper. Let him be the prosecutor. It is needless for me to point out, after what I have said, that I assume the State would exercise the greatest forbearance, prudence, and judgment before taking the drastic course I here suggest. The law officers of the Crown would be consulted. Should the newspaper proprietor bring an action it would be tried before the highest tribunal in the land—the High

<sup>1</sup> This essay was no doubt prepared before the introduction and passing of the Newspapers (Incitement to Offences) Act 1908, whereby in certain cases a newspaper may be suppressed and the press where it is printed be confiscated.—ED.

Court, and appeal to the Privy Council would lie therefrom.

After confiscation of a newspaper every new application for a licence to establish a newspaper would be carefully scrutinised. The applicant would have to make an affidavit to the effect that the proposed paper was not financed either directly or indirectly by any person whose press had been confiscated. He would, moreover, have to guarantee that he would adopt all reasonable precautions to prevent such person ever at any future time acquiring an interest in the said property, or ever becoming a member of the staff of such paper in any capacity. The penalty for violation of these provisions would be a heavy fine. A repetition of the offence would lead to confiscation. For offenders the *éclat* of a State prosecution would no longer exist. Gentlemen of revolutionary instincts would no longer be able to air their views through the medium of the Law Courts, either by means of their own oratory or that of counsel. The strong arm of the law would simply pluck them forth, as one plucks out a poisonous weed or evil growth from the ground and consigns it to the rubbish heap.

Let it not be forgotten that there do exist in India a large number of vernacular papers and newspapers under Indian proprietorship which scorn to make use of the violent and unworthy tactics of their contemporaries. There should be some means

devised for systematically extending on well organised lines the influence of this better element. I must confess the matter is not so easy as it may perhaps appear. Writing as I am from an inside knowledge of journalism in India, I am fully cognisant of the difficulties which hamper the newspaper proprietor in this country. I cannot but recognise that any co-operation between the Government and the press in the interests of law and order must, in fairness, be enjoyed by papers worked with British capital as well as by those worked with native capital. I think that Government might well grant a subsidy to all well-conducted papers, should the proprietors of such care to accept such a grant. Such a subsidy would be given on the express understanding that it should be used for the improvement of the paper, in securing ampler telegraphic information, in a better service of news and information generally, possibly too in lowering the subscription rates, or in any other ways which from time to time might commend themselves to the management. Moreover, to such papers let the State give a preference in the early communication of official information. Readers of these papers would get better value for their money than would the readers of the rabidly "patriotic" sheets, and human nature, whether Oriental or Occidental, is influenced by considerations of this kind. Then again, the State should keep a keen and intelligent eye on the really sound and illuminating writing

in the newspapers, and articles which deal with public affairs in a really telling fashion should be reprinted as leaflets and placards. These documents, whether in English or vernacular, or both, should be distributed and posted in prominent places throughout the country both in cities and rural districts.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE TEACHERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE State would do well to exercise a careful supervision over the training and selection of schoolmasters, especially those in charge of primary and secondary schools. The principles of good citizenship, of obedience to superiors, of respect for the laws of the land are things surely not impossible to inculcate in the youthful mind. In casting about for teachers of the young let us place a higher value on character than on mere literary attainments. Let us, as far as possible, recruit our schoolmasters and their assistants from families who are known to be the *nuclei* of good citizens. The son of a man who is notoriously a mischievously disposed agitator is likely to be infected from his birth, by his very surroundings, with political doctrines of a malevolent tendency. That these should be the circumstances of his life would be unfortunate for such a youth, but the interests of the State demand that he should seek some other avocation than that of the teacher ; or that if he himself should wish to be a trainer of

youth, it certainly would be prudent for the State to regard his ambition with suspicion. We cannot well prevent the young men of the country who are still students at our colleges and universities from discussing matters political. Yet, admitting this, we can, at least, make some systematic effort to prevent their knowledge being crude, their judgments biassed from their birth, their prejudices all twisted in the wrong direction, their passions inflamed to base and dishonourable ends. Indeed, I would say, wisely encourage the student who is approaching maturity and assist him to grasp and master with a sane and well-equipped intelligence the problems of government and the principles of sound political economy. Awaken in him—if he have it not—the pride of a true, noble, and independent manhood. Make him realise that liberty and freedom are based on order, that the assumption of the *toga virilis* brings with it not only the dignity of manhood but the obligations and responsibilities of recognised maturity.

Apart from the printed word, the agencies of sedition which perform their nefarious work by word of mouth are many. The wandering *fakir* and *sunnyasi*, the itinerant teachers and preachers of various sects, are by no means above suspicion. In a country in which the proportion of people who can read and write is infinitesimal, the spoken word is naturally the chief medium for the conveyance of thought from brain to brain. The Government should make more use of the town and village crier

than it does. The people should be told in simple language the nature and scope of certain laws and regulations which affect their welfare. Similarly, in districts in which it is known or suspected that mischievous rumours have been set afloat, and the acts and intentions of Government misrepresented, a full proclamation by word of mouth should be sedulously made to deny the lie at once, and to counteract its effect, at least to some extent.

In certain centres I think, too, it would be a good thing if commissioners or their deputies, collectors, or the chief executive officer were to hold a kind of meeting or durbar once a month or once every two months. Complaints from villagers and others should at these assemblies be dealt with *viva voce*. There should be no overbearing and corrupt *chup-prassies* at the doorways to keep the people out. The poorest ryot should have free ingress, and should be encouraged to make his prayer and petition to the Sirkar's representative. I am convinced that this innovation would be heartily welcomed by the people. That it would savour of a procedure associated with the patriarchal ages is, in my opinion, no objection against it whatever. Far otherwise, in fact. The primitive simplicity of the Indian villager's outlook on life can only be understood and appreciated by those who have turned a sympathetic eye upon his environment and bent a sympathetic ear to his plaints. To him the Sirkar is still the "Protector of the Poor," and

he is accustomed to regard the State *in loco parentis*. I have spoken to many natives of India, especially in the Punjab, on this subject of periodical meetings free and unrestrained among the people and their rulers, and I have never once heard anything but the heartiest approval for such a suggestion. A Punjab landowner was the first to put the idea into my head, and the more I have thought it over the more I am convinced it would work for good. The great thing for us in India is that we should understand the people and that they should understand us. A kindly word, a friendly glance, a sympathetic tone, the visible presence of the personality of the Raj standing up in front of the man whose welfare he largely controls, does much to place us *en rapport* with the minds and sentiments of the millions who labour in their villages and fields. Hence the inestimable value of the district officer who truly understands the countryfolk among whom he moves. We may feel assured that when the ryot gives his farewell salaam to such a man he goes back to his people an agent of helpfulness to us in the onerous and complicated work of government. He is the channel through which we have poured oil into the works of the mighty machine. The cogs and wheels will work all the better for the lubrication.



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