

Volume 2 Book-1

# Voices of Indian Freedom Movement



J. C. JOHARI

**VOICES OF INDIAN  
FREEDOM MOVEMENT**



# VOICES OF INDIAN FREEDOM MOVEMENT

(VOICE OF 'LOYAL' AND MODERATE NATIONALISM)

## VOLUME II

(Book 1)

*Edited and Annotated by*

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## **PREFACE**

An account of the rise and growth of nationalism in the later part of the nineteenth century is a bold refutation of the arguments of the defenders of imperialism who contended with the power of all rhetoric at their command that there was never, nor could there ever be a thing like India as a nation, or that the British rule in, any way, would lead to the making of Indian nationalism. As a matter of fact, these 'observers' of the British rule had become so blind that they, like the Bourbons of France, could not read the bold writing on the wall. Obstinacy yielded place to sheer callousness and so they never liked to grasp the implications of this definite law of politics that a system of empire-building inevitably and irresistibly generates the sentiments and forces of nationalism. And while the callous minds like Sir John Seeley, John Strachey and George Chesney took pleasure in denying the existence of anything like Indian nationalism and, more than that, in scotching the possibilities of any such thing in time to come, there were some sensible Englishmen also who recognised the reality of the prevailing situation

A proper study of the subject of India's freedom movement covers all what prominent Indian figures thought and did for the great cause ; it also covers all important reactions, interpretations and pronouncements of the British leaders and 'observers'. As such, I have put the matter in two parts. While Part I contains original writings and statements of the great Indian figures, Part II has important readings representing the British point of view. The noteworthy point is that our national leaders spoke in different 'voices' and so I have sought to include their views in different volumes with a view to maintain, as far as possible, the unity of a particular trend. In this volume I have taken up the views of the great Indian leaders like Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Syed Ahmed Khan,

M.A. Jinnah and Motilal Nehru. I have included two English figures—A.O. Hume and Mrs. Annie Besant—in the beginning for the obvious reason that they set the trend that was so faithfully followed by the Indian liberals. Known as the moderates on account of having faith in the British sense of justice and fairplay and desiring self rule (Swaraj) within the British Empire, their loyalty to the British Raj and their commitment to the use of constitutional methods were clear and unmistakable. However, the striking point is that these Indian leaders, excluding Syed Ahmed Khan, read the pulse of the time and adhered to the line of critical liberalism and so they proudly admired as well as frankly criticised the British bureaucratic rule for its wrongs and lapses. I could have included some more leaders in this volume which could not be possible owing to the limitation of space. For this I would crave the indulgence of my readers. I, however, hope that my scheme would receive the appreciation of my readers who would find here much for the purpose of their advanced study or research in this important field of modern Indian history and politics.

I have drawn material from numerous published sources, Indian and foreign, according to my own scheme and I offer my sincere gratitude to all of them. I am thankful to a large number of my friends for the help they extended to me for the completion of this project. I am much thankful to Seema Saxena and Seema Johari who helped me in the collection and arrangement of the matter and checking of proofs. In particular, I am grateful to my Publishers who appreciated this project and took pains to bring out the volumes in a record time.

—J C. Johari

## INTRODUCTION

The precursors and trend-setters of Indian nationalism regarded British imperialism as an ally, a boon, an ideal, even a divine dispensation. The well intentioned English liberals also thought in terms of creating and developing Indian nationalism as a supportive and constructive force so as to give a humanised form to their system of colonialism.<sup>1</sup> They set the trend of, what came to be known as, 'sane and constructive nationalism'. The Indian nationalist leaders of the next generation sought to prove themselves 'loyal' to this trend. However, the changed conditions of the present century forced them to revise their line of thought and action in response to the changed nature of the colonial rule. It had different reactions and, hence, a line of cleavage developed between those who sought to tread the old path with an enlightened sense of commitment and those who preferred to depart and set a trend different from it. The latter came to be known as the 'extremists'; they thought that loyalty to the British Raj was incompatible with patriotism and thus they advocated the path of militant agitation to achieve *swaraj* (self-rule). The former were called the 'moderates', because they continued to have faith in British sense of justice and fairplay and to follow constitutional

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1. A noted Indian jurist, Dr. L M Singhvi, as India's High Commissioner-designate to the United Kingdom, said in a press interview: "We fought the British during our freedom struggle with the ideological weapons that had been perfected in Britain itself in their own freedom struggle. In a sense, we paid the supreme compliment to the British by making a part of their ideological history as part of our own historical evolution. Our intellectuals did that and, that apart, the British left a certain legacy of the principles of rule of law, legal institutions, public administration, democratic polity. Shorn of its colonial content and the consequent exploitation, there are many positive points that need to be appreciated." *The Hindustan Times* (New Delhi), 4 March, 1991, p. 5.

means for securing more and more 'reforms' for the better administration of India. These leaders were also called 'loyalists'.

However, two important points should be borne in mind in this regard. First, the term 'loyalists' refers to those who heartily desired continuation of the English rule for any length of time, even for ever, as well as to those who thought in terms of Indian independence as an integral part of the British Empire and, in course of time, they came to be known as the advocates of Dominion Status for India. Viewed thus, we may say that while Syed Ahmed Khan subscribed to the former course, G.K. Gokhale, M. A. Jinnah and Motilal Nehru subscribed to the latter. But the 'moderates' were those who subscribed to the latter course and, in this sense alone, the difference between the 'loyalists' and the 'moderates' can be taken as a matter of no consequence. Second, the difference between the 'moderates' and the 'extremists' is more of degree than that of kind. Both were true nationalists and both desired 'Swaraj within the Empire'. Different, of course, were their perceptions about the nature and character of British rule and the methods to deal with it so as to realise the goal of self rule. The 'moderates' thus preferred to veer round to the perceptions of the 'extremists' to the possible extent and so the Calcutta Congress (1906) adopted resolutions on Swaraj, Swadeshi, Boycott and National Education. It certainly looked like 'a curious mingling of the old ways and the new'.<sup>2</sup>

A O. Hume should be admired for playing the role of a humanised colonialist as he "laboured for India's good both as an official and a non-official for over sixty years."<sup>3</sup> Known

2. S.R. Mehrotra : *Towards India's Freedom and Partition*, p. 107.

3. Pattabhi Sitaramayya : *The History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. I, p. 77. As a loyal servant of the East India Company, Hume worked for the suppression of the 'mutiny' in the district of Etawah and played the part in saving India for the British. But after normalcy was restored, he began to vindicate a policy of enlightenment declaring that, 'Assert its supremacy as it may at the bayonet's point, a free and civilised government must look for its stability and permanence to the enlightenment of the people and the moral and intellectual capacity to appreciate its blessings.' *Ibid.*

as the 'Father of the Indian National Congress', his real motive was to effect political regeneration of India under the aegis of British rule so that she could be a strong and loyal partner of the British Empire. He forcefully hit at the critics of the Congress like Syed Ahmed Khan and Syed Ameer Ali and sought to correct some of the impressions of Badruddin Tyabji. At the same time, he cautiously advised the English rulers to mend as well as amend their ways so that the fears of the recurrence of the 'Mutiny' could be avoided for ever. It is evident from the text of his Circular. He fought for reforms in the spheres of education, police administration, agriculture etc. and thereby earned the distinction of being 'too honest and too independent' for which he could not remain in the good books of Viceroy Lord Lytton and Secretary of State Lord Salisbury. He deserves the credit of founding the Indian National Congress as an organised and authentic expression of the real wishes of the Indian people. Thus, he started the trend of, what he himself termed, 'sane and constructive nationalism' by working, in the words of Gokhale, "amidst the repeated misunderstandings of well meaning friends and unscrupulous attacks of determined enemies."

Hume was a Scotchman, Mrs. Annie Besant was an Irish woman. Both played a very important role in the formative phase of Indian nationalist movement. Mrs Besant subscribed to 'the Platonic philosophy of politics by believing not in the sovereignty of numbers but in the omniscience of wisdom'.<sup>4</sup> And yet, surprisingly, she played the role of a great Indian nationalist stressing, in the vein of Swami Dayanand and Swami Vivekanand, that India had been a nation from remote past by virtue of having a spirit of nationality. Like Aurobindo, she defined Indian nationalism as a spiritual phenomenon. She sought to harmonise the concept of nationalism with the ideals of synthesis, tolerance and universal harmony that would ultimately signify the coming together of the East and the West. Well conversant with the idea of the Home Rule Movement of Redmond of her home-country, she desired an independent India as an integral part

4. V.P. Varma : *Modern Indian Political Thought*, p. 61.

of the British Empire and thereby she laid the foundation of what came to be known as India's demand for Dominion Status—a kind of self-rule as prevailing in British Dominions like Canada and Australia.

Known for being a moderate and a liberal leader, Mrs. Besant ardently desired that the Indian people should invariably use constitutional methods and, more than that, she desired that even the so-called 'extremist' leaders should return to the path of moderatism. Hence, she pleaded and worked for the unity of the two wings of the Congress—the 'moderates' and the 'extremists'—and could be successful in bringing the latter into the national organisation in 1916. However, her anxiety that only a strong India as a part of the British Empire could be capable of defeating German imperialism in the first World War left a handle in the hands of her critics to dub her as an agent of British imperialism.<sup>5</sup> Her opposition to the non-violent non-cooperation movement of Mahatma Gandhi on the ground that it would lead to India's separation from the British Empire was taken as another proof of the fact that she "sought to guide the national movement into channels of loyalty to the Empire."<sup>6</sup>

Gokhale is known as the leading light of the 'moderate school', though one may discover many points where he moved closer to the line of the 'extremists' in the midst of changed conditions of the present century. Unlike Pherozeshah Mehta, Dadabhai Naoroji and M. G. Ranade, he in a very harsh tone accused the British rulers of suppressing the liberties of the people by making Draconian laws and, in particular, by partitioning the province of Bengal in 1905 certainly with the motive of giving a rude setback to the cause of India's secular nationalism. In his evidence before the Welby Commission (Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure) he charged the

5. A diehard Indian communist, M.N. Roy (as he then was) commented in his book *India in Transition* (published in 1920 with the name of Abani Mukerji as its co-author) that Mrs. Besant "had always been a champion of the British Empire, which she chose to call the 'foundation of a real league of nations.'" (p. 216).

6. Rajni Palme Dutt - *India Today*, p. 334.

British rule with being too expensive at the cost of India's fiscal resources. He laid stress on the Hindu-Muslim unity and upliftment of the depressed classes.<sup>7</sup> He endorsed the ideas of swaraj, swadeshi and national education, but he did not appreciate the idea of boycott of foreign goods as it might mean India's separation from Britain on the economic front. In his Budget Speech in the Imperial Legislative Council in 1907, he endorsed the view of Edmund Burke that 'opinion is of greater importance than laws or executive power in maintaining order.'

The distinctive point about Gokhale's written and verbal expressions is that he adopted a moral approach to politics. He condemned the alien rule in the name of dwarfing the moral stature of the Indian people. However, this point was not taken by the English rulers in right earnest that he never shunned the way of negotiation, moderation and compromise which was manifest in his repeated utterances and writings and, more than that, he expressed his opposition to the re-entry of Tilak and other 'extremist' leaders into the Congress shortly before his death in 1915. Gokhale is wrongly described as the uncompromising opponent of Tilak. It is a fact that while the former desired responsible association with the British, the latter offered responsive cooperation to the Raj. The real motive or 'dream' of Gokhale is well given in these words : "Having learned step by step the art of self-government

7. Gokhale sought to sustain his argument on the principle of equality that naturally involved the principle of reciprocity. As he said : "The soul of social friendship is mutual appreciation and respect which ordinarily is not found to coexist with a consciousness of inequality." The important point to be noted here is that Gokhale extended this perception to the unity of the East and the West. Thus, he argued that the promotion of social relations between Indians and Englishmen would have a beneficial effect on the administration if, on the one hand, Indians realised that British rule was necessary for their progress and, on the other, British policy in India had no other aim than the advance of the interests of the Indian people." See A. Appadorai : *Indian Political Thinking in the Twentieth Century, (From Naoroji to Nehru)*, pp. 10-11.



with a populace trained to understand the responsibilities as well as the privileges of democracy, India's bloodless transition from a caste- and priest-ridden society of many kingdoms to a modern secular, national state would have been completed."<sup>8</sup>

Syed Ahmed Khan is rightly regarded as one of the prominent liberal thinkers and social reformers of modern India. But his liberalism had a feature of its own that should not be taken as the representative view of the Muslim community of India as a whole.<sup>9</sup> He started the movement of making his co-religionists 'loyal' to the British Raj so as to dispel the apprehension of the rulers that the Muslims were their natural enemies as they (the British) had wrested power from them (the Muslims). He feared that the termination of the British rule would lead to the establishment of the Hindu Raj. His monograph on the causes of the Indian revolt came as a diplomatic defence of the 'misdeeds' of the rulers of the Company and his another monograph on the loyalty of the Muslims came as a powerful argument in support of the faith of his co-religionists in the integrity of the British rule. In 1866 he founded the British Indian Association for demanding proper

8. Stanley Wolpert : *Tilak and Gokhale*, p 304.

9. It is a fact that Syed Ahmed Khan and his Aligarh Movement never represented the line of Muslim thought in India. There were other perceptions as well. For instance, the Deoband School and its nucleus Dar-ul-ulum (Seminary) founded in 1867 by Mohammed Qasim Nanotivi (1832-80) and Maulana Rashid Ahmed Gangoni (1829 1905), both had been very active in the revolt of 1857 regarded any cooperation with the British rule as injurious to the interests of the Muslim community. Unlike the Aligarh School, the Deoband Seminary aimed at the rehabilitation of the Muslim socio-religious identity and the rediscovery of their original culture and religious distinctiveness for the Indian Muslims in a spirit of cooperation with the Indian National Congress, in total rejection of collaboration with the ruling power. It is of interest to note that in their zeal to overthrow alien rule, some Deobandis (as Maulana Obeidullah Sindhi and Maulana Mohammed Hassan) went to the length of joining the revolutionary movement working towards armed insurrection, with the aid of foreign military powers, if necessary." See N.R. Ray ; 'Introduction' in B.N. Pande (ed.) : *A Centenary History of the Indian National Congress, 1885-1985*, Vol. I, pp. 43-44.

representation of the Muslims in all deliberative bodies and he harped on the same theme when he served as a member of the Imperial Legislative Council of Lord Lytton

The burden of Syed's argument was that the implementation of the principle of 'one person, one vote' would certainly go for the benefit of the majority community (Hindus) and, as such, some scheme of reservation should be devised so as to protect the interests of the Muslims. With a view to spread education among the people of his community, he started the Mohammedan Literary Association in 1877. When the Indian National Congress came into being in 1885, he described it as a 'seditious organisation' and advised, rather exhorted, his co-religionists not to join it. In 1888 he established Indian Patriotic Association (later United Indian Patriotic Association) as a parallel body to the Indian National Congress. The central idea of the movement of the Syed was that the English rule should remain until the Muslims of this country were able to share power with the Hindus in the new set up. If it were not possible, the English rule should continue for many years, in fact for ever <sup>10</sup>

Peculiarly different from other liberal leaders is the case of M.A. Jinnah. He started his political career as a 'moderate' leader belonging to the tradition of Naoroji and ended as a zealous crusader of the line of 'separatism' set by Syed Ahmed Khan. Until 1920 he faithfully followed the line of moderatism by supporting the Home Rule Movement of Mrs. Annie Besant and, more than that, by playing the role of a crusader of Hindu-Muslim unity. He did not appreciate Gandhi's non-violent non-cooperation movement so as to win swaraj within the Empire if possible and without it if necessary. During the period under study, like Hume and Besant, he never thought in terms of India's severance from the British Empire, nor did he appreciate the course of militant opposition to the Raj, though he never shirked in condemning the provisions of the Rowlatt Act and the role of inhuman bureaucracy in the Amritsar tragedy. He fought for the protection of rights and liberties of the people. Like Gokhale and Motilal, he supported India's

10. A Appadorai, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

case for Dominion Status and, as a member of the Muddiman or Reforms Enquiry Committee, he passed critical reflections on the Act of 1919. Then, as a member of the Skeen Committee, he laid strong stress on the Indianisation of the armed forces. By temperament an obstinate and a haughty man and by profession an astute lawyer, he never preferred to accept the course of compromise with what he disliked or, what in his view, amounted to his personal humiliation. The turning point came after 1928 when he did not appreciate some of the recommendations of the Nehru Report and then he offered his 14-Points which became the basis of the demands of the Muslim League.<sup>11</sup>

Like Gokhale and Jinnah, Motilal Nehru was more of a 'moderate' and less of a 'loyalist' leader. Unlike Syed Ahmed Khan, he desired termination of the British rule but, like Gokhale, he sought to have swaraj within the Empire. He sharply criticised the misdeeds of British bureaucracy culminating in the Jallianwala Bagh Tragedy of 1919. As a competent lawyer-politician, he fought for the rule of law in India and thus hit at the provisions of the Rowlatt Act and the shortcomings of the Montford Constitution of 1919. In his presidential addresses at the Amritsar Congress (1919) and then at the Calcutta Congress (1928), he supported India's case for Dominion Status. He frankly and publicly criticised the way of the extremist leaders like B.G. Tilak and B.C. Pal. He gave vent to his reservations about Gandhiji's idea of a non-violent non-cooperation movement as it would amount to severance of India's connection with Britain. Thus, after the sudden suspension of Gandhi's movement in 1922 he, with C.R. Das, founded the Swaraj Party and adopted the policy and strategy of entering the reformed Legislative Councils with a determination to attack bureaucracy and 'smash Reforms from within'.

11. As the biographer of Jinnah comments: "But now he would never forget or under-estimate the political importance of Islamic identity. Many doors had been slammed in his face since Nagpur, some on his toes. The public humiliation and personal rejection he had felt drove him back deeper into himself and to the enduring community that still valued his advice." Stanley Wolpert: *Jinnah of Pakistan*, p. 79.

It is true that his strategy failed within a couple of years, it is equally true that it gave a proof of his commitment to the ways of realism in politics. His speeches on various themes of social reform show that he followed the line of Ranade and his stress on the issue of Hindu-Muslim unity shows that he sincerely subscribed to the cause of secular nationalism. But he ever avoided the way of pure idealism or abstract thinking. A study of his speeches and writings leaves this strong impression that "he would refuse to waste time in discussing the fine dialectics and subtle nuances of ideas divorced from the context of social and political reality. If Gandhi is the prophet of political idealism, Motilal stood for realism in politics."<sup>12</sup>

On the whole, the trend set by Hume and Mrs. Besant continued to inform the policy and strategy of the Indian National Congress during the period under study, though its under-currents had started changing since the inauguration of the policy of conciliation and counterpoise of the natives against the natives in the wake of the present century. The wrongs and misdeeds of the administration of Viceroy Lord Curzon, culminating in the partition of Bengal in 1905, forced the Indian 'moderate' leaders to revise their policy and strategy. They had to move closer to the trend of extremism to the possible extent. The longing for self-rule within the Empire continued, but the trend of attack on the wrongs and misdeeds of the bureaucratic rule became more sharp. An Indian writer is, therefore, justified in commenting: "The Indian liberals, with their characteristic caution, avoided for a long time the task of clearly formulating to themselves the goal of all their political strivings. But since 1905 the colour of Indian politics had changed beyond recognition; and the Moderates realised that unless they coped with the requirements of times, they would be swept away."<sup>13</sup>

To say that these liberal leaders were not real nationalists as they were the 'loyal' servants of the British rule is altogether

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12. Varma, *op. cit.*, p. 468.

13. M.A. Buch : *Rise and Growth of Indian Nationalism (From Ram Mohun Roy to Gokhale)*, p. 267.

a rash statement. They were mistakenly called by their 'extremist' colleagues as 'mendicants with a begging bowl policy', or 'Unpaid Parliamentary Opposition to His Majesty's Government in India', or 'sheer opportunists playing trade in the name of patriotism'. For instance, Lala Lajpatrai in his fiery attack on the line of the 'moderates' commented that the struggle of these leaders "lacked the essentials of a national movement" in as much as it was "halting, half-hearted political movement depending on the sympathy and goodwill of the very class against whom it is directed."<sup>14</sup> Such observations are essentially founded on a wrong understanding of the real contributions of these leaders. It is true that their watchword was 'caution' and their motto was 'reform, not revolution'; it is equally true that they represented the most advanced section of the Indian society at that time. They fought for the rule of law in the country and thus they could cleverly as well as effectively beat their opponent with its own weapons. They laid the foundations on which their successors could build superstructures. Thus, the transition from 'Dominion Status' to 'Complete Independence' was not like a radical departure from the past, it was like another bold and final step in the direction of winning *swaraj*. Whatever these leaders could say and did was by all means revolutionary, if one takes into account the times and circumstances in which they came forward to represent the real will of the Indian people. Even a Marxist writer of modern Indian history has endorsed that these leaders "were not reactionary anti-national servants of the alien rule. On the contrary, they represented at that time the most progressive force in the Indian society."<sup>15</sup>

—J.C. Johari

14. Lala Lajpatrai : *Young India*, p. 145.

15. Rajni Palme Dutt : *India Today*, p. 322.

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## **PART I**

### **PROMINENT 'LOYAL' AND MODERATE NATIONALISTS**

## WAKE UP, INDIA

Hark the tramp of marching numbers,  
India, waking from the slumbers,  
Calls us to the fray.

Not with weapons slaughter dealing,  
But with blood her triumph sealing,  
But with peace-bells loudly pealing,  
Dawns her Freedom's Day.

Justice is her buckler stainless,  
Argument her rapier painless,  
Truth her pointed lance.

Hark ! her song to Heaven ringing,  
Hatreds all behind her flinging,  
Peace and joy to all she's bringing,  
Love her shining glance.

Mother, Devi ! all-victorious,  
Thou hast seen a vision glorious,  
Dreamt of Liberty.

Now the vision has its ending  
In the truth, all dreams transcending,  
Hope and fact together blending,  
Free ! from sea to sea.

By thy plains and snow-clad mountains,  
By thy streams and rushing fountains,  
By Himalayan heights,

By the past of splendid story,  
By the hopes of future glory,  
By the strength of wisdom hoary,  
Claim thy sacred Rights.

(From Mrs. Annie Besant's  
*The Future of Indian Politics*)

## ALLAN OCTAVIAN HUME

[The freedom struggle of India took an organised form when the Indian National Congress was founded in 1885 as a result of the serious and sincere efforts of a former English civil servant, A.O. Hume (1829-1912), who had won for himself the nickname of 'hermit of Simla' on account of leading a retired life in that city. His motive was to establish an organisation of prominent Indian figures who would play their part in generating a particular kind of nationalism, what he termed 'sane and loyal', that would strengthen the roots of the British empire with the willing cooperation of the Indian people. Obviously, the Indian National Congress was founded as an instrument of saving the British Empire. The trend that Hume set was faithfully followed by a number of great Indian leaders who came to be known as the 'moderates'. It is, however, a different matter that the law of dialectical development had its application as a result of which the character of the Indian National Congress changed after some time. It is evident from the fact that while Viceroy Lord Dufferin had showered his 'blessings on the Indian National Congress in 1885, Viceroy Lord Curzon said in 1900 that he was 'waiting for the peaceful demise of the Congress'. It is, of course, a rare instance in history that the nationalist party of a colonial country was founded and, for some years, led by a well-intentioned member of the ruling race. This is the reason that while Mahatama Gandhi is proudly known as the 'Father of the Indian Nation', Hume is respectfully called the 'Father of the Indian National Congress'.]

**ON POVERTY OF INDIA\***

'As I move, silently and unnoticed, from one district and province to other districts and other provinces of this great Empire, amidst much that seems to me to be regretted, much that I cannot but think wrong, one feature of Indian life of the present day forces itself everywhere on my attention, with an intensity that overpowers and almost excludes all other sensations. Struggle against it as I will, and as I have for years now struggled one gloomy shadow overclouds all my waking hours, one hateful spectre haunts all my dreams. Whatever I do, wherever I go one sorrowful fact stares me in the face and withers all flowers of my life. I have endeavoured to drape it over with more pleasing and presentable facts, but the best of these, that I could procure, look only as little scraps of coloured rags, sparsely scattered here and there upon a vast and rugged mountain side. I have tried to forget, to ignore it, to live and float upon the surface, without looking down into or giving heed to the depths below; but all in vain. Year after year, the heartache has grown within me, till now at last, urged by a power stronger than myself, I feel that I must speak, and speak out. I have long hesitated to do this, for until recently I have been unable to see my way—unable to set before myself any distinct goal, any definite course of action offering any hopes of mitigating the misery that so oppresses me. But the time of doubt has passed. I see my way, my goal, the definite course of action clearly enough now...

'...at this moment there are fully fifty millions of your countrymen who are moaning hunger-stricken, for better times that *never* come, who with one single dirty rag about their loins, shiver even in this warm clime, in the chill evenings and raw mornings, who can never fill their own stomachs. who, worse still, have to see the one joy and crown of their lives, their little children, unfed, unclothed, to watch them, weakened by insufficient nourishment, fall innocent victims to the

\*From a pamphlet of A.O. Hume titled *The Old Man's Hope* (Calcutta, 1886).

demons of disease that are ever prowling through our famished population.

‘Ah men ! well-fed and happy ! with, so to say, scarce a sorrow or a care (for what are your troubles to theirs ?) do you at all realize the dull misery of these countless myriads ? From their births to their deaths, how many rays of sunshine think you chequer their gloom-shrouded paths ? Toil, toil, toil ; hunger, hunger, hunger ; sickness, suffering, sorrow, these alas ! are the key-notes of their short and sad existence, and who can deny that for these fifty odd millions and more, it were better that they had never been born, better, almost, that stones were now tied around their necks, and that they were cast into the rivers and drowned !

‘You, who are comparatively so well off ... do you, can you, picture to yourselves the hopeless sadness of these your unhappy brethren’s hard and suffering lives ? Do you feel for them ? Are you men, or stones ? I will not say animals, for all know how much many animals sympathize in the sufferings of their fellows ; but are you stones ? And if not, how is it that with this ocean of misery surging beneath your feet, you are all so smiling and comfortable ? How is it that you are apparently making no single effort to remove this national calamity, and—in so far as you calmly tolerate it—disgrace ?’

#### APPEAL TO INDIANS\*

It is needless to go further into details ; there is not one single Indian, high or low, rich or poor, whose position, prospects, comfort, and general welfare do not, in numberless different ways, direct and indirect, suffer by the existing autocratic form of Government and will not be improved and enhanced by substituting for this, representative Government. Before you hangs the golden prize, worthy even of our great Indian nation’s ambition. Will you despising all obstacles, press forward and grasp it ? Great are the difficulties, strenuous will the struggle be ; but the difficulties were greater that

\*From *The Old Man’s Hope*.

British reformers had to face 60 years ago ; the struggle for them was even a more arduous one, for we have with us the mighty spirit of the age, that their throes gave birth to, and yet they triumphed, as I have shown you and you too may similarly triumph if you will only follow faithfully in their footsteps.

Friends, brethren, I appeal to all who call our India home, without distinction of creed, or race, or colour. I appeal to all, high and low, gentle and simple, ignorant and learned, rich and poor. This day have I set before you, good and evil, freedom and happiness, or continued serfdom and disquiet ; and that, encouraged thereto by the dauntless struggles of British reformers, you will now, one and all, alike for your own sake and the sake of those millions who are being crushed beneath the existing despotic system, boldly choose the nobler and the better course and throw in your lot heart and soul with us : this is my hope, my belief, my prayer ; this is the OLD MAN'S HOPE ; and if I can only live to see this realized, I shall die content and happy !

**GOD BLESS INDIA AND ALL WHO LOVE HER !**

### **EFFORTS TO REMOVE MUSLIM MISGIVINGS**

From

Ameer Ali, Esqr.,  
Honorary Secretary,  
Central National Mahommedan Association ;

To

Hon'ble Budruddin Tyabjee,  
Bombay.

9, Harrington Street,  
Calcutta, the 5th January 1888.

Sir,

In continuation of my letter No. 456, dated the 28th November 1887, I have the honour to inform you that in consequence of certain erroneous impressions prevailing in some

quarters as to the scope and object of the proposed conference of Mahomedans it is considered necessary by the Committee of the Central Association to address to you and other well wishers of the Mussulman Community the following observations. You cannot be unaware of the state of utter disintegration into which Mussalman Society in India has fallen within the last half century, nor of the baneful results which have followed from it and their general poverty. The absence of unanimity and cohesion in general questions of public policy and the entire neglect of all idea of self-help add to the difficulties of their situation. The conference does not propose to discuss high politics. The programme which we have set before us is extremely moderate and suited to our own progress. As a gathering of cultivated moslems from all over India its social and moral effect will, it is hoped be of incalculable benefit. It must be remembered that the real advancement of our people lies in the future and as nothing can be built without a foundation we hope by this conference to give a shape to our aspirations and lay the foundation stone of future good.

In proposing this conference we have not been actuated by any spirit of rivalry towards our Hindoo compatriots. It is our anxious desire to work in sympathy with Government and all classes of Her Majesty's subjects. Our main object is to bring about some degree of solidarity among the disintegrated masses of Mahomedan Society ; to reconcile in some measure the conflicting aims and objects of different sections and parties, to introduce some amount of harmony among the discordant and jarring elements of which the Mussalman educated classes are composed, to devise some means of self-help for Mahomedan advancement and lean less upon Government patronage ; to give a real impetus to the process of self-development perceptibly going on among our community ; to safeguard our legitimate and constitutional interests under the British Government : to become the exponent of the views and aspirations of educated Mahomedan India ; and to serve as the means of reconciliation between our Hindoo fellow subjects and our own community. It seems to us that no right-minded Mahomedan or Hindoo can object to this unpreten-



tious programme. We think that the least endeavour in the direction indicated will not be without its value, that the very intermixture of cultivated mussalmans will exercise a most beneficial effect upon Mahomedan India and prove the ground work of substantial progress.

I remain,

Yours obediently,  
Ameer Ali.

*P.S.*—I beg to inform you that owing to certain unavoidable causes, the conference is postponed until February, 1889.

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Capper House Hotel,  
Madras, January 5th, 1888.

Strictly Private and Confidential.

To

The Secretary to the Standing Congress Committee.

Dear Sir,

In the course of his conversations with numerous Mahomedan gentlemen, our late honoured President discovered, that, in the minds of most of those who have been holding aloof from the Congress movement, an apprehension lurked that the Hindus, being numerically strongest, might, at some time, press and carry in Congress some Resolution directly hostile to Mahomedan interests.

It is needless to say that he is just as certain as I am myself that the Hindus, to say nothing of the growing Eurasian and European element, would never do anything of the kind, and that they feel that the Mahomedans are, in good sooth, their fellow countrymen, whose welfare, happiness, and content are their welfare, their happiness and their content. But there are ignorant men in all communities. You will remember the worthy gentlemen who desired to press a resolution on the Congress that cow-killing should be made penal. I am afraid that, even here, there are Mahomedans who do not feel sure that this question would have been summarily put out of Court, had not our President been a Mussalman.

Now, it is extremely desirable to render all such misconception impossible, by a definite rule on the subject. I, therefore, drafted the subjoined rule and submitted it to our late President, to whom it is needless to say that we look to effect, during the coming year, a complete reconciliation with all those sections of our Mahomedan brethren which have hitherto held aloof from us. This rule was approved by Mr. Budruddin Tyabji and mentioned by him to many Mahomedans here, who said that such a rule, if accepted, would completely obviate all remaining difficulties in the way of their hearty co-operation in the movement.

I now submit this rule to you and I hope you will be able to assure me that your Committee will be prepared to support a rule, to this effect at the next Congress the exact wording being left for determination when the rest of the rules are formally settled. If I can place in our late President's hands, such an assurance from all our standing Congress Committees, it will very greatly diminish the difficulties he will have to contend with. I feel sure that you will agree that this is a necessary and righteous rule, and one that if we mean to be true brothers to them, we cannot hesitate to accept if wished for by our Mahomedan brethren.

I earnestly beg the favour of your replying to me at the earliest possible moment, as it is essential that our late President should be placed without any avoidable delay in a position to assure all his co-religionists authoritatively of the brotherly spirit, in this matter, which does really, as I know, pervade the Hindu community.

I have, etc.  
A.O. Hume,  
G. Secretary.

#### DRAFT RULE

No subject shall be passed for discussion by the subject Committee, or allowed to be discussed at any Congress by the President thereof, to the introduction of which the Hindu or Mahomedan delegates, as a body, object, unanimously or nearly unanimously, and if after the discussion on any subject, which has been admitted for discussion, it shall appear that all the Hindu or all the Mahomedan Delegates,

as a body, are unanimously or nearly unanimously opposed to the Resolution which it is proposed to pass thereon, such Resolution shall be dropped without reference to whether the opposers constitute the majority or the minority

High Court, Bombay :  
13th January, 1888.

Dear Syed Ameer Ali,

I have sent a separate note in reply to your official letter as secretary to the Central National Mahomedan Association, and I trust you will pardon my writing to you privately also. You are no doubt aware that I took a somewhat leading part in the last Congress at Madras and I have observed with pain and regret that valued friends like yourself, Syed Ahmed Khan and Nawab Abdul Latif have thought it their duty to keep aloof from the Congress. I have not been able thoroughly to understand the grounds on which this abstention is sought to be justified but it does seem to me to be a great pity that on matters affecting all India as a whole, any section of the Mussalman community should keep aloof from the Hindus and thus retard the national progress of India as a whole. I understand your objection to be that the Hindus being more advanced than ourselves would profit more by any concessions made by Government to educated natives but surely it is our duty if possible to raise ourselves in the scale of progress, rather than to prevent other people from enjoying the rights for which they are qualified. If any proposal is made which would subject the Mussalmans to the Hindus or would vest the executive power in Hindus to the detriment of the Mussalmans. I should oppose it with all my strength, but the Congress proposes to do no such thing. Its aims are, *and must be for the benefit of all communities equally* and any proposition that is *disliked by the Mahomedans as a body must be excluded* from it. At the last Congress I strictly followed this principle and *absolutely shut out* everything to which we *as a body* could take exception. Indeed I have already framed a rule to the effect that no proposition to which the mussalmans generally object shall be considered by the Congress. This rule will be formally embodied in the constitution of the Congress and is,

I think, calculated to remove your objection so far as I can understand it. Please let me know what you think of it and also whether you object to *any Congress at all in any shape or form*, or only to a Congress which may possibly prejudice our community. In the latter case, I think we could frame rules and restrictions that would obviate your difficulty. I may tell you that I have not the smallest doubt that the Congress worked on proper principles with due restrictions and with *proper safeguards for rights of our community*, is capable of doing an enormous amount of good to our country, and I think we ought all to put our heads together to see whether we cannot devise means to work in harmony with our fellow subjects, while jealously protecting our own peculiar interests. Please consider these suggestions carefully and let me know your views about them. It is a sufficient misfortune to us to be divided from our Hindu fellow countrymen without being disunited among ourselves.

Your truly,  
Budruddin Tyabjee.

(Similar letters were addressed to Sir Ahmed Khan and Nawab Abdul Latif.)

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Madras,  
22nd January 1888

Dear old Budruddin,

Yours of the 19th. I am inclined to think you are right and any how I will not press you more on this point. Of course if by any chance it should be possible to convert Syed Ahmed into even a neutral that would be best. My fear was that having been patted on the back, for this outrageous speech, it is a speech in the worst possible taste in addition to all its other worse sins, he would go on further and render it difficult to hold our Congress next year at Allahabad—though we may not cherish the least animosity against Syed Ahmed and others, it is, it seems to me, most probable that we ought to take some such action against them as may tend to neutralize their virulence and limit the evil consequences of their inherent and

natural poisonous nature. It was with this feeling that I wrote to you and had things remained in the position they were, I should have in my own mind still doubted whether it was not you who were marked out for the work of suppressing Syed Ahmed and whether your first step in this work should not be a formal reply to the attack on the Congress over which you presided.

There is a sense growing up that this Congress at Allaha-  
bad, will be the turning point of the movement. That invading  
our opponents, own dominions we must carry the day, or give  
up the campaign and it is beginning to be felt (I have had four  
letters on the subject during the last three days) that if we are  
to succeed we must again have a Mohamedan president and  
that that president must be yourself. It is believed that with  
you as the president, Syed Ahmed's tirades will have no effect  
with the North of Indian Mahomedans. They feel that they  
cannot be boycotted for joining a conference of which a  
Mahomedan—such a Mahomedan—is a president whereas half  
of them would not dare to risk Syed Ahmed's displeasure if  
someone else were president. This is spontaneous feeling and it  
seems to be widespread—it had not occurred to me but the  
moment it was mentioned it came to me as a revelation. The  
more I think the more I am convinced that Syed Ahmed, who  
had a long interview with Lord Dufferin before he left Calcutta,  
has been put up to throw out this suggestion of suppression as  
a feeler and the more essential it is I think that this point  
should be made. Now you must not blame me for bothering  
you. The whole principle of our movement is—not that I  
should do this or that off my own bat—but that—I having  
leisure should watch your case, and at each step get those of  
you whom common consent declares to be most competent to  
deal with that particular branch, to do the needful leaving of  
course yourselves to decide what exactly that needful is. This  
is a Mahomedan crisis—the whole country throws the responsi-  
bility on you. By this time next year I fully believe that the  
Mahomedan difficulty will, thanks to your personality, have  
disappeared but in the mean time, the interests of the country  
are largely at stake and despite your work, I must—I should

not be doing my duty if I did not—worry you for advice and assistance. I will do exactly what you counsel, but I must make sure that you look at the question all round and really give it that careful consideration that it demands. In the mean time see the confidential circular I sent out. I have already received the assent of Benares, Calcutta and Madras and shall soon have them all I am quite sure.

Yours ever, dear Budrudin,  
Very sincerely,  
A.O. Hume.

Aligarh,  
24th January 1883

My dear Badrudin Tyabji,

First of all I thank you for the kind letter you have sent me, and then offer my thanks for your kind congratulation on the honour which Her Majesty has been pleased to confer upon me. I hope you will accept my humble thanks.

The fact that you took a leading part in the Congress at Madras has pleased our Hindu fellow subjects no doubt, but as to ourselves, it has grieved us much.

The statement of our ideas about the Congress, and of our grounds of abstention from it, would have been appropriate if we had an opportunity of stating them before your taking a leading part in the Congress. But as everything is done, I see no use of stating them now.

We do not mean “to retard the national progress of India” or “to prevent other people from enjoying rights for which they are qualified” and even if we try to do so we cannot hope to succeed, but at the same time it is not obligatory on our part to run a race with persons with whom we have no chance of success.

Your remark that “it is our duty if possible to raise ourselves in the scale of progress” is quite true, yet you should not

forget the saying of our old Philosopher "that before we get the antidote from Irak the snake bitten person will die".

I do not understand what the words "National Congress" mean. Is it supposed that the different castes and creeds living in India belong to one nation, or can become nation, and their aims and aspirations be one and the same? I think it is quite impossible and when it is impossible, there can be no such thing as a National Congress, nor can it be of equal benefit to all peoples.

You regard the doings of the misnamed National Congress as beneficial to India, but I am sorry to say that I regard them as not only injurious to our own community but also to India at large.

I object to every Congress in any shape of form whatever— which regards India as one nation on account of its being based on wrong principles, *viz.*, that, it regards the whole of India as one nation. Probably you will not like my ideas and therefore I hope you will excuse me for venturing to write so much.

Yours truly,  
Syed Ahmed.

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High Court, Bombay,  
18th February, 1888.

My Dear Sir Syed Ahmed Khan,

I would have replied earlier to your letter of the 24th January; if I had not been waiting for answers to my communications addressed to other leading Mussalman gentlemen in different parts of India. I know that we differ materially on some important points, but my object in addressing you is to ascertain if possible whether and by what means we can act in harmony with each other for the common benefit of the Mussalman community of this great Empire. No doubt where independent minds apply themselves to the consideration of great questions, differences of opinion must be expected, but at the same time I cannot help feeling that it is the duty of us to understand each other thoroughly, to appreciate their motives

and by mutual concessions to bring about a common course of action. It is only with this view and with the object of healing the irritation that is now prevailing in India that I write to you again. It seems to me that there is a vital difference in the point of view from which you and I look at the Congress. In my view the Congress is nothing more and should be nothing more than an assembly of educated people from all parts of India and representing all races and creeds met together for the discussion of only such questions as may be generally admitted to concern the whole of India at large. The question then is, is it desirable that there should be a Conference of people of this description. Of course, there are questions which may be for the benefit of one race or one community or one province only but such questions ought not to be discussed in the Congress at all. It seems to me, therefore, that no one can object to a Congress of this kind, unless he is of opinion that there are no questions at all, which concern the natives of India at large. Your objection to the Congress is that "it regards India as one Nation". Now I am not aware of any one regarding the whole of India as one Nation and if you read my inaugural address, you will find it distinctly stated that there are numerous communities or nations in India which had peculiar problems of their own to solve, but that there were some questions which touched all those communities and that it was for the discussion of these latter questions only that the Congress was assembled.

At the time when I wrote you I had not seen your speech at Lucknow. But I have since had an opportunity of reading it, and it is quite clear that at the time you delivered that speech, you were under the impression that the Congress was composed of Bengali Babus alone. How you should have got this idea passes my comprehension ; for surely you could not have imagined that the Hindus of the Madras and the Bombay Presidencies had not taken an active part in it, even if you were unaware of the attitude of the educated Mussalmans of these Presidencies towards the Congress. Be that as it may, the facts are that so far as Hindus are concerned they unanimously and as a body support the Congress no matter what province they belong to ; and as to the Mussalmans, the Presidencies of Bombay and Madras strongly support it while in Bengal and



North West Provinces to judge from your speech there seems to be very considerable opposition to it. Under these circumstances is it not the duty of all thoughtful Mussalmans to try to remove the causes that have given rise to these differences? We can no more stop the Congress than we can stop the progress of education. But it is in our power by firm and resolute action, to divert the course the Congress shall take and my strong conviction is that the Mussalmans can by united action confine the Congress to such topics only as they may deem desirable or safe for discussion. Take for instance the question of the Legislative Councils. If the Mussalmans as a body do not like that the members should be elected, they could easily modify the proposition so as to unite their own interests. My policy, therefore, would be to act from *within* rather than from *without*. I would say to all Mussalmans "act with your Hindu fellow—subjects in all matters in which you are agreed but oppose them as strongly as you can if they bring forward any propositions that you may deem prejudicial to yourselves." We should thus advance the general progress of India, and at the same time safeguard our own interests. If you think that any such action can be adopted, please let me know because I cannot help regretting the extreme irritation which now exists not only among the Hindus but among a very considerable portion of educated Mussalmans.

(Signed) Badruddin Tyabjee.

73, Hornby Road,  
23rd February 1888,

My Dear Mr. Budruddin,

At yesterday's meeting of our Congress Committee we discussed that draft rule which Mr. Hume informs us, has your approval. Mr. Telang and others fear that practically the rule may defeat the object in view. There is a deal of ambiguity as to the word "majority". What is to constitute a "majority" of Hindus, Mahomedans, Europeans, Eurasians, Parsees etc.? Is the majority to be of the number of delegates of each community present at a Congress? If so will it be fair if a

majority of 12 Europeans out of 15 say that a particular subject be not discussed ? Or again take the case of Mahomedan delegates. Suppose that for some reason or another only 15 to 20 Mahomedans attend the Congress. Say of them 3/4 propose to a particular subject as suitable for discussion, whereas a majority of 400 Hindus consider it undesirable. How are you to proceed ? Can the vote of the majority of Mahomedans carry the day ? There are minor difficulties in the way of the adoption of the rule as it stands. Mr. Telang and other members of our committee have under the circumstances postponed further consideration of the draft rule and have meanwhile requested us to request you to be so good as to name a day which may be most convenient to yourself to consider the matter in consultation with you. Will you kindly drop me a line stating a day which may suit you ?

Yours sincerely,  
D. E. Watcha.

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123, Mount Road :  
30th August, 1888.

My dear Mr. Tyabji,

I see you have been speaking at the Anjumane Islam of Bombay regarding the National Congress. I am living with Sir Charles Lawson of the Madras Mail and he often asks me questions about Indians and the Mahomedans. I am afraid I do not always agree. I have an idea about the National Congress that might be useful to you. If it is National Institution, interest of all should be looked to and the Hindus ought to take an interest in their Mahomedan brethern. Only the Mahomedans who number over 50 million ought not to be indifferent to the fate of their coreligionists in other parts of the world. Let the National Congress at its next meeting say that it views with regret that Mahomedan brothers in India have cause to feel sorrow and shame on account of the way their co-religionists are treated in other parts of the world. That the Sultan is insulted at his very doors (viz., at Livedia) by an official address to the Czar in which a hope was given that the Greek Cross would overstep the Crescent in the Sophia Mosque of Constantinople some day. That no sooner

the Sultan of Morocco supposed to be seriously ill than efforts are made by European Nations to grasp his territory. That Tunis and Algeria, Samarcand and Bokhara Shereef are in the hands of the foreigners. That seeing the wealth and power of India and that the Queen reigns over 50,000,000 of Mahomedans that greater interest in their fate in every part of the world should be taken by the British Government. These sort of things would bring the Mahomedans over with a rush. With increasing Education among the Mahomedans there is no reason why Mahomedans from India should not have good places at Mahomedans Courts in other parts of the world—Istambul, Teheran, Morocco Governments.

Yours sincerely,  
*Illigible.*

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Simla, 4th September 1888.

Dear Baddrudin,

I have never bothered you with letters because I have never been anxious about Bombay as others were. I knew you had the culture of Islam on your side and—besides that common-sense—and I felt quite certain of your ultimate triumph. It came sooner than I expected but I knew it would come and now that you have happily drawn the line, education and the Congress on one side and ignorance and the opposition on the other, and I have read the full report of the Anjuman-Islam meeting. I am glad they are reprinting that full report, that appeared in the Morning Post all over the country. I only fear that half our people will not fully appreciate all you say and abstain from saying, more power to your elbow. I hope that a larger proportion of even the ignorant Mussalmans, will realize, who their best leader really is. I am told that the majority of the Khojas are with us. Could you not have a private gathering of the more important members of this wealthy community and have them to constitute themselves an electoral division with their own divisional committee to elect their own delegates and establish a propoganda to explain the case to all the humbler members of their community ?

Yours affectionately,  
A. O. Hume.

Ganesh Khind,  
8th September 1888.

My dear Hume,

I answer your letter at once. Of course I have never seen a Police circular making enquiries about congress members — I have never asked who belonged and who did not belong and I should not tolerate any intimidation direct or indirect.

The Congress criticises the administration to which I belong and the administration of course must welcome any criticism which leads to improvement and eradication of abuses.

Good administration of course is of "*Republicae Suprema Salus*". That has always been my view and I am paid and sent here to make the administration better and stronger. My relations to the Congress are those of a stage manager to a stage critic.

With regards to the Anjuman, I have this week asked the Director of public instruction to accelerate the arrangements for their school in Bombay to which we have contributed a noble site and Rs. 38,000, so that the gossip under this head is as equally hollow as the other.

I attach as much importance to all such rumours after 3½ years in India as I do to anonymous charges which are received by me. If by this time my ideas and principles are not known and understood I must despair of ever making them clear but I should have thought that such absurd stories as those which reached you would not require any contradiction. I forgot to add that Badruddin wrote me a letter of thanks for favours received.

Yours sincerely,  
Reay.

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Simla,  
13th September 1888.

Dear Budrudin,

I won't argue with you about yourself. You may or may not accept what I said about the conduct of affairs by you, but it is the truth and I who see all over the country, know that there is no other Indian, except perhaps Banerjee, who could have so wisely guided the issue.

I think the most important work is the elevation of the moral standard. The next most important, the diffusion of mental culture and only third in importance to my mind is political enfranchisement. But I throw my energies into this latter—firstly because I have read history—and have studied it under guidance of the highest character—and I have come to see that neither moral elevation nor mental culture are nationally possible without some considerable political enfranchisement. There have been periods of intellectual culture as in the Augustan age, accompanied no doubt by political serfdom, but that culture was but the fruit of seeds sown and plants nourished in an antecedent era of political freedom. You may create the grandest academies, you may found the purest religious sects, but without the infinitely varied inducement to mental exertion and moral restraint afforded by political freedom, your nature will never be either cultured or virtuous.

It is so great a question, that I can here only, as it were glance at the propositions. I cannot pretend to give the demonstrations though, if I am spared, I will some day publish the work that I have half written on this great question, and which deals with every record of the past that survives to us. Secondly because, the *political work* to be *successful*, must be treated nationally and unitedly, while both the moral and mental questions must be treated not only provincially but sectionally and hence the former alone is suited to me who belong to no province and no sect, but to the whole country and to all creeds, and also because the political work needs a wider and higher class of organisation and because while neither very clever, nor wiser, I have been given a real gift for organization and thus find my most appropriate occupation in this line in which organization is the most essential element.

But wherever I go except in your scoffing, insincere, worldly Bombay, in Madras, Poona, Gujerat, Nagpur, Lucknow, Allahabad, Benares, Patna, I never fail in the private addresses which I deliver everywhere to point out that unless they will lead purer and better and truer lives, unless they will educate

themselves, their sons and their *daughters*, they will never reap due fruit of the political concessions we may attain, and never attain half those concessions essential to the highest welfare of the nation. Well now let me tell you that at my request Bonnerjee went and saw George Yule and he most kindly said that, if elected, he should deem it the greatest honour to preside at the next Congress and would do his best to discharge the duties of the office satisfactorily—and now I am writing confidentially to all the standing Congress Committees to know if this arrangement meets their approbation so that I may be able to advance the matter another stage. If approved, Yule will come out by the end of November to Calcutta, so as to be at hand to advise or consult with, if necessary.

I do hope you read or get read to you the letters I have been writing to Dinshaw, for the committee of late. I can not write to every man and these letters I do believe are worth reading as showing not merely what I think, but what the country with which I am to a great extent in touch feels and thinks.

Now one more point. I send you a copy, in confidence of a private letter received from Lord Reay, private—not for publication, but intended to be used. You will see a day or so after this reaches you an article of mine in the Phoenix headed the 'Congress and its Opponents' or something to that effect in which the purport of this letter is utilised. I hope you will make a point of reading that article. You in Bombay may not know it but for the last six months our opponents in your presidency have been industriously circulating the rumour that the Government were opposed to Congress and meant to punish in some way all who supported it. Of course in Bombay itself our quasi-supporters were not such fools as to believe this rumour but in the mofussil people were getting very frightened and I received letters by the score, reporting these tales and asking me if they were true. Of course I ridiculed these. One of these was to the effect that Lord Reay had refused to preside at the distribution of prizes of the Anjuman, to mark his displeasure at your having

presided at the last Congress. Of course I knew this was idiotic, but when Bhimjee came to stay with me, I not only found that he had heard it but that he himself believed it. So much so that I had some difficulty in persuading him, that Lord Reay being what he is, it was impossible. Well having thus prepared the soil our adversaries' next direct move was at Ahmedabad where the authorities gave out that Government had desired the police to ascertain and report the names of all persons supporting or favouring the Congress. The poor towns people were terrified and though more than 100 leading citizens signed in my presence a written resolution approving the Congress and engaging to support it, only one man Abajee Vishnu Kathawate had the pluck to send up his name and invite the police to make the most of it. Then he wrote to me full particulars. Then I saw the time had come—I wrote at once to Lord Reay—who is really a friend of mine and told him the whole thing—told him all about the rumours sent him Kathawate's letter in confidence and asked him to write me a letter, not for publication but to show and use—so as to crush summarily all this intrigue. This he at once did. He writes rather harsh English but his repudiation of hostility is emphatic. I like much his metaphor *viz.*, he himself and the Congress are like stage manager and stage critic, *i.e.*, that while he reserves to himself the right to form judgment on his critic's verdict, he feels bound to give it his most careful consideration and draw from it every possible hint that may tend to improve the performance for which he is responsible. I like too the plucky way in which he says that the administration must welcome criticism that leads to improvement and the eradication of abuses.

I do not know whether you ever heard the absurd story about Lord Reay refusing to distribute prizes at the Anjuman, because you had presided at the last Congress, but you will find that in the mofussil the opponents have made great capital out of it and it is as well that you should have by you a copy of Lord Reay's letter ridiculing the idea and expressing his strong sympathy with your cause. I have brought it all out well in that article in Phoenix and I hope you will read this and if you think it can be of any use in Bombay, get it copied in part or whole into one of the Bombay papers.

Now good bye, dear old fellow and please think of me in future as one whose aims go far beyond political agitation, though his time is as a matter of duty mainly devoted to this.

Yours very sincerely,  
A.O. Hume.

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Simla.  
20th October 1988.

Dear Buddrudin,

See what is said in the enclosure. I don't believe a word about it because you gave a public promise to all the assembled delegates last year that you would be with them this year as a brother delegate and I know you are absolutely a man of your word. But it is not right for Telang because he himself may not feel sure that he will take the trouble to come, to write to the people thus about you and so spread discouragement ; for I need not say that were this true it would be a severe blow to us, as whether you like it or not, your having been the President last year having so skilfully manipulated "The Rebellion" at Bombay makes you in the eyes of the country the most important man there and your defection would, no matter what the cause, cause us most serious discouragement. I don't mean to me personally but to our people generally. I don't think Telang ought to write this.

By the way do also so arrange that Sayani also comes. He has always been our friend. Entreat him from me to attend this year. This is our turning point, and he is such a leading man that his presence will be of the very greatest service this year. I do not want to bother him to come every year. But this year we do badly want his and your aid and counterance you will come, and also bring him too.

Yours ever very sincerely,  
A.O. Hume.



Chowk Hall,  
27th October 1881.

My dear Hume,

I received your letter of the 20th with the enclosure from your Jabbulpure correspondent. I delayed writing to you because what I am about to say is a matter of the utmost importance and though I have long been thinking about it I thought it best to take still more time about it before communicating my views to you I write to you, of course as an ardent friend of the Congress desiring nothing so much as its success. You have no doubt been watching the movements of the Mahomedans ; but still you are probably not so well acquainted with their feelings as I am. Again I have been discussing the matter with thoughtful members of the different communities who are all in favour of the Congress. What I write now, therefore, may be taken to represent the views not only of myself and other leading Mahomedans of Bombay, but such men as Mehta, Telang, etc. We are all of opinion that having regard to the distinctly hostile attitude of the Mahomedans, which is becoming daily more pronounced and more apparent, it is time for the friends, promoters and supporters of the Congress to reconsider their position and to see whether under the present circumstances it is or not wise for us to continue holding Congress meetings every year. My own view is that the friction and bitterness which are caused by this agitation every year outweigh the advantages to be gained. If all the communities of India were unanimous, I think the Congress would be a very good thing and capable of doing a very great deal of good to the people of India. The prime object of the Congress was to unite the different communities and provinces into one and thus promote harmony. As it is, however, not only have the Mahomedans been divided from the Hindus in a manner they never were before but the Mahomedans themselves have been split into two factions, the gulf between whom is becoming wider and wider every day. The Nizam and all the principal men of the state such as Salar-jung, Munir-ul-Mulk, Fateh Nawaj Jung and above all Syed Hussain Belgrami have joined the opposition led by such well known men as Syed Ahmed, Ameer Ali and Abdul Latif.

For the purpose of my present argument I assume that all these men are wrong and that we are in the right. Nevertheless the fact exists and whether we like it or not, we must base our proceedings upon the fact that an overwhelming majority of Mahomedans is against the movement. Against this array it is useless saying that the intelligent and educated Mahomedans are in favour of the Congress. If then, the Mussalman Community as a whole is against the Congress—rightly or wrongly does not matter—it follows that the movement *ipso facto* ceases to be a general or National Congress. If this is so it is deprived of a great deal of its power to do good. It may no doubt be continued by the force and determination of some men; but it is not the same thing as if the Mahomedans had joined it as a body. I observe increasing bitterness between Hindus and Mussalmans and I observe also that a difference of views among the Mahomedan leaders produces friction and bitterness which leads to extremely evil consequences. The peculiar state of Mahomedan society renders it necessary that we should act together in all political matters but this friction comes in the way and I already find that even in Bombay we are not able to act in the same way as we did before. Under these circumstances weighing the good against the evil, I have come to the distinct conclusion after the most careful consideration of which I am capable that it is time to cease holding the Congress every year. I should like to make the Allahabad Congress as great a success as possible. I should like to have as large a representation of Mahomedans as possible and I should then like the Congress to be prorogued, say for at least five years. This would give us an opportunity of reconsidering the whole position and if necessary of retiring with dignity and would at the same time give us ample time to carry into execution our programme, which has already become very extensive. If at the end of the 5 years our prospects improve we can renew our Congress. If not we can drop it with dignity conscious of having done our utmost for the advancement of India and the fusion of the different races into one.

(Signed) Budruddin Tyabji.

To

The Editor of *The Pioneer*.

Sir,

In the course of conversation with many of my coreligionists in regard to the late Congress over which I had the honour of Presiding, I found that there were not a few, who approved of the movement in principle, and accepted the resolutions, thus far passed at the three Congresses that have been held, yet felt some anxiety lest, at future Congresses, resolutions that could not commend themselves to Mussalman as a body, might in virtue of the greater numerical strength of the Hindus, be passed and they, if members, be thus committed to a participation in what they could not approve.

Having for many years in Bombay worked in public matters hand in hand with Hindus and having been a witness at the late Congress of the brotherly feeling in regard to the Mussalmans that pervades the entire body of delegates of other religious denominations, I felt convicted that my friends' apprehensions were wholly needless. But, in order to be able to convince them, and others who share their doubts, that this is so, I requested the general secretary to address all the standing Congress Committees and ascertain whether they were willing that a rule should be passed, that in the case of the Mahomedan delegates unanimously or nearly unanimously objecting to the introduction of any subject or the passing of any resolution, such subject or resolution should be thereupon dropped.

All the twelve standing Congress Committees, have now replied, unhesitatingly in the affirmative, and I do therefore hope that this announcement which I am now able to make authoritatively will remove any apprehension in regard to the future operation of the Congress, that may still lurk in the minds of any of my Muslim brethren.

Of course this rule refers only to new subjects that have not already been definitely dealt with by past Congresses. If there be any Mahomedans who still, after reading the discussions at the third Congress, feel themselves unable to accept

the Resolutions, or any of them, which have already been passed, that is another matter, but as regards all those, who though approving what has been done, yet, hesitate to take an active part in the movement for fear that at some future Congress some resolutions repugnant to Muslim feelings should be carried, I do hope that the assurance I have not been able to give them will convince them of the propriety of joining in an undertaking, in the success of which we are quite as deeply interested as either Hindus, Parsees or Christians.

Yours obediently,

(Signed) Budruddin Tyabji.

President of the 3rd Indian National Congress.

## GOVERNMENT AND THE CONGRESS

Letter from the Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department (Public), No. 36-2852, dated 29th October 1888 ;—

“It has been brought to the notice of the Governor-General-in-Council that in some parts of the country officials have without the consent of their superiors exerted themselves in collecting subscriptions for the promotion of objects of a political character. It appears to the Government of India to be very inexpedient that Government Officials should be permitted to interest themselves in the raising of subscriptions, and I am therefore to call the attention of His Excellency the Governor-in-Council to the desirability of taking such steps as will effectually put a stop to the participation by public servants in the collection of subscriptions intended to promote political purposes of any kind whatever. It is obvious that great abuses and misconceptions might arise from such action or from any indiscretion on the part of Government officials between the public and private aspects of whose acts people do not always discriminate.”

Resolution— Copies of the letter from the Government of India should be forwarded to all Departments of the Secretariat and all Heads of Offices for information and guidance.

(Signed) J. Dec. Atkins,  
Under-Secretary to Government.

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Simla,  
5th November 1888.

Dear Budruddin,

Yours of the 30th to hand this moment. Before you settle anything, please look further into this supposed "hostile attitude of a very large number of Mahomedans". I have been enquiring town by town and district by district, wherever according to the census there is any appreciable proportion of Mahomedans. I estimate that there are no less than 8 millions of adult male Mohomedans sufficiently intelligent to understand the Congress question if properly put before them. There are probably 4 to 5 millions more who are little better than cattle and whom we cannot gain through their brains.

Now out of the 8 millions we have over one million already distinctly with us and there are not one hundred thousand really opposed to us.

All through Oudh and N. W. Province we have more than ten Mahomedans to one that is against us. (Note this against us—because there are a far larger number who though they approve the Congress and hate Syed Ahmed will not as yet *join us* because they do not feel sure that in the long run the Hindus being so enormously numerically in the majority and having considerably the start in education, will not get an undue preponderance in the Parliament into which they apprehend that our councils will ultimately, as they surely will, expand.)

In the Punjab, we are sweeping Syed Ahmed away. I send you a copy of the Ludhiana Fatwa (to my mind a very clumsy

document—but the Mussalmans seem to approve of it), but now dozens of Mahomedans, are carrying copies of this all over the Punjab, and the greatest Moulvis are everywhere attesting and singing it. The Ludhiana Moulvis have the absolute command of 40,000 Mahomedans. Fatwas to this same effect will be read on a Friday. in every mosque and copies placed in the hands of every Mussalman, who can read and write in the Punjab.

To return, in both Bihar and Eastern Bengal we have an over-whelming majority. In Madras, etc. the same. We want at *this* coming Congress every Mahomedan we can get ( I hope you will bring as many as possible to make the best possible show). I think you may personally let your mind at rest as to the very large number of Mahomedans being *opposed to us*. There is really, looking to totals, only a very small fraction opposed to us and a really good fraction with us. No doubt, our opponents are very active against as and are making a great show and noise and unfortunately through Mehdi Ali and other influential foreigners. They have the Nizam on their side, but the true Hydrabadis are not against us, whether Hindus or Mahomedans. And when thus upper Indian business is done, we will get all these foreigners turned out of Hyderabad.

Now all I have told you above I tell you in strict confidence for you and you only—because I can trust you, I mean your *wisdom*. (I can trust Telang, Menta and others but not to hold their tongues and we want our secret work in upper India—the mine we are digging under these Wahabi traitors—kept secret until the time comes to light the match). Syed Ahmed himself, I believe to be a little mad—and so say some of the men in immediate private contact with him. I am by no means sure that he understands the game that most of the prominent men working with him are playing. But he is puffed up to a degree—and has altogether ceased to be the man he was—bragging ceaselessly in his own entourage of the great things he is going to do, the great man he is going to be at 70 ! alas ! and that reminds me, did you see that wonderfully good letter, “an open letter to Sir Syed Ahmed” in the Tribune. (I don't yet know who wrote it) proving from his own writings,

which are quoted with chapter and verse, that a few years ago he advocated the very things he now so vehemently opposes—only (he) went further than we did or do in the Congress. But to return—having known the man as I do—I do not believe that he is the wilful and shameless liar and a turn-coat that his speeches and writings would make him appear. I believe that his popularity with European officials and his K. C. S. I. and favour recently shown to him by the Viceroy, and the adulation of that title and his immediate entourage have completely turned his head, and this is the view taken by some at any rate of his own personal following.

Now another secret—which I learned only this week. Lord Dufferin *now* is against us. In the first place, he has become afraid. So long as we were a mere consultative body purely native—whose views he could adopt when it suited him or ignore when they did not, he was strongly in favour of it. But now that *many* Europeans are joining—the missionary interest is going with us here and the great non-conformist party at home, is leaning also to us, and lastly that the people of the country are beginning to go with us, so that in almost every village you find our partizans in many parts of the country, he begins to fear that the time will come when we shall be in a position to compel Government not by physical force—he is too wise to feel that—but by moral pressure, to attend to what to say. In the second place—he is out of health and very irritable and the Mirror by its virulent and unjust attacks is driving him half crazy. He is good enough to credit me personally and the Congress Party generally with participation in this business.

When Auckland Colvin wrote to me about the Congress, he sent him a copy of the letter. It appears he replied again abusing the Mirror, the Congress and myself and telling Colvin that he ought not to have written to me as it is giving me an importance I do not deserve and moreover, I learn that he has been in correspondence with Sir Syed Ahmed and that this latter's boasts that he was acting under the Viceroy's instructions were not perhaps altogether groundless.

All this has come upon me like a burst of thunder. Uptil July, twelve months, Lord Dufferin and I constantly discussed Congress details and he was informally favourable towards the end of last season.

We had, as I told you, a difference. I considered and still consider that he had been guilty of a breach of faith towards me (I explained it all to you—about the Star in the East, of which the proofs were submitted to him and modified in certain particulars in accordance with his suggestions.) He denied this and was rather angry. I stuck to my position (the fact was that no intelligent and impartial man could take any other view) but said I would not trouble him further. Since then, he has never written to me nor sent for me. And as he was a big man I have never written to him nor been to see him. Of course I received the usual dinner invites etc. but as I never dine out, of course, this went for nothing and I knew nothing of his volte face—our difference was a purely private matter so it never occurred to me that this could have made any difference in his feelings towards the Congress—but I fear it has—and now for 6 months past I have been innocently telling falsehoods and saying that Lord Dufferin did not look with disfavour on the Congress, whereas it now comes upon me as a revelation that it is almost certain that he does. Of course, there is no public utterance of his to show this—but of private utterances there have been many—at least this is, what I am assured, by more than one high official here.

Yours ever,  
A. O. Hume.

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To

The Editor of *The Indian Mirror*  
Sir,

I am dejected to perceive that the National Congress is beginning to attract the attention of our Rulers.

The latest instance of this is His Excellency the Viceroy's last night's utterances, after the Saint Andrews dinner. There



are many things in these utterances which lead me to fear that His Excellency is not so well informed as to Congress matters, as I hope and believe. A bler pens than mine however must set him right on the general question, but there is one passage in His Excellency's speech as reported in the "Englishman" which embodying as it does, a direct personal attack on myself, demands from me more particular notice. That passage runs as follows :

"Nor is the silly threat of one of the chief officers, the Principal Secretary, I believe, of the Congress, that he and his Congress friends hold in their hands keys not only of a popular insurrection but of a military revolt, calculated to restore our confidence in their discretion "

Nor I can hardly believe that His Excellency really used either these words or even words to a like effect because I am positive that I never at any time publicly or privately, in writing or by word of mouth, gave expression to anything even distantly approaching the sentiments attributed to me in this passage. Possibly His Excellency was referring to a passage in my letter published in the Pioneer of 24th November, 1887, in which in reply to Mr. Beck, I wrote as follows :

To continue. Mr. Beck's assertions (which he conceives to be argument), in support of this monstrous proposition of his, are as untenable as is the proposition itself. He says, "The English educated class does not at present hold in its hands the keys, of the magazines of physical force in this country. They have no control over the native army nor those classes of war like peasantry which form the inflammable material of the country". Now in the first place, no one ever dreamt of the representation being based on the English educated class. Every one confidently expects that the system which will be sanctioned by the Government will be far more perfect and not less perfect, than under which our national Congress assembled. Yet under our present imperfect, tentative system, the English educated class does not constitute 1/58 of the persons directly represented. Great stress is laid upon all the representatives

understanding English, because this is now true *lingua franca* of the Empire, and Tamil, Telegu, Malayalam, Gujerathi, Marathi, Sindhi, Punjabi, Urdu, Persian, Hindi, Bengali, Assamese and Uria speakers can here all meet on a common basis. And yet at the last Congress there were many delegates and even several speakers, who were only acquainted with their own vernaculars. If we take Provincial standing Congress Committees, comprising of some 97 members, fully 13 of these are not English educated men and in the lower grades of the organisation the English educated are the exception but large body of more or less educated (not English educated) men who are at this moment supporting the movement, do hold in their hands, the key of the good many magazines of physical force, though they are not going to put those keys into locks.

As for the native army every sepoy and native officer has a home, and often visits it on leave and furlough, and every one of them could be got at without the slightest difficulty, and (the facts of the case are so plain, simple, and irrefutable) converted to the views held by the great mass of his educated and half-educated countrymen. In two years the great bulk of the native army could be converted into sound politicians and strong supporters of the reform movement. But the policy of our readers has always been opposed to any action that could possibly incline the Government to suspect the perfect loyalty of our agitation, and, therefore, not only has this not been attempted but native officers, on leave, who were desirous of taking part in demonstrations connected with the work of the National Party have been discouraged and advised so long as they remain in the army, to leave politics alone, and content themselves with loyally obeying their lawful superiors.

Now, I leave any fair minded man to say whether the above can possibly be construed as a "silly" or any kind of "threat of holding the keys not only of a popular insurrection, but of military revolt"; and I am constrained to conclude that His Excellency has either been misreported or not having done me the honour of himself reading my letter, has been misled by others as to its purport.

A. O. Hume

Calcutta, 20th January 1891.

To the Editor of *Hindoo Patriot*,

Sir,

I received many letters enquiring what has been the result of our late President, Mr. Pheroazshah Metha's reference to His Excellency the Viceroy, on the subject of certain orders of Bengal Government to which the Congress took objection.

I am now in a position to publish His Excellency's final orders on this subject which I hereto annex. I am quite sure that all thinking men will feel deeply grateful to His Excellency for the kindly straightforward and liberal spirit in which he has dealt with the entire question of the attitude which it behoves the Government servants to assume in regard to the Congress, and all other political and *quasi*-political movements working like the Congress, by open constitutional means. If now, officials throughout the country will only loyally abide by His Excellency's explicit instructions and knowing the service as I do I feel confident that great majority will do this—much of the bitterness that has hitherto characterised the struggle for reform will disappear, and it even seems possible within a few years, the time may arrive for another step, and the Government, instead of remaining neutral as now, may find itself in a position to co-operate heartily with both our liberal and conservative parties in their efforts for the common good.

Under any circumstances this candid and characteristically British declaration in favour of freedom of opinion and actions in political matters in cases of all private persons (no less important) in its way than Lord Metcalfe's in favour of freedom of the press) ought to go far to bridge the gulf which for years unhappily has been widening between the European official classes and the Indian public

Surely, now that the Viceroy has, himself, formally decided that the Congress is a perfectly legitimate movement which every private person is free to join and that Government officials are debarred from putting any pressure, upon any one, to induce them to abstain from taking part in it, the best plan

for both parties the officials and the native community would be to shape and make friends, and while tolerant of differences of opinion regarding the labours of the other party in the most charitable and sympathetic light, each on its own lines and according to its own opportunities, do its utmost to promote the welfare of India and her people.

Yours truly,  
A.O. Hume.  
General Secretary, I.N.C.

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Government House,  
Calcutta, 19th January, 1891.

Dear Sir,

With reference to the communications which have recently taken place, first, between Mr. Mehta and the Viceroy, and after Mr. Mehta's departure from Calcutta, between yourself and His Excellency, upon the subject of the letter received by the Secretary of the Reception Committee from the Private Secretary of the Lieut-Governor of Bengal, in reference to the attendance of Government servants at meetings of the Congress, I am authorised by His Excellency to say that Mr. Lyon's of December 26th in which it was stated that "the orders of the Government of India definitely prohibit the presence of Government officials at such meetings", and the circular, in which that letter was communicated to the heads of the departments under the Bengal Government, were issued under a misapprehension as to the purport of the orders of the Government of India. It was at once recognised both by Government of Bengal, and by the Government of India that the letter in question went beyond those orders, and an amended circular in which it was pointed out that the expression "absolute prohibition" had a reference only to the participation of Government officials in the proceedings of a political meeting, was subsequently issued by Bengal Government to the Heads of the Departments. I enclose herewith a copy of the orders of Government of India.

These orders which arose out of a totally different matter has no special reference to the Congress movement, and were

certainly not framed in a spirit of hostility to it. The publications of some of the supporters of the Congress have, in the opinion of Government of India, been open to serious questions, but apart from this the movement is regarded as one of those which in the words of the circular are "perfectly legitimate in themselves, and which private persons are free to promote" but from the participation in which Government officials are, for the reasons specified in orders necessarily debarred.

The Government of India recognise that the Congress movement is regarded as representing in India what in Europe would be called the more advanced Liberal party, as distinguished from the great body of conservative opinion, which exists side by side with it. They desire themselves to maintain an attitude of neutrality in their relations with both parties, so long as these act strictly within constitutional limits.

They intend that all Government servants shall preserve a similar attitude of neutrality, and shall abstain from active participation in political or *quasi*-political movements of all kinds, and also from putting pressure upon others to induce them to take part or not to take part, in any movement which is legitimate in itself. It was with the above objects that the orders of March 1890 were issued.

In reference to a specific question which you address to His Excellency, I am to say, that the orders apply only to those who are actually, at the time being, Government servants, but not to pensioners and others who have quitted the service of the Government for good.

Yours truly,  
J.C. Ardagh, Colonel,  
Private Secretary to the Viceroy.

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Copy of Government Resolution No. 1903, dated the 6th April, 1892 :

*Nagpur Congress*

Complaint by Mr. A.O. Hume  
of the alleged prohibition by  
Government of Bombay  
against Government Pleaders  
attending the—

Judicial Department.

No. 1903.

Bombay Castle, 6th April, 1892.

*Read* again the following documents :

(1) "Government Resolution No. 1461, dated the 15th April, 1890, General Department.

"Letter from the Government of India, Home Department, Public. No. 11-680, dated 18th March 1890 :

"I am directed to say that the Governor General in Council has had under consideration the attitude which should be maintained by officers in the service of Government towards political or quasi-political movements with which they may be brought in contact. Servants of Government have not the same liberty of action as private individuals, and are bound to hold themselves aloof from many movements which are perfectly legitimate in themselves and which private persons are free to promote. Their participation in such movements is open to objection, because their connection with them is likely to create, and even to be appealed to for the purpose of creating, a false impression in the minds of ignorant persons that such movements have the countenance of Government, and because their influence, with the community at large is liable to be impaired by their identifying themselves with the class by which the movement is promoted.

2 For these reasons His Excellency in Council desires that the following rules may be observed by all Government servants :

(a) As a general rule no officer of Government should attend at a political meeting where the fact of this presence is

likely to be misconstrued or to impair his usefulness as an official.

(b) No officer of Government may take part in the proceedings of a political meeting, or in organizing or promoting a political meeting or agitation.

(c) If in any case an officer is in doubt whether any action which he proposes to take would contravene the terms of this order, the matter should be referred to the Head of the Department or District, and if necessary, to the Local Government or Administration.'

*Resolution.*—Copies of the letter from the Government of India should be forwarded to all Departments of the Secretariat and all Heads of Offices under those Departments for information and guidance.”

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“Memorandum from the Judicial Department of the Secretariat No. 1077, dated 18th February, 1891—Transferring the following letter from the Government of India, Home Department, Public, No. 5 Public-205, dated 6th February, 1891 :—

“A question having arisen whether the orders contained in Home Department Circular letter No. 11-676-88, dated the 18th March, 1890, prohibiting Government servants from participating in political movements, should be held to be binding upon Government Pleaders, I am directed to say that the Governor General in Council considers it undesirable that Government Pleaders should be treated with the same strictness, in regard to attendance at political meetings or participation in political movements, as persons who are wholly in the service of Government.

‘While, however, His Excellency in Council would, in ordinary cases, leave Government Pleaders free to follow their own inclinations in any matter of political interest, it should be recognized that the adoption of an attitude which brings a Government Pleader into notoriety as a partisan may interfere with the proper performance of his duties to the Government ;

and His Excellency in Council therefore considers that any Government Pleader who takes up an attitude on a political question either inconsistent with the proper performance of his duties as a public servant, or which is liable to be misconstrued, should be warned that he must either alter it or accept the alternative of having to give up his appointment.'

*Resolution.*—Copies of the letter from the Government of India should be forwarded to the Judicial Department of the Secretariat and the Remembrancer of Legal Affairs for information and guidance, in continuation of Government Resolution No. 1461, dated 15th April 1890."

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Letter from A.O. Hume, Esq., to the Editor of *Bombay Gazette*, dated Nagpur, the 17th December 1891 :—

'I am informed that the Government of Bombay or some authority subordinate to that Government, in that Government's name, has issued a confidential circular to all Government Pleaders prohibiting them from attending the Nagpur Congress.

'I can scarcely credit this information, but I wish to say that, if correct, orders thus issued are *ultra vires*, and in direct contravention of the explicit orders of the Government of India.

'Lord Lansdowne has distinctly laid down that it is only persons actually in the Government service at the time, who can be required to abstain from attending the Congress as delegates.

'Now Government Pleaders are not in Government service. They are independent professional men, who in consideration of receiving a permanent retaining fee, paid monthly, undertake all Government business as they do that of other clients.

'Any Government or authority, therefore, who endeavours by circulars, confidential or otherwise to prevent Government Pleaders from attending the Congress as delegates, is acting in direct contravention of the Viceroy's own published instruc-



tions in which he says that the Government of India intend that all Government servants *shall* abstain from putting pressure upon any one in order to induce them not to take part in the Congress.

'Clearly, therefore, Government Pleaders are at perfect liberty to attend the Congress, and any attempt made by any official high or low, to prevent their doing so, is made in direct disobedience to the Viceroy's orders, to whose notice as well as to that of the British press and Parliament it will, if persisted in, undoubtedly be brought.'

Government Resolution No. 63, dated the 6th January 1892, Judicial Department.

Letter from the District Judge of Thana, No. 2355, dated the 29th December 1891 — Enquiries whether any circular has been issued forbidding Government Pleaders to attend the National Congress. States that he is led to make the enquiry by Mr. A.O. Hume's statement that such a Circular has been issued in a letter, dated the 17th December 1891, which appeared in the *Bombay Gazette* of the 21st idem.

"*Resolution* — The District Judge of Thana should be informed that the information supplied to Mr. Hume is devoid of foundation and untrue."

*Resolution* — With reference to the recent correspondence between Mr. A.O. Hume and the Private Secretary to His Excellency the Governor published by the former it should be pointed out to the Remembrancer of Legal Affairs, and through him to the several Government Pleaders, that this Government has not at any time circulated any order prohibiting the attendance of Government Pleaders as delegates at the Nagpur Congress. In September 1890 the Remembrancer of Legal Affairs wrote to Government suggesting that Government Pleaders should be held subject to an order of the Government of India by which Government servants were prohibited from participating in political movements. This Government, not accepting the suggestion of the Remembrancer of Legal Affairs

made a reference to the Government of India as on a question affecting other Provinces as well as the Presidency of Bombay. The Government of India rejected the proposal of the Remembrancer of Legal Affairs ; and at the same time expressed its disapproval of a Government Pleader taking up a position which would bring him "into notoriety as a partisan". This Government sent the ruling of the Government of India, as it was bound to do, for information and guidance to the Remembrancer of Legal Affairs. It was prefaced by his own letter in order that the exact effect of the Government of India's decision might be known. Both letters were given in full. This Government added no comment or direction of its own ; nor, did the Remembrancer of Legal Affairs add any in communicating the order of the Government of India to the Government Pleaders.

2. His Excellency in Council has thought it desirable to republish the previous orders of Government so that Government pleaders may not be misled as to the purport of the orders of the Government of India.

(Sd.).....,  
Secretary to Government.

It is in connection with Mr. A.O. Hume's letter dated Nagpur January 13, 1892 addressed to the Private Secretary to His Excellency the Governor of Bombay and his letter to the Editor of the *Bombay Gazette*.

To the Editor of the "Bombay Gazette".

Sir,

Some little time ago I wrote to the *Bombay Gazette*, stating that I had been informed that the Bombay Government or some subordinate authority in their name, had, by means of a confidential circular, been prohibiting Government Pleaders and Prosecutors from attending the Congress as delegates. The Bombay Government promptly replied by a Resolution setting forth that the information furnished to me was *untrue* and *entirely devoid of foundation*. In the meantime further information had reached me, and I wrote to Lord Harris, saying that

I was sure he would be sorry to learn, that it was not the information supplied to me, but the resolution published in his name which was *untrue*.

He declined, but very courteously, to plead guilty to the impeachment, and challenged me to send him a copy of the circular.

With some difficulty I obtained a copy and then, on that, wrote, again, pointing out that the circular entirely substantiated the information supplied to me, and, as Lord Harris is a young man, and perhaps, not *over-wise* I suggested to him, in a kindly and fatherly spirit, that he should cancel his erring Resolution.

He replied in effect, though very politely, that he would see me blow'd first.

I said, all right, then I shall go and tell the Viceroy, which I did privately, but he naturally did not see his way to interfere.

Now, I have shown this correspondence to many persons, Indians and Europeans, officials and non-officials; and all concur with me in deprecating that "not guilty" Resolution of the Government of Bombay and even the verdict most friendly to this latter ran: "The Resolution, to say the least, is most disingenuous and, whether so intended, or not, is eminently calculated to mislead." In this verdict I concur, and as it would be unjust to allow my informants to continue any longer under the unmerited aspersion of the Bombay Government. I now enclose the whole correspondence (which please publish along with this), and I will leave the public to judge, whether it has been my informants, or the Bombay authorities, who have told a taradiddle.—Yours, etc.

A. O. Hume.

(Extract from Minutes by members of the Governor's Council, in connection with Hume's correspondence regarding alleged banning by Government of Government Pleaders attending meetings of the Indian National Congress.)

“It seems to me clear that Mr. Hume has scored by his tactics in getting the personal staff to His Excellency the Viceroy to intervene with correspondence on a subject, about which they were not fully informed and had not time to obtain the requisite information, although correspondence on official subjects outside the Secretariat is, I think, apt to lead to oversights and even error, yet we can hardly improve on Mr. Edgarly’s statement of the case as given on February 1 of 1892. But any statement of the facts must throw over Col. Ardagh’s statement as to the nature of our G.R. and the public will not be slow to suspect when the correspondence as to doubt our line of argument in this G.R. 1461, General Department dated 15th April 1890, circulated in extenso the orders of the Government of India, Remembrancer of Legal Affairs represented that certain pleaders wished for a ruling and expressed his own opinion. The matter was referred to the Government of India who recorded their opinion. The opinion was then printed in full with Legal Remembrancer’s opinion and case submitted and thereon Government resolved in G R. 918/27 Confidential, dated 10th March, 1891 that the letter of the Government of India to be forwarded to the J.P.D. the Legal Remembrancer himself for guidance. The Legal Remembrancer’s opinion served to explain and bring out in sharper contrast the decision of Government of India.

The resolution was conclusive that the order of Government of India, in sharp contrast to the views of the Legal Remembrancer placed alongside of them, were the orders to guide the Judicial Department and the Remembrancer of Legal Affairs. The reproduction of the Legal Remembrancer’s opinion rendered any mistake impossible. The shade and light were placed alongside. The doubts of the pleaders and the views of the Remembrancer were set forth on the same sheet with the decision of the supreme Government ; and then followed the brief unmistakable order of Government that the letter of Government of India was to guide the Remembrancer of Legal Affairs.

When then Mr. Hume wrote on December 17 that Government or its agent has issued a confidential circular to all

Government Pleaders prohibiting them from attending the Nagpur Congress he was rightly informed that the information was devoid of foundation and untruth.

First because the circular issued by Government merely forwarded for the guidance of the Remembrancer of Legal Affairs and the J.D. The Government of India letter No. 5 public-205, dated 6th February 1891.

Second because his letter distinctly conveyed the impression that a special edict against the Nagpur Congress had issued and nothing had issued with special reference to the event specially mentioned by Mr. Hume.

The proper course is to reprint the two circulars with Mr. Hume's letter and to repeat the Resolution 63, dated 8th January, 1892 but we cannot give publicity to Government of India's letter marked confidential as it is without their express permission. Nor does it seem expedient to correct publicity a mistake of fact in Col. Ardagh's letter dated March 11, 1892, without prior reference to the Viceroy, Mr. Hume is safe on board ship and we might wait till His Excellency the Viceroy arrives. As to form we can easily issue a Government Resolution without impulse or apparent impulse for any subordinate of Government.

*(Extract from the "Bombay Gazette" Dated the 21st March 1892.)*

We published on Saturday a letter from Mr. A. O. Hume enclosing the correspondence between himself and the Government of Bombay in regard to his allegation that a confidential circular had been issued prohibiting all Government Pleaders from attending the Nagpur Congress. When that statement appeared in our columns, the Bombay Government issued a Resolution setting forth that the information furnished to Mr. Hume was "devoid of foundation and untrue". Mr. Hume candidly owned that he had not himself seen the confidential circular. It is a very perilous course for any one to base a charge on the supposed contents of a document which he had not himself perused. It is especially astonishing that Mr. Hume, with his striking experience in such matters, should commit

himself to a charge upon so uncertain a foundation. He had before this been led in entire good faith to make serious aspersions against others upon documents of which he has heard at second-hand ; and when challenged to produce them he found to his dismay that there was nothing to justify his allegations. Such an example ought to be shunned, but unhappily it is one that is only too likely to be followed. There is an instance in point in a paper published in Allahabad on Saturday, which sets forth in large type that it has heard that the private and confidential letter from Mr. Hume addressed to the Standing Congress Committee is of so "incendiary" a character, so peculiarly offensive and outrageous, that the authorities "will certainly fail in their duty if they do not arrest the writer for sedition." There is plenty of time for the adoption of this course, says this heated partisan, who has not seen the document on which he founds the recommendation, for Mr. Hume does not sail from Bombay till next week. The paragraphist goes so far as to state that in this letter, of which he has heard, "the English are held up to execration, and it is affirmed that the time will come when their throats will be cut like sheep". We do not suppose for a moment that Mr. Hume gave utterance to any sentiment so foolish and ferocious. Yet these words are ascribed to him by a political opponent, who thinks he has discharged the whole duty of a publicist in stating that he has heard that they form part of a letter which he has not seen. This is precisely what Mr. Hume permitted himself to do in respect of the confidential circular of the Bombay Government. The necessity of verification did not occur to him, even when the Government Resolution challenged the allegation, and affirmed that it was untrue. He deemed it sufficient to enclose to Mr. Edgerley an editorial of a paper published in the Punjab contradicting the Government Resolution, and stating that the editor had himself seen and read the confidential circular. On this unsubstantial basis he maintained that his assertion was substantially correct, and affirmed that facts material to a correct judgment have been withheld from the knowledge of His Excellency. The Private Secretary asked for a copy of the circular said to have been issued, in order that its authenticity

might be tested, and stated that His Excellency declined to accept an imputation on officers of high position, that they had withheld material facts from his knowledge. It was only then that Mr. Hume deemed it necessary to endeavour to obtain a copy of the document on which he founded two several allegations. Some one sent him anonymously a copy of "Rules regarding the attitude to be maintained by Government pleaders towards political and quasi-political movements." The document began by reciting a letter from the Legal Remembrancer Mr. Naylor, stating that he had sent copies of the orders of the Government of India of the previous year, prohibiting Government servants from taking part in political movements, to the Government pleaders in the Presidency for their guidance. Certain of the pleaders doubted the applicability of these orders to them, on the ground that they were not Government servants. Mr. Naylor considering that this objection might be correct, the question was referred for instructions to the Government of India which decided that the orders applied to Government servants only. The circular is not given to the public with the correspondence, Mr. Hume being doubtful whether he could legally reprint it under the Officials' Secrets Act. He tells us that the Government of India, to soften their refusal to apply the prohibition to gentlemen who are not Government servants went on to say "that a Government pleader who takes up an attitude on a political question which is liable to misconstruction, must either abandon it or accept dismissal from his office." Without perusing the document, we cannot say whether these words are textually used by the Government of India. If they are we can only express surprise that a Government pleader or any one else would be liable to dismissal from office because his attitude had been misconstrued. Then penalty surely should be visited on those who misconstrue—not on the victims of misconstruction. The Government of India would do well to publish the text of the ruling, and with it the correspondence which Mr. Hume has carried on with the Government of India on the same subject matter. The rules, such as they are or such as he conceives them to be, were regarded by Mr. Hume as conclusive proof that his original allegation was

true ; and he, therefore, asked that Government should cancel and Resolution stating that it was untrue, and with engaging candour he advised His Excellency in Council not to defend a disingenuous resolution by verbal quibbles. From this view of the case His Excellency dissented. The charge which had been brought against the Bombay Government was that a confidential circular had been issued prohibiting all Government pleaders from attending the Nagpur Congress ; no such circular had been issued ; but the rules of the Government of India for the guidance of Government servants were sent to the concerned. The Bombay Government had not issued a confidential circular forbidding pleaders to attend the Nagpur Congress and then denied the fact. Had Mr. Hume taken the trouble to possess himself of a copy of the document actually issued, he would not have committed himself to an allegation which he could not make good. In matters of controversy Mark Twain's rule should always be borne in mind ; make sure of your facts and then you can do with them what you please.

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### HUME'S CIRCULAR

6th Parke Street, Calcutta,  
16th February, 1892.

To Every Member of the Congress Party.

Dear Sir,

I have had so many letters asking me whether any permanent memorial to late Pandit Ajudhianath is in contemplation, as also what I think about the matter, that it seems to me best to write a circular letter on the subject.

In my opinion, in the present state of the country, it is not desirable to attempt memorials to any one. We so grievously need money for the national cause that we should give to this every rupee we can spare, and not fritter away our resources in half-a-dozen different channels.

No matter how deserving are individuals or institutions, these are of little moment compared to the national cause,



upon the triumph of which depends the comfort, prosperity, nay the very lives of countless millions.

A very large number of you seem almost as behind as the Government. You do not, especially the rich and well to do, realize that the existing system of administration is not only ill adapted to the wants of the country, is not only pauperizing the people—you all know and heartily deplore these facts—but is inevitably preparing the way for one of the most terrible cataclysms in the history of the world.

The people are very patient, very mild and humble, but so were the people of France, only twenty years, nay only ten years before they rose and murdered their Sovereign and practically, the bulk of the better classes; they are very ignorant, and absolutely devoid of definite aims and leaders, but so were the masses in France. It was Hunger and Misery, those great leaders and teachers that changed, at last, apparently in a day (though the change had been going on unseen for years) that crowd of sheep into an army of wolves.

All history shows that, however peaceful a population, a time comes when starvation, injustice and despair instil into them a new nature and drive them into violence and crime

Those of you who have gone deep into the roots of the question know that the cup of misery of scores of millions of our masses is well nigh full, and that day by day, poverty, the mother of Anarchy, is pressing with a heavier and heavier hand upon an ever-growing portion of our population.

As surely as night follows day, must a terrible rising evolve, sooner or later out of this state of affairs unless we can remedy existing evils and redress the more prominent of our paupers' grievances.

Do not be buoyed up with false hopes. Providence in its mercy may delay the catastrophe, but come it must and come it will, and it may be sooner and not later.

Do not fancy that the Government will be able to protect you or itself. No earthly power can stem an universal

agrarian rising in a country like this. My countrymen will be as men in the desert, vainly struggling for a brief space, against the simooms. There will be no foe to meet in the field, but rail and road will become impossible, bridges will be wrecked, telegraphs cease to exist, supplies be arrested, thousands of rioters may be killed, but to what avail, when there are millions on millions who have nothing to look forward to, but death—nothing to hope for but vengeance ; as for leaders—with the hour comes the man—be sure there will be no lack of leaders.

This is no hypothesis—it is a certainty. Recall what you know of the growing poverty and sullen discontent amongst the masses, and reflect for yourselves, those amongst you who have read history to any purpose, what such a state of things ever has led to and ever must culminate in.

Now we can only avert this general ruin by those radical reforms in the administration which the Congress has, after years of patient labour, by all the ablest and wisest Indians, declared to be essential. Even these alone will not suffice, but they will do much and they will substitute hope for despair in the hearts of the masses, and give us time to work out those other changes and reforms which are required for a peaceful solution of the terrible problem, that our Rulers' failure to realise the real position of affairs has created.

But, here in India, we pray, we argue, we protest, to men who cannot, or will not hear, cannot or will not see. Our only hope lies in awakening the British public to a sense of the wrong of our people—to a consciousness of the unwisdom and injustice of the existing administration. The least that we could do would be to provide ample funds—for sending and keeping constantly in England deputations of our ablest speakers to plead their country's cause—to enable our British Committee to keep up an unbroken series of public meetings, whereas the true state of affairs in India might be expounded to flood Great Britain with pamphlets, leaflets, newspapers and magazine articles, in a word, to carry on an agitation there on the lines and scale of that in virtue of which the Anti-Corn Law League triumphed.

As a fact, however, but a small sum, comparatively is provided—a *wholly inadequate sum*, and even that, though promised, is paid so tardily that thousands of letters, circulars and reminders are needed to get even this ineffectual contribution.

Now perhaps you will understand, why I say “For God’s sake” waste no money on memorials or any other minor enterprise ; give every farthing you can spare to the general cause. It is not your patriotism I appeal to only, but to your dearest interests Your homes, your little properties, your lives and those, it may be, even, of all dearest and nearest to you, are at stake. Cherish no false hopes. You are the creation of Great Britain—of British learning, history and literature, and with British Rule you stand or fall. On the peaceful continuance of that Rule depend all that is dear to you in this life, all your earthly hopes ; but that peaceful continuance can only be ensured by securing those fundamental changes in the policy and practice of that administration that you have advocated in Congress. You all know this, you feel its truth in your hearts as strongly as I do and yet you twaddle on about memorials here and memorials there, and I can hardly spur you into having even that miserably inadequate subsidy which you early ‘promise’ so cheerfully, to the national cause.

I know that there are a few of you who living on pittances of £100 to £300 a year, do contribute relatively to your means, most liberally but I marvel at the short-sighted avarice of so many of the rich who grudge what for them are truly paltry sums. Are they, too, like our Rulers, wholly blind to the signs of the times ? Is it impossible for you to make them realize that it is they themselves and their beloved treasure that would be the first to fall victims to the cataclysm ? That they are grudging a few hundreds or thousands to the only cause that can save their lakhs and crores ? Or do they comfort themselves, as some of the most far-seeing of our Rulers do, with the hope that ‘it will last our time’ ? It may in the case of some, but all probabilities are against its doing so in that of the majority. They and their precious riches, which they hug so miserly rest upon an almost limitless heap of loose dynamite

which any trifle may explode—how, when or where no man can say. Such troubles ever come like a bolt out of the blue ; it is always the unexpected that occurs.

Our Government, here, after seven years of persistent efforts, I give up in despair, but is it quite impossible for you to open the eyes of *your own countrymen*, to make them realize the position and induce all to join heartily and liberally in a grand effort to save that Government to whom, in the past, India has owed so much, and in whose fortunes ours are indissolubly bound up, even without its help even against its will ?

Yours sincerely,  
A.O. Hume.

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6 Park Street, Calcutta,  
8th March 1892.

To Every Member of the Congress Party.

Dear Sir,

In continuation of my letter of the 16th February I now forward for your information copies of certain letters that have passed between the chairman of the Allahabad Standing Congress Committee and myself. I think these letters raise questions which will interest you all. Moreover Pandit Bishambhar Nath is a gentleman second only to the late Pandit Ajoodhinath in wisdom, experience and the respect in which he is held by all classes in the N.W. Provinces, and it is only right that you should be made acquainted with his view on this vital question.

Yours sincerely,  
A.O. Hume.

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Allahabad, 23rd February 1892.

My dear Sir,

We have very carefully considered the contents of your printed circular letter, dated the 16th instant, copies of which were received here the day before yesterday, in the afternoon. With due deference to you I beg to submit, on behalf of myself and the Members of the Committee here, that the publication

of that letter is, for various reasons, inexpedient and calculated to do great injury to the cause which you and we have so much at heart. You no doubt address that letter as an independent member of the Congress Party, and not as its General Secretary, but, considering the position you occupy, the letter in question will be held to be a manifesto of the whole party; and, though you have taken very great care to leave no room for misconstruction or misrepresentation, still, we feel positively certain that our opponents will misconstrue it and misrepresent us in a way that is likely to do us serious injury as a party.

In fact, we are not only afraid of being misrepresented by our opponents, but we also think that a considerable number of men in our ranks will feel nervous at the publication of the letter.

We fully understand that such a publication would be considered wholly harmless in England, where it can only be taken as an honest expression of the deep and earnest convictions of a person who possessing an intimate knowledge of the condition of the country, and burning with a desire to promote the welfare of both the rulers and the ruled, feels it his duty to awaken them to proper understanding of the situation. You know, however, how different India is from England, and with what hostility the expression of such opinions is treated here. I beg you, therefore, to reconsider the matter, and to stop the circulation of the letter by wiring to all those committees and individuals to whom it may have been sent to return all the copies of it to you.

It is with great reluctance and regret that I address you this letter, but we feel that we would be wanting in our duty, not only to the country but also to you if we did not express our honest opinion of the matter, especially when we consider it be so extremely serious. With best respects.

To  
A.O. Hume, Esquire, C.B.,  
6 Park Street, Calcutta.

I remain, Dear Sir,  
Yours very truly,  
Bishumber Nath Pandit.

To

The Editor of the "*Bombay Gazette*".

Sir,

I suppose it would be altogether futile to attempt to discuss with you the real character of Mr. Hume's letter addressed to the members of the Congress which you have published. But I am surprised that you should charge him with cowardice; and a few facts will show how altogether unfounded is such a charge. Long before his departure he sent me copies of his letter for immediate circulation. I showed them to Mr. P.M. Mehta, who at once asked me to send an urgent telegram in his name begging Mr. Hume to withdraw them. We followed up the telegram with a letter. Mr. Hume, however, still pressed us to lay the matter before the Bombay standing Committee. I did so, and the Committee formally declined to circulate the letters. Were it not for this the letters would have been in circulation long before Mr. Hume's departure. I may mention that ultimately the letters were entirely withdrawn from circulation here.

Yours etc.,  
D.E. Watcha,

March 31, 1892.

The *Hindu* publishes the following letter and the resolution of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress sent to the English Press, repudiating the circular letter of Mr. A.O. Hume :

April 1st, 1892.  
Queen Victoria Street, E.C.

To

The Editor of *The Times*.

Sir,

We beg to enclose the copy of a resolution passed to-day at the British Committee of the Indian National Congress, with

regard to the most injudicious circular letter recently issued by Mr. Allan O. Hume, C.B. to the members of the Congress party in India. This letter appears to have been repudiated already by the Standing Committee at Allahabad and, no doubt, other Standing Committees have taken or will take the same course.

There are statements in Mr. Hume's letter bearing on the great poverty and misery of the agricultural population of India with which we entirely agree, but it is impossible for us to do other than to repudiate the prophecies to which Mr. Hume appears driven in face of the consideration of the deplorable condition of large portions of the Indian people.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) W.S. Caine  
Dadabhai Naorojee  
Charles E. Schwann

(Signed) John Adam (Vice-President),  
Madras Congress Committee.

*(Resolution referred to)*

"This Committee having before it the full text of a circular letter, issued by Mr. Allan O. Hume, C.B. to every member of the Congress party, dated Calcutta, February 16th, the substance of which was cabled by the Times correspondent, yesterday, to express their deep regret that such a letter should have been circulated, and their entire repudiation of the wild language and the unjustifiable conclusions drawn by Mr. Hume."

(From "Bombay Gazette", 28th April 1892).

*Lecture on the Indian National Congress by*  
Mr. Eardly Norton.

...It would not be right for him to conclude without saying a word or two about Mr. Hume's last circular (Loud

Applause). It has been said that the Madras Committee was to be congratulated that it has made no sign about the circular and therefore condemned it absolutely. He heard a lot talked about loyalty, but he would tell them that it was only loyalty that compelled him to say one or two words about the matter. To his mind there was absolutely no reason for any apology of exculpation for the publication of the circular. He should like them to know the views of the Madras Committee on the point. He had read the circular over and over again, up and down and inside out and he should not for the life of him find one single trace in the manifesto which justified the most caustic critic in saying that Mr. Hume acted with any hostility towards the Government of India (Loud Applause). On the contrary Mr. Hume's manifesto was based on the fact that they were what they were, and because England had given them all they had got. It was because he believed that education was panacea for all ills that he had come forward as he had done. As for his literary style he said nothing. He was not there to apologise for that. He looked to the substance of the letter, and that breathed nothing but a simple strain of the purest loyalty to the Queen (Applause). Whether his facts were absolutely true he did not know but he for one would be cautious before he ventured to cross swords with Mr. Hume, for he was a man than whom no English man had a better knowledge of the native aspirations and the causes from which they sprang. When Mr. Hume said there was grave discontent abroad he would not be prepared to say Mr. Hume was not speaking the truth. How, the speaker asked, could they progress if there was no discontent? If they sat down with their hands folded across their breasts and simply muttered "kismet", how did they expect to raise themselves beyond the level of the mere dumb brute of creation? Discontent there must be, and he trusted in the interests of good Government that the discontent would increase. He trusted Mr. Hume's manifesto would be received by all and he was prepared to say whether it was of the character or not of that described by Mr. Hume—that there was great discontent in Madras in the whole of the presidency. He trusted the natives of Madras would remain discontented until they had got what they justly required. In conclusion, he said he did not profess to be a



prophet, but he did foresee that in a very short time if only they would be preserving and loyal—he did not say they would get all they have been working for during the past seven years, for that would only come in the greater fulfillment of a greater time—they would get much of what they asked for he trusted, before he died.

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London, April 26, 1892.

In the House of Commons last night, the India Council Bill was taken in Committee.

A series of amendments was brought forward by Sir W. Plowden, Mr. MacNeil and Mr. Schwam, all in favour of embodying in the Bill the elective principle, but they were either withdrawn or rejected.

Mr. Curzon affirmed that a representative government was impossible in India. The idea was congenial to some classes but absolutely repugnant to others.

In reply to Mr. Curzon, Mr. Maclean declared that the Government had already clearly expressed without the consent of Parliament. He said it was a mistake to suppose that no public opinion existed in India as there was a free Press which largely criticised the proposals of the Government. Mr. Curzon, he said, had virtually admitted that the intention of the Government was to introduce the elective principle and he (Mr. Maclean) was convinced that if the principle was applied Great Britain must prepare to abandon India.

Referring to Mr. Hume, Mr. Maclean said he deserved to be hanged or shot as a traitor. The debate later continues.

Mr. Maclean's Amendment to the Indian Council Bill has been rejected by a majority of ninety-one against twenty-four votes.

Mr. Curzon opposed the amendment which he said would create friction and that it aimed at a danger which was unlikely to occur.

The debate has been adjourned.

*Mr. Maclean's speech with reference to Mr. Hume is reported as follows :*

Mr. Maclean moved an amendment to the effect that no regulation should be put in force under the Act until it had received the sanction of both Houses of Parliament. It was a mistake to suppose that there were no means of ascertaining the public feeling of the inhabitants of India. They had a free platform and a free Press, while the Government took the greatest pains to ascertain that opinion before any changes were made in the law of the land. Under the Bill as it stood any Viceroy might after consultation with his colleagues at home, leave this country for India with a readymade constitution in his Gladstone bag. That was taking the whole control out of the hands of the Imperial Government. Indeed the clause contained potentialities of mischief beyond the dreams of the present generations of agitators. It would be possible under it to recognise as a legislature the Indian National Congress, which, it was true, broke up with cheers for the Queen, but which was in reality a seditious gathering. (Cries of "No, No" from the opposition benches). He had expected that denial and he had with him extracts of a letter by Mr. Hume, the Secretary of the Congress, a pensioner of the Government, who under a less mild rule than ours would be hanged or shot as a traitor. What did Mr. Hume say? "Do not fancy that the Government will be able to protect you. No earthly power can protect you from an agrarian rising in country like this. There will be no fear of it. Passage by road and rail will become impossible. Bridges will be wrecked, telegraphs will be at an end. A great many of them do not understand what a house of cards this Administration of India is. An Administration which shrivelled up like parchment flung into the fire in less than a month in consequence of the mutiny of 40,000 soldiers". This was the letter which was circulated, after a slight protest, by the Allahabad Committee. If Hon. members opposite disapproved of such language and believed that it was contrary to the feelings of those who worked the Congress, why did they not call a meeting of Indians in London to denounce Mr. Hume and his doctrines, just as they held a meeting to denounce his (Mr. Maclean's) language

in the house? He should protest to the last against this irrevocable fatal step, which was leading to the ultimate overthrow of British authority in India.

*The Times* of the 29th April, 1892 publishes the following letter from Mr. A.O. Hume :

From the report in the *Times* of yesterday I see that Mr. J.M. Maclean in the debate on the Indian Councils Bill quoted the extracts from a letter which I addressed to my political friends in India, and founded on these extracts a personal attack upon me, charging me with inciting the members of the Congress to rise against the Government and stating his opinion that under any less mild rule I should have been hanged or shot as a traitor. My letter was one of warning and entreaty; and I am much obliged to Mr Maclean for having given it such wide publicity, for the facts and the danger to which I draw attention are of equal moment to the British and to the Indian people. On the other hand, I have reason to complain that Mr. Maclean has made a personal attack upon me in a place where I am unable to reply to him and also that he has selected extracts which read apart from the context give an entirely wrong impression of the substance and object of my letter. Under these circumstances I trust you will be so good as to allow me space to your columns to set forth the true facts of the case.

The fact is that so far from inciting any one to rise against the Government, the whole purpose and object of my letter was to stir up the Congress party or in other words the constitutional party, to strenuous exertions in order to secure those ameliorations in the conditions of the masses in India that can alone avert the catastrophe with which the growing poverty, misery and discontent of the people threaten us, to make clear to them that their interests are indissolubly interlocked with ours and to induce them to treat the Government with greater confidence and not hide from their rulers the facts of which they are thoroughly cognizant. I say, "It is not your patriotism I appeal to only, but to your dearest

interests. Your homes, your little properties, your lives and those, it may even be, of all dearest and nearest to you are at stake. Cherish no false hopes. You are the creation of Great Britain—of British learning, history and literature and with British rule you stand or fall. On the peaceful continuance of that rule depend all that is dear to you in this life, all your earthly hopes; but that peaceful continuance can only be insured by securing those fundamental changes in the policy and practice of the administration that you have advocated in Congress. Again, in my second letter, referring to the hundreds of letters to me which my first circular elicited I say, "It would seem that educated Indians throughout the country accept as facts the most widespread poverty, misery, semi-starvation and discontent and yet, for the most part, they sit silent and passive, making no real effort to avert the inevitable consequences of such a lamentable state of affairs, I call upon each and all as honest men and loyal citizens to do their duty by themselves, their country and their Government by firmly openly and persistently pressing on the notice of all Europeans, official and non-official, with whom they are brought in contact, or whose ears they can in any way reach, a correct view of the present state of the country". It is for the public to judge whether these exhortations are in their nature an indictment to rebel, and whether they are not in truth, an appeal to the educated to act the part of good citizens and to labour earnestly in order to strengthen the real foundations of British rule.

I have been through the Indian Mutiny and know what it was. I have seen one period of anarchy in India and I do not want to see another. I have lived 43 years in India. I have served in the Administration from the lowest to all but the highest grade, and since my retirement have moved amongst the Indians in every province of the Empire for some 11 years in a way that no other European living has done. I affirm, and the people of India will ratify my assertion that there is no man, European or Indian at this present day who possesses such an intimate knowledge of what is going on below the surface among the masses in India as I do. I have a right to be heard, and when I warn the people of India, and of

England, of the impending danger, it is futile to meet my assertion by personal charges that are manifestly absurd. What does Mr. John Bright say as to the wisdom and consequences of living in a fool's paradise? This is what he says: "It may be said, 'Let us leave the great Indian problem to solve itself' well, leave it and it will solve itself, I do not doubt, in some terrible disaster to India, and some sore and lasting disgrace to England. It is the great question which is coming up—it cannot be denied—step by step it draws nearer." The crisis has now drawn nearer than when Mr. Bright spoke. The way to hasten it is by a policy of contemptuous refusal to listen to the reasonable and temperately expressed prayers of the Indian people.

### **HUME'S FAREWELL TO INDIA**

**(Bombay, 18 March 1894)**

'This day I have to bid farewell not only to you, my friends, but to all the thousands of friends, spread over the length and breadth of this vast empire—friends with whom I have laboured in India's sacred cause for so many years...It is not only Bombay that I am leaving, I fear, for ever, but that dear India in which, with brief sojourns in England...I have spent forty-five years of my life...How can I forget the happy hours, the friendships, the love that India has given me, or how fail to remember that here sleep my own dearest? India is sacred to me not alone by that one pine-shrouded grave in the far distant hills, but scarcely less so by the memories of other dear friends and fellow-labourers, bright stars, too early lost alike to India and to me—Girija Bhusan Mookerjee, George Yule, Ajoodhia Nath, Telang, and others no less beloved, though less well known to fame—India that has become an integral and the best part of me, myself, my thoughts, my hopes—India and India's people, that, with all their faults and failings, I still so dearly love. And from all this, tomorrow, I am to wrench myself away—for ever. You can hardly, my friends, understand what the sadness of this parting is to me...To you my going is but as one dim star dropping from your firmament,

in which thousands of brighter luminaries still shine. But to the poor lost star it means the end of all things, and when I think of this final parting from you, from everything that for years has filled my heart, it seems as if all colour were fading out of life.

'I must confess that to me the present outlook promises ill for the speedy fruition of our most cherished hopes and aspirations. The great bulk of the leading politicians of both parties in England are in public life the veriest humbugs, talking like angels, but ready to do the devil's work, to sacrifice principle to party. Taking them in the gross there is little to choose between the professional ministerial gangs of both parties. They are politically dishonest to the core. That anything like full justice will ever be done to India until our working men put forth in earnest the power now vested in them, and bring into office a real democratic ministry, I do not suppose and never for a moment have supposed.... I wish India to be prepared for the re-entry to the Imperialists into power, and the consequent arrest for a time of all progress in the direction in which we long to travel; but when it comes, be not disheartened—contain your souls in patience—work on steadily—organize—provide funds for the work in England—never relax your efforts...and rest assured that this time of frost shall not endure for ever, but shall melt away before the rising sun of democracy...The day of democracies is opening out. We may have to wait but we are on the winning side. The spirit of the age is behind you. If only you the people of India do your duty, India, our beloved India shall yet be free and happy. [Hume even prophesied the coming war in Europe and advised Indians to be on the side of the British in that calamity.]

'A great and honourable task lies before you. You have heard it said that,

"They would be free

Themselves must strike the blow."

But I say to you,

"They would be free

Must first deserve to be so."

Do you as yet so deserve ? Lover as I am of India and India's children, I cannot answer this question as I would wish to. No, my friends, you, the people of India must raise your general level, physical, mental, moral, above the pitch at which it now stands, before you can either deserve to be or really call yourselves free.

'What have you to do ? Perhaps you know this better than I do, but yet, as a father parting for ever from his children that he loves, and whose future he fears for, I will not shirk from trying to tell you some of the things which it seems to me that you must first and foremost do. I am an old man. I have lived my life amongst you and perhaps know as much of India as a whole as anyone living ; but for all that I do not pretend to dogmatize—I only tell you what I and who love you believe to be essential to your ultimate success. If in doing so I offend any of my strictly orthodox friends I shall deeply regret it ; but I have to say truly what I honestly think and believe—the welfare of the nation is the highest law. I care not about orthodoxy or heterodoxy...what I care for is that India should become free and happy and grow great and glorious...

'First, you must have the sound body in which the sound mind may grow...You must prevent the marriage of immature persons...

'[Second], you must educate the girls...Believe me that a nation whose women are degraded to the position of mere ministers to man's pleasures, mere toys and household drudges, goes into the world's struggle with only one arm ..Raise your women and you will have raised incredibly the moral tone of the nation...

'[Third], a want of reliability—a want of a due conception of the sanctity of a promise—is one of your chief failings. Here—and I speak from painful experience—men promise, promise, promise—no doubt in all good faith ; but when the time comes for performance, how often do they allow any trifle to intervene to prevent their redeeming their word. You cannot rely on your fellows as a body. There are naturally bright

exceptions, men whose words are as their bonds ; but taking Indians in the gross, you cannot tell whether when the time comes, they will do what they promise...

'Then there is another point—a thing that has broken my heart time after time—and that is the internecine jealousy that every other active man seems to cherish towards every other active man who is working on the same side as himself...This is a cancer eating into the very heart of your national greatness. Believe me, until the greater number of your workers are content to fight the battles of India solely for India's sake careless who gets the credit, who reaps the fame, who wears the laurel, careless who is ranked first or last in the army of progress, by the world, but careful only that his country's cause prevails—there is little chance of that ultimate triumph, that glowing national revivication, which we all so earnestly long for...

'I can find no adequate words to express my feelings, for the patience and unvarying kindness with which you have ever dealt with me. It is a great thing to be able to say, and say truly, after a residence of five and forty years that I have *never* yet met with unkindness or discourtesy from any Indian. Indians have their faults, but where kindness and courtesy are concerned, no people on the face of the earth can rival them.

'Farewell, dear friends, farewell. A little space and I shall have left you for ever—a failure—for I have not succeeded in securing for you any appreciable fraction of what I hoped to win for you—a sower of seed never destined to see the harvest—a planter of trees whose fruit I shall never taste—but yet not disheartened, because I know to a certainty that the land I have loved will surely some day win all I hoped for her, will some day reap that harvest and some day enjoy those blessed fruits. Then when those happier times come round, may I too be sometimes remembered, and may India's kindly sons accord me this epitaph, not graven in bronze or marble, but written in their loving hearts :

"He laboured zealously in India's cause,  
And if he sometimes erred, he greatly loved us."



'Good-bye, once more, good-bye. And may the Divine blessing rest ever on you and yours, and upon the whole of this dear land of India and all her teeming children.'

#### WEDDERBURN'S NARRATION\*

It was in 1882 that Mr. Hume retired from the public service; and we now approach the great work of his life—the national movement, of which the Indian National Congress was the political side. As he explained, the Congress organization was “only one outcome of the labours of a body of cultured men, mostly Indians, who bound themselves together to labour silently for the good of India.” The fundamental objects of this national movement were threefold, and were recorded in the following terms: First, the fusion into one national whole of all the different elements that constitute the population of India; second, the gradual regeneration along all lines, spiritual, moral, social, and political, of the nation thus evolved; and third, the consolidation of the union between England and India, by securing the modification of such of its conditions as may be unjust or injurious. This, in simple language, sets forth his great scheme for restoring the ancient grandeur of India, in happy partnership with the British people. It was a labour of Hercules, but he brought to the task the necessary elements of genius—the power to formulate a lofty ideal, with infinite patience and industry to work out the practical details; also he possessed in himself the personality necessary for success in a heroic enterprise. In him we see the true Aryan breed: of the Western type, in character and *physique*; with the Norse strain that belongs to Scotsmen dwelling by the North Sea: fair and blue-eyed, stalwart and active, a dauntless lover of freedom. He had within him the compelling spirit of the Berserker; but his craving was not for battle, but for peace and goodwill. He was thus in full brotherly accord with the Aryan of the East, the meditative and saintly type; and it pained his very soul that West should deny to East the joys of freedom, which should be the common heritage of both.

\*From William Wedderburn: *Ailan Octavian Hume—The Father of the Indian National Congress*.

In Japan, a peaceful revolution converted a mediaeval military despotism into a constitutional government, based on the people's will. By a process of evolution, equally peaceful, the followers of Mr. Hume have set themselves gradually to convert the precarious domination of a foreign bureaucracy into a stable national government, under the aegis of the British Empire. India will then become a tower of strength to the Empire, attached by the strongest ties to this free country, under whose auspices she will, we trust, attain redemption and happiness.

Inspired with these hopes for the future, Mr. Hume became the Founder of the Indian National Congress; and the foundations were well and truly laid. Trust in the Indian people was the corner-stone; and the trust was well justified. During twenty five long and weary years the Congress stood firm; often under storm and stress: the floods came, and the winds blew upon that house, but it fell not, because it was founded upon a rock. And the labour was not in vain. Writing to Mr. Hume in 1907, Lord Morley said, "I know well your historic place in the evolution of Indian policy." The reforms followed in 1909, and before he passed away the Founder of the Congress was privileged to see the first fruits of his labours.

A detailed chronicle of these twenty-five years of patient labour would be for political edification, as proving the extraordinary foresight of the Congress leaders in framing their original programme, and their tenacity in following up the claim for a substantial share of popular representation in the government. Such a retrospect would also show the unceasing care with which Mr. Hume, as General Secretary, supervised the widespread mechanism of the organization. But in a brief memoir these particulars cannot be included. I have therefore thought it best to select a few important landmarks in the Congress history, and to deal with them at some length, as best illustrating Mr. Hume's principles and methods of work. Among the most notable of these episodes we may reckon the following: (i) The early steps taken in 1883 to form a national organization on a sound constitutional basis; (ii) The first

session of the Indian National Congress in 1885; (iii) The aggressive propaganda addressed to the Indian masses in 1888; (iv) Mr. Hume's correspondence with Sir Auckland Colvin in the same year; and (v) The propaganda in England. The official recognition of the Congress began with Lord Lansdowne's pronouncement in December 1890, declaring that, as a political organization, the Congress was "perfectly legitimate"; and was finally confirmed by Lord Hardinge's ceremonial reception of the Congress Deputation in December, 1910.

1. *The Early Steps taken in 1883 to form a National  
Organization.*

Towards the close of Lord Lytton's viceroyalty, that is, about 1878 and 1879, Mr. Hume became convinced that some definite action was called for to counteract the growing unrest. From well-wishers in different parts of the country he received warnings of the danger to the Government, and to the future welfare of India, from the economic sufferings of the masses, and the alienation of the intellectuals. But happily the arrival of Lord Ripon revived hope among the people, and produced a full; and Mr. Hume postponed definite organization until, by his retirement from the service, he should be free to act, and able to take advantage of the growing improvement in the popular feeling produced by Lord Ripon's benign presence. Accordingly, the first movement towards a definite scheme is to be found in a circular letter dated 1st March 1883, addressed to the "Graduates of the Calcutta University." The letter opens with these wise and kindly words: "Constituting, as you do, a large body of the most highly educated Indians, you should, in the natural order of things, constitute also the most important source of all mental, moral, social, and political progress in India. Whether in the individual or the nation, all vital progress must spring from within, and it is to you, her most cultured and enlightened minds, her most favoured sons, that your country must look for the initiative. In vain may aliens, like myself, love India and her children, as well as the most loving of these; in vain may they, for her and their good, give time and trouble, money and thought; in vain may

they struggle and sacrifice ; they may assist with advice and suggestions ; they may place their experience, abilities, and knowledge at the disposal of the workers, but they lack the essential of nationality, and the real work must ever be done by the people of the country themselves." Scattered individuals, however capable and however well meaning, are powerless singly. What is needed is union, organization, and well-defined lines of action ; and to secure these an association is required, armed and organized with unusual care, having for its object to promote the mental, moral, social, and political regeneration of the people of India : "Our little army must be *sui generis* in discipline and equipment, and the question simply is, how many of you will prove to possess, in addition to your high scholastic attainments, the unselfishness, moral courage, self-control, and active spirit of benevolence essential in all who should enlist." And then he proposed that a commencement should be made with a body of fifty "founders," to be the mustardseed of future growth ; "if only fifty men, good and true, can be found to join as founders, the thing can be established, and the further development will be comparatively easy." The details of the organization would have to be decided by the members themselves. But he made suggestions as to the personnel, discipline, and working methods of the association ; and specially he insisted on its constitution being democratic, and free from personal ambitions ; the head should merely be the chief servant, and his council assistant servants. This is the principle followed in later years by Mr. Gokhale in his Servants of India Society : and it conforms to the precept, "He that is greatest among you, let him be your servant." And this long letter ends with an appeal, which both stirs and stings : "As I said before, you are the salt of the land. And if amongst even you, the elite, fifty men cannot be found with sufficient power of self-sacrifice, sufficient love for and pride in their country, sufficient genuine and unselfish heartfelt patriotism to take the initiative, and if needs be, devote the rest of their lives to the Cause—then there is no hope for India. Her sons must and will remain mere humble and helpless instruments in the hands of foreign rulers, for 'they would be free, *themselves* must strike the blow.' And if even the leaders of thought are all either such poor creatures, or so

selfishly wedded to personal concerns, that they dare not or will not strike a blow for their country's sake, then justly and rightly are they kept down and trampled on, for they deserve nothing better. Every nation secures precisely as good a government as it merits. If you, the picked men, the most highly educated of the nation, cannot, scorning personal ease and selfish objects, make a resolute struggle to secure greater freedom for yourselves and your country, a more impartial administration, a larger share in the management of your own affairs, then we your friends are wrong, and our adversaries right; then are Lord Ripon's noble aspirations for your good fruitless and visionary; then, at present, at any rate, all hopes of progress are at an end, and India truly neither lacks nor deserves any better government than she now enjoys. Only, if this be so, let us hear no more fractious, peevish complaints that you are kept in leading strings, and treated like children, for you will have proved yourselves such. *Men* know how to act. Let there be no more complaints of Englishmen being preferred to you in all important offices, for if you lack that public spirit, that highest form of altruistic devotion that leads men to subordinate private ease to the public weal, that true patriotism that has made Englishmen what they are,—then rightly are these preferred to you, and rightly and inevitably have they become your rulers. And rulers and taskmasters they must continue, let the yoke gall your shoulders never so sorely, until you realize and stand prepared to act upon the eternal truth that, whether in the case of individuals or nations, self-sacrifice and unselfishness are the only unfailing guides to freedom and happiness."

This appeal—from one trusted and beloved by the Indian people—was not made in vain. The men required as founders to initiate the movement, were forthcoming from all parts of India; and the "Indian National Union" was formed. It was arranged that a Conference should be held at Poona, to enable "all those most interested in this Union to exchange opinions and authoritatively adopt an organization that, in the main, shall approve itself to all." In the meantime a Preliminary Report was issued to members, containing suggestions and conclusions, "the result of the discussion of the subject with all the

most eminent and earnest politicians of this Empire." In the first place it is stated that "the Union, so far as it has been constituted, appears to be absolutely unanimous in insisting that unswerving loyalty to the British Crown, shall be the keynote of the institution. The Union is prepared when necessary to oppose, by all constitutional methods, all authorities, high or low, here or in England, whose acts or omissions are opposed to those principles of the government of India laid down from time to time by the British Parliament, and endorsed by the British Sovereign, but it holds the continued affiliation of India to Great Britain, at any rate for a period far exceeding the range of any practical political forecast, to be *absolutely essential* to the interests of our own National Development." Amongst the qualifications for membership most commonly insisted on are the following: (1) An unblemished record, public and private; (2) an earnest and unwavering desire to improve the status, either material, mental moral or political of the people of India; (3) marked natural intelligence, adequately developed by education; (4) a willingness to sink, when occasion demands this sacrifice, selfish and personal, in altruistic and public considerations; and (5) independence of character, coupled with sobriety of judgment. Progress had been made in forming local Select Committees at Kurrachee, Ahmedabad, Surat, Bombay, Poona, Madras, Calcutta, Benares, Allahabad, Lucknow, Agra, and Lahore, all of whom had promised to attend the Conference at Poona either as a whole, or in the person of delegates, selected among themselves. And it was proposed that until the formation of a Central Committee, there should be a "General Secretary to the whole Union whose duty it should be, not only to visit personally all the Select Committees from time to time and communicate to them the experiences of the other Select Committees, but also to look after the practical details connected with the Conferences, receive all communications from the several Committees and circulate these to others, and generally supervise the office work of the Union." Naturally, the discharge of these toilsome duties fell to the lot of Mr. Hume himself.

Having thus laid the foundations of a national organization, to voice the aspirations of the Indian people, Mr. Hume pro-

ceeded to England, in order to consult with friends there, as to the best means of getting a hearing for these aspirations from the British Parliament and Public. His first visit was to Sir James Caird, at Cassencary in Galloway, and there Mr. John Bright met him, having arranged to do so at considerable personal inconvenience. After prolonged consultation with these wise and faithful friends of India, Mr. Hume went on to Lord Ripon at Studley Royal. Thence he proceeded to Lord Dalhousie at Brechin Castle, Mr. Baxter M.P. at Dundee, Mr. R.T. Reid, M.P. at Arrochar, Mr. Slag, M.P. at Manchester, and other influential friends. The result of these interviews was reported to his Indian correspondents in an interesting series of letters, written during September 1885. The first matter for consideration was the supply of Indian news to the British Press. The general public in England rarely read more about India than what is contained in the Reuter telegrams which appear in *The Times* and other leading papers; and it had been long the complaint in India that these telegrams have an Anglo-Indian official colouring, and do not do justice to the Indian view of current events and discussions; on the contrary, they usually present any case of an Indian complaint in terms hostile to Indian wishes. No opportunity existed for correcting mis-statements thus published in England; and the question had assumed additional importance on account of the approaching Conference at Poona, as it was essential that this national organization should not be presented to the British public in an unfair light. Accordingly before leaving Bombay, Mr. Hume arranged for an "Indian Telegraph Union," which was to provide funds to send telegrams on important matters to such leading journals in England and Scotland as would agree to publish them. Mr. Hume undertook to negotiate this matter with the Editors of leading journals, and he later reported that among Provincial papers the following had agreed to receive and publish the Indian Union telegrams: *The Manchester Guardian*, the *Manchester Examiner*, the *Leeds Mercury*, the *Scotsman*, the *Glasgow Daily Mail*, the *Dundee Advertiser*, the *Western Times*, and the *Bradford Observer*. Unfortunately this useful agency was allowed to drop from want of funds. The next question was, how to influence the British public, and especially Members of Parliament? On this question all friends

were agreed that at the pending General Election, no hearing could be got for detailed Indian grievances. But it was thought that the opportunity might be taken to obtain from candidates a promise to give attention to Indian affairs. This was the shrewd advice given by Mr. Reid, M.P. (now Lord Loreburn), in a letter addressed to Mr. Hume: "I would recommend you," he said, "to secure two or three men, as influential as you can, in as many constituencies as you can, and get them to write to the candidate, exacting no pledge as to the course of policy but a simple pledge to give attention to Indian affairs, and publish the correspondence in the local papers. Every candidate in the three kingdoms would pledge himself to so easy an obligation. One in ten would keep the pledge and thus give a nucleus of listeners in an Indian debate. The publication of the correspondence would make them afraid wholly to neglect business they had so publicly engaged to consider." The resources at the disposal of the informal Committee in England were not sufficient to carry out so large a scheme, but it may be noted that a limited pledge such as Mr. Reid proposed, was the basis of the Indian Parliamentary Committee, which afterwards did good work for many years in the House of Commons. In the same letter Mr. Reid gives Mr. Hume practical advice on two other points, as to coaching British members on Indian subjects; and as to getting a seat for an Indian in the House of Commons: "You must have coadjutors in Parliament. If you have a few men like yourself busy in England they will find friends inside the House. For there is a real desire in this country to act justly and generously as regards India. But members know nothing. You must have men of honour to inform them of facts. So many impostors and self-seekers are always ready to catch an M.P. to ventilate their grievances, that members are afraid to trust the information given them, and never act on it (if they respect themselves) unless convinced of the integrity of their informants. Therefore you require high-class men to 'coach' and inform members. If they appear and are in earnest, you will get plenty of help." For preference, members would listen to a trustworthy Indian; and if you "succeeded in obtaining a seat for him simply to represent Indian grievances, he would be listened to in the House and would be a real power for good." Besides



these definite suggestions, all British friends were agreed that if the cause of India was to make progress among the British people, a vigorous and sustained propaganda must be kept up throughout the country, by means of public meetings, lectures, pamphlets, articles and correspondence in the Press, and by securing the sympathy of local associations and of influential public men. A local British Committee, to act as the guiding and propelling power in this work, was evidently required; but it was felt that the time had not yet come to reorganize on a permanent basis the informal Committee of sympathizers, who were then attending to Indian interests in England.

## II. *The First Session of the Indian National Congress.*

Having accomplished his mission in England, and established touch with the leading progressives there, Mr. Hume returned to India, in order to watch over the arrangements for the first Conference of the Indian National Union, which had been fixed to be held at Poona from the 25th to the 30th of December 1885. The Poona Reception Committee had made admirable preparations. To accommodate the delegates, the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha (the leading Association of the Deccan) granted the use of the Peshwa's palace of Heerabagh, which with its gardens, stands beautifully situated upon the lake under the temples of Parbati Hill. Further it was decided that, looking to the national importance of the movement, and the wide support it had received in all parts of India, the Conference should formally assume the title of the Indian National Congress. Unfortunately, a few days before the time fixed for the assemblage, several cases of cholera occurred in Poona; and it was considered prudent to transfer the meeting to Bombay. Thanks to the exertions of the Bombay Presidency Association, and the liberality of the manager of the Goculdas Tejpal Sanscrit College and Boarding House (who placed the grand buildings above the Gowalia Tank at the Association's disposal), everything was ready by the morning of the 27th of December 1885, the date when the representatives began to arrive. Thus, it happened that Bombay had the honour of holding the first session of the "Indian National

Congress," while Calcutta provided, as the first President, Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee—the wise head and firm hand, that took the helm when the good ship was launched.

Now looking back at the proceedings of this first Congress, we must be struck by the success which, though long delayed, ultimately attended the definite claim which formed the core of the resolutions, viz., the prayer for substantial popular representation on the Indian Legislative Councils. It will be well to reproduce in full this memorable resolution, which (a good augury) was moved by the Hon. K. T. Telang C.I.E., seconded by the Hon. S. Subramania Iyer, and supported by the Hon. Dadabhai Naoroji. It was No 3 on the Congress programme, and ran as follows: "Resolved.—That this Congress considers the reform and expansion of the Supreme and existing Local Legislative Councils, by the admission of a considerable proportion of elected members (and the creation of similar Councils for the North-West Provinces and Oudh, and also for the Punjab) essential; and holds that all Budgets should be referred to those Councils for consideration, their members being moreover empowered to interpellate the Executive in regard to all branches of the administration; and that a Standing Committee of House of Commons should be constituted to receive and consider any formal protest that may be recorded by the majorities of such Councils against the exercise by the executive power which would be vested in it, of over-ruling the decisions of such majorities." This is the resolution of which Mr. Hume said that it "indicated the very essence of the great task which the people of India, at last a nation, one and indivisible henceforth and for ever, was soberly and deliberately girding up their loins to undertake." The struggle lasted long; and ultimately this prayer for popular representation was granted by Lord Morley's reforms of 1909. But what a world of misunderstanding and suffering, of affections alienated and passions aroused, of secret conspiracy, and outrage, and Russian methods of repression, might have been avoided if the Administration had been wise in time, and listened long ago to the counsels respectfully tendered by a friendly and law-abiding people!

But here it must be noted that, although the Congress movement has always been looked on with undisguised hostility by that section of officials who are in permanent antagonism to the educated and independent classes, this disfavour has not, as a rule, extended to the higher authorities. This was especially the case at the outset. Indeed, in initiating the national movement, Mr. Hume took counsel with the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin; and whereas he was himself disposed to begin his reform propaganda on the social side, it was apparently by Lord Dufferin's advice that he took up the work of political organization, as the matter first to be dealt with. Lord Dufferin seems to have told him that as head of the Government he had found the greatest difficulty in ascertaining the real wishes of the people; and that, for purpose of administration, it would be a public benefit if there existed some responsible organization, through which the Government might be kept informed regarding the best Indian public opinion. He further observed that, owing to the wide differences in caste, race, and religion, social reform in India required local treatment, rather than the guidance of a national organization. These kindly counsels were received with grateful appreciation by all concerned. Indeed so cordial were the relations, that Lord Dufferin was approached with a view to the first Congress being held under the presidency of Lord Reay, then Governor of Bombay.<sup>4</sup> Lord Dufferin welcomed the proposal, as showing the desire of the Congress to work in complete harmony with the Government, but he considered that many difficulties would be involved if a high official presided over such an assembly. The idea was therefore abandoned, but none the less the first Congress was opened with the friendly sympathy of the highest authorities.

### III. *Aggressive Propaganda in India of 1888.*

At the second Congress, which was held at Calcutta, Lord Dufferin showed his sympathy by inviting the members of the Congress, as "distinguished visitors," to a garden party at Government House. And a similar compliment was paid to them by Lord Connemara, the Governor of Madras, in the following year. But after that there came a change. For

years were passing on, and there were as yet no signs of any concessions being granted. To the ardent mind of Mr. Hume platonic expressions of sympathy by the authorities were a mockery while nothing practical was being done ; for he was obsessed by the misery of the masses, and the belief that most of it was preventible. Intimately acquainted with the inner life of the Indian village, and a witness of successive famines with all their horrors, he was familiar with the sorrows of the impoverished peasantry, and in a pamphlet entitled "The Old Man's Hope," he thus made impassioned appeal to the comfortable classes in England : "Ah men ! well fed and happy ! Do you at all realize the dull misery of these countless myriads ? From their births to their deaths, how many rays of sunshine think you chequer their gloom-shrouded paths ? Toil, toil toil, hunger, hunger, hunger ; sickness, suffering, sorrow ; these, alas ! alas ! are the key notes of their short and sad existences." The special travail of his soul was for these suffering masses, and his prayer was, "God save the people" ; echoing the cry of Ebenezer Elliott, the Corn-Law poet :

"When wilt Thou save the People ?  
 Oh God of Mercy—when ?  
 The People, Lord—the People !  
 Not thrones and crowns, but men.

"Flowers of thy heart, Oh God, are they  
 Let them not pass like weeds away,  
 Their heritage a sunless day,  
 God save the People !"

With such feelings, and his heart hot within him, it was not in the nature of the man to wait with calmness when nothing was being done. The pool of Bethesda had been stirred, but no healing had followed. Time was passing ; the patient was in danger of collapse ; but there were no signs of a remedy ; and Mr. Hume felt that at all hazards the authorities must be awakened to the urgency of the case. In no grudging spirit he acknowledged the benefits conferred by British rule : the blessings of peace, and protection to life and property. But the *Pax Britannica* has not solved the economic problem, nor

availed to preserve the deb-tladen and despairing peasantry from the ravages of famine and disease. British rulers, he maintained, had failed, not from any lack of good intention, but from insufficient knowledge. The sufferings of the Indian masses from famine and disease arose from poverty ; and this poverty was preventible, if the Government would take into their counsels experienced representative of the people, who know exactly where the shoe pinches. But the Government would take no action. What was to be done ? The case was one of extreme urgency, for the deaths by famine and pestilence were counted, not by tens of thousands, or by hundreds of thousands, but by millions ; and in order to constrain the Government to move, the leaders of the Indian people must adopt measures of exceptional vigour, following the drastic methods pursued in England by Bright and Cobden in their great campaign on behalf of the people's food.

In the days of his youth Mr. Hume had witnessed the progress of this campaign, and he told how the delegates of the Corn-Law-League were refused a hearing by the House of Commons ; and then Cobden, in few but weighty words, announced the new propaganda, which was to have such far-reaching results for the people of England : "The delegates," he said, "have offered to instruct the House ; House has refused to be instructed ; and the most unexceptionable and effectual way will be by instructing the nation." "So," continued Mr. Hume, "has it fared with us ; our educated men singly, our Press far and wide, our representatives at the National Congress—one and all—have endeavoured to instruct the Government, but the Government, like all autocratic government, has refused to be instructed, and it will now be for us to instruct the nations, the great English nation in its island home, and the far greater nation of this vast continent, so that every Indian that breathes upon the sacred soil of this our Motherland may become our comrade and coadjutor, our supporter, and, if needs be, our soldier in the great war that we, like Cobden and his noble band, will wage for justice, for our liberties and rights."

In pursuance of such a propaganda in India, Mr. Hume set to work with his wonted energy, appealing for funds to

all classes of the Indian community, distributing tracts, leaflets, and pamphlets, sending out lecturers, and calling meetings both in large towns and in country districts. Throughout the country over 1,000 meetings were thus held, at many of which over 5,000 persons were present ; and arrangements were made for the distribution of half a million of pamphlets ; translations into twelve Indian languages being circulated of two remarkable pamphlets, entitled "A Congress Catechism," by Mr. Veraraghava Chariar of Madras, and "A Conversation between Moulvi Furreeduddeen and one Rambuksh of Kam-bakhtpur," showing by a parable the necessary evils of absentee State landlordism, however benevolent the intention may be.

It will naturally be asked, What was the attitude of the Indian Government, not constitutionally tolerant of popular agitation, towards this bold and drastic political propaganda ? The Hon. Mr. Gokhale, speaking at the Hume Memorial Meeting in London on the 6th of August last, indicated the probable inclinations of the Government under such circumstances. "No Indian," he said, "could have started the Indian National Congress. Apart from the fact that any one putting his hand out to such a gigantic task had need to have Mr. Hume's commanding and magnetic personality, even if an Indian had possessed such a personality and had come forward to start such a movement embracing all India, the officials in India would not have allowed the movement to come into existence. If the founder of the Congress had not been a great Englishman and a distinguished ex-official, such was the official distrust of political agitation in those days that the authorities would have at once found some way or other to suppress the movement." This conclusion was no doubt correct ; and is certain that, from the time when the propaganda was addressed to the masses, the official attitude, which till then had been one of more or less friendly neutrality, became distinctly antagonistic. Mr. Hume himself realized this, and said, "Friends come with solemn faces and say in grave voices : You mean well, but you are stirring up feelings, you are exciting passions, the issues of which you cannot foresee ; you are letting loose forces that

you cannot control." And he took occasion to explain his position, and put forward his Apologia, in a speech at a great meeting at Allahabad on the 30th of April 1888, which was published under the title of "A Speech on the Indian National Congress, Its Origin, Aims, and Objects." Speaking of the spirit which it was desired to inculcate among the people, he quoted what had been placed on record at the inception of the Congress, "since this record embodies, not merely the ideas of one or two men, but the harmonized views of a very large number of the ablest, best, and most advanced thinkers of the nation." The record declares that the Congress was intended "to foster a wider altruism and a more genuine public spirit, by concentrating the most strenuous efforts on great national problems, and diminishing the absorption in local or purely selfish interests—to educate all who took part in it, not merely in the arts of public speaking and debate, developing the faculty of thinking out clearly opinions, and expressing them lucidly to others, not merely in habits of accuracy and research, but also in the practice of self-control, moderation and willingness to give and take—to educate them in fact into what has been described as a genuine Parliamentary frame of mind—to familiarize the country with the methods and working of representative institutions on a large scale, and thus, as this familiarity grew, to demonstrate to the Government and people of England that India was already ripe for some measure of those institutions to which the entire intelligence of the country so earnestly aspires."

Having thus made clear what was the inner spirit of the movement, he proceeded to show that there was no cause for fearing political danger from Congress teaching: "The people are taught to recognize the many benefits that they owe to British rule, as also the fact that on the peaceful continuance of that rule depend all hopes for the peace and prosperity of the country. They are taught that the many hardships and disabilities of which they complain are after all, though real enough, small in comparison with the blessings they enjoy, but that all these grievances may be and will be redressed if they all join to press their views and wishes unanimously, but temperately, on the Government here and on the Government

and people of England. The sin of illegal or anarchical proceedings is brought home to them, and the conviction is engendered that by united, patient, constitutional agitation they are certain ultimately to obtain all they can reasonably or justly ask for, while by any recourse to hasty or violent action they must inevitably ruin their cause and entail endless misery on themselves." And then, in eloquent words, he pleaded for a logical continuity, on the part of the British nation, of the humane and enlightened educational policy of 1833 and 1854: "It is the British Government in their noble enthusiasm for the emancipation of this great people—God's trust to them—from the fetters of ignorance, who by the broadcast dissemination of Western education and Western ideas of liberty, the rights of subjects, public spirit and patriotism, have let loose forces which, unless wisely guided and controlled, might, nay sooner or later certainly must, involve consequences which are too disastrous to contemplate. And it is precisely to limit and control these forces and direct them, while there is yet time, into channels along which they can flow auspiciously, bearing safely the argosies of progress and prosperity on their heaving waves, that this Congress movement was designed. The Government has, broadly speaking, never realized the vast proportions of the coming flood which is being engendered by the noble policy of which in 1833 Lord Macaulay was so prominent an exponent; and it is we of the Congress, who through good repute and ill repute, careless what men say of us if only haply God may bless our efforts, who standing between the country and the coming development, are labouring—labouring almost frantically—to provide in time channels through which this surging tide may flow, not to ravage and destroy but to fertilize and regenerate."

#### IV. *Correspondence with Sir Auckland Colvin.*

The Allahabad speech, boldly justifying a propaganda addressed to the masses, on the model of the Anti-Corn-Law League, was certainly successful in compelling the serious attention of the authorities. But the new departure, and especially the campaign in the rural districts, had also the effect of



causing some genuine alarm among the officials. I do not wish to enlarge upon the proceedings of the more excitable and high-handed functionaries, who put their trust in espionage ; who stimulated among Mahomedans a class hostility to the movement ; who desired to suppress the Congress ; and who recommended that Mr. Hume should be deported. This was only a passing official phase, not countenanced by the highest authorities, which we may well forget. But it is altogether different in the case of a critic of the position and abilities of Sir Auckland Colvin, and in order to judge regarding the merits, or demerits, of this new and active propaganda, we cannot do better than study the letters which, in October 1888, passed between Sir Auckland Colvin and Mr. Hume, and which were published, with Sir Auckland's consent, as a pamphlet, under the title of "Audi Alteram Partem." Sir Auckland Colvin was a very distinguished member of the Civil Service ; he held the high office of Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces ; he claimed to belong to the "Liberal Official Camp" ; and, until the new departure which followed the third Congress, held at Madras, he was distinctly friendly to the Congress movement. The grounds therefore of his disapproval, which are stated in calm and courteous language, are deserving of the most respectful consideration. His letter also was welcome at the time it was written, because it gave Mr. Hume a favourable opportunity of publicly making his position clear, and replying in detail to the objections raised by a competent and responsible critic. So important indeed is this correspondence, that I would gladly have reproduced the letters *in extenso*, but they are too detailed and (in parts) too technical for this brief memoir, Sir Auckland Colvin's letter extending to over twenty printed pages, and Mr. Hume's to nearly sixty ; but I will give ample extracts from the text, with a summary of the arguments on both sides.

Looking to these considerations, Sir Auckland's letter of remonstrance, and Mr. Hume's answer, vindicating his action, may be taken as the pleadings in the Congress case at the most critical period of the movement ; showing what could be said for and against the bold and drastic policy of appealing to the masses of the Indian people, on the lines marked out

and followed in England by Bright and Cobden. Sir Auckland considered that this new departure was premature and dangerous ; on the other hand Mr. Hume held that it was the path of safety, and the only way of averting national disaster.

Upon this issue Sir Auckland's argument may be summarized as follows. The question, he said, was one of both principle and methods. As regards principle and the general objects of the Congress, he was more or less in sympathy ; especially he was in favour of the expansion of the Legislative Councils. And as regards methods, he saw little to object to in the earlier proceedings of the Congress, as manifested at Bombay and Calcutta in the sessions of 1885 and 1886. But his sympathy received a "severe check" after the Madras Congress of 1887, when the propaganda became aggressive, on the model of the Anti-Corn-Law campaign in England. He considered that in the existing political condition of India such a propaganda was premature, and likely to defeat the objects in view. He further anticipated definite mischief from this aggressive or denunciatory method, because it tended to excite hatred of the Government and the officials, and because agitation would produce counter-agitation, dividing the country into strongly hostile camps. He objected to the tone and substance of the pamphlets recently issued, which in his opinion misrepresented the policy and action of the Government ; and commenting on the attitude of the Congress, he considered that its supporters unfairly claimed to represent the Indian population. Finally, he suggested that the reformers should occupy themselves with social reform, as being more needed than political reform, for the welfare of the people.

These objections are no doubt serious. But at the same time it was reassuring that they were directed against the methods, and not against the principles or objects of the Congress. As to these, Sir Auckland Colvin, keen observer and careful administrator as he was, saw little to disapprove. On the contrary, he expressed sympathy with the leading people of the Congress programme—the expansion of the Legislative Councils on a popular basis—which was designed to bring the most able and trustworthy Indian intellectuals

into co-operation with the Government, in the grand task of rescuing the millions of India from the miseries of ignorance, of destitution, and disease. Such doctrine was in accordance with common sense. It needed no justification; and its practical wisdom was proved by the logic of events. For the early leaders of the Congress—men like Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Mr. Justice Ranade, Sir Pherozesha Mehta, Mr. W.C. Bonnerjee, Mr. Justice Budrudin Tyabji, Mr. Surendranath Banerjee, Mr. Bhupendranath Basu, Mr. Gokhale, and Mr. Krishna Swami Iyer—became the trusted advisers of the Government; and, by force of merit, rose to the highest offices, whether judicial, municipal, legislative, or executive. There is no truer saying than, that in the affairs of life, as in mechanics, where there is no resistance there is no support; and it was not long before the Government realized the value of strong and independent men, who afterwards proved to be the firmest support of ordered progress, in the dark times of trouble and unrest.

So much for the principles and objects; there remains to consider the experiences of Congress methods. On this part of the question Mr. Hume lost no time in replying to Sir Auckland Colvin's challenge. The main point of his defence was that, so far from the action of the Congress being premature, the fear was that it might be too late. But before dealing with this central question, it will be convenient to say a few words regarding the minor objections raised. With regard to the charge that the Congress pamphlets excited hatred to the Government, Mr. Hume replied that nothing was to be gained by ignoring the notorious practical grievances felt by the peasantry. Every one who makes himself acquainted with the village life knows how bitter, when they talk among themselves, are the complaints, not loud but deep, with regard to the costly and unsuitable civil courts, the corrupt and oppressive police, the rigid revenue system, the galling administration of the Arms Act and the Forest Act. What is wanted is justice, cheap, sure, and speedy; a police that the people can look up to as friends and protectors; a land revenue system more elastic and sympathetic; a less harsh administration of the Arms and Forest laws. Accordingly the policy followed in

the pamphlets and lectures has been, not to "blink or pretend to ignore the grave evils that exist." In every hamlet there are the natural leaders of the people who "acknowledge and are grateful for the many unquestionably fine things we have done for them." But they "equally recognize and grumble over the many bad things they have to put up with by reason of our well-intentioned ignorance of how to fit our burden properly to their backs." Therefore, "in our pamphlets we approach these intelligent men with sympathy, we admit their grievances, but we put them in a milder shape than they themselves do; we tell them that 'the English Government is superior to all other governments in the world, for its fundamental principle is to shape its policy according to the wishes of the people'. We tell them emphatically that it is not the individual governors or officials who are to blame for the shortcomings of the administration, but the system, the form of that administration; and we further show them how, by loyal and constitutional efforts, they can secure the amelioration of that system, and a remedy for many of the evils they have to contend against." This is the answer to the charge of exciting hatred against the Government and the officials.

Next, as to the risk of a counter-agitation, dividing the country into two hostile camps. On this point it is not now necessary to recall the personal incidents of the opposition to the Congress raised by Sir Syed Ahmed and his friends. Mr Hume considered that this opposition was not important, and he held that, excluding an inappreciable fraction, the whole culture and intelligence of the country was favourable to the Congress. And he dealt somewhat severely with the anti-Congress party, which he said was made up of a small knot of Anglo-Indians, mostly officials, supported by a section, of the Anglo-Indian Press; "a few Indian fossils, honest, but wanting in understanding; a few men who in their hearts hate British rule, or are secretly in the employ of England's enemies"; and a certain number of "time-servers, men not really in their hearts opposed to the Congress but who have taken up the work of opposition to it, because it has seemed to them that this will 'pay.'"

Further he maintained that the Congress, instead of dividing, was uniting, was binding in harmonious co-operation, men who previously scarcely met except to quarrel and even to fight; and he instanced the case of Salem, till recently a hot bed of religious antagonism between Hindus and Mahomedans.

Mr. Hume highly appreciated the distinctive characteristics of the Moslems—their manly energy and democratic instincts; and he did not believe that the opposition represented their genuine feeling. According to his view the hostile stimulus came from the outside, from a few ill-advised officials who clung to the pestilent doctrine of "Divide et impera," and from unfriends of the Government, who hated a movement which sought to unite all parties and all creeds in friendly co-operation under the aegis of the British Empire. He therefore denounced the counter-agitation as artificial and mischievous. Further, he held that, more than any other community, the Mahomedans would benefit by the united action which would bring them into the current of modern progress; he trusted to their good sense to realize this; and he believed that within three years the anti-Congress party would collapse. We have reason to hope that eventually opposition to the Congress will cease. At the same time it appears that there was some foundation for the apprehension suggested by Sir Auckland Colvin; and that the active Congress propaganda did stir up, to a certain extent, religious rivalries which had, more or less, become dormant. The reason for this was twofold. In the first place the Hindus, as regards numbers, were predominant in the Congress. This was because the Congress was mainly supported by the English speaking class, and it was the Hindus who had most readily accepted Western education. In the second place, the Mahomedans, who mostly conducted their education on the old lines, had fallen behind in the learned professions and in the competition for the public service. It was therefore not unnatural that a section of them regarded the Congress with suspicion and jealousy, as an instrument of aggrandizement for the Hindus. It cannot be said that this feeling has died out even at the present day, but happily it is not generally shared by the rising generation of educated Mahomedans, nor by leaders like His

Highness the Aga Khan. For his part, Mr. Hume indignantly repudiated the idea that the Mahomedans could not hold their own in fair competition. "The wretched plea," he said, "about the Mahomedans being so inferior to Hindus that they will have no chance if a fair field is conceded to all classes and sects, is monstrous. I swear that no good true Mahomedan ever, if he reflected on it, would put forward so base a libel on his coreligionists. Haven't I had thousands of both under my own eye? Have I not hundreds of Mahomedan friends?" He then named Sir Salar Jung, Mr. Justice Budrudin Tyabji, Mr. Justice Syed Mahmud and other distinguished public men; and continuing, he said, "The whole thing is a shameful libel on the Mussulmans, who, alike in times past and present, have ever held and ever will hold their own, and whatever advantages flow from an improved and gradually developing administration of India, believe me that the Mussulmans will ever obtain, in virtue of their hereditary capacity, energy and pluck, a full and fair share." To this he added a personal note, saying, "I speak warmly on this subject, because even inferentially to charge me with participation in any scheme injurious to the best interests of the Mussulmans, to whom in the past I have owed so much, amongst whom I have still so many friends, is an insult. Can I forget the brave friends and followers who in those dark days of danger and distress stood by me, protected me, and fought for and beside me in 1857--aye, and in too many cases sealed with their lifeblood the record of their friendship and fidelity? Never!"

Sound education is what is wanted to enable the Mussalman to do justice to themselves. And to provide this, their leaders at the present day have been working, both by their scheme for a Moslem University, and by supporting Mr. Gokhale's Bill in the Viceroy's Council for free and compulsory elementary education. May they prosper in their patriotic labours; and find encouragement from the sympathy of so trusty a friend as Mr. Hume, and from his warm expression of regard and gratitude!

It is not necessary to go at any length into other minor points raised by Sir A. Colvin. With regard to his objection,

that the Congress had no right to claim to be representative of the people of India, Mr. Hume pointed out that in Great Britain the Mother of Parliaments represented directly only a small fraction of the people, and that less than 10 per cent. of the population took part in the parliamentary elections, even in such advanced constituencies as the City and Country of Aberdeen. He might also, without unfairness, have referred to the doings of the Free and Independent electors of Weymouth, who not so long ago had sent to the Imperial Parliament two "representatives" of the English people. He claimed that the Congress represented the culture and intelligence of the country, a claim which was afterwards confirmed, in part at least, by Lord Lansdowne, when he said that the Congress represented "the more advanced Liberal party." As regards the suggestion that the Congress should devote itself to social in preference to political reform, Mr. Hume referred to the declared objects of the great movement of which the Congress formed only a part. The movement sought the regeneration of India on all lines, spiritual, moral, social, and political. The Congress was directed to national and political objects desired by all classes in India. On the other hand social requirements varied according to race, caste, and creed, so that they had to be dealt with by separate organizations ; but, as a general rule, it was found that the workers for political progress were the most active friends of social reform.

We have now to consider the main contention between Sir Auckland Colvin and Mr. Hume. Sir Auckland considered the propaganda premature and mischievous ; Mr. Hume considered it necessary for the safety of the State. Which was right ? To those unfamiliar with Indian affairs, it may seem strange that there should be this acute difference of opinion between two experienced officers, both members of the same service, both sympathetic with Indian progress, both keenly anxious for the public welfare. But the interpretation is simple, and is well understood by every Indian. The difference of opinion is an irreconcilable one, depending on the point of view, whether of the ruler or the ruled. For after his retirement from the service in 1882 Mr. Hume had identified himself with the Indian people, living among them as one of themselves. The difference

therefore between the Lieutenant-Governor and the Congress leader, was the difference of the view held by the British administrator judging his own work, and that of the Indian subject with personal experience of its defects. Mr. Hume tells his friend how he may learn the truth : I can clearly see, he says, that you "still look upon our government through the rose-tinted official spectacles that so long obscured my sight. But leave the service, become a nobody, mix freely with the people, hear what they have to say when not afraid to speak their minds, study the reverse of the shield, and, knowing you as I do, I know well that you would wholly change your views." The one way of learning the truth is, as Mr. Hume says, to "mix freely with the people"—the people of all classes, from the highest to the lowest ; prove to them that you are trustworthy, and they will trust you and tell you all the truth. This is not only the best way, but the only way. For whatever information English officials, as foreigners, can acquire is, and must be, obtained from the people themselves ; and it may be obtained from the right men, or from the wrong men. And in this matter the ordinary official is under great disadvantages, because as the local magnate and the dispenser of official favours, he is naturally surrounded by self-seekers, who do not deal in disagreeable truths. It is the interest of these men to flatter him, and, for their own protection, to keep him out of touch with the independent men of his district ; also to persuade him that these men are unfriendly and even (vague and terrible word) "seditious." Many an official is thus brought into antagonism with the best men, and falls into the hands of the secret police, and the miserable class of spies and informers. Independent Indians of high character and public spirit are to be found in every province, and in every district ; but they must be sought out with care ; they do not willingly present themselves in official quarters, where they may be met with suspicion from the authorities, and insult from underlings. Now it was this class of highminded men, in solid agreement throughout India, friends of India and England, whom Mr. Hume took as his advisers. They saw the danger looming ahead, "tremendous in the immediate future," from the misery of the masses, acted on by the bitter resentment of individuals among the educated



class ; and they warned him that early action must be taken if disaster was to be averted. Accordingly, in answer to Sir Auckland, Mr. Hume admitted that there was a certain risk in the Congress agitation, that the experiment was quite new in India ; and that circumstances were not wholly favourable ; also he explained that, had it been possible, he personally would gladly have postponed the propaganda for some years. "But," he wrote, "no choice was left to those who gave the primary impetus to the movement. The ferment, the product of Western ideas, education, inventions and appliances, was at work with a rapidly increasing intensity, and it became of paramount importance to find for its products an overt and constitutional channel for discharge, instead of leaving them to fester, as they had already commenced to do, beneath the surface. I have always admitted that in certain Provinces and from certain points of view the movement was premature, but from the most vital point of view, the future maintenance of the integrity of the British Empire, the real question when the Congress started was, *not*, is it premature, but is it too late—will the country *now* accept it? ..... A safety-valve for the escape of great and growing forces, generated by our own action, was urgently needed, and no more efficacious safety-valve than our Congress movement could possibly be devised." In this matter Mr. Hume to use his own phrase, was "in deadly earnest." Appreciating the nature of the Indian people, their conservative instincts, their law-abiding character, their astonishing endurance and docility, unless driven out of their ancient quietude by feelings of despair, he felt confident that he was following the right and safe course in showing them how hope could be maintained, and that there was a peaceful and orderly line of conduct by which relief from their sufferings might be obtained.

As a lesson to the people of this country in world politics, the teaching of Mr. Hume in this matter is of the first importance, showing where the real danger in India lies—the danger under the surface, arising from material suffering among the masses and resentment among the irreconcilable section of the dissatisfied intellectuals. The danger is enhanced by the fact that the autocratic power is exercised by a handful of

foreigners, alien to the population in language, race, and creed, and belonging to a masterful nation singularly regardless of the feelings and prejudices of others. Consequently the mutterings of the storm are unheeded by them. and great disasters, like the Mutiny of 1857, and the tragedies of Cabul, come upon them like a bolt from the blue. To listen therefore to the warnings of "the man who knows," like Mr. Hume, is vital to the continuance of British rule in India. History tells a similar story. It is true that in Venice oligarchic government lasted for a long term of years, but there the dominion over the people was exercised by men of their own race, men of singular political insight, who kept themselves well-informed, and dealt skilfully with the beginning of trouble. Such favourable conditions are not enjoyed by the Indian bureaucracy. As pointed out by Mr. Hume, the true historic parallel is to be found in the regime of the Bourbons at the close of the eighteenth century : they had neither eyes to see nor ears to hear, and sudden destruction was brought upon them by the hatred of the intellectuals energizing the dull despair of the peasant masses. No doubt when the crisis comes, the Englishman meets disaster in a fine spirit, and usually comes out more or less victorious in the end. But there is a grievous waste of life and labour involved in this purblind trust in the sad method of "muddling through."

#### *Indian Religius Devotees*

Looking to Mr. Hume's experiences in the Mutiny of 1857, as briefly described in these pages, and the boldness and resource which he displayed, no one can doubt the importance which attaches to his personal belief in the reality of the threatened danger. Also his judgment was confirmed by that of a wide circle of Congress friends spread over the different Provinces. But in addition to this, information and warning came to him from a very special source, that is, from the leaders among those devoted, in all parts of India, to a religious life. Among his papers there exists a very illuminating memorandum regarding "the legions of secret quasi-religious orders, with, literally, their millions of members, which form so important a factor in the Indian problem." As regards those

professing to be religious devotees, he recognizes that a large proportion of the Faquirs, Bairagis, and Sadhus are little better than rogues and impostors. But if there is dross, there is also gold ; and among the heads or *Gurus* of these sects are to be found men of the highest quality who, like the ancient Hebrew prophets, have purged themselves from earthy desires, and fixed their aspirations on the highest good. These religious leaders, through their *Chelas* or disciples, are fully informed of all that goes on under the surface, and their influence is great in forming public opinion. It was with these men that Mr. Hume came into touch, towards the end of Lord Lytton's viceroyalty. The ground of sympathy may have been in part religious, for Mr. Hume was a keen student of Eastern religions. But the practical reason why these men made a move towards him was because they feared that the ominous "unrest" throughout the country, which pervaded even the lowest strata of the population, would lead to some terrible outbreak, destructive to India's future, unless men like him, who had access to the Government, could do something to remove the general feeling of despair, and thus avert the thing to be done involves, so far as I can judge, no moral wrong, and never to give out, without permission, anything I have been informed of or shown, unless it should appear to me a distinct moral duty not to hold my tongue."

### *The Propaganda in England*

We have now to shift the scene from East to West. For the great scheme to which Mr. Hume had set his had consisted, as regards its political side, of two parts, each complete in itself, neither effective without the other. There was essential work to be done in India ; and there was essential work to be done in England. In India, a programme of reforms was being matured ; in England, that programme had to be pressed on the attention of Parliament and the public. For Mr. Hume was firmly convinced that the British people desired fair play for India, and would see that justice was done, provided only they understood the merits of the case. No doubt the original connection of England with India was purely self-seeking. But gradually there came an awakening of the national con-

science, and the sentiment of duty in the performance of a national trust. India, therefore, helpless in official bonds, should make known her grievances to her big brother, the all-controlling Demos of the British Isles; but in order to obtain relief, it was necessary that she should raise her voice in tones loud enough to rouse the friendly but slumberous giant.

These were the views held by Mr. Hume; and he called on Indian reformers to make a strenuous effort to induce the British public to shake off the torpor of an ignorant optimism, and to restore the continuity with the best traditions of British statesmanship, as declared by such leaders as Edmund Burke, Lord Macaulay, and John Bright: the policy embodied in the wise Statute of 1833, and the noble Proclamation of Queen Victoria in 1858.

It will be remembered that in 1885, the first year of the Congress, Mr. Hume paid a visit to this country, and in consultation with Parliamentary friends, sketched out a plan of campaign for the propaganda in England. We have how to see what action was taken in this direction. At first he cherished the hope that some concessions might, by the force of persuasion, be obtained in India from the Viceroy-in-Council, but when year after year passed away without any response to the Congress prayer, he became convinced that no reform of any value could be expected from the official hierarchy at Simla, and that it was from England that the impulse must come, if any satisfaction was to be obtained for Indian aspirations. Accordingly in a letter, dated 10th February 1889 from Calcutta, he pressed upon Congress workers the vital need for the British propaganda on an adequate scale. He pointed out that in India the work of the Congress in consolidating public opinion had been in great measure accomplished, and that, broadly speaking, all Indian progressives were agreed as to the proper remedies for Indian grievances and disabilities, but "our European officials—who are here all-powerful—in consequence of service traditions and bureaucratic bias, as a body deny utterly the justice of our contentions, and are not

to be convinced by anything that *we* can ever possibly say. We impute no blame to them for this—it is only natural—for the tendency of all the reforms we advocate is to curtail the virtually autocratic powers now exercised by these officials, and unless they were more than human they must necessarily be antagonistic to our programme. Giving all due credit to our European officials, and acknowledging their many merits, nothing nevertheless is more certain than that, so long as we confine our reclamations to their ears, we shall never secure those important reforms that *we* all know to have now become essential, not only to our own welfare but to the auspicious continuance of British rule in India... Our only hope lies in awakening the British public to a sense of the wrongs of our people—to a consciousness of the unwisdom and injustice of the present administration. The least that we could do would be to provide ample funds—for sending and keeping constantly in England deputations of our ablest speakers to plead their country's cause—to enable our British Committee to keep up an unbroken series of public meetings, whereas the true state of affairs in India might be expounded—to flood Great Britain with pamphlets, leaflets, newspapers, and magazine articles—in a word to carry on an agitation there, on the lines and scale of that in virtue of which the Anti-Corn-Law League triumphed." Would that India had followed this wise leadership! A frontal attack on bureaucratic power, firmly entrenched at Simla—with all the armoury of repression at its command—was hopeless. But success was within reach, by means of a flanking movement, that is, by an appeal to the British elector; for the elector's vote gives office to the Prime Minister, and the Prime Minister nominates the Secretary of State, to whom the Viceroy in Council, with all the official hosts is subordinate. Unfortunately the party of progress in India have never properly realized the practical advantage of this method, and in succeeding years have brought upon themselves endless woes by futile resistance in India to irresistible force, while neglecting to conduct effectively in England the operations which, with a moderate expenditure of labour and of money, would have secured to them a painless victory.

*The British Committee of the Indian National Congress*

The first steps towards a Congress organization in England were taken in 1887, when Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, then residing in London, volunteered to act as Agent for the Congress; but he was not supplied with funds, and being engaged in business, he could only spare a small portion of his time, so that practically little was done. But in 1888 an important move forward was made, when Messrs. W.C. Bonnerjee and Eardley Norton joined Mr. Dadabhai in England, and succeeded in enlisting for their cause the great democratic champion, Mr. Charles Bradlaugh M.P. Further, a paid Agency was established under Mr. W. Digby C.I.E.; offices were taken at 25 Craven Street, Strand; and a vigorous campaign was carried out in the country. Ten thousand copies of the Report of the third Congress, and many thousand copies of speeches and pamphlets were printed and circulated: while Messrs. Bonnerjee and Norton, in connection with the Agency, addressed a number of public meetings, and Mr. Bradlaugh delivered many lectures on Indian questions in different parts of England. All this Mr. Bradlaugh did gratuitously, solely in the interests of India, but of course the Agency had to pay for the public halls, advertisements, and other incidental expenses. During the seven months of this work about £1700 were spent. For the current year 1889 the expenditure was estimated at £2500, and this amount Mr. Hume called upon India to provide. Concluding his note, he wrote, "In order first to guide the operations of this Agency, and second to check its accounts and audit them in England before they are sent out to us, a strong Committee of influential gentlemen is now being formed in London. Later I shall be able to report more fully on this matter; at present I am only in a position to say that Sir William Wedderburn, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, and Mr. Bradlaugh will certainly be upon it, and that it will include others of the most prominent and trusted of our friends in England."

Action was taken in accordance with the above scheme, and the required Committee was formed on the 27th July 1886. It consisted of Sir W. Wedderburn (chairman), Mr. Dadadha

Naoroji, Mr. W.S. Caine M.P., and Mr. W.S. Bright McLaren M.P., with Mr. W. Digby as secretary, and subsequently the Committee was joined by Mr. John Ellis M.P., Mr. George Yule, Mr. W.C. Bonnerjee, Sir Charles Schwann M.P., Sir Herbert Roberts M.P., Dr. G.B. Clark, and Mr. Martin Wood. The constitution of this Committee was confirmed by a Resolution of the Congress of 1889 and Rs. 45,000 were voted for its maintenance, the amount to be raised by a proportional contribution from each of the Provincial Congress Committees. The title finally adopted was, "The British Committee of the Indian National Congress." In September 1892 Mr. Digby resigned the secretaryship, and the office was removed to Nos. 84 and 85 Palace Chambers, Westminster, a very convenient locality opposite the Houses of Parliament; and these rooms, suitably furnished, the walls hung with portraits of Congress worthies, and with an Indian library contributed by Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and other friends, became the permanent centre of operations for the Congress propaganda in England.

It has been the practice to elect, as temporary members of the Committee, any leading Congress supporters who happen to be on a visit to England. This brings the Committee into touch with the most recent developments in India, and adds much strength to its position, as will be understood from the list of these temporary members, which has included such names as Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, Mr. Surendranath Banerjea, Mr. Subramania Iyer, Mr. Mudholkar, Mr. Gokhale, Mr. D.E. Wacha, Mr. Romesh Dutt, Mr. H.A. Wadia, Mr. H.N. Haridas, Mr. A. Chaudhuri, Mr. M.A. Jinnah, and Mr. Bhupendranath Basu. On account of his long absences in India, it was not till the 6th of May 1890 that Mr. Hume was himself able to join as a member, and for the first time to attend a meeting of the Committee.

As a Congress leader, and as an early member of the British Committee, Mr. W.C. Bonnerjee stood pre-eminent, combining wise counsels with steady perseverance and ungrudging liberality. His lamented death occurred on the 21st of July 1906, and Mr. Hume writing of him as "one of the best and

truest friends" he ever had, thus described his work for India : "From the very outset, he had thrown in his lot, unhesitatingly, with the Congress movement of which he was one of the originators, and from early in 1885 up to this his lamented decease, he adhered to and supported that movement, alike through good and evil report, giving it all the strength of his high character and position, great abilities and widespread influence. Probably no other Indian gentleman of modern times ever exercised so great an influence over his countrymen at large—not merely in Bengal, but throughout India—as did Mr. W.C. Bonnerjee, who from the first day that he put his hand to the plough of Reform very early in 1885, never grudged his time, his talents or his money, whenever and wherever he saw, or thought he saw, that the cause of India's people might be in any degree aided or promoted by any or all of these."

As time went on, changes occurred in the permanent membership of the Committee. Early colleagues dropped out, and new friends were added. In 1903 there came an important accession of strength when Sir Henry Cotton K.C.S.I. joined the Committee, and from time to time other sympathetic Parliamentarians were added, including Mr. Alfred Webb M.P., Mr. Hart Davies M.P., Mr. C.J. O'Donnell M.P., Dr. Rutherford M.P., Mr. Mackarners M.P., Mr. Philip Morrell M.P., Mr. O'Grady M.P. (as representing the Labour Party), and Mr. A.M. Scott M.P. Some of those who co-operated most actively with the Committee, such as Sir Charles Dilke, and Mr. Samuel Smith, preferred not to join, on the ground that they would be able to work more effectively in the House of Commons for India without being members of an outside Committee.

Now as regards the success of the work undertaken by the British Committee, it must be borne in mind that the chief difficulty in England for those seeking justice to India, arises from the antagonism of the India Office, where the Council of the Secretary of State has always been the stronghold of reactionary officialdom. As Mr. Hume put it, the India Office is "an organization perpetually employed in popularizing the official view of all Indian questions," and if Indian grievances



are to be remedied, this hostile influence must be met—in Parliament, on the Platform, and in the Press—by “an organization equally persistent and strenuous in disseminating the people’s view of these same questions.” This therefore was the task before Mr. Hume and his friends; and they sought to fulfil each of these duties—as regards Parliament, by organizing an Indian Parliamentary Committee; as regards the Platform, by arranging public meetings throughout the country; and as regards the Press, by founding the journal *India* as an organ of Congress views. Each of these enterprises must here be described a little in detail.

### *The Indian Parliamentary Committee*

It is in Parliament that vital issues are decided; and as few Indian readers are familiar with the technicalities of Parliamentary methods, it seems necessary to explain the difficulties which an independent member desiring reform has to encounter, and to show how completely, as regards India, official influences are dominant in the House of Commons; also it is important to understand that things have gone from bad to worse since 1858, when the direct administration of India was assumed by the Crown. In theory, the Secretary of State in Council is supposed to be the servant of the House of Commons; and in theory, he is supposed to occupy a position of judicial impartiality, as the Court of Appeal for Indian grievances. But neither of these suppositions has any foundation in fact. In point of fact, no matter which Party is in power, the Secretary of State, as a member of the Government commanding a Parliamentary majority, is not the servant but, in Indian matters, the master of the House of Commons; and in dealing with the independence member who questions authority, he does not even affect impartiality, but comes before the House as the indignant apologist of the Department for which he is responsible. Also, he is free to treat the troublesome member with scant courtesy, because his salary is drawn by himself direct from the Indian Treasury, and no inconvenient motion can be brought forward for a reduction on the estimates. Further, as noted above, the Parliamentary situation has materially deteriorated since the days of the old

East India Company, because the House of Commons regarded the Company with a wholesome jealousy, as being a privileged monopoly; and since the privileges were granted for a period of only twenty years, a searching enquiry into the whole system of administration was on each occasion carried out before the charter was renewed. Now this is all changed. The wholesome jealousy is dissipated; and for more than half a century there has been no periodical enquiry, such as was before provided automatically, no account of stewardship, no day of reckoning for official delinquencies. To complete the picture, one more point must be noticed. In other departments of the administration, an independent member seeking redress of grievances, gets ready support from the Front Opposition Bench. But this is not so in the case of a Radical daring to voice India's complaint of destitution, famine, and pestilence. Him a Tory Secretary of State denounces for his malignant, though unaccountable, want of patriotism, while the ex-Minister, emerging from his retirement on the Liberal benches, re-echoes these sentiments, praises his own past administration, and proclaims "the unspeakable blessings of British rule." With a few honourable exceptions, the London Press follows suit, finding subject for amusement when the House empties itself, as soon as it is a question of India's suffering, not seeing any shame in this shameful disregard of national duty.

To stem this tide of official optimism, and get a hearing for India's complaint, is beyond the power of a private member, unless endowed with the personality and authority of a Bright, a Fawcett, or a Bradlaugh. The only hope is in combination; and fortunately in the House of Commons there has never been wanting an element of independence and love of fair play, if only it can be reached and made available. Acting therefore on the lines indicated in Mr. Hume's letter of 5th September 1885, steps were taken during the Session of 1893 to establish an "Indian Parliamentary Committee," not committed to any particular measures, but pledged to attend to Indian interests, and to see that justice was done. The earlier movements in the same direction are interesting, and may be noted here. Under the name of the "India Reform Society," an organization was founded in 1853, mainly through

the exertions of Mr. John Dickinson, for the purpose of promoting combined and well-directed action among the friends of India. At that time the Charter of the East India Company was about to expire, viz., on the 30th of April 1854, and the immediate object of the Society was to secure that the customary enquiry by Parliament, previous to the renewal of the Charter, should be full and impartial. By means of the facts thus collected, and supplied to him through Mr. John Dickinson, Mr. Bright was enabled to make the noble speeches on India, which led to the issue of Queen Victoria's memorable Proclamation in 1858, and did so much to determine the wise and humane policy under Lord Canning, which followed the Indian Mutiny. In 1883 Mr. John Bright approved the formation of an informal Indian Committee, having for its object to secure combined Parliamentary action. Some fifty names were obtained of Members of Parliament, willing to co-operate on the broad ground of a just and sympathetic policy towards India; and it was arranged that out of these an Executive Committee of five or six should be formed. Of this Executive Committee, Mr. Bright consented to act as Chairman. Supported by this Committee, Mr. John Slagg, Senior Member of Manchester, in 1885, moved for a full Parliamentary enquiry into Indian administration. He secured a place for his motion to enquire into the Government of India Act of 1858, and Lord Randolph Churchill agreed to second it. But, unfortunately, a change of Government prevented the motion coming on, and the opportunity was lost.

The Committee of 1883, which has fallen into abeyance, was revived on the 27th of July 1893, when Sir W. Wedderburn and Mr. Caine invited a few leading independent members to dine with them at the House of Commons, in order to discuss Indian affairs. On that occasion Sir W. Wedderburn, after briefly explaining the situation, moved the following Resolution: "That it is desirable to form an Indian Parliamentary Committee for the purpose of promoting combined and well-directed action among those interested in Indian affairs." This Resolution was seconded by Mr. Caine, supported by Mr. John E. Ellis, and carried unanimously. Mr. Jacob Bright then moved, "That the following members form the Indian Parlia-

mentary Committee, with power to add to their number." The names, which included all those present, were the following : Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Caine, Mr. John E. Ellis, Dr. W. A. Hunter, Mr. Illingworth, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. Walter B. McLaren, Mr. Swift MacNeill, Dadabhai Naoroji, Mr. Herbert Paul, Sir Joseph Pease, Mr. J. Herbert Roberts, Mr. R.T. Reid, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. C.E. Schwann, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. Alfred Webb, and Sir W. Wedderburn. This motion was seconded by Mr. Illingworth, and supported by Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Mr. Swift MacNeill, and Mr. Schwann, and was carried unanimously. On the motion of Mr. Caine, seconded by Mr. S. Smith, Sir W. Wedderburn was appointed Chairman, and Mr. J. Herbert Roberts Secretary of the Committee. From time to time new members joined, so that at the close of the Session the Indian Parliamentary Committee comprised no fewer than 154 members of the House of Commons, a formidable body from a Parliamentary point of view. among these the following were elected to form a Working Committee : Mr. W.S. Caine, Mr. J.E. Ellis, Mr. W.S.B. McLaren, Mr. D. Naroji, Mr. J.G. Swift MacNeill, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Secretary), Mr. C.E. Schwann, Mr. S. Smith, Mr. A. Webb, Sir W. Wedderburn (Chairman), and Mr. H.J. Wilson.

At this time the financial condition of India was very critical. The Viceroy, Lord Lansdowne, described the situation in the following terms : "To leave matters as they are meant for the Government of India hopeless financial confusion ; .....for the taxpayers of India the prospect of heavy and unpopular burdens ; and for the country as a whole a fatal and stunting arrest of its development." Under these circumstances, a letter (dated 1st July 1894) was addressed, on behalf of the Committee, to Mr. Henry Fowler, then Secretary of State for India, containing a searching criticism of Mr. Westland's Budget ; and the subsequent proceedings in the House of Commons, followed by the debate on the Indian Budget, resulted in Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji's motion for a Parliamentary enquiry, which wrung from Mr. Fowler the appointment of the Welby Royal

**Commission on Indian expenditure and the apportionment of charge between India and the United Kingdom.**

At the elections during the ten succeeding years of Tory domination the Indian Parliamentary Committee lost many of its most active members. But at last the wave of reaction spent its force; the tide turned: and at the General Election of January 1906 the Tory Government was wrecked, and power came into the hands of the most democratic Government, and the most democratic House of Commons, that had existed since the Reform Act of 1832. With a House of Commons so favourably constituted, no time was lost in reviving the Indian Parliamentary Committee. At the invitation of Sir W. Wedderburn, a company of Members of Parliament and others interested in Indian affairs, met at breakfast on February 28th 1906, at the Westminster Palace Hotel; and afterwards a Conference was held "with a view to reconstitute the Indian Parliamentary Committee, and generally to consider what action may usefully be taken in the new Parliament to advance the interests of the Indian people." Mr. Leonard Courtney (now Lord Courtney) presided at the Conference, and opened the proceedings; and speeches were made by Mr. Schwann M.P., Mr. J.M. Robertson M.P., Lord Weardale, Mr. Frederic Harrison, Mr. Herbert, Roberts M.P., Sir Henry Cotton M.P., Mr. Pickersgill M.P., Mr. J.A. Bright M.P., Mr. H. Nuttall M.P., Mr. C.J. O'Donnell M.P., Sir George Robertson M.P., Mr. Byles M.P., Mr. Hastings Duncan M.P., Mr. Hume, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, and Sir W. Wedderburn. Resolutions in pursuance of the objects of the meeting were passed unanimously; the Indian Parliamentary Committee was duly reconstituted; and eventually nearly two hundred Members of Parliament became members of the Committee.

*The Journal "India"*

Next as regards propaganda in the Press. Indian reformers should bear in mind that without a recognized organ in the Press no cause has in England any chance of success. Whether the cause is Temperance or Free Trade, Land Reforms, Irish Nationalism, or Female Suffrage, all reformers find it indispen-

sable to be well represented in the Press, and spend large sums annually with this object. But as regards India the need is far greater, (1) because the subject of Indian grievances is unfamiliar, and distasteful to the national vanity of "the man in the street"; (2) because in the London Press articles on Indian subjects are mainly supplied by Anglo-Indians unfavourable to Indian aspirations; and (3) because there are no Indian electors to bring pressure upon Parliament and the Government. If India ceases to have an organ in the Press of this country, she will be held to have abandoned her appeal to the British public and the British Parliament. Accordingly, as early as 1890, the British Committee established the journal *India*, to place before the British public the Indian view of Indian affairs. At first the journal was issued at irregular intervals; in 1892 it appeared as a "monthly," being issued on the second Friday of each month; and on the 7th of January 1898 it first appeared as a "weekly" in its present form.

Besides its functions of advocacy, *India* performs an essential duty in supplying trustworthy information to the British public. The British Committee constantly receives requests for accurate information on Indian affairs from Members of Parliament, from journalists, and from lecturers and platform speakers. In order to supply such a demand it is absolutely essential to have a complete and handy record of current facts, events, and opinions. And this is furnished by *India*, which is a store house from which arms and materials are supplied to all those who are willing to strike a blow on behalf of India. The special correspondent of *The Times*, a none too friendly critic of the Congress, bears witness to the performance of this useful duty, when he says of *India* that "it may not have a very large circulation at home, but is the chief purveyor of Indian news to a large part of the Liberal Press."

Unfortunately there is another side to the question, *i.e.*, the financial side. As already noted, journals in this country which preach reform, whether political or social, can only do so at the expense of their supporters. The advocacy of an altruistic cause, going counter to selfish interests, popular prejudice, and national vanity, cannot be a commercial success: in the school

of the world it is the vender of sweets, not the doctor with his "nauseous draught" that is welcome. And this is peculiarly the case with regard to the Congress cause in England. For any hope of success the grievances of India must be forced on the attention of the British public, and this is the duty imposed on the British Committee. Under the circumstances no source of political influence can with safety be neglected. And accordingly, from week to week, by a free distribution of the journal *India* to Members of Parliament, journalists, political associations, clubs, and reading-rooms, the Committee have placed before the British public the case of India, her needs and grievances. But for want of funds this work has been carried out with increasing difficulty. Rigid economy had to be exercised, preventing various desirable developments, and with their scanty resources the Committee could not have obtained the services of editors possessing such exceptional qualifications as Mr. Gordon Hewart and Mr. H.E.A. Cotton, had not these gentlemen been influenced by their warm sympathy with the cause. The matter is of extreme importance, and it will be necessary of urge the Congress to make suitable and permanent provision for its propaganda work in England. This should be done by forming a permanent propaganda fund, and by securing in London the continued presence of responsible Indian exponents of Congress views.

#### *Public Meetings, Addresses, and Interviews*

There remains to be considered what can be effected by public speech and personal persuasion. This work has been done in past years by public meetings and lectures, by addresses to associations and other select audiences, by social entertainments, and by interviews with Ministers, Members of Parliament, editors, and other publicmen. In this work the best results were obtained when accredited Congress leaders like Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, Mr. Surendranath Banerjea, Mr. Gokhale, and Mr. Bhupendranath Basu came to speak at first hand on behalf of their fellow-countrymen. To show the nature of the work, a brief description may be given of the campaigns carried out by Mr. Gokhale in 1905 and 1906. In 1905 four Delegates from India were expected, and the British Committee arranged

for some fifty meetings at important centres all over the country. Only two Delegates, Mr. Gokhale and Mr. Lajpat Rai, were able to come; and much of Mr. Lajpat Rai's time was taken up by a visit to America, where he addressed meetings at New York, Boston, and Chicago. But Mr. Gokhale's campaign in Yorkshire and Lancashire was a brilliant success. His visit to Lancashire, under the auspices of Sir Charles Schwann and Mr. Samuel Smith, was specially opportune, with reference to the Partition of Bengal, and the boycott of Manchester goods. At Manchester he addressed four most important meetings, (1) the Federated Trades Councils, (2) the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, (3) a meeting of merchants connected with Indian trade, and (4) the Manchester Liberal Association. At each of these meetings he made a different speech, in each case specially adapted to the requirements of his audience. The Chairman of the British Committee, who accompanied him, can bear witness to the profound impression produced on his hearers by the accuracy of his information and the cogency of his arguments. Good meetings were also held in London, and he had a gratifying reception by the undergraduates of the "Union" at Cambridge, where his motion in favour of more popular institutions for India was carried by 161 to 62. The Fabian Society also held a special meeting to hear an address from him. At this time a Conservative Government was in power, and gave its support to Lord Curzon's reactionary and repressive policy. Mr. Gokhale's main duty therefore in 1905 was to arouse public opinion in this country by means of the Platform and the Press. In 1906, after presiding at the Benares Congress, he returned to England as the accredited representative of the Congress. But the situation had much changed in the meantime. Our political friends were in power; so that to address public meetings was a secondary matter; and his main object to come into touch with, and inform, Ministers and Members of Parliament, upon whom the future of India mainly depended. For this purpose he not only addressed meetings of the Indian Parliamentary Committee, but also personally interviewed about 150 members of the House of Commons, and secured from them promises of active interest in Indian affairs. As regards interviews with Ministers, the most important were



naturally those he had with Mr. Morley, who accorded to him a series of long interviews, in which he was able to place fully before the newly appointed Secretary of State the needs and aspirations of the Indian people. Mr. Ellis, the Under-Secretary for India, who was an original member of the British Committee, also had cordial interviews with Mr. Gokhale, and invited him to a breakfast party, where he and other Parliamentary friends expressed their sympathy. Finally the Prime Minister, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, accorded him an interview, and gave him a most kindly hearing.

### *Support of the Propaganda*

These particulars of the propaganda in England, as regards Parliament, the Press, and the Platform, have been set forth in some detail for a specific purpose, viz., to impress on the Indian public the very precarious position of Indian interests, and the absolute need of an organization in England, well-informed, vigilant, and with resources sufficient to take effective action whenever a crisis occurs. At present in England the friends of progress are in power. For a time the sea is calm, and the wind is fair. But who can tell how long this will last? Is any one so simple as to suppose that the Imperialistic Party is dead, because for the moment it is "hushed in grim repose"? Owing to the complications of home and foreign affairs, the fact of all Ministries in this country hangs on a thread. Sooner or later there must be a change; and power will come into the hands of those out of sympathy with Indian aspirations. Surely the people of India have not already forgotten what they suffered under the Party of retrogression, of race and class prejudice, of aggression abroad and repression at home! Are they content to await passively the repetition of the same experiences? What the Indian people have to realize is, that *action in favour of Indian aspirations does not spring spontaneously from the ordinary operation of British institutions, but has ever been the result of persistent and laborious personal effort on the part of outside reformers working, both in India and England, on the lines indicated by Mr. Hume.* If from time to time an advance has been achieved, it is due to the sympathy of the British democracy, acting under the

propulsion of independent reformers. No reform has ever been initiated by the leaders of the Indian bureaucracy. On the contrary, the class interests which hold the lever of power at Simla and at the India Office, are continuously working to strengthen the official position. Not only have they always done their best to prevent new concessions, but when opportunity has offered, they have taken away the privileges inherited from a former generation of reformers—the liberty of the Press, the right of public meeting, municipal self-government, the independence of the Universities. These ill-starred measures of reaction, combined with Russian methods of police repression, brought India under Lord Lytton within measurable distance of a revolutionary outbreak; and it was only just in time that Mr. Hume and his Indian advisers were inspired to intervene. Through their devoted efforts the gulf between the rulers and the ruled was bridged over by the Congress structure, which bore the strain of Imperialism for seven years under Lord Curzon, and made straight the paths for Lord Morley's reforms of 1909, and the Royal Declarations of 1911. Let any thoughtful Indian reflect what fatal developments, much more serious than sporadic outrages, must have followed from popular despair if, during those years, the controlling influence of the Congress had not existed in India, and if, after the Liberal victory at the polls, a duly authorized statement of grievances, and of needed reforms, had not been systematically pressed upon responsible statesmen in England. From the past learn the future; and let the people of India be assured that disaster will follow, and follow (not undeservedly) from their own default, if effort is relaxed, if the organization in England, built up so painfully, is allowed to go to pieces, and if the results of twenty-five years of labour are thrown away.

#### *A Proposed Memorial*

We learn from India that influential friends in different parts of the country desire to raise a memorial to Mr. Hume; and it seems very appropriate that such a movement should be initiated, as it has been, in the United Provinces, in which he worked for many years, and where he was so well

known and so well beloved. May I venture to make an appeal with regard to the form of the memorial, and to remind his friends of the views expressed by him in a circular letter which he addressed to Congress workers on the 16th of February 1892, regarding a proposed memorial to Pandit Ajudhia Nath ? As is well known, there was no one for whom he had a more sincere personal regard than Pandit Ajudhia Nath, but in this letter he wrote, "For God's sake waste no money on memorials or any other minor enterprise ; give every farthing you can spare to the general cause." The purpose for which he claimed the money was for propaganda in this country : "Our only hope," he wrote, "lies in awakening the British public to a sense of the wrongs of our people." What then is my suggestion ? It is this : Mr. Hume's dearest wish was for the emancipation of India, and he held that this could be secured only by an insistent appeal to the British people. The best memorial therefore to the faithful friend who has now passed away would be an "Allan Hume Memorial Fund", having for its object to perpetuate his work, and prevent the destruction of his dearest hopes.

### GOKHALE'S TRIBUTE\*

Gokhale began by saying that it was a high privilege to be asked to offer welcome to so eminent a benefactor of India as Mr. Hume, and the welcome that he offered was offered not only on behalf of the people of Poona, but in the name of the entire Deccan, representatives from the various districts of which had thought it their duty to be present on that occasion. It was impossible for him to adequately express how deeply grateful they all felt to Mr. Hume for the immense sacrifice of personal comfort and convenience at which he had snatched, in his indifferent state of health and after a very fatiguing journey, a few hours to gratify their dearly cherished wishes and honour their city with that visit. The speaker, however, wanted to say that no one was surprised at the trouble Mr. Hume had taken ; because his conduct in that matter was only

\*An indirect version of Gokhale's speech delivered at a public meeting in Poona for bidding farewell to Hume in 1894.

in keeping with that absolute disregard of self which had all along been the guiding principle of his life. Gokhale was aware that nothing was more repugnant to Mr. Hume than any demonstration or even an expression of the feelings by which he was regarded by the people of the country ; but he would ask him to remember that, when the gratitude of the heart was deep and strong, it gave an irresistible impulse to the tongue to speak. And if, therefore, in what little he intended to say, he appeared not to act quite in accordance with Mr. Hume's wishes, he trusted Mr. Hume would excuse him on the ground that what he wanted to say came straight from the heart and there was no art about it.

Any one who compared the India of today with what she was seven or eight years ago, would at once realize the enormous nature of the services rendered by Mr. Hume to the country. All that the Indian National Congress had done during the seven years of its existence was principally Mr. Hume's work. What it was exactly that the Congress had achieved it was unnecessary for the speaker to state at length, first, because that question had been repeatedly dealt with in an infinitely abler and more eloquent manner than any he could ever hope to attempt, by successive Presidents of past Congresses, and secondly, to speak of that in the presence of the Father of the National Congress was something like holding up a candle-light to the face of the eternal and glorious source of all light.

Gokhale, however, wanted briefly to refer to four results which were principally due to the Congress. First, the Congress had welded together all the influences in the country which were struggling, scattered, to create throughout India a sense of common nationality. The influences had not been created by the Congress. They had come into existence along with British rule in this country, and they had been tenderly nursed by the wise and large-hearted policy of successive generations of statesmen, and notably that of the Marquis of Ripon. But although the influences were already in existence, it was reserved for the Congress to unite them together and produce a result owing to which the heart of Bombay throbbed.

today in unison with that of Bengal or Madras in matters of national welfare.

The Congress had also made public opinion in India more enlightened and more influential. The movement had spread far and wide in the land a considerable knowledge of the main political questions, and the result was that public opinion was better informed now than before. It also carried more weight with Government and no more eloquent testimony on the point was required than the fact that Lord Lansdowne himself had recognized in the Congress the Liberal party of India. Then owing to the Congress movement, the main political questions of the country were advancing, some slowly, some rapidly, but all of them advancing towards a state of satisfactory solution. And lastly, the Congress supplied a ready machinery to those English politicians who realized their vast responsibilities in connection with India and who were anxious to do their duty by the people of this country. One peculiarly glorious circumstance connected with British rule, according to Gokhale, was that this country had never lacked distinguished, disinterested advocates of her cause in England. The speaker mentioned the services rendered by Edmund Burke to this country a century ago, and said that it was for such services that the names of Bright and Fawcett—and, last but not least, Bradlaugh—had become household words with the people. The four results mentioned by the speaker were the work of the Congress and as such they were principally the work of Mr. Hume's hands; and surely it was not given to a single individual to achieve more.

Mr. Hume's path, again, had not been smooth. He had to work amidst the repeated misunderstandings of well-meaning friends and the unscrupulous attacks of determined enemies. But as though those difficulties had not been sufficient, it had pleased Providence to send him more trying ordeals. In the space of the past two years a domestic affliction, sad and heavy at all times, but peculiarly sad and heavy in old age when the mind of man is rather conservative in its attachments, had rendered his home desolate and his hearth cheerless; while his

public life was embittered by the sad and untimely loss of his best and most eminent co-worker in England and his most beloved and trusted collaborator in India. The difficulties and misfortunes mentioned by the speaker were more than sufficient to break the spirit of most men ; but Mr. Hume continued, in spite of them all, to walk firmly and unshaken in the path of duty chosen by himself. When the people of India contemplated all that, naturally their hearts overflowed with feelings of gratitude and admiration and veneration and love. For Mr. Hume had enabled India, for the first time in her history, to breathe and feel like one nation by bringing together men of enlightenment and patriotism from the various parts of the country to work in a common cause. He had tried to steady their faltering footsteps and turn their weak accents into firm speech. He had toiled for them in the midst of calumny and contumely of every kind, amidst the wicked attacks of avowed enemies and the more wicked stabs of false friends. For their sake he had denied himself the comforts which old age demanded and to their service he had devoted his time, his energy, his talents, his purse, his all. Above all, he had set them a high and glorious example as to how they should labour for the regeneration of their motherland. Such had been Mr. Hume's services and they were above any memorial or reward. Rather their own reward they were, and in themselves they constituted a memorial more lasting than brass and more enduring than marble.

In conclusion, Gokhale expressed the great regret of all assembled there that Mr. Hume was not coming out for the next Congress. The melancholy circumstances of Pandit Ajudiya Nath's death rendered it, in the speaker's opinion, necessary that the next Congress should have the guidance of Mr. Hume's hand. However, as Mr. Hume's decision had been already finally made in the matter, they had to bow to it as meant for the best. Gokhale was also very sorry that Mr. Hume's stay in Poona should have been so extremely short that they had to blend their welcome and their farewell together. But as even in that matter Mr. Hume had already made final arrangements, nothing remained for him but to wish

Mr. Hume and his daughter a happy voyage and a very happy time in England and to bid him farewell in the words which he himself had used in the case of Lord Ripon :

Farewell, farewell, a nation's love,  
A nation's prayers watch o'er thee,  
Nor space nor time can part thee e'er,  
From hearts that here adore thee.

## 2

### ANNIE BESANT

[If a well-intentioned Englishman, A O Hume, thought in terms of founding a political organisation [in India so as to work as a bridge between the ruling English and dependent Indian people, an Irish lady, Mrs. Annie Besant, (1847-1933) thought in terms of leading the Indian freedom movement on the lines of Home Rule agitation as going on in Ireland at that time. In 1893 she came to India and joined the Theosophical Society having its headquarters at Adyar in Madras. She glorified Hinduism and hailed Indian civilisation as higher than the 'mushroom' civilisation of modern times. It had its own impact on sharpening the trend of Hindu religious revivalism that was so powerfully advocated by the extremist leaders of our freedom movement. She wrote profusely on the problems of Indian sociology and politics and exhorted the people of the country to take active part in the nationalist movement so much so that she won for herself the nickname of 'an Indian Tom Tom waking up the sleepers'. Her internment in June, 1917 owing to the unwise action of the Governor of Madras (Lord Pentland) made her so popular that she was offered the presidentship of the Indian National Congress at its session held in Calcutta in that year. It marked the culmination of her Home Rule Movement. Mrs. Besant always insisted on the use of constitutional means for winning a kind of self-rule that was akin to 'Dominion Status' or 'complete freedom within the British Empire' for India. Her most important contribution was to unite the two wings of the Congress that had parted their ways after the Surat split in



1907. The line of Mrs. Besant had its triumph until it was superseded by the revolutionary line of Gandhiji's non-violent non-cooperation adopted by the Congress in 1920.]

### INDIA AS SHE IS\*

British rule over India is dated from the Battle of Plassey, 1757, and lasted for 164 years as an undiluted autocracy — for the Councils of 1892 and 1910 had no power—until 1921, when the present interlude between undiluted autocracy and Self-Government began. We have seen that 5,000 years ago India was a powerful, wealthy and colonising country, with an immense sea-borne trade, enjoying orderly and settled government at home, borne witness to by travellers from abroad. She tried all forms of political government, from "Village Republics" and Council-ruled City States, up to huge Empires, through these 5,000 years, at least, and none can say for how many millennia more. The outstanding material fact was her enormous wealth created by her prosperous agriculturists and village craftsmen; the splendour of her religious and philosophic literature, her art, her drama, her seats of learning, her village education, the strength, courage and discipline of her armies, her well-equipped commercial navies, her caravan-trade, her embassies to foreign courts—all these things belonged to India as she was.

The beginning of India as she is, her people a subject Nation at home and her Nationals despised abroad, began with Clive and Hastings, with the East India Company establishing its ruling power, described by Macaulay (quoted on p. 36 *ante*) as "That Government, oppressive as the most oppressive form of barbarian despotism, was strong with the strength of civilisation". The havoc it wrought, till practically overthrown by the Sepoy rebellion, made India as she is.

The chief and lasting injury done by the Company was the destruction (in Madras in 1816) of the *Village System*, as it had existed and kept India rich for unknown millennia. The

\*From Annie Besant: *India—A Nation*.

Company turned village land-holding into small-owner land-holding, village servants elected by the village into village tyrants appointed by and responsible to the Government, thus creating village jealousies and feuds, favouritism and fleecing by the new officials, bribery to obtain unfair advantages, the corruption of village life. With the village system went free village education, which, in 1813, Sir Thomas Monro said in his evidence to the House of Commons, was carried on in a school in every village, which taught reading, writing, arithmetic to every child, and provided the Company with clerks and accountants. India, as she was, had an educated people. This destruction of the admirably organised village system was the root of India's fall; she could easily have recovered from the wars and annexations and plunderings of the Company, but the destruction of her villages, of her local governments, essentially democratic, of her village education, her village industries, her village servants—iron-smiths, carpenters, shepherds, tax gatherers, and headmen, etc.—strangled her National life. and plunged her into ignorance, so far as the masses were concerned, and from this she has never recovered. To the credit of that Company rule are some of their servants, noble and generous-hearted men, who tried to serve the much wronged Nation, and the introduction of English education, shorn of its religious and moral inspiration. Crown government was an immense improvement on Company rule, though it continued the demoralisation of the people by the neglect of mass education, and by the continual unvarying pressure of the treatment of Indians as inferior, as devoid of ability to govern, as needing tutelage, excluding them from high positions, and from all but the most formal social functions. Everywhere the stamp of inferiority was branded on them, in their education, in the legal, medical and educational professions, in their employments, in their social relations, in their manufacturing and mercantile associations. The marvel is that in such an atmosphere, with an education which taught them nothing of their glorious past, which gave them as a subject for an examination essay, "The blessings of British rule," the inborn spirit of the race—nurtured by a long traditions of culture and Nationhood kept alive by religion—responded to the trumpet-call of Liberty ringing through

English literature, as though a rush of native air had swept through that mephitic stifling atmosphere of enforced inferiority, and grew such men as Ranade, Telang, Gokhale, Tilak, Rash Behari Ghosh, Dadabhai Naoroji, and the younger generation, S. Srinivasa Sastri, Tej Bahadur Sapru, Madan Mohan Malaviya, C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, and many another man who, in a free country, would have been hailed with acclamation as its foremost statesmen, but here have to struggle for the right to serve their country, as though patriotism were an outrage, and courage a crime. Even these sometimes shew a lack of self confidence, a tendency to under-estimate their own powers, bred of the repression of the generous enthusiasms of boyhood, the pride in country, the noble ambition greatly to serve their Nation.

“But we gave you peace, the Pax Britannica,” urges the Civilian. A peace, a safety, bestowed and preserved by others is more demoralising than war, and should it cease to be felt as humiliating, then would the Nation be dead.

*Education.*—India was very highly educated as regarded the student population in her huge universities. The masses of the people enjoyed free education, reading, writing, arithmetic, mensuration and account-keeping being generally taught. Now India is, as regards the masses of her people, the most ignorant civilised population in the world. She has now, in 1923, 3.4 per cent. of the population receiving education.

*Poverty.*—India was very lightly taxed while Self-governed. But she is now extremely heavily taxed, and expenses are rushing up by leaps and bounds. Her military expenditure in 1913-14, including military works and marine, was over 31 crores of rupees. In 1922-23, it is over 73 crores of rupees and it is said to be impossible to reduce it even to Rs. 50 crores. India uses an inordinate proportion of her income in military expenditure, not for her own defence, but for Imperial needs, and is forced to support a large English army at an exorbitant cost, said to be necessary to keep a white soldier in health. But why have white soldiers? The cost of the

British officials, again, is exorbitant ; why have them ? After a while they retire, and spend all their pensions out of the country. The people are underfed and therefore have little vitality, little hold on life. Infant mortality is very high. The average life period is 23.5. Her manufacturing industries languish under the competition with Self-governed countries, the English Government considering English interests more than Indian, and the Japanese underselling her on her own soil. In many provinces the death-rate is higher than the birth-rate, the total excess in 1919 being 5.8 per 1,000 in a population of 245 millions. This may be intelligible when we remember that, between 1909-10 and 1919-20, Indian taxation has risen from an average annas 41 to annas 73 per head, on an average annual income of about Rs. 35 per head. Her debt has risen from £ 290 millions to £ 465 millions.

The Reformed Legislatures have made great progress in their first 2½ years of work, passing measures for Compulsory Primary Free Education in Bombay, United Provinces and Punjab, while in Bengal, Madras, Bihar and Orissa, and Central Provinces compulsion is left to the local authorities. They cannot touch Military Expenditure, nor the Services, nor "Home" charges, the worst departments of Expenditure, but they have cut down considerably the grants over which they have control. They have given Woman Suffrage in Madras, Bombay and the United Provinces, and it has also been incorporated in the new Burmese Reform Act ; they have passed important amendments in the Factories Act and a Workmen's Compensation Act ; they have repealed the Press Act 1910 and most of the Emergency Laws ; have swept away most of the racial distinctions in the Law Court, with several other beneficent measures. The outlook is bright for the future, if India obtains Svaraj without further delays, and this she imperatively demands. The National Conference held in February, 1923, issued a broad outline of the irreducible factors in a Svaraj Government, and proposed a national convention in 1924, composed of delegated members of the Legislatures, with power to co-opt, to formulate an Act establishing Svaraj, whether by sweeping away the restrictions in the Reform Act of 1919, or drafting a Constitution, a "Com-

monwealth of India Act" as in Australia. In either case, India will obtain Dominion Status, and become a Free Self-Governing Nation.

*Some Deductions and Anticipations*

We submit from a review of this rough sketch :

That India, despite foreign invasions and local disturbances, which all Nations have suffered in their time—what peace had England from the Conquest up to the final defeat of Charles Edward in 1745 ?—was a prosperous and wealthy Nation before the coming of the East India Company, and that her huge wealth, down to the end of the eighteenth century, is a proof of general industry and security and immense industrial output among the masses, while the wealth of the merchants, and of the banking and trading communities shows a settled condition, where credit was good ; that commercial integrity was so great that receipts and bonds were not demanded in financial transactions.

That the English connection, under the Company, reduced India to poverty, and dislocated her industries, and that, under the Crown, the Government still hampers her industries, makes a cruelly severe drain upon the country, and by its fiscal arrangements prevents the return of prosperity. That between 1770 and 1900—130 years—there have been twenty-two famines, eighteen according to the Report of the Famine Commission of 1880 and four after 1880. In 1770, as we have seen, there was a famine in Bengal with 10,000,000 deaths ; in 1783 in Madras ; in 1784, in Upper India, which left Oudh in a pitiable condition ; in 1792 in Bombay and Madras ; in 1803 in Bombay ; in 1804 in northern India ; in 1807 in Madras ; in 1813 in Bombay ; in 1823 in Madras ; in 1833 in Madras, where in one district, Guntur, 200,000 died out of 500,000 population, and the dead lay unburied about Madras, Masulipatam and Nellore ; in 1837 in north India, in which a calculation of 800,000 deaths is thought too low by the Famine Commission ; in 1854 in Madras ; in 1860 in northern India, about 200,000 deaths ; in 1866 in Orissa and Madras, in Orissa a third of the people died, about

1,000,000, in Madras about 450,000 ; in 1869 in north India, about 1,200,000 deaths ; in 1874 in Bengal, over 1,000,000 were relieved and life was saved ; in 1877 in Madras 5,250,000 deaths ; in 1878 in north India, 1,250,000 deaths ; in 1889 in Madras and Orissa ; in 1892 in Madras, Bengal and Rajputana ; in 1896-7 in north India, Bengal, Madras and Bombay—the number of deaths is not given, but 4,000,000 persons received relief ; and in 1899-00, in north India, Central Provinces and Bombay, 6,500,000 persons were in receipt of relief—the worst famine on record. In 1892 and 1897, Burma also suffered from famine. In 1896, bubonic plague broke out in Bombay, and has slain its millions.

That even in Self-Government should cause—as we do not think it would—any recrudescence of local jealousies and divisions, they would be local and temporary troubles, out of which India would emerge prosperously, as she has done before.

That after an admitted prosperous and wealthy existence for 5,000 years under eastern rulers, she could not fall into barbarism even by the total and sudden withdrawal of a rule that has only been here in any kind of power for a poor 165 years, of which the first fifty were spent entirely in plundering, and which only stopped constant wars and annexations in 1856. Has the history of British rule in India proved to be more peaceful than the worst of its predecessors up to the Sepoy Rebellion ? And it must not be forgotten that nearly all the current history is the special pleading of an advocate, who is representing his own side and blackening his antagonists, minimising every wrong committed by his own side, exaggerating every wrong done upon the other.

That in the very limited educational work she has done, Britain has been immensely useful, for the study of her own history has strengthened and given point to the National feeling that was powerfully aroused in the rise of the Marathas ; from 1835 she took up education, and though it has spread very slowly, and is doing badly now in consequence of the strangling policy initiated by the Universities Act of

1904, India's debt here to Britain is great and is fully recognised.

That Britain has done much in railways—of mixed benefit, being chiefly strategic instead of economic, but on the whole desirable ; much less well than the old rulers in irrigation works, in forestry, in village government, and in sanitation

That India welcomes English co-operation, but is getting very tired of English domination ; that she is determined to get rid of coercive legislation, and to enjoy Self-Government. That she earnestly desires to have it with English help, but is resolved to have it.

That she is perfectly well aware that England did not "conquer her by the sword," but by the help of her own swords, by bribery, intrigue, and most acute diplomacy, fomenting of divisions, and playing of one party against another. But she is willing to let bye-gones be bye-gones, if Britain will now treat with her on equal terms, and welcome her as a partner, not a dependent.

*India Wants Self-Government Because :*

1. British rule has destroyed her Village and Council Government, and has put in its place a hybrid system of Boards and Councils which are impotent for good, because well-informed Indian opinion is overruled by officials who come, knowing nothing of India, and seek to impose English methods on an ancient land which has its own traditions. They then complain that their hybrid is sterile. It is the way with hybrids. India wants to rebuild and improve her own system, beginning with Panchayats, and working upwards, untrammelled by foreign experts.

2. British rule, after eighty years of its education, is educating 3.4 of the population, and bases her denial of liberty on the "microscopical minority" of the educated, due to her own policy. Japan, under eastern rule, has educated her whole population in 40 years. British education is not

only microscopic, but it is ill-directed ; it was arranged with a view of supplying clerks and some professional men, in order to enable the British Government to be carried on. India wants a system which will develop her resources by supplying scientific experts in every branch wherein applied science is needed, by supplying practical experts in all industries and crafts ; a system which will educate her whole population for useful ends, as the United States and Germany have done for their populations and Britain is now doing for hers. India also desires to check the lavish expenditure of her money on the schools and colleges of foreign missions—British, Scotch, American, German (till 1914), Danish, French, Swiss, Italian—while those under her own control are discouraged and crippled in their natural development on lines shaped by Indians.

3. British rule has destroyed India's finest arts and industries in order to favour the importation of cheap foreign goods, and even in machine industry, such as cotton, taxes the home-produce in order to balance the customs duty on imported goods. It encouraged the export of raw materials, which come back as manufactured articles, thus paralysing Indian industrial efforts for the benefit of foreigners. The export industry being in full swing, when England goes to War, India's materials are suddenly thrown on her hands, and as she has neither plant, nor knowledge how to use it, they rot on the ground and their producers starve. India would train her own sons to utilise her vast stores of raw material for her own profit, and would only send abroad her surplusage.

4. British rule has neglected irrigation—only lately taken up because of the awful famines, and even now starved for want of funds—and while recklessly cutting forests down has, also until lately, neglected replanting. Huge tracts of land, especially in the north west, have consequently become deserts, which were formerly rich and fertile. India would place irrigation and forestry among the first duties of Government.

5. British rule has neglected sanitation, while the tendency to centralise in towns and neglect villages has necessitated



changes from the old methods. Alarmed by the plague—a disease of dirt, which decimated Europe dirty and vanished before Europe semi-clean—it took some hasty and injudicious methods, which alienated Indian sympathy, and is now more busy with injecting serums into Indian bodies, thus really perpetuating disease, than with sanitation. The trouble is increased by the arrogant contempt for indigenous systems, and the ousting of them by Government, while it is impossible to replace them adequately everywhere with the costly modern appliances. India would insist on sanitation as among the first duties of Government, would encourage all that is good in the old systems, and utilise what is good in western methods.

6. British rule is extremely costly ; it employs Europeans in the highest posts at the highest salaries, and introduces them everywhere as “experts”—experts ignorant of the conditions in which they are working : it keeps special preserves wholly for Europeans ; others into which Indians may enter at the heavy cost of going to England to obtain “English degrees” ; it pensions its servants, so that the English ones live on Indian money when they retire to England, making a huge annual drain ; it encourages exploitation of the country by English companies and English capital, making another drain ; it makes India pay for an Indian army, maintained to keep India in subjection ; it makes India pay for a costly English establishment, the central autocracy, irresponsible to our Parliament. India would do away with all this ; would open everything to Indians—as indeed the Proclamation of 1858 promised—and require no foreign degrees as credentials ; would abolish the India Office ; would acknowledge, outside India, the authority only of the Crown and the Imperial Parliament, in which she enjoyed adequate representation. She would have her own Army and Navy, for protection and Imperial needs, not to hold her people down.

7. British rule has substituted coercion for improvements in Government, like any other autocracy. India would sweep all this coercive legislation away ; she would not be afraid of her people possessing arms ; she would not be afraid of the

criticism of free speech and a free Press ; she would reform abuses instead of strangling the expression of the discontent which abuses produce ; she would emulate British rule in Britain, not British rule in India.

In a phrase :

India is enthralled, and she is determined to be free.

### RELIGION AND NATIONALITY\*

Those who have studied the history of the political movement of Shivaji know that a religious movement in Maharashtra preceded it, and led to the great wave of Hindu power which bid fair for a while to re-establish a mighty Hindu Empire on the wreck of the Mughal dominion. In truth, any movement to be strong in India must rest on a religious basis, and so interwoven with religion is the very fibre of the Indian heart, that it only throbs with full response when the religious note has been struck which calls out its sympathetic vibration. And it must be remembered that with Hinduism are bound up a literature—which is the admiration of the world for its sublime spirituality, its intense devotion, and its depth of intellectual insight—a culture which has endured for unknown millennia, and a civilisation so magnificent that the world has not yet seen its equal.

We shall see that it is the assertion of this greatness which most angers the narrow-minded among the opponents of Indian Nationality. They could forgive the imitation of the West ; they cannot tolerate the self-assertion of the East. And it is this self-assertion which has been brought about by the religious revival. The hostile eyes of Christian missionaries, fixed on the evils found in every society, have regarded India as "heathen," and therefore as contemptible, as a land, as Bishop Heber sang of Ceylon :

Where only man is vile.

They point to the abolition of widow-self-immolation and the raising of the age of consent to twelve years as triumphs

\*From Annie Besant : *India—A Nation*, Chapter I.

of Christian legislation, as though the drunkenness of Glasgow should be considered as a proof of the wickedness of their own faith, as though these reforms had not been pressed on the Government by Hindu reformers, and as though the further raising of the age of consent had not been lately urged by Hindus in the Viceroy's Council, and rejected by the Supreme Christian Government.

The revival in Hinduism was the salient characteristic of the nineteenth century in India, and it gave birth to the National Movement. Later in time came the Zoroastrian revival. The Mussalman has not been so marked, for Islam had not weakened to the same extent. It is gradually entering the National Movement. The chief reviving agencies have been, in order of time : the Brahmo Samaja and its branches ; the Arya Samaja ; the Theosophical Society ; the Ramakrishna Mission.

### *The Brahmo Samaja*

Of this society—Samaja means Society—Raja Rama Mohan Rai was the founder, that extraordinary spirit of fire and steel, whose heroic courage faced alone the dread and then unbroken force of Hindu orthodoxy, and planted the seed of freedom, the seed destined to grow into a spreading tree, the "leaves of which" are "for the healing of the" Nation. He was born in Bengal in 1774, "of an ancient and honourable Brahmana family," and his father gave him a first-rate education ; "he learnt Persian at home, Arabic at Patna"—a boy of twelve—"where he studied Euclid, Aristotle, and *Al Quran*), and Samskrt in Benares" (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, *sub voce*). Attracted by Buddhism, he went to Tibet at the age of fifteen, spending some years in travel, but, revolting against the use of images in worship, and otherwise heretical, he aroused so much hostility that he was obliged to fly from home. After his father's death (1803) he returned to Bengal, and was for some ten years in the service of the East India Company ; but his outspokenness and his publication of a book against superstition and priestcraft made it necessary for him in 1814 again to seek safety, this time in the freer atmos-

phere of Calcutta, and leaving the service of the Company, he devoted himself to his life's work.

In Calcutta, in 1814, he drew round him a few men of liberal ideas, who met weekly for study of the Hindu scriptures, and he published some of the Upanishads in Bengali, Hindi, and English, with comments, and the Vedanta Sutras in the first two languages. He strove to bring his countrymen back to the purity of ancient Hinduism, and to this end he directed all his strength. Most of all he laboured for education, and brought about the founding of a Hindu College in 1819, linking together the religious and educational reforms destined to save India, and preparing the way for the introduction of English education, even helping Dr. Alexander Duff, the missionary, to open an English school in 1830. As he wrote against Christian orthodoxy as well as Hindu, he was bitterly attacked by the missionaries of Serampur, especially as he converted one of them from Trinitarianism to Theism, instead of being converted. To his religious and educational reforms his strong and logical mind added social and political—the first Indian to grasp the interdependence between the four lines of Indian progress; and the great agitation he created and led against Sati—the self-immolation of the widow with the husband's corpse—led to Lord William Bentinck's Regulation in 1829, abolishing it in the territories controlled by Fort William.

On August 20, 1828, the Brahma Sabha was formed, the "Sabha" being soon changed into the equivalent "Samaja," and on January 23, 1830, the first temple of the Brahma Samaja was opened. The trust deed secured it as a building wherein all were welcome to adore "the Eternal, Unsearchable, and Immutable Being who is the Author and Preserver of the Universe"—a quite Upanishadic description; no name was to be given, no image made, no living creature to be derived of life as sacrifice; but nothing sacred to others was to be reviled or treated with contempt, and only such teaching was to be given as promoted virtue, and strengthened "the bonds of union between men of all religions and creeds". In those words was struck the note characteristic also of the Theosophical Society

and the Ramakrishna Mission. Splendidly before his time was this heroic man. A group of learned Brahmanas gathered round him, and among his few early supporters was Raja Dwarkanath Tagore—a name to become famous in the annals of the Bra'hmo Samaja.

In 1830 Rama Mohan Rai went to England on a mission from the Emperor of Delhi, who created him a Raja, and he reached England in 1831, and gave "much valuable evidence before the Board of Control on the condition of India". (*Ency. Brit.*). It is a pathetic fact that this great servant of India died far from the Motherland, in Bristol, in 1833, and a monument is erected there to him.

The movement he had founded lived on in India, and his friend's son, Debendranath Tagore, joined it in 1842, and became its teacher and inspirer, leading it firmly along the lines of pure Hinduism. Keshab Chandra Sen joined the Samaja in 1857, and his eagerness and eloquence introduced many changes, and ultimately led to the branching of the Samaja in 1865; he became strongly tinctured with Christianity, so that the latter Brahmoism has been called Christianity without "Christ," and he came into close relation with the Theistic party in England and America, being influenced by the writings of Theodore Parker, James Martineau, and Frances Power Cobbe. The members who remained true to the Hindu ideal, under Debendranath Tagore, were termed the Adi (original) Bra'hmo-Samaja, while in 1866 Keshab Chandra Sen formed a new Bra'hmo Samaja, having already in 1864 established the Veda Samaja in Madras. The Prarthana Samaja in Bombay, founded in 1867, was largely due to the inspiration of his visit in 1864, and his strengthening visit in 1868.

Another split occurred in 1881, those remaining with Keshab Chandra being known as the Church of the New Dispensation, influenced to some extent, perhaps, in his central idea that all religions were true, by Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, whom he visited much from 1875 onwards.

The allied movement, the Prarthana Samaja in Bombay, with its great members, Mr. Justice Ranade, Sir R.G.

Bhandarkar, and Sir Narayana Chandavarkar, has contributed enormously to the shaping of Indian Nationality by its work of educational, political, and social reform, and it gradually and inevitably became more thoroughly Hindu in spirit, as Nationality grew more and more self-conscious. The Adi Brahma Samaja has given to India the two famous Tagores, Rabindranath and Abanindranath, the National Poet and Painter ; both added currents to the stream of Nationality. The remaining Brahma Samajas are a good deal Christianised and therefore Anglicised, playing a smaller part in the National life. Sir Valentine Chirol says of them. "The Brahma Samaja is still a great influence for good, but it appears to be gradually losing vitality, and though its literary output is still considerable, its membership is shrinking. The Prarthana Samaja is moribund."<sup>1</sup>

Although Christians and Anglo-Indians thus patronise the Brahma Samaja, we, who love India, must never forget that to the movement as a whole, India, the Nation, owes much, for it broke and ploughed up the ground of rigid orthodoxy, it faced the greatest difficulties, and, as pioneer, it opened a way for others, the easier to tread because of the devotion and self-sacrifice of the early workers.

### *The Arya Samaja*<sup>2</sup>

The second great movement was at once more conservative and more aggressive than the Brahma Samaja, and in much reminds the historical student of the Puritan movement in Great Britain. It has the strength, virility and devotion of its prototype, and much of its iconoclasticism and aggressiveness. Its influence on the life of Northern India has been and is great, and it has been a potent source of independence of mind and character, of a broad and liberal interpretation of Hinduism, of a bold assertion of the value of Hindu culture and self-sufficiency, and thereby has contributed greatly to the

1. Sir Valentine Chirol : *Indian Unrest*, p. 27.

2. This section is drawn from *The Arya Samaja*, by Lajpat Rai, its greatest living member.

building of Indian Nationality. Like Rama Mohan Rai, it has occupied the whole field of reform, religious, educational, social, political.

The founder of the Arya Samaja, Mulshankara, later Dayananda Sarasvati, was a Brahmana of pure descent, his father rigidly orthodox, his mother, says Lala Lajpat Rai, "a typical Indian lady". He was born at Tankara, in Morvi, a feudatory State in Kathiawar, in 1824.

Brought up in his father's orthodoxy, the first doubt as to the use of images in worship entered his mind at fourteen, while engaged in the worship of Mahadeva on the Shivaratri night—a fast held in honour of Mahadeva; and on submitting his doubt to his father and being subjected to a violent scolding instead of a rational explanation, the lad, as obstinate as his father, quietly held his tongue, and went on with his studies, ignoring parental authority. When, in 1845, his father tried to force him into marriage, he fled from home, and became definitely a Brahmachari—celibate student—and after wandering about for some three years, he took Sannyasa from a regularly initiated Sannyasin of the Sarasvati Order, and was given the name Dayananda, thus becoming Dayanada Sarasvati.<sup>3</sup>

He continued to work with the Brahma Samaja and its branches, and in Bombay, in April, 1875, he founded the Arya Samaja. Two years, later, in 1877, he founded another group in Lahore, and that became the centre of his work. He invited to India Mme H.P. Blavatsky and Colonel H.S. Olcott, the founders of the Theosophical Society, and the two movements were for a time allied, but the heads of both were too independent for close partnership in 1880 the Presidents of the two Societies met, and "we agreed that neither should be responsible for the views of the other; the two Societies to be allies, yet independent"<sup>4</sup> Mme. Blavatsky wrote of the

3. Sannyasa is complete renunciation of the world, entailing poverty and celibacy. The Sannyasin wanders about teaching, living on charity. The mendicant preaching friar is the nearest western analogue.

4. Colonel H.S. Olcott: *Old Diary Leaves*, ii, p. 224.

great Hindu with intense admiration, and Colonel Olcott paid him, in *The Theosophist*, perhaps the finest tribute of all that were paid on his passing away on October 30, 1883, recognising in him the noblest of patriots, as well as the greatest of orators, in whom "there was a total absence of any degrading sycophancy and toadyism towards foreigners," and praising his "energetic patriotism" and the "Nationalising influence exerted upon his followers". In truth, it was Dayananda Sarasvati who first proclaimed : "India for the Indians."

The main tenets laid down by Dayananda Sarasvati were : That caste and qualities must go together, and that a man who shows the characteristics of a caste has a right to belong to that caste. That all Hindus have the duty of studying the Vedas, and every human being has the right to do so, thus placing Hinduism among the world-religions and opening its gate to all ; also that the Vedas must be read by the old canons of interpretation and not in the light of later commentaries and beliefs. He further taught that there is a Primeval Eternal Religion ; that there is one Spirit, Brahman, permeating the whole Universe ; that the Vedas are His Word—Vedas including only the Samhita, the Mantras ; that there are three Eternal Things, God, Soul, Matter ; that activity is superior to resignation, and creates destiny. He worked out a full system of religion and philosophy on the Vaidic basis. The Ten Principles of the Arya Samaja include the above ideas on God and the Vedas, and basic moral duties ; they were formulated in Lahore in 1877, and are the conditions of admission to the Society.

In 1892 the Arya Samaja split into two, one section maintaining that Dayananda's opinions were binding on the Society, and that every member must therefore be a vegetarian ; the other, that the members were only bound by the Ten Principles, and were free, on everything else, to follow their private judgment. But the division cannot be said to have weakened it, and its strong propaganda goes on as before.

In education, carrying out the eighth of its Ten Principles, "to diffuse knowledge and dispel ignorance," it carries on an



immense propaganda, which will be noticed in the chapter on Education. Suffice it here to say that it sends out annually into public life a steady stream of sturdy Hindus, enlightened and liberal, and devoted to the Motherland. Regarding the sexes as equal, it educates girls as well as boys, and has proved a potent factor in the National movement for raising Indian Womanhood.

Socially it has played a great part in the education of the depressed classes, with its principle of human brotherhood, and its recognition of the fact that hereditary castes did not exist in Vedic times; it admits the "untouchables" into the Samaja on an equal footing with all others. It stands for monogamy, approves 25 as the suitable marriage age for men and 16 for girls, and prefers the avoidance of second marriages both for men and women.

Politically, the Arya Samaja is not, as a body, engaged in politics, but its influence directly fosters pride in the Motherland, patriotism, self-dependence, and independence. Fundamentally Hindu, it stands for Hindu civilisation and Hindu culture, enriching them from everything that is good in the West, but refusing to be dominated by foreign ideals. It builds up a manly and self-reliant character, and if the virile qualities which are regarded as admirable in every other civilised Nation are held to be seditious and treasonable in the Indian, then, and then alone, are justifiable the attacks made on it by the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy, and by the enemies of educated India, such as Sir Valentine Chirol. He says: "The Arya Samaja, which is spreading all over the Punjab and in the United Provinces, represents in one of its aspects a revolt against Hindu orthodoxy, but in another it represents equally a revolt against western ideals, for in the teachings of its founder, Dayananda, it has found an aggressive gospel which bases the claims of Aryan, i.e., Hindu, supremacy on the Vedas, as the one ultimate source of human and Divine wisdom."<sup>8</sup>

5. Valentine Chirol, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

It is this resentment against Indians' during claim to follow their own immemorial lines of thought, which makes the British yoke so heavy; they claim to deprive a "subject Nation" even of its own ideals, and make it treason to cling to them. Such an attempt to crush out National individuality has never been made before in India's long history. The Arya Samaja is thus one of the potent forces working for Indian Nationality, not anti-British but pro-Indian. A free and Self-Governing Nation within the Empire is the inevitable aim of all patriotic Indians, and the indirect, not direct, influence of the Arya Samaja works necessarily for the teaching of this goal.

Its religious work is definitely and aggressively anti-Christian, and, as Lala Lajpat Rai points out, "It is not unnatural, then, that the Arya Samaja should meet with the most merciless criticism and the bitterest opposition from the Christian missionaries."<sup>6</sup> Itself violent in its attacks, and aggressive in its defence of Hinduism, carrying its counter-attacks into the enemy's camp, it is not surprising that the Christian missionaries, who, before its advent, were accustomed to deference as white people, and to the gentle tolerance of the Hindu in religious matters, should be startled into angry antagonism against the new portent of a vehement and aggressive Hinduism.

The missionaries, identifying the admission of their own superiority with loyalty to the British Crown, set themselves to denounce as disloyal the whole work of the Arya Samaja, and indoctrinated the authorities with their own suspicions. Hence much trouble and persecution for the Society during the troublous period from 1967 onwards. The splendid work of the Arya Samaja in late famines and floods has done much to dispel prejudice, and the Society, for the most part, is now left in peace.

#### *The Theosophical Society*

This third of the great movements for the revival of religion in India, was a Society founded in New York, on November

6. Lala Lajpat Rai, *op. cit.*, pp. 262-63.

17, 1875, by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, a Russian lady of noble birth, and Henry Steele Olcott, a colonel in the American army, who had filled high and responsible office with great distinction in the American Military Department during the Civil War. In 1877, an American gentleman who had lately been in India called on the two Founders, and recognised the portrait of a Hindu hanging on the wall as that of a gentleman he had met in Bombay. Colonel Olcott, thus obtaining his address, wrote to this gentleman about the Society, and heard in answer of "a great Hindu Pandit and Reformer, who had begun a powerful movement for the resuscitation of pure Vaidic religion". Correspondence followed, and in May, 1878, the T.S. Council proposed to rename the Society "The Theosophical Society of the Arya Samaja". Further correspondence, however, showed that this would narrow the T.S. too much, as the Arya Samaja was Hindu and the T.S. international, so in September an intermediate group was formed under the above name, as a "link-Society". On Swami Dayananda Sarasvati's invitation, the two colleagues left for India, and landed in Bombay on February 16, 1879.<sup>7</sup> Colonel Olcott's first lecture was given on March 23 in the Framji Cowasji Hall, Bombay, on "The Theosophical Society and its Aims," and writing on it he says: "It was a stirring discourse on the majesty and sufficiency of Eastern Scriptures, and an appeal to the sentiment of patriotic loyalty to the memory of their forefathers to stand by their old religions, giving up nothing until after its worthlessness had been proved by impartial study." Colonel Olcott remarked, writing on this:

'It should be noted that the view taken then was that the redemption of any Nation must come through its own self-evolved leaders, not from without, and that if the downfall of India was to be arrested, the inspired agent must be sought within her boundaries, not in foreign lands, not among aliens. For ourselves, we utterly disclaimed all pretence of leadership or qualifications for the same. I believe, after twenty years'

7. *Old Diary Leaves*, by Colonel H.S. Olcott. The early days in India are taken from this.

Indian experience, that this is the sound view, and the only tenable one. I also believe, as I then stated, that this necessary spiritual Teacher exists, and in the fullness of time will appear. For, truly, the signs of his coming multiply daily, and who shall say that our Society, Mrs. Besant, Vivekananda, Dharmapala, and others, are not the *avant couriers* of the blessed day when spiritual yearnings shall again fill the Eastern heart, and materialistic grovelling be things of the black past ?”<sup>8</sup>

The note struck in that discourse was the keynote of the Society’s work in India. Colonel Olcott lectured to the Zoroastrians, and turned the younger generation from formalism or materialism to a recognition of the living spirituality latent in their religion. He lectured through the length and breadth of India, arousing Hindus to a sense of their National degradation, urging them to separate the splendid Hinduism of the past from the excrescences that were draining away its life, and he founded many boys’ societies for the study of the Hindu religion. He went to Ceylon, and worked for Buddhism, with such effect that to-day there are three colleges and 225 schools in which Buddhism is taught, managed there by Theosophical Societies. Everywhere pride of country arose in the track of his footsteps. The very fact of a Westerner, from progressive America, doing homage to the greatness of the East, touched the heart of India ; but how hopeless the task seemed to be in 1879 may be judged by the comment of the India-loving *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of Calcutta on his first lecture in Bombay :

“What can the doctor do when the patient is already still and cold ? India is dead to all sense of honour and glory. India is an inert mass which no power of late has been able to move ...India has no heart, and those of her children who have yet any portion of it left, have been deadened by blank despair. Talk of regenerating India to the Indians ! You might as well talk to the sands of the sea.”

8. Col. Olcott, *op. cit.*, p-39.

The India of 1915, throbbing with vigorous life, shouts out her joyful denial of the prophecy of 1879.

The Society fixed its Headquarters in Madras, Colonel Olcott buying the Adyar property at the beginning of June, 1882, and moving thither in December of the same year. The work went steadily on, the opposition of the missionaries to it steadily increasing, until it culminated in their infamous plot with the steward and the housekeeper at Adyar, in 1884, against Madame Blavatsky, as it culminated against the Arya Samaja in the political prosecutions of 1907 onwards. In 1885, we may note a lecture to students by Colonel Olcott in Pachaiyappa's Hall, Madras, where, as ever, he urged the danger of their "irreligious education by Government and their anti-Nationalistic education by missionaries, whose policy it was to destroy their reverence for their National religion". Ever the note is struck that religion must inspire Nationality. "This," he writes (*iii*, 323), "has been the keynote of all our teaching in Asia from the very commencement, and the creation of the Central Hindu College at Benares by Mrs. Besant has been made possible thereby."

In 1893, Mrs. Annie Besant came to India, and the work thenceforth went on with increased rapidity; she devoted herself first entirely to the revival of religion, knowing that that was necessary to the sense of Nationality in India, and refusing to give any opinion on subjects outside religion, until she had studied the condition of the country and was fitted to form sound opinions on the results of the changes proposed. Hindu at heart, she threw herself into the defence of Hinduism, and justified both from modern and ancient science many of the Hindu practices which had been discarded and assailed by the Arya Samaja, thus gradually leading large numbers of the more open-minded of the orthodox into the National movement. Sir Valentine Chirol complains :

"The advent of the Theosophists, heralded by Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, gave a fresh impetus to the

9. Chirol, *op cit.*, pp. 28-29.

revival, and certainly no Hindu has done so much to organise and consolidate the movement as Mrs. Annie Besant, who, in her Central Hindu College at Benares, and her Theosophical Institution at Adyar, near Madras, has openly proclaimed her faith in the superiority of the whole Hindu system to the vaunted civilisation of the West. Is it surprising that Hindus should turn their backs upon our civilisation, when a European of highly trained intellectual power, and with an extraordinary gift of eloquence, comes and tells them that it is they who possess, and have from all times possessed, the key to supreme wisdom ; that their gods, their philosophy, their morality, are on a higher plane of thought than the West has ever reached ?”

But before Mrs. Besant came, the vivifying process had gone far, and, as we shall see in the chapter on Nationality, a committee had been formed after the Annual Theosophical Convention of 1884 at Madras, composed of delegates and others, forming the organising Committee of the National Congress. The members of the Society joined the Congress, when formed, in large numbers, the National self-respect, aroused by their revived pride in Hinduism, leading to the National Ideal of Self-Government.

The Central Hindu College and other schools, and Colonel Olcott's Panchama (untouchables) Free Schools at Madras, come under Education ; suffice it to say here, that the educational was, as with the Arya Samaja, a necessary step in the great work of Nation-building carried on under the inspiration of the Theosophical Society. But also, as with the similar work of the Arya Samaja, the work was not corporate, though inevitably growing out of the Theosophical ideal of Brotherhood, “without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour,” applied to Indian conditions. Colonel Olcott wrote, speaking of various social reforms :

“As a Society we abstain from meddling with them, though as individuals we are perfectly free to plunge into the thick of either of the fights that they occasion...Mrs. Besant's Central Hindu College at Benares, my three Buddhist Colleges, and

two hundred schools in Ceylon, and my Pariah Free Schools at Madras, are all individual, not Society activities."<sup>10</sup>

The next step, equally inevitably on applying the ideal to life, was taken when the Benares School laid down the policy of excluding married boys, thus entering the field of Social Reform, and Mrs. Besant's most earnest followers, early in the twentieth century, signed a pledge to delay the marriage of their daughters, and to work for the reception back into caste of England-returned students; after three years of strenuous work they succeeded in inducing the southern India Jagat Guru to receive back into caste an England-returned Brahmana. Leagues were formed for Social Service, for the Education of Girls, for Foreign Travel, and other reforming measures.

Finally, Mrs. Besant, in 1913, threw the whole of her influence in India, built up by her twenty years of religious, educational, and gradual social reform, into the National Movement, bringing with her the large party which had gradually grown up round her. Essentially religious in spirit, they bring with them devotion to Hindu ideals, readiness for sacrifice, a burning passion of patriotism, and of devotion to the Motherland.

#### *The Ramakrishna Mission*

This mission owes its inspiration to the famous disciple of Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the Svami Vivekananda, who was to his Guru what S. Paul was to Christ, the apostle of his Teacher's ideas and the organiser of them for effective action in the world. Like Rama Mohan Rai and Dayananda Sarasvati, the inspirer of this latest powerful vivifier of religion was a Brahmana. Gadadhar Chatterji was born in 1834, in Kamapukur, a Bengali village, and was at first educated by his elder brother, a professor in Calcutta; but Svami Vivekananda tells us that, desiring only spiritual knowledge, the boy became a temple priest—at Dakshineshvara close by—but, consumed

10. Col. Olcott, *op. cit.*, iii, pp. 70-71.

with a passion of longing for the Divine vision, he left the temple and lived in a little wood near. Thither came a woman ascetic, who taught him for some years and helped him in Yoga, and later a Sannyasin came from whom he took Sannyasa, and the name of Ramakrishna. Then, he lived according to different religions, and realised their unity; he performed the lowliest offices—he, a Brahmana, cleaning the house of a Pariah—and thus for forty years he trained himself, till he gained first-hand knowledge of the inner truths, and was ready to teach. Says Swami Vivekananda: “To proclaim and make clear the fundamental unity underlying all religions was the mission of my Master . . . . He left every religion undisturbed because he had realised that, in reality, they are all part and parcel of the one External Religion”.<sup>11</sup>

Round the Saint gathered a group of earnest men, and to him came the simple and the learned, the believer and the sceptic. To him came Keshab Chandra Sen and P.C. Mozumdar; to him many a seeker after God, and of all, the favourite disciple was one Narendranath Datta, a graduate of Calcutta University, who went to him in 1882. When the Saint died in 1886, some of his disciples vowed to spread his teachings, and became Sannyasins. Narendranath taking the name of Vivekananda. He retired to the Himalayas for some six years, emerging in 1892, when he visited Madras. Sir S. Subramania Iyer, a devoted Theosophist, struck by the promise of usefulness in the then unknown young man, gave him welcome, and, with some friends, collected funds to send him to represent Hinduism in the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, in 1893.

His striking oratory, his presentation of the truths of Hinduism, took the great audiences by storm, and when the Parliament was over, he lectured on Hinduism in many places, founded several Vedanta Societies, and gained many disciples, some of whom followed him to England in 1895. He returned to America in the winter of that year, coming back to England in April, 1896, and he then lectured and held classes in London,

11. *My Master*, Complete Works of Swami Vivekanand, iv, p. 840.



and won that admirable interpreter of Hindu thought and life, Margaret Noble, or Sister Nivedita, although she did not join him in India until January, 1898. Their common love for India drew together Sister Nivedita and Mrs. Annie Besant, and the latter, at Svami Vivekananda's request, presided at the Sister's first lecture at Almora, in the Himalayas.

Svami Vivekananda travelled on the continent of Europe in the summer of 1896, returned to India at the end of the year, reached his Motherland early in 1897, and was welcomed with intense enthusiasm. His passionate eloquence, his contempt for western civilisation, his reproaches to all who imitated the West instead of living the East ; who, having the privilege of Indian birth, reproduced the customs of another Nation—all these things roused the strongest feeling of Nationality. He lashed the weakness of the modern Indian while holding high the ideals of Hinduism ; he raised Hindu civilisation higher than the Western, declaring that the one embodied spirituality, the other materialism. India was the spiritual teacher of the world. Sister Nivedita writes of "his love of his country and his resentment of her suffering. Throughout those years in which I saw him almost daily the thought of India was to him like the air he breathed."<sup>12</sup>

He paid another visit to Europe and America in 1898, his health having broken down, returning in 1900 ; too ill to lecture, he devoted all his remaining strength to organising his followers for self-sacrificing work and died—only forty years old—in 1902. But he had nobly accomplished his work, and wherever his followers gather in their Sevashramas—Homes of Service—they set a high example of beneficent activity, and are ever ready to nurse the sick, care for the suffering, uplift the miserable.

### *The Relation of the Movement*

It is instructive to note that these four religious movements are closely connected, and mark successive developments of the National self-consciousness.

12. *The Master as I saw Him*, by Sister Nivedita, 1910.

The Brahmo Samaja marked the awakening of the Indian Nation from the state of coma produced by the East India Company and in that first awakening it was natural that, confused and bewildered, finding herself helpless in the grip of a new and foreign civilisation, and with the masses of her people superstitious and ignorant, cut up into endless subdivisions and without sense of unity, she should be dazzled by the light of a strong and imperious rule, and accept dumbly the assertion that the West was the model to be copied. Hence the Brahmo Samaja; but in its development under Keshab Chandra Sen it lost its value as a reforming and uplifting agency, and only in the Adi Brahmo and the Prarthana Samajas was preserved the precious seed of Indian Nationality.

It was this tendency of the Brahmo Samaja towards Christianity and its general westernising influence which made the arising of the Arya Samaja a necessity for the saving of Eastern ideals. The country was in danger of their total supplanting by western; the anglicising process had gone far enough in establishing English education, by which the ideals of English liberty were placed before each generation in its youth; the spread of the English language had ensured the passage of all valuable western thought to India; it was time that the distinctively Hindu note should be struck, and that an aggressive hard-hitting movement should arise to strike down Hindu superstition, and strike also for Hindu ideals. The Arya Samaja arose. The missionaries had naturally seen in the later Brahmo Samaja step towards the Christianising of India—the hopeless task on the accomplishment of which their hearts are set. To their horror they found a new movement had arisen among the most virile of Indian peoples in the North, the Arya Samaja. Their hatred of this hardhitting foe, meeting violence with violence, western in its vigorous fighting, if in nothing else, has therefore all the bitterness of disappointed hopes.

The Arya Samaja saved the essentials of Hinduism, but, by throwing away much that was valuable, it frightened the orthodox majority, and by its propagandist character it alienat-

ed the Mussalman population. It was too exclusive, too aggressive—all must accept its special form. And it was too arid. There seemed no room for the devotee—a constant and powerful element in Indian life. Thus while we recognise the Arya Samaja and its patriotic vigour as one of the strongest currents in the stream of Indian Nationality, we see also the need of something more. The West must come as a helper, not as a master, must recognise the greatness of the East, must show respect and not arrogance, and thus prepare the way for India's high place in the world—not only in the East—in the future ; must enter into her life, place their western powers of organisation at her service in her struggle for liberty, and catch on their willing shoulders some of the blows aimed at her in the fight.

Hence the Theosophical Society was called to add its quota, and with its recognition of the unity of religions, its service to each in its own sphere, its arousing of the Zoroastrian, the Buddhist, and, to a small extent, of the Islamic, it brought other religions into the National movement and softened the acerbities of all. It justified those elements in Hinduism which the Arya Samaja, in its first necessary iconoclasm, had shut out, and so liberalised those of the orthodox not too fossilised to be affected through its influence. Orthodox Hinduism is becoming more liberal, and as the Arya Samaja has moderated its aggressiveness towards it, the twin are drawing together to the advantage of both. In social life, Theosophists have rendered and are rendering service by their attitude of perfect friendliness and ignoring of race distinctions. In education their service has been invaluable. In politics they have been strenuous helpers.

The work of the Ramakrishna Mission has completed the religious impulse, by adding the sweet reasonableness and tolerance of pure and spiritual Hinduism as voiced by its Guru. The occasional expression not only of pride in India but of contempt of the West in Svami Vivekananda, added a probably necessary touch of the lash—almost the lash of hatred.

Thus has Religion inspired Nationality, and Sir Valentine Chirol, cruel and unjust as he was, had true and acute insight when he saw in the revival of Hinduism the genesis of Nationality.

### THE ECONOMIC POSITION\*

In this as everywhere, this booklet is only a signpost. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji's monumental work, *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*, is the book on which many subsequent treatises have been founded. The accuracy of his figures is undoubted, but they are, of course, old, and therefore need to be supplemented.

The main economic grievances may best be first stated boldly, and then a few details only can be given in our brief space.

1. The great drain on India is of money raised as revenue from her people, and sent out of the country, to maintain the India Office, to pay pensions to English officials, to pay interest on English capital expended on railways largely controlled from London. This drain reduces India to perpetual poverty, recurring famines, and the huge indebtedness of her agricultural population, now amounting to 500 crores (5,000 millions) of rupees (D.E. Wacha). To this may be added the cost of famine relief, rendered necessary by the recurring famines and the cost of foreign wars, undertaken for imperial purposes.

2. The crushing and inelastic taxation on the cultivators of the soil, the direct cause of famines, and of the indebtedness just mentioned.

3. The great cost of the British Government, with its highly paid British officials, its continual employment of European experts at high salaries, the multiplication of costly offices, the unknown amount of their occupants' savings transmitted to Great Britain, increasing "the drain," the

\*From Annie Besant : *India—A Nation*, Chapter II.

encouragement given to the employment of Europeans instead of Indians in all important posts outside the Government, and the low salaries paid to Indian officials, so that their spending capacity is small.

4. The unfair treatment of indigenous industries, as the cotton, in which a countervailing tax is placed on cloth produced in the Indian cotton mills, to balance the customs duty levied on foreign imported piece-goods, and the excise levied on Indian salt to counterbalance the customs duty on foreign salt. The refusal to help infant industries to establish themselves, in place of the many industries which have decayed under British rule, and which were the sources of Indian wealth, economic principles based on western conditions being applied without regard to their unsuitability here. The immense exports of raw materials, which should be chiefly worked up here, and the return of them as manufactured goods.

5. The comparative neglect of works useful to India, such as irrigation, education, and sanitation, on the ground of want of funds wasted in 1 and 3.

The books of Dadabhai Naoroji, Romesh Ch. Dutt, Hyndman, and above all, Digby, should be carefully read. Among more recent books those of J.S. Sarkar, S.K. Sarma, M. de P. Webb, and P. Bannerji may be consulted. *The Indian Year-Book*, though written with a strong Government bias, is useful for statistics, and it and the Census of 1911 have been used for the latest figures.

### 1. *The Drain*

The word "drain" is sometimes objected to, as connoting that the burden of the white man on India tends to exhaust her resources. That is exactly what it is intended to connote. The other word, borrowed from Lord Salisbury, is "bleeding," and that is still more unpleasant. The noble lord, when Secretary of State for India, wrote in a Minute (26-4-1875; C. 3086-1 [1884, p. 144]) : "The injury is exaggerated in the case of India, where so much of the revenue is exported without a direct equivalent. As India must be bled, the lancet

should be directed to the parts where the blood is congested or at least sufficient, not to those which are already feeble for the want of it," already "bled white," like the calf, in fact.

Since then we have had the famines of 1877, '96 and '99. Other writers corroborate Lord Salisbury's views. Mr. W.T. Thornton, in *The Westminster Review*, in 1880, remarked: "Railways are good, irrigation is good, but neither one nor the other good enough to compensate for opening and continually widening a drain *which has tapped India's very heart blood* (italics Mr. Thornton's), and has dried up the mainsprings of her industrial energy" (Digby, p. 205). The Rev. Mr. Sutherland, in the *New England Magazine*, Boston, September, 1900, writing on the causes of Indian famines, says they are not due to failure of rains, nor to over-population, but to "the extreme, the abject, the awful poverty of the Indian people," and that this is due to the enormous foreign tribute, the cost of "the most expensive Government in the world," the army, the foreign wars, which he puts at £100,000,000 sterling, of which England contributed to one war £5,000,000, and to another £500,000. (See *Famines in India*, Romesh Dutt, p. 294) Once more the "bleeding" appears: "It is the stronger Nation sucking the blood of the weaker" (Digby, pp. 162-170). Mr. Hyndman speaks of it as "an open artery, which is draining away the life-blood of our great dependency" (*Bankruptcy of India*, p. 132). "Even as we look on, India is becoming feebler and feebler. The very life-blood of the great multitude under our rule is slowly, yet ever faster, ebbing away" (p. 152). But of what avail to multiply quotations? As Mr. Hyndman says, the voters of Great Britain are responsible. But do they care? I believe they would care did they know, and that is why this book is written.

When the taxes paid by a country are expended in that country they are comparatively easily borne; they pay large numbers of the raisers of food, of the producers of clothing, of manufactured articles of every kind, and by a country wealthy from its agriculture, its manufactures, its trade, its commerce, they may be even heavy without being ruinous;

we shall deal with this in our next section. But in the case of India all goes away from her—a real “drain”.

Sir George Wingate (in *A Few Words on our Financial Relations with India*, quoted by Romesh Ch. Dutt, pp. 101 102) points out :

“Taxes spent in the country from which they are raised are totally different in their effect from taxes raised in one country and spent in another...(these are) an absolute loss and extinction of the whole amount withdrawn drawn from the taxed country...Such is the nature of the tribute we have so long exacted from India...From this explanation some conception may be formed of the cruel, crushing effect of the tribute upon India.”

Mr. Romesh Ch. Dutt himself urges the same contention ; having compared the elastic collections of the Mussalman rulers with the rigid collections of the British, he says :

“It is forgotten that the whole of the Mughal revenues derived from the land was spent in the country, fructifying agriculture and the industries, and flowing back to the people in one shape or another. Spent on the army, it maintained and fed the people ; spent on the construction of great edifices, or in articles of luxury, it encouraged arts and industries ; spent in the construction of roads and irrigation canals, it directly benefited agriculture. It is obvious that the people of a country can bear the incidence of heavy taxation better if the proceeds of the tax flow back to the people themselves, than if a large portion of it is sent out of the country, adding to the capital and helping the trade and industries of a distant land” (pp. 100, 101).

Moreover taxes arouse less discontent, if they are levied by a home, than by a foreign Government. Resentment arises against those who tax when they are not of the same blood as the taxpayers, and it must be remembered that, even after the Minto-Morley reforms, the members of the enlarged Legislative Councils had no effective control over the Budget. There is a Budget debate, but no control. They are told what the Govern-

ment is going to do ; they are not consulted as to the incidence and allotment of taxes. Even after the 1919 Reform Act, the larger part of the expenditure is withdrawn, in the Central Legislature, from its control, and of three items in the part left to it, rejected by the Assembly two were restored by the Governor-General and one certified in 1923.

On the condition up to 1921, Mr, Dadabhai Naoroji quotes Sir William Hunter as saying :

“I cannot believe that a people numbering one sixth of the whole inhabitants of the globe, and whose aspirations have been nourished from their earliest youth on the strong food of English liberty, can be permanently denied a voice in the government of their country. I do not believe that races.. into whom we have instilled the maxim of ‘no taxation without representation’ as a fundamental right of a people, can be permanently excluded from a share in the management of their finances” (App. X).

The system of Provincial Settlements makes things worse because less frankly autocratic. There is a Finance Committee, but it may not discuss anything which the Provincial Government is discussing with the Supreme. Any item can thus be withdrawn, and when the Supreme has decided, there is no more to be said.

Let us consider the amount of the drain. In 1898-99, the Secretary of State for India received from India £16,303, 197 (Rs. 244, 547,955). He spent it in Interest on Debt, etc., Railways, Army, Pensions, Civil Charges, etc. Mr. Sutherland estimates that from twenty-five to thirty millions a year go to England in other ways, including the balance of trade against her. Sir George Campbell, at one time Lieut.-Governor of the United Provinces, puts the public remittances at £16,000,000 and the private remittances and the balance of trade at £16,900,000. Of course the drain varies from year to year ; in 1870-74 the public remittances were £17,500,000. The fall in the rate of exchange, again, terribly increased the Indian tribute, which was measured in pounds sterling, making in one year an additional drain of Rs. 117,000,000, according to



Mr. C.B. Phipson (Digby, pp. 236, 237). Mr. Hyndman, writing in 1886, puts the drain at £20,000,000, half the net revenue of India from land (*Bankruptcy of India*, p. 131), and, while accepting this as the "admission of a Finance Minister," says it is really over £30,000,000 (p. 150). In a later analysis of the *Statistical Abstract*, he makes the drain £33,500,000, from a population of 224,000,000, "whose total gross products are valued at no more than £400,000,000 by officials, and at £300,000 by able native statist's". (pp, 184, 185) The drain is rising not falling : the Secretary of State is now spending £18,00,000 annually, and in 1908 he drew 25½ millions, of which the "Home Charges" were 18½ millions (Sarkar, pp. 257, 258). This goes with the general increase of expenditure ; that of 1898-9 was £55,312, 81, while the estimates for 1911-12 show a total of £78,640,200. The chief items are : Civil Department, from £9,201,441 to £16,837,000 ; Railways, £9,123,838 to £12,113,800 ; Military, £17,153,718 to 20£,811,900 (Sarma, p. 171). The older figures represent a better state of things than the present. India is nearer bankruptcy than she was when Mr. Hyndman wrote. It is in this ever-increasing evil that lies the chief material need for Indian Self-Government, a National Government in which Indian prosperity will be the chief aim. In the long run, India, prosperous under her own Government, will be a more valuable Imperial asset than India bankrupt under the present foreign rule, which thinks first of Great Britain's temporary advantage, but ultimately will ruin both. Lord Salisbury said in 1877 that the only "true remedy against famine and scarcity is the frugality of the people". But it is a little difficult to be frugal when a man has a constant annual deficit, as we shall see when we come to taxation.

It is often alleged that the "drain" is "payment for services rendered," and is therefore legitimate. It is forgotten that the services, exorbitantly paid, are not invited but imposed, and that, if India had her way, the services would be rendered by her own people, and the payment would be returned into her own pocket.

## 2. *Crushing Taxation*

We must now consider the process of "squeezing blood out of stones," but, alas, the stones are sentient. The masses of the working population in India are chronically underfed, as may be seen by the normally low vitality, so that a failure of one harvest causes millions of deaths, by the numerous cases of death from a blow or a kick the well-known "ruptured spleen," by the small elasticity in recovery from slight illnesses, by the extraordinary sparseness of their bodies, and by the fact that the average life-period in India is 23.5 years, while in England it is 40, and in New Zealand it is 60. (Other causes contribute to this, such as child-parentage, and the frightful struggle for existence)

Under Indian rulers, the land-tax was levied on produce, not on area, hence varied with good and bad harvests, and with the fertility of the soil; this method had also the advantage that it left to the cultivator sufficient food and seed-grain, and allowed land to lie fallow without tax for renovation, while now it is cultivated incessantly, and so gradually deteriorates. Mr. Gokaldas Parakh has pointed out that in some Bombay villages the incidence of taxation per acre is Rs. 2-11-1, Rs. 5-0-7, and Rs. 5-1-6. Per head it amounts to Rs. 2-7-8, Rs. 3-12-6 and Rs. 8-1-2. In the Report for 1897, out of nine cases, one showed 72 per cent, one 67 per cent of the gross value of the produce. In another district one of 42 per cent, six of over 30. The year before, out of nine cases, there was one of 96 per cent, one of 73, one of 63, and one of 50 (Romesh Dutt, p. 323).

Under the old Hindu rulers from one-twelfth to one-sixth of the gross produce was taken from the cultivator under the law, and this rule seems to have been normally carried out; Megasthenes speaks of the land bearing two crops in the year, giving the cultivators "abundant means of subsistence," and the husbandmen were regarded "as a class that is sacred and inviolable". Fa Hian says that "only those who till the royal lands return a portion of the profit". Hiuen Tsang says that these tillers of royal estates pay one-sixth as tribute. Akbar, as

we have seen, claimed one-third of the gross produce, but Mr. Romesh Dutt thinks his collections averaged from one-tenth to one-sixth. The Marathas claimed one-fourth. Under British rule assessments for the land vary; Sir Louis Mallet, speaking of Madras, puts the land revenue at 50 per cent or one-half of the net produce, and remarks that it is not only large, but uncertain (Appendix M. in *Famines in India* should be carefully read). Lord Salisbury says, commenting on Sir Louis Mallet's views, that "we cannot afford to limit all land payments to 50 per cent on the gross produce"! In North India assessments have not been so heavy, but there landlords also had to be paid rent, the two taking about 30 per cent of the gross produce (landlords 20, Government about 10, sometimes only 8). The variations of assessment offer many opportunities for sophistical argument. When the hardships of a Madrasi are complained of, we are told that a Panjabi is well off; that the taxation "on an average" is only so-and-so, Northern India being more lightly taxed than Southern. Mr. Shore, of the Bengal Civil Service, as long ago as 1837, said that "the grinding extortion of the British Government has effected the impoverishment of the country and people to an unparalleled extent" (Naoroji, p. 41), and official after official has endorsed this truth. Mr. Marriott in 1836 pointed out that the country was far more prosperous under "native rule" (p. 44), and comments on the before-mentioned drain as the "heavy tribute" which India pays to England.

Comparing relative incomes and taxation, we find that England paid  $8\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of her annual income as taxation, India nearly 22 (Naoroji, p. 221); and it must be remembered that England pays out of wealth, India out of poverty; in England the taxes are spent in the country, in India half goes out. Sir E. Baring in 1832 put the income per head in India at 27s, while in England it was £ 33; Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji also works it out at Rs. 20, which at the present rate of exchange is almost 27s. Taxation ten times as heavy in actual money in England on an average of 660s.—the taxation of 1910—is as nothing, whereas 3s. 7½d. out of 27s. is crushing. The constantly repeated statement that India "is the most lightly taxed country in the world" is true in shillings, but scandalous!

false in fact. In 1871, Lord Mayo, deducting various items of other taxation, put the land revenue at 1s. 10d. per head (Naoroji, p. 59). In 1910 it was 1s. 8d. per head, other taxes raising the total incidence to 3s. 7½d. per head. In the 175 municipalities, taxation in 1899 was at the rate of 2s. 8d. per head; in 1910 it was 5s. 5d. District and rural boards had taxation of 2½d. per head in 1899, of 3½d. per head in 1910. Taxation is rising, not falling. The total amount raised by pure State taxation in 1910, excluding land, was 35½ crores of rupees, and by local taxation a little over 7½ crores (Sarkar, pp 317, 318). The land revenue was 26.2 in 1898, 30.1 in 1910 (*Ibid*, 316) and 32 crores in 1913-14—a steadily rising impost, and it must be remembered that both Mr. Ranade and Mr. Gokhale have pointed out that the amount levied on the land not only leaves no savings to the cultivator, but actually trenches on his subsistence. Hence despite his incessant labour his indebtedness is always increasing. The total net revenue was, in 1909-10, £ 74,600,000, and in 1913-14, £ 82,321,800. In 1902-3 it was only £ 65,300,000. England was *paying in taxes*, when Mr. Naoroji wrote, £ 2-10 per head. India's *total production* was £ 2 per head (p. 61). If India is "lightly taxed," why is it so impossible, as is often officially stated, to tax her further? There is no margin; she is taxed up to the hilt. Moreover, some of the taxes are peculiarly cruel, such as the tax on salt, an absolute necessity of life in a largely vegetarian population; yet Re. 1 per maund of 82 lb. is the tax on it and 467 lakhs of rupees were the estimated revenue from it in 1913-14. (The outcry against this tax has been so great that it has been lowered to Re. 1 from the Rs. 2.8 per maund paid in 1888.) For some years it was Re. 1.4 per maund. In 1923 it was doubled, *i.e.*, raised to Rs. 2.8 against the vote of the Assembly. It is worse than a bread-tax in England.

The poverty of the cultivators—and "nine-tenths of the rural population of India live, directly or indirectly, by agriculture" (*Imp. Gazetteer*, iii, 2)—would be incredible, were not the facts visible on every side. The *Gazetteer* points out that "a considerable landless class is developing which involves economic danger, because the increase is most marked in districts where

the rural population is most congested, or in provinces in which there is special liability to periodic famine" (*ibid*). Moreover, the peasantry in many cases can no longer live by their land, but, after the harvest, go into the towns to earn by wages enough to pay the land-tax. The census of 1911 gives 218.3 millions out of 304.2 millions as living by agriculture. It says of Bombay, "that there is a large local supply of labourers". Into Calcutta and its vicinity 1.4 millions migrate annually for industrial employment, the great majority seeking only temporary work for the cold weather ; some stay longer, returning home with their savings, their families remaining in the villages.

Mr. Digby gives table after table of the actual "budgets" of labourers, and they are official. In the United Provinces peasants with  $5\frac{1}{2}$  acres, one pair of oxen and a plough made a profit over expenses of Rs. 45.14 (£ 3-1-2) a year ; average family five ; per head Rs. 9-2-10, nearly, for everything, food, clothing, bedding, religious ceremonies, etc. Another, with 17 acres, has a deficiency of Rs. 15 annually on the land, and, says the investigator (Mr. Crooke, Collector of Etah, ruling a population of 756,528 persons), with bare food and clothing the annual deficiency came to Rs. 138-9. Another, with 7 acres, spends Rs. 50 on food (he pays Rs. 40 as rent), Rs. 7 on clothing, Rs. 2 on household furniture, Rs. 2 on marriage and funeral expenses, totalling a deficit of Rs. 22 in the year. The official statement sometimes heard, that the people suffer because of thriftlessness and extravagance in ceremonies, may be seen, in the light of the grand total of Rs. 2 in a year for both marriage and funeral ceremonies, to be scandalously false. The extravagance would not cover an English official's "pegs" at his club for a week.

One man, Abe Ram, family of five, 9 acres ; "he has no blanket ; he ate the bajra before it was ripe"—an unwholesome proceeding ; he had two buffaloes (a bull and a cow), and a cow, and sold milk for Rs. 18 ; he earned by labour (outside) Rs. 15 during the year ; his crops sold for Rs. 70.4. His rent was Rs. 68.15—99 per cent of the produce—leaving the royal

sum of Rs. 1.5 for the year ; he spent extravagantly Rs. 44 for food and Rs. 7 for clothing, and had a deficit of Rs. 25.11.

Mr. Alexander, Collector of Etawah, says that in *ordinary years* the cultivators live on advances from money-lenders for four months of the year. In a village near Cawnpur, with thirty-five families of cultivators, 171 persons, there was a balance of Rs. 2,550 over expenses of cultivation ; for food alone Rs. 3,678 were necessary, so Rs. 1,088 was the deficiency ; the sympathetic Sir Antony Macdonnell, Lieut.-Governor of the United Provinces, put as one of the causes of "the ryots' difficulties", "his recklessness in expenditure on festivals" ! This is the Lord Macdonnell who objected to an Executive Council for these Provinces on which an Indian should sit. Mr. Irwin, a Deputy Commissioner in Oudh, finds that 173 persons have ten blankets, sixteen resais (bed covers of padded cotton), and twenty-four quilts among them, and in Oudh the temperature in winter touches freezing-point. "The small cultivators, *i.e.*, the large majority, must be always on the brink of want of food," would go over it but for the money-lender. Many say they live on the money-lender's grain for four months, eight months, on their labour. One man, "evidently underfed," had his rent enhanced three years ago. Average income per head 13s. 4d. per annum. Of another group, 10s. 8d. Deficit on the year Rs. 9, Rs. 32, Rs. 17, for food alone.

In Bombay, in 30 to 40 per cent of the holdings, the ryot cannot get enough to pay his assessment and feed his family for the whole year "even in good seasons" ; after the harvest, he goes to a town and works as a labourer to earn enough to live. In 567 such villages, the Revision Settlement enhanced the assessment 28 per cent. In the Deccan, in ten years, with crop and cattle losses, and 7 per cent of the population on relief works, the rents were enhanced and regularly collected, with a remission of less than 4 per cent. The annual borrowings Mr. G.V. Joshi has shown, in these districts, are 93 per cent of the total assessment ; the assessment was £ 381,134, the borrowings £ 358,000. The ryots' debts in the whole Presidency amounted in 1794 to £ 15,000,000 old debt and about £ 1,66 ,667 new annually. The money-lenders practically pay the assessment,

and the ryots pay interest on the rent they advance. The ryots' condition, therefore, grows worse every year, new borrowing, mounting indebtedness. "Half of the absentee landlords live in Britain," says a report from the United Provinces. Some of the volumes of these reports were laid on the table of the House of Commons at Mr. Charles Bradlaugh's request, and are presumably buried somewhere in the House. Mr. Digby's published cases are taken from these ; pp. 306-508 contain the records of individual cases.

Sir Charles Elliott, Settlement Officer, and afterwards a Lieutenant-Governor, says : "I do not hesitate to say that half our agricultural population never know from year's end to year's end what it is to have their hunger fully satisfied." One hundred millions of men, women, and children always hungry ! No wonder he adds that any attempt to increase taxation would result in financial failure (Digby, p. 509). Missionaries bear evidence to the misery ; here is one quotation from the Rev. C.H. Macfarlane, quoted by Digby (p. 564) :

"We cannot present harrowing tales of starvation and death as yet. But people are living on one meal on every two or three days ; the poorer classes in India are always prepared for this. As one of our Christians said : 'If we can eat food once in two days, we will not ask for more.' In my own missionary experience I once carefully investigated the earnings of a congregation of three hundred, and found the average amounted to less than a farthing per head per day.... So it comes to pass that, living as they do, and that from hand to mouth, if they fail for a few days to work they have to face starvation, and when famine really comes it is ready to claim its millions as victims unless prompt and timely help is given."

The non-official estimated income in 1850 was 2d. per head per day ; officially estimated income in 1882 was 1½d per head per day ! analytical examination of all sources of income in 1900 was less than ¾d. per head per day (Digby, frontispiece) India is on the down-grade.

### 3. *Cost of British Government*

The "drain," of course, is part of this cost, but the burden of British administration in the country itself cannot be omitted. Mr. Digby remarks sardonically that the salary of the then Secretary of State for India during his term of office represented the average annual income of 90,000 Indians. That is a graphic way of putting it, and true. Outside the "drain," we have the cost in India itself. The Viceroy draws Rs. 2,50,800 a year; the three Governors Rs. 1,20,000 a year each, while Lieut.-Governors have Rs. 1,00,000. The rest of the salaries are proportionate. We have now nine Governors.

A Return, ordered by the House of Commons in 1892 (and made in 1900), gave the annual salaries being paid in India for the services of 13,178 Europeans as Rs. 8,77,14,431; Eurasians were paid Rs. 72,95,026 for 3,309 officials; 11,554 Indians received Rs. 2,55,54,313. None employed on less than Rs. 1,000 a year are noted, so the smaller salaries of ordinary clerks do not come in. In addition, there are leave allowances to Europeans of Rs. 46,36,314, Eurasians Rs. 3,22,120, and Indians Rs. 12,18,743. Pensions, paid in India, were to Europeans and Eurasians (given together), Rs. 23,28,882, and to Indians Rs. 59,81,824. In England out of Indian taxation, Europeans were paid in pounds sterling £ 3,710,678, or Rs. 5,56,60,173.

Another most unjust imposition on Indian revenues, and one of a peculiarly irritating kind, is that of the alien Church establishment. The Bishop of Calcutta draws Rs. 45,980, and the Bishops of Madras and Bombay Rs. 25,000 each. The Bishops of Lahore, Lucknow, Nagpur, and Rangoon draw Rs. 10,000 a year for five years and then Rs. 12,000 a year, the salaries of "Senior Chaplains". There are 134 Anglican and 11 Presbyterian Chaplains, receiving regular salaries, while Roman Catholics and Wesleyans receive "block grants," and the churches of all four "may be built, furnished and repaired, wholly or partly, at the Government expense". In addition their schools and colleges receive huge grants, and out of 5,544



scholars in Protestant schools 5,241 are non-Christians. Thus Indian money is spent in supporting a vast agency for insulting and outraging the religious feelings of the Hindu, Mussalman, and Parsi "heathen," proving a source of civic strife. There is no conscience clause in Christian schools except for Europeans.

We have seen that the estimated revenue in 1913-14 was over £ 82,000,000 sterling, and the expenditure was estimated at a little over £ 81,000,000. It is impossible to say how much the expenditure might be reduced, if the Government was Indian, but in Indian States we find the people better off, without State debts, and yielding a revenue to the State without distress of twice and thrice the amount yielded by India (see Naoroji, i, p. 259).

Mr. Sarkar says :

"India is a dependency of Great Britain. In consequence of her dependent political position she has to employ a large number of high English officers ('the *corps d'elite* must be European,' as Lord Curzon said) and a strong garrison of British troops, which numbered 80,591 in 1911. The pensions of all these and their savings while in service in India are sent to England. The English cannot breed and multiply in India. They have to send their children above four years of age to home for education ; a large part of the father's income (sometimes amounting to three-fourths) is remitted to England for maintaining the young ones there. In one year, 1910, above 13,800 European soldiers came to India from abroad and 12,000 were sent back to India or British Africa. Very often these numbers have been exceeded. India has to pay their transport expenses" (p. 119).

Nor can we omit to notice the fact that in the higher educational, legal, and medical services the insistence on English degrees adds to Indian expenses. For the Indian Civil Service, Medical Service, for the Law, Indians must go to England, and spend Rs. 3,000 a year to qualify for higher status in their own land. All this goes to swell the "drain," though not reckoned therein. All requests to hold simultaneous

examinations in India, so as to save this cost, were refused. They have now (1923) been begun.

Moreover, Englishmen are appointed to responsible posts of all kinds in preference to Indians, because of the Government *cachet*, stamping the Indian as inferior. The competition for Government service as a means of livelihood has driven down salaries, so that the majority of middle-class Indians are miserably poor, while education increases in cost, and prices rise.

#### 4. *Indigenous Industries*

The huge wealth of India, gained by commerce as well as by internal trade in the past, depended far less on her agriculture than on her industries. The valuable products of her looms drew in from other lands vast returns in gold, and she worked up her own raw materials. The influx of machine-made goods must inevitably have brought about widespread changes, but a system of Government which had sought India's prosperity instead of Britain's enrichment would have made possible a transition instead of a destruction.

For there are advantages in hand-loom that should not be overlooked; with short-stapled cotton, Dacca weavers produced "the same results as from the finest long-stapled cottons of America," and so fine was the yarn that 250 miles of it went to a pound of cotton (*Imp. Gazetteer*, iii, 201). An Indian, instead of a foreign, Government would have grouped these cottage-industries together, would have introduced co-operative societies—begun only when the industry was decaying—and thus have facilitated the transition, and have preserved what was valuable in the hand-industry. Indian weaving suits the climate better than foreign-made goods; the foreign silk cracks where folded; the foreign gold and silver thread tarnishes. India used to make her own, but in 1913-14 customs duty was paid on £ 302,773 sterling worth of gold thread imported. Foreign silks do not bear constant washing as do the Indian, nor do they last.

None the less, India brought into competition with western nations would probably, in any case, have had to establish machine industries. But when she began to take them up, and might have worked up her own cotton instead of exporting raw cotton and importing foreign cloths, the English Government, to protect Lancashire mills, imposed an excise duty on Indian products to balance the customs duty on foreign goods, thus making an "equal" duel between the well-established British giant industries and the Indian infant ones. Of course, the Indians were unable to compete successfully, and meanwhile the hand-products, though of better quality, were beaten out of the market by the cheap foreign goods, and the industries decayed. Half the total production of raw cotton is exported, and another quarter goes out as yarn, leaving only one quarter to be worked up here at home ; in 1903-4, 2,032,000,000 yards of foreign cotton cloth came into India, while she produced only 436,000,000 yards (*Imp. Gazetteer*, iii, 205).

There are but nine paper-mills in India ; glass, for which the constituents abound, is not made, but in 1913-14 she paid customs duty on £ 699,246 sterling worth of glass beads and bangles for the wearing of her women ; the beautiful vegetable dyes have been killed out by their coarse aniline rivals ; oil-seeds are exported where they should be crushed and their oil utilised, no less than 160s.25 lakhs of rupees worth being exported in 1903-4. For soap she paid customs duty on £ 500,400 sterling worth in 1913-14, where her own palm-oil might have been used. Cement, for which she has the materials, was imported to the value of £ 438,991 sterling, and candles £ 49,300.

Another industry for which her artisans are well fitted is the making of toys, of which £ 177,986 worth were imported. Yet the artistic toy-carving of Lucknow is dying, owing to foreign competition. In these few trades with the gold thread before mentioned, small manufacturers might have made £ 2,168,696 worth of goods, as valued for customs, realising from 30 to 50 per cent more in the market. Were India Self-governed these natural products would be manufactured and become a source of wealth, as in former days ; now they are

swept away by foreign merchants to be coined into wealth abroad, and she would herself make many of the articles imported by them. An Indian Government would place heavy duties on incoming products until the infant industries could hold their own; would advance loans, if necessary, for their establishment. But it is probable that Indian capital would no longer be "shy," if its employment were protected against the competition of well-established foreign firms, so that India, coming into contact with western methods, should not be "hustled" to death before she has time to secure a footing in the new ways. Even in the injury wrought by the war, the English Government has not helped to repair it, though, in one product, ground-nuts, the crop has been left to rot on the ground, where a little help in adapting crushing-mills might have started an industry that would have remained, and have created in India a manufacture which Germany had exploited for her own gain. Without a Government of her own, India is ruthlessly exploited for the enrichment of Europe.

The Swadeshi (own country) movement, advocating the use of home-produced instead of foreign-produced articles, has done something to check the destruction of indigenous industries. When the Partition of Bengal caused the popular leaders, in 1905, to take it up as a means of arousing Great Britain, by menacing its trade, to a sense of the wrong inflicted, it practically saved the Bengal hand-loom weavers from their steady decline, and replaced them in a secure position. A simple and cheap mechanical device, applied to the ordinary loom, has multiplied tenfold the power of production. As Mr. Sarkar points out (p. 298) the ethical value of Swadeshi is also great, as enabling each person to make a sacrifice for the welfare of the Motherland, and as promoting the spirit of Nationality.

In considering all these questions it is necessary to remember that Indian conditions differ from those in the West. By long tradition, manual workers are trained on special lines, and cannot find work in a new trade if the old one fails them. Hence the law of supply and demand does not work as quickly here as in western Nations, and protection of infant industries

is even more necessary than it was acknowledged to be by John Stuart Mill in new western countries. The heavy trade balance against India, the excess of exports over imports of some 24 crores of rupees annually, goes to pay her debts to Great Britain, to liquidate the annual drain, and much of this is in the form of the raw material, which thus leaves her for no equivalent, but which, kept here, would increase her manufacturing wealth.

Germany, Japan, the United States, have built up great industries with Government help, and India would do the same, had she, like them, a Home Government, whose one aim was the prosperity of its people. Great Britain, naturally, looks first to British interests, and political parties in Great Britain calculate the effect of their Indian trade policy on the votes which determine the fate of Government at Westminster.

#### 5. *Public Works*

One of the most frequent complaints of Indian reformers turns on the comparative claims of railways, irrigation, education, sanitation, on the public funds. Government guarantees a minimum interest on capital invested in railways, capital which comes chiefly from abroad ; a reserve is set aside to meet this interest, and is thus withdrawn from public use, instead of fertilising works sorely needed by the country. The total capital liability, on the railways classed as State railways, is given in the *Year-Book* of 1914 at £ 334,500,085 sterling (p. 172). The total capital outlay on irrigation works up to the end of 1900-1 is given in the same book (p. 185) as 39,83.72 lakhs of rupees. But it will be easier to compare the relative expenditure if we take the annual charges, when we find in pounds sterling that railways in 1914-15 were put at 11.6 millions (capital) reduced from 12 millions because of the war ; this excludes ordinary expenditure and interest on debt. Irrigation was assigned 1.2 million, increased slightly ; education 3.22 millions, and medical relief and sanitation 1.5 million. (These figures are from the Budget statement.) In 1913-14 the non-recurring grants for urban sanitation amounted to 150 lakhs—£ 1,000,000—distributed to the Local Govern-

ment, and 13½ lakhs were assigned for special schemes. Recurring grants amount to 45 lakhs annually—£ 300,000 (p. 510). Other grants are being made for research and other schemes totalling £ 319,400 recurring and £ 2,366,666 non-recurring, and in some districts land cess is being assigned to this purpose. All money thus spent, though going too largely to European officers, is expended for the welfare of the country. In considering the relative returns to the State from railways and irrigation we find :

	1913-14	1914-15	1915-16
Railways	1.36%	0.53%	0.32%
Irrigation	5.87%	5.44%	5.30%

If we ask why the more profitable expenditure is not preferred, the only answer is that the railways profit English shareholders, while irrigation profits the people of the country.

Another reason why the expenditure on railways is less pleasing, may be said to be sentimental. The railway arrangements are made for the comfort of Europeans, and Indians of all ranks are discriminated against. This is most, but not exclusively, true as regards the huge bulk of the travelling population, from whose payments dividends increase ; these are extremely badly provided for, treated with brutal harshness, subjected to innumerable inconveniences and indignities, and shut out of decent arrangements at stations ; the gentry, nobility, and princes are also excluded from station sleeping apartments—a night having sometimes to be spent in waiting—provided exclusively for a few Europeans only.

### SELF-GOVERNMENT\*

The Government of India is an autocracy, vested in the Secretary of State, as representing the Crown ; he goes in and out with party changes, but is not directly responsible to the House of Commons. The East India Company had powers vested in it by renewable charters, the last of which was passed in 1853. The two bodies wielding authority—the ' Directors of

\*From Annie Besant : *India—A Nation*, Chapter VI.

the Company and the Board of Control established in 1784 as the dominions of the Company grew, rendering necessary the first interference of Parliament in 1773—were swept away by the Government of India Act, 1858, by which the Government of India and the powers of the above two bodies were vested in the Crown; the change was announced in India on November 1st, 1858, by the Queen's Proclamation. The Company then ceased to have any authority in India, and was dissolved in 1874, after a chequered existence of 274 years.

The Charter Act of 1833—made for twenty years—was passed in a fortunate time, when Macaulay, then in the House of Commons, "was Secretary to the Board of Control, and James Mill, Bentham's disciple, was the examiner of Indian correspondence at the India House" (p. 81).\* In this debate was made Maaculay's famous speech, already quoted, referring to India becoming self-governing under Britain's guidance, and there was a very general view that consummation was to shape Britain's policy. It was the era of statesmen administering a trust, not the era of bureaucrats, clinging to privileges and powers as against the interests of the people of the country.

The "Governor-General of India (instead of Bengal) in Council" was made the supreme authority and the Council consisted of three members, with a fourth member with limited powers, and four Presidencies—Bengal, Agra, Madras, and Bombay—were constituted, Madras and Bombay having Councils of two members only; these Council members received their appointments from the Secretary of State. The Presidency of Agra was never formed, the constituting of it being suspended by an enactment of 1835, but it was made, in 1836, a Lieutenant-Governorship without a Council; the long overdue granting of a Council—though the population numbers 48 millions—was proposed by the Secretary of State in 1914, and supported by the Supreme and Local Governments, but

\*Consult throughout Sir Courtenay Ilbert's *Government of India*, here quoted, ed. 1915. The statements, dates, etc., are based thereon, and the references, wheae not otherwise noted, are to its pages.

suspended by the action of Lords Curzon and Macdonnell in 1915, causing the strong agitation now going on in the United Province (Agra and Oudh), and the formation of a League to obtain it. The important section of the Act, as leading towards Self-Government, and one eloquently pleaded for by Macaulay, was Sec 87, which declared that "No native of the said territories, 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 Company". (pp. 88, 89) The Charter Act of 1853 continued that of 1833, with additional provisions, and added to the Governor-General's Council, for "legislative purposes," seven additional members, including four representative members from Bengal, Madras, Bombay, and the North-Western (now United) Provinces. It also provided for a fourth Presidency and a second Lieutenant-Governorship, and an Act of the following year gave the Governor-General of India in Council power to take under his control any part of the Company's territories, appointing the necessary administrative officers. Under this, Chief Commissioners (a title recognised in 1870) have been appointed in various parts

The Act of 1853 created the Secretary of State for India, with the India Council of fifteen members, whom he could overrule or ignore at pleasure. The Civil Service Examination was then established.

In the Proclamation of Queen Victoria, on taking over the rule of India, occurred the words which repeated in more admirable language the pledge of 1833 ; she said (quoted by Naoroji, p. v) :

"We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and these obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil.

"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.

“When, by the blessings of Providence, internal tranquillity shall be restored, it is our earnest desire to stimulate...and to administer its government for the benefit of all our subjects resident therein. In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward. And may the God of all power grant to us and to those in authority under us strength to carry out these our wishes for the good of our people.”

Mr. Naoroji also quotes the following :

Lord Lytton, the Viceroy (on the assumption by Queen Victoria of the title of Empress, 1st January, 1877), at the Delhi Assemblage said :

“But you, the natives of India, whatever your race and whatever your creed, have a recognised claim to share largely with your English fellow-subjects, according to your capacity for the task, in the administration of the country you inhabit. This claim is founded in the highest justice. It has been repeated affirmed by British and Indian statesmen and by the legislation of the Imperial Parliament. It is recognised by the Government of India as binding on its honour, and consistent with all the aims of its policy.”

Lord Lytton, as Chancellor of the Calcutta University, March, 1877, said :

“The Proclamation of the Queen contains solemn pledges, spontaneously given, and founded upon the highest justice.”

Jubilee of 1887. The Queen-Empress, in reply to the Jubilee Address of Congratulation of the Bombay Municipal Corporation, said :

“Allusion is made to the Proclamation, issued on the occasion of my assumption of the direct government of India,

as the charter of the liberties of the Princes and Peoples of India. It has always been and will be continued to be my earnest desire that the principles of that Proclamation should be unswervingly maintained."

These pledges have not yet been redeemed ; they are admittedly treated as "scraps of paper". The Duke of Argyll (later Secretary of State for India), speaking in the House of Lords on March 11, 1869, said frankly :

"With regard, however, to the employment of natives in the government of their country, in the Covenanted Service, formerly of the Company, and now of the Crown, I must say that we have not fulfilled our duty, or the promises and engagements which we have made" (Naoroji, p. 46).

In the first National Congress, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji quoted the Report of five members of the India Council, which, after quoting Sec 87 of the Act of 1833, said :

"It is obvious therefore that when the competitive system was adopted, it could not have been intended to exclude natives of India from the Civil Service of India.

"Practically, however, they are excluded. The law declares them eligible, but the difficulties opposed to a native leaving India and residing in England for a time, are so great that, as a general rule, it is almost impossible for a native successfully to compete at the periodical examinations held in England. Were this inequality removed, we should no longer be exposed to the charge of keeping a promise to the ear and breaking it to the hope" (*Report of First Congress*, p. 41).

Mr. G. Mukerji quoted a confidential minute of Lord Lytton referred to, Mr. Naoroji tells us, in the Despatch of the Government of India, May 2, 1878, the same Lord Lytton who is quoted above in his public utterances :

"The Act of Parliament is so undefined, and indefinite obligations on the part of the Government of India towards its native subjects are so obviously dangerous, that no sooner was the Act passed than the Government began to devise means for practically evading the fulfilment of it. Under the terms of the Act, which are studied and laid to heart by that increasing

class of educated natives whose development the Government encourages, without being able to satisfy the aspirations of its existing members, every such native, if once admitted to Government employment in posts previously reserved to the Covenanted Service, is entitled to expect and claim appointment in the fair course of promotion to the highest posts in that Service. We all know that these claims and expectations never can, or will, be fulfilled. We have had to choose between prohibiting them and cheating them; and we have chosen the least straightforward course. The application to Natives of the competitive examination system as conducted in England, and the recent reduction in the age at which candidates can compete, are all so many deliberate and transparent subterfuges for stultifying the Act and reducing it to a dead letter. Since I am writing confidentially, I do not hesitate to say that both the Governments of England and of India appear to me, up to the present moment, unable to answer satisfactorily the charge of having taken every means in their power of breaking to the heart the words of promise they have uttered to the ear." (*Ibid.*, pp. 48, 49).

After these frank confessions it is needless to labour the point further.

The Indian Councils Act, 1861, remodelled the Governor-General's Council, took away from it the power of interpellation and of discussing measures of the Executive, found inconvenient, and limited it "strictly to legislation" (p. 100). It gave expanded powers of legislation to the Governors of Madras and Bombay, who might nominate members "for legislative purposes," and similar nominated Legislative Councils were established for Bengal, the North-West Provinces, and the Panjab.\*

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\*The curious nomenclature may be a little puzzling to English readers. The Governor "in Council" means in his small Council, appointed by the Secretary of State, and this is now usually spoken of as the "Executive Council". It is practically his Cabinet. Then, Governors being allowed to nominate "additional members for legislative purposes only," these, with the Executive Council, make the "Legislative Council" in each Province.

The Indian Councils Act, 1870, gave further powers to the Governor-General to overrule his Council, and, as quite truly said, the Councils were "a sham" and "a farce".

The Indian Councils Act, 1892, enlarged the number of members of the Indian Legislative Councils, and allowed discussion of the budget—not any power over it—and asking of questions under prescribed restrictions (p. 107).

A step forward was made in the direction of the reforms asked for by the National Congress in 1909.

In 1906, Lord Minto, the Viceroy, drew up a Minute, pointing out that the growth of education demanded changes in the Government—the result prophesied by Macaulay and others—and appointed a Committee of his Council to consider "these novel conditions".

Sir William Hunter had foreseen these conditions when he said :

"I cannot believe that a people numbering one-sixth of the whole of the inhabitants of the globe, and whose aspirations have been nourished from their earliest youth on the strong food of English liberty, can be permanently denied a voice in the government of their country. I do not believe that races... into whom we have instilled the maxim of 'no taxation without representation' as a fundamental right of a people, can be permanently excluded from a share in the management of their finances." (Quoted by Naoroji, p. x.)

Sir John Malcolm says—following out the same line of thought :

"We are not warranted by the history of India, nor indeed by that of any other Nation in the world, in reckoning upon the possibility of preserving an Empire of such a magnitude by a system which excludes, as ours does, the natives from every station of high rank and honourable ambition.... If we do not use the knowledge which we impart, it will be employed against us.... If these plans are not associated with the creation of

duties that will employ the minds which we enlighten, we shall only prepare elements that will hasten the destruction of our Empire. The moral evil to us does not thus stand alone. It carries with it its Nemesis, the seeds of the destruction of the Empire itself." (Quoted by Naoroji, p. xi.)

It was Lord Minto's supreme merit that he realised that the time foreseen by these men had come, and that, if the Empire were to last, it was necessary to enter on the path which would lead to Indian Self-Government. The results reached were sent to Lord Morley, Secretary of State for India, who expounded his views thereon in the House of Lords on December 17, 1908. These caused the joy expressed by Congress in its session of that year. The Act embodying these views was introduced on February 17, 1909, and received the Royal Assent on May 25, with an amendment insisted on by the House of Lords, which compelled the Secretary of State, who was empowered to create an Executive Council for Provinces under Lieutenant-Governors, to submit the proposals to both Houses of Parliament. (It was this proviso which enabled Lords Curzon and MacDonnell to prevent the United Provinces from having an Executive Council in 1915.)

In 1907, two Indians had been placed on the India Council, and in March, 1909, Lord Morley had appointed the first Indian member, Mr. (now Sir) S.P. Sinha, to the Viceroy's Executive Council. One Indian was, later, appointed by the Secretary of State to each of the Executive Councils of Madras, Bombay, Bengal, and Bihar and Orissa.

The most important step in the direction of Self-Government in this Act was the introduction—so long demanded by the National Congress—of the principle of election into the Legislative Councils. The Act gave power to the authorities in India to frame Regulations, and these have largely taken away from its value, and were severely criticised in the National Congress of 1909. They were revised in 1912.

The majority in all the Legislative Councils, except that of the Viceroy, is nominally non-official ; in the latter there is an

official majority of 4. In the Supreme Council 27 members are elected out of 68 ; in Madras, 21 out of 48 ; so also in Bombay ; in Bengal 28 out of 53 ; in Bihar and Orissa 21 out of 44 ; in the United Provinces 21 out of 49 ; in the Punjab 8 out of 26 ; in Burma 1 out of 17 ; in Assam 11 out of 25 ; in the Central Provinces 7 out of 25. In all cases the Viceroy, Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, or Chief Commissioner is also a voting member and has a casting vote—not often needed. Moreover, of elected members, to take one example, Madras : the Chamber of Commerce, all English, elects 1 ; the Trades' Association, nearly all English, elects 1 ; the Planting Community, all, or nearly all, English, elects 1 ; Landholders elect 5, and are very much influenced by the Government. The other electorates, Corporation (1), Municipalities and District Boards (9), University (1), are largely English, or appointed by English. The Muhammadans (2) are freeing themselves. It will be seen that patriotic members have a very "hard furrow to plough". Nominated members are, as a rule, more official than the official, though there are some very good ones and the words a "non-official" majority are entirely misleading. We should always speak of the "elected minority".

The Province, under its Governor—or other Chief Officer—with his Legislative Council—is divided into Districts, with the District Magistrate, or Collector, at its head ; in some Provinces, Districts are grouped into a Division, with a Commissioner as highest officer. District Boards and Municipalities—spoken of below—are practically their councils. Below these come Taluq Boards (in Madras) and similar bodies in other Provinces. The lowest unit is the village, with its headman, accountant and watchman. The old Village Council, or Panchayat, has been re-established in some Indian States by their Chiefs, with the happiest results, and some have been established voluntarily in British India and have proved successful. Their general establishment is one of the aims of reformers, as they form the natural basis for Self-Government, and are welcome to the villagers. Co-operative Panchayats work well ; Forest Panchayats are being experimented with in Madras Province ; Irrigation Panchayats, proposed by Mr. M. Ramchandra Rao in the Madras Legislative Council, are looked

on fairly favourably by the Government, and the Decentralisation Commission reports in favour of establishing a Village Panchayat in every village.

The new Member for Education in the Viceroy's Council, the Hon. Sir C. Sankaran Nair, is an authority on the subject, and a Bill for their establishment is to be brought in, in the Madras Parliament—a local body for the discussion of political and social questions—by Mr. T. Rangachariar, and is to be made the basis for popular education on the subject.

The *Report of the Decentralisation Commission*, in Part III, chapter xviii, p. 236 *et seq.*, remarks that the "villages formerly possessed a large degree of local autonomy, since the native dynasties...regarded the village as a whole.... This autonomy has now disappeared. .. Nevertheless, the village remains the first unit of administration; the principal village functionaries—the headman, the accountant and the village watchman—are largely utilised and paid by Government, and there is still a certain amount of common village feeling and interests". In Madras Province there are nearly 400 "Local Fund Unions," administered by Panchayats, the headman of each village in the Union being *ex officio* a member of the Panchayat. The Commission is not in favour of these, but thinks is "most desirable" to constitute and develop village Panchayats for the administration of local village affairs. The Panchayat should be elected by the villagers, assembled in meeting, and be assigned definite functions (pp. 240-245).

The first Act creating Municipalities (outside Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay), if we omit a local permissive Bengal Act in 1842, was a general and permissive Act in 1850, allowing town Committees to be formed which might levy indirect taxes. After this many local Acts were passed, and many Municipalities formed; Lord Mayo's Government passed a resolution in 1870, which recommended the "development of Self-Government" and the "strengthening of municipal institutions," associating Indians and Europeans more in the administration of affairs. Twelve years later, Lord Ripon's love for India led him to make efforts to widen civic liberty, and in

1883-4 Acts were passed in which "a wide extension was given to the elective system," and committees were allowed to elect a private citizen as Chairman instead of an official (*Imp. Gazetteer*, (p. 286 *et seq.*).

In 1906-7, there were in the whole of India only 19 towns with populations over 100,000, and 91 below 5,000. Between 5,000 and 100,000 there were 236, and between 10,000 and 100,000 there were 391. Altogether, India contained in 1906-7 737 municipalities, 5 less than in 1900-1. Each of the three Presidency cities has its own Act; we are concerned with them only as regards Self-Government; in Bombay (1885), with 72 Councillors, there are 36 elected by Wards, 16 by justices, 2 by University Fellows, 2 by the Chamber of Commerce—56 in all—and 16 nominated by Government. Calcutta (1889) has 50 Commissioners, 25 of whom are elected by Wards, 4 are appointed by the Chamber of Commerce, 4 by the Trades' Association, 2 by the Port Trust, and 15 by Government. Madras (1904) has 36 Commissioners, 20 elected by Divisions, 3 by the Chamber of Commerce, 3 by the Trades' Association, 2 by bodies chosen by the Government and 8 appointed by it. Bombay elects its own President, but in Calcutta and Madras the Local Government appoints the Chairman.

District Municipalities Acts lay down the conditions for the towns in seven Provinces, and vary in their details. In Bombay half are elected, half appointed. In Calcutta two-thirds are elected; in Madras, "part" are elected and part appointed, the Governor in Council fixing the proportion and the election or appointment of the Chairman.\*

District Boards in Madras, taken all together, have nearly one-half of their members elected, but they must be chosen from the members of the Sub-District, or Taluq, Boards, and the members of the Taluq Boards were nominated until 1914, but are now elected. In Bombay at least things are better, for one-half of both Taluq and District Boards must be elected. In Bengal, half the members of the District Boards are elected by

\*All the Acts now in force have been edited by Mr. P. Duraswami Aiyangar, in 2 vols., *The Law of Municipal Corporations in British India*.



the Sub-District Boards, and in the more advanced district two-thirds of the Sub-District Boards are elected, while in others they are nominated.

The Chairman of the District Board is nominated, and is generally the Collector (*Imp. Gazetteer*, p. 301).

We have here the material for a very practicable scheme of Self-Government, election being made universal and nomination done away with, save in very backward tracts, hill-tribe areas, and the like, the power to proclaim which might be left in the hands of the Governor's Cabinet in each Province.

The tentative scheme which has been put forward by the present writer as a basis for discussion, and which has aroused some enthusiasm, is in outline as follows :

*Main principle* : That each person shall have a vote, but that universal suffrage shall be limited to the election of Councils exercising control over small areas where only simple questions arise ; that as the area becomes more extensive, and the questions arising more complicated, the interests concerned larger and more interdependent, the problems to be solved more complex and further-reaching, the electorates shall diminish in number, greater age and higher education being demanded as qualifications. The system suggested is one in which each has a voice, "with a share of the power of guidance over the things he (or she) understands, in which knowledge, experience, and high character shall be the credentials for power, and in which the area over which that power extends shall be proportioned to the development of these characteristics in the one who seeks to wield it".

*1st Grade Councils* : Village (rural) and ward (urban) Panchayats. *Electors* : All adults resident in the area, of sound mind, free from crime, age twenty one and over. *Duties* : Civil and criminal jurisdiction over petty cases arising within the village ; construction, maintenance, and control of the village school and attached workshops, the funds being chiefly supplied by the Provincial Parliament and assigned to the Panchayat

through the District Council, the Education Department in which would fix the curricula and inspect the schools of the District, sanitation ; irrigation and wells ; maintenance of roads within the village ; lighting ; tree-planting ; club and reading-room ; credit bank and co-operative society. Other functions will accrue—arrangements for games, amusements, discussions, lectures, etc. The Ward Councils would take up a similar class of duties, adding inspection of food-stuffs, of dairies and cowsheds, of wells and tanks, towns-scavengering, provision of stands for hired vehicles and carts, troughs for horses and cattle, and the like small municipal work.

*2nd Grade Councils* : Sub-District or Taluq Boards, and Municipalities below a certain population. *Electors* : The members of the Village Panchayats in the Sub-District and Ward Councils, and men and women residing in the sub-district or ward, of the age of twenty-five and over, with education up to school-leaving level. Proportional representation desirable. *Duties* : The control of Secondary and High Schools ; the establishment of model farms in the country and technical institutes in towns ; the control of lighting, water supply, canals and roads, where this part of the administration may be assigned to them by the District Boards ; where Co-operative Societies are not established, they should hold agricultural machinery for hiring to villagers, establish granaries for storage of grain, dairy-farms with stud bulls to be hired to villagers, breeding-stables for horses, and generally they should organise industry, wherever individual capitalists or Co-operative Societies are not available. This side of their work, however, will be of late growth, as the people find it to their advantage to act collectively rather than individually.

*3rd Grade Councils* : District Boards in the country and Municipalities in towns over a certain population. *Electors* : The 2nd Grade Councils, and all men and women resident in the district or town over the age of thirty, and educated up to the Intermediate or other equivalent standard. All the business which concerns the whole district or town would be under their control ; roads, local railways, colleges—agricultural, industrial, arts, science, etc,—the assignment of the proportion

of local taxation to be raised in the sub-divisions of the district, and so on.

*4th Grade Councils* : The Provincial Parliament. *Electors* : The Councils of the 3rd Grade, and all men and women over thirty-five, resident in the Province and educated to the graduate level. *Duties* : The control of the Universities within the Province, and of all Provincial matters. All Provincial legislation would be its work ; the levying of taxation, and the assignment of financial grants, of the levying of minor local taxes, the division of duties among the lower Councils, the whole of the administration of the Province and its relations with other Provinces and the Supreme National Government. The Cabinet of Ministers each with his own portfolio—education, law, home, agriculture, etc.—would be members elected to the Parliament and responsible to it. It is a moot point whether the Governor, appointed by the Crown should receive the resignation of a Ministry defeated as a whole in Parliament, according to the present party system, and should call on a leader of another party to form a new Cabinet, or should call on the Parliament to elect the Ministers holding portfolios, so doing away with the “party” system, and making each man responsible for his own portfolio only.

Provincial Autonomy would be complete, and the Provinces, including the Indian States, would form the United States of India, with a Federal Parliament, the National Parliament, above them. The National Parliament would be elected by the Provincial Parliaments, and have its own Ministry, controlling national affairs, army, navy, railways, post, customs, etc. Some such Federation is necessary to meet the varieties of types, customs, development, and general conditions over the vast areas of India, and to unite it into one Nation.

By the National Parliament would be elected India's representatives in the Parliament of the Empire.

Such is a possible scheme of Self Government, offered as a contribution to debate. It utilises existing materials, but replaces everywhere election by the people for selection by a Government.

I sum up this little book, which seeks to justify India as a Nation claiming her freedom, with an appeal I wrote in *New India*, a daily paper, at the close of some articles on Self-Government. It puts, as strongly as I can put it, India's appeal to England :

O English Nation ! Great and free and proud. Cannot you see ? Cannot you understand ? Cannot you realise that your Indian brothers feel now as you would feel if a foreigner ruled in your land ? That to be a stranger in your own country, an alien in your own land, with no rights save those given by grace of a Government not your own, your inferiority taken for granted, your capacities weighed in alien scales, and measured by the wand of another Nation—you could not bear such a state, such an outlook. India is patient, as you would not be. She does not want to break the link ; she wants to remain part of the Empire ; but an equal part, a Self-Governing Community, standing on a level with the Self-Governing Dominions. Is this passionate longing, sedition ? Is this ineradicable hope, treason ? You dare not say so, you, who bred Hampden, and Sidney, and Milton ; you, whose glory is your Freedom ; you, who boast of your Empire as an Empire of the Free. Who dared to ask if you were fit for freedom ? Charles I asked it. James II asked it. History records the answer that you gave.

What does India want ? She wants everything that any other Nation may claim for itself. To be free in India, as the Englishman is free in England. To be governed by her own men, freely elected by herself. To make and unmake Ministries at her will. To carry arms ; to have her own army, her own navy, her own volunteers. To levy her own taxes ; to make her own budgets ; to educate her own people ; to irrigate her own lands ; to mine her own ores ; to mint her own coin ; to be a Sovereign Nation within her own borders, acknowledging the paramount power of the Imperial Crown, and sending her sons to the Imperial Council. There is nothing to which any man can aspire in his own land from which the Indian must be shut out here.

A large claim, you say. Does the Englishman ask less for himself in England ? If yes, what is there strange that an

Indian should ask the same for himself in India? What is the radical difference between them, which should make an Indian *content* to be a thrall? It is not the "angle of vision" that needs changing. It is the eye, purified from pride and prejudice, that can see clearly, and the heart, purged from arrogance, that can beat with healthy strokes.

England and India hand-in-hand. Yes, that is our hope, for the world's sake. But that it may be so, Justice must replace inequality; for India can never be at rest, till she is free.

### THE GREAT AGITATION\*

When the Congress met at Bombay, 1915, Sir Satyendra Sinha in the chair, it was, so far as the bulk of the delegates were concerned a Home Rule Congress, throbbing with life and new energy. But the older men, the leaders, as said above, did not wish that a separate organisation should be formed, as they thought it would weaken the Congress. We had a meeting of leading adherents of the two parties, and agreed that if the Congress had not started an educative propaganda by August 31st, 1916, a Home Rule League might be started. Many of those who followed my programme were angry with me for yielding so far to the wishes of the older men, especially as Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji had approved the idea. I felt, however, that we could afford to wait eight months for the sake of union, and that it was not for me, a new-comer into the Congress—having attended it for the first time in 1914—to go against the older men, who had borne the burden and heat of the day. I managed therefore to restrain my more enthusiastic followers, with the result that all agreed to the resolution to form a definite scheme, as suggested the year before.

Resolution XIX, on Self-Government, was introduced, says the Anglo-Indian *Madras Mail*, "amidst scenes of great enthusiasm, the speakers being repeatedly cheered, notably the Hon. Mr. Surendranath Bannerji, Mrs. Besant, and the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya". The Resolution was as follows:

\*From Annie Besant: *The Future of Indian Politics*, Chapter IV.

“That this Congress is of opinion that the time has arrived to introduce further and substantial measures of reform towards the attainment of Self-Government as defined in Article I of the Constitution, namely reforming and liberalising the system of Government in this country so as to secure to the people an effective control over it by amongst others :

(a) the introduction of Provincial Autonomy including financial independence ;

(b) expansion and reform of the Legislative Councils so as to make them truly and adequately representative of all sections of the people and to give them effective control over the acts of the Executive Government ;

(c) the reconstruction of the various Executive Councils and the establishment of similar Executive Councils in Provinces where they do not exist ;

(d) the reform or the abolition of the Council of the Secretary of State for India ;

(e) establishment of Legislative Councils in Provinces where they do not now exist ;

(f) the readjustment of the relations between the Secretary of State for India and the Government of India ; and

(g) a liberal measure of Local Self-Government.

That this Congress authorises the All-India Congress Committee to frame a scheme of reform and a programme of continuous work, educative and propagandist, having regard to the principles embodied in this Resolution, and further authorises the said Committee to confer with the Committee that may be appointed by the All-India Muslim League for the same purpose, and to take such further measures as may be necessary ; the said Committee to submit its report on or before the 1st September, 1916, to the General Secretaries, who shall circulate it to the different Provincial Congress Committees as early as possible.”

This Resolution bore its fruit in “the Congress-League Scheme,” carried in the Lucknow Congress of 1916 by the

united parties in the Congress and by the All-India Muslim League. It gave a good programme for the work of 1916, in addition to the before-named propaganda. The Provincial Congress Committees worked separately, and their work was submitted to the All-India Congress Committee, and was thus thoroughly discussed before the latter met the Council of the Muslim League, and came to an agreement with it on all points, including the burning question of Muslim representation. The decision on this was accepted later by the British Government, and was incorporated in the Reform Act.

I wrote from Bombay on December 29, 1915, to *New India*, a letter in which the following occurred: "I expect as this resolution has been carried, the Home Rule League will not be sanctioned this evening. The opportunity of joint action on a common platform between Hindus and Muslims will thus be destroyed. I am, of course, bound by my promise not to start the organisation if the Indian leaders disapprove it, deep as will be the disappointment felt all over the country by the rank and file, who have come to the Congress with the object of joining it. They must console themselves with the fact that the strength of the delegates in favour of a constitutional agitation to be begun at once, and carried on through the year, has forced even the timid to agree to a resolution ordering the All-India Congress Committee to form a programme for such educative work. I hope we shall hear no more about "embarrassing the Government," now that the Congress, under the cautious Presidentship of Sir Satyendra P. Sinha, has ordered this propaganda to be carried on. (*New India*, December 31, 1915, p. 11.)

And again in *New India* of January 6, 1916 (p. 10): "As regards the suspension of the formation of the H.R.L., the position is really quite clear. I had said from the beginning that it was intended to strengthen, not to weaken, the Congress. I had further said, in a note *addressed to every signatory*, that I would not organise the League if the Indian leaders were against it." The enthusiasm raised by the brief three months' work brought a huge number of delegates to the Congress; the

resolution which was carried took up the proposed work of the H.R.L.—my resolution on the 27th December was: “To establish a Home Rule League to carry on an educative propaganda throughout the country”—and adopted, after that meeting, the mandate to the All-India Congress Committee to frame a programme for continuous educational propaganda. I had to choose on the 29th, between obeying this mandate as a member of the All-India Congress Committee, or starting a new organisation to do exactly the same thing, creating a split for the mere sake of leading a new body when the old one had taken up the work. All the well-known Congress leaders were against the formation of a new body under the changed conditions, and my own judgment agreed with theirs. For I should have had to lead the young men into a propaganda without the protection of the elders which I had sought to gain for them, and I, alone, should have been unable to protect them. It would have been madness to do this, when they could do exactly the same work under the aegis of the Congress. The formation was therefore adjourned. If the All-India Congress Committee does not carry out the mandate of the Congress, and if the Congress organisation goes to sleep, then we can go on with our adjourned meeting. But we have no right to insult the trusted men elected by the Congress Circles by assuming that they will disobey the Congress. In Madras, we are already beginning, within one week of our return, and I have no doubt that other Circles will do the same.

If we are to win Home Rule, union is absolutely necessary: the Right and Left Wings of the National Party are united by the Congress; the Congress and the Muslim League have appointed Committees to confer with each other on a scheme of reform, and it rests with us to make Reform and Home Rule identical. Would it have been right, at this critical moment, to play into the hands of the strong party opposed to Indian Self-Government by insisting on a separate movement, a separate label for identical work, yielding to the fissiparous tendency which is the curse of India? Is it not better for us all to sacrifice personalities to principles, names to facts, and, rejoicing that the National Congress has taken the work we proposed to do as an auxiliary, into its own hand, joyfully and



loyally to labour to make its work a success, as it will be if we throw all our enthusiasm and energy into the propaganda it has ordered.

The Resolution, with a summary of the most important speeches, was published as "Home Rule Series, No 1"; "Published for the Editorial Board of the All-India Self-Government Propaganda Fund, by Annie Besant" was the legend on its title-page. It was the first of 31 tracts, of which the first 16 were published by the Board. The names of the Editorial Board may be put on record : they were :

*Bengal* : Hirendranath Datta, A. Rasul, J. Choudhuri.  
*Bombay* : Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Ratansi Morarji, Umar Sobani. *Madras* : Annie Besant, C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, B P. Wadia. *United Provinces* : Tej Bahadur Sapru, C.Y. Chintamani, Wazir Hasan. *Bihar* : Mazar-ul-Haque, Parmeshwar Lall, Moozam Ali Khan.

Members of the Board do not necessarily agree with every page in a pamphlet, but think it, as a whole, useful and worthy of publication.

They were the younger leaders of the then National Party, energetic and determined to work. This was the least aggressive way in which the propaganda for Home Rule could be carried on, while arousing and educating the country, and was added to the work begun in 1915 and continued through 1916 and 1917, so that the volume of propaganda literature grew ever greater during these years.

The year 1916 opened under good auspices. I wrote in *The Commonweal* of January 7, 1916 (p. 2) : "The time for piecemeal reforms is over, and the Congress marches steadily forward under the banner of Self-Government. It is absolutely essential that the propaganda proposed for the Home Rule League and adopted by the Congress, shall go forward actively. Mr. C.Y. Chintamani began it nobly with his brilliant lecture on Self-Government in Poona, with Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak in the chair—the combination proclaiming the reunion of the

Right and Left Wings of the National Party—a necessary preliminary to successful action. Mr. Chintamani, we are sure, will do his part in the U.P. We in Madras are planning our campaign, and we should soon hear from Bihar and from Lucknow. Sindh, we know, is eager for work. The popular propaganda can be carried on upon the broad lines we are already agreed upon, while we prepare the more detailed plan for Easter.

The reunion spoken of was brought about us related in a letter to *New India*, which appeared on December 31, 1915, P. 11 : A matter of great rejoicing is the closing of the breach between the two wings of the National Party, and the declaration that it is not necessary that a delegate should be a member of a Congress Committee in order that he should be elected—thus forbidding any unfair order such as the one by the Bombay Provincial Congress in order to shut out people they disliked. We shall have a United Congress at Lucknow, the first since the Surat split ; the wound has been healed, and what Madras began, Bombay has completed. Let us now all work together for the common Motherland, and be rivals only in devotion to her.

In that same number, in "India and Great Britain," I wrote (p. 3) : "Great and epoch-making is the point in the joint history at which India and England have now arrived, and on their attitude to each other and on the decisions that will be come to at the end of the War, hang mighty issues, affecting the welfare and happiness of yet unborn generations in both lands. We may well spend the months which lie before us, ere the War can end, and the terms of peace can be so settled between the belligerents that there is breathing-time for other problems to be handled, in considering carefully and deeply the many-sided questions which must arise over the re-settlement of the relation of India to Great Britain.

The question of Home Rule for India has now been brought within the sphere of "practical politics" ; the great demonstration by the Congress, and the plain-spoken declarations of the President of the Muslim League meeting, have brought it to

the front ; from all parts of India delegates flocked to acclaim it, and the Congress has been revitalised and placed in the van of the Nation by the enthusiasm aroused by the cry of Home Rule. Never again will it be possible for anyone to declare on the Congress platform that Indian Self-Government is a far-off vision, for it has descended from the world of ideals into the world of acts.

After pointing out that the preparation of the Congress Scheme must be accompanied by "a programme for educational propaganda during the year," so that the people might be competent to discuss the details put before them in the Scheme, I urged that each Congress Circle should prepare leaflets and pamphlets to aim this propaganda. Further, I pleaded that Home Rule would remove the *causes* of India's poverty by "altering the system which breeds the poverty" (p. 3) : If India is, as is so often pointed out, the most poverty-stricken country in the world, there must be a cause for this. If the most poverty-stricken country in the world is also the most costly Government in the world, there is obviously a need for retrenchment. If Indian interests are subordinated to the interests not only of Lancashire, but until lately of Germany, and now of Japan, it is clear that we need a system of administration which will put India's interests first. Hence, if India is to live, her own children must take up the duties of Government, and administer their own affairs. The time has come of which Macaulay prophesied, when India shall be Free and Self-Governing.

Returning to the same subject the following week I showed why "For Great Britain's sake India should have Home Rule." (*Ibid.*, January 14, p. 23) How much stronger would England have been, had she taken the advice of the country given thirty years before by introducing a system of Indian volunteers. If she had had Home Rule, then when the war broke out, India would have ready, and would have sprung to arms, with all the pride of a race conscious of its freedom, to defend the Empire in which she was a partner, to make Egypt and the Suez Canal as safe as the centre of England. The War would have been

over in a few weeks, if indeed it had ever begun, with the millions of a free and armed India standing forward to protect the Empire.

For when Home Rule has obliterated the sad memories of the past, and when Indians in England and Englishmen in India meet as equals, as citizens, as welcome residents in each other's countries, in the mutual respect and trust that can only grow out of equal freedom, then indeed shall they be sharers in an Empire, peaceful, free, and prosperous. Then shall they be knit together by ties of love that nothing can rend a under. Then shall East and West understand each other, hand clasped in hand, clear eyes shining on each other in mutual friendship, mutual helpfulness. Then shall the designs of Providence in bringing them together be no longer inscrutable, for they shall form an Empire that none shall dare to threaten, an Empire that shall be the home of Liberty, the Guardian of weak Nations, the terror of the would-be oppressor, the glorious home of Science, of Literature, of Art, an Empire which shall unite East and West, in which, "Righteousness and Peace shall have kissed each other". (*Ibid.*, January 14, p. 23.)

If the year 1916 marked the beginning of a new phase in the struggle for Liberty, it also saw the beginning of a new form of resistance to it. The growing strength of the Home Rule movement during the autumn of 1915 alarmed the Government of Madras, which possessed, perhaps, the most reactionary of the Civilian class in its Executive Council and bureaucratic Government, and Lord Pentland, the then Governor, was pliant in their hands—a well-meaning but weak man.

They determined on repression, and the Press Act, the Act which placed every newspaper at the mercy of the Local Government was invoked. On May 26, 1919, notice was served on *New India*, and a security levied of Rs. 2,000, paid on June 5. It was the first step of the Pentland Government on the path that led quickly to the Reform Act of 1919. Incidentally, the first Court of the Hindu University, of which I was a member, took place on August 12 of the same year. Naturally,

the levy of security could make no difference in the well-considered policy of *New India*, and the security was forfeited on August 28, and a new security of Rs. 10,000 levied. The Act stated that the security might be given in Government Promissory Notes, or in cash : the Government refused the Notes and insisted on the cash. When the Press Bill was before the Council, the Law Officer, Mr. Sinha, had promised that interest should always be paid on the money taken as security, saying that it was always invested, and therefore interest accrued. The Madras Government, however, did not feel itself bound by the pledge of the Government of India ; it refused the Government paper, insisted on cash, and some of its agents put the interest into the Government treasury, thus levying on *New India* a continuing fine of Rs. 350 a year, reckoning interest at the low figure of 3½ per cent. Such were the pleasant little ways of the Madras Government at that time.

Being a fighter against oppression, I continued to edit *New India* on the same lines, and began an action against the Government for the recovery of the forfeited security.

I knew it was a hopeless task from the beginning, as the Press Act was so worded that no one penalised by the Executive under it could possibly escape, as had been pointed out by Sir Lawrence Jenkins, the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court. But in fighting bad law, every opportunity must be seized, so beginning with a Special Bench in the Madras Court (September 27, 1916) I fought on to the Privy Council. Mr. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar made a fine effort on a technical legal point, but could not carry it. The Acting Chief Justice acquitted me of all sedition and admitted my perfect loyalty to the Crown, but, like his peer in the Calcutta Court, he thought some of the articles came within the Act.

This all made good propaganda, and educated the people to understand the benefits of bureaucratic rule. The advantage of going on to the Privy Council was that it tied up the bureaucratic hands, while *New India* though under heavy security and liable to have the press forfeited after a second

forfeiture of the security, could go on upon its unrepentant way until the first security case was finally decided.

Two Home Rule Leagues were formed during the year 1916. Mr. Tilak formed one and I the other, on the ground that some people loved him and hated me, and others hated him and loved me ; hence working-together-separately was the best policy. We of the Congress of 1915 formed our All-India Home Rule League in September 1, 1916, according to the agreement reached in Bombay at Christmas, 1915. It worked splendidly and successfully through the remaining months of 1916, through 1917 and 1918.

A "Home Rule (English Auxiliary) League" was formed in England during 1916, and in fact, it preceded ours. It worked most actively in Britain, representing the wish of India for Freedom within the Empire, printed and circulated large numbers of pamphlets, and created in England so lively an interest in India that the Government there looked on it suspiciously, without the smallest reason, unless it were that after the Government had persuaded the publishers in England of a little sixpenny book of mine, called *India A—Nation*, to withdraw it from circulation, the English Auxiliary printed a pretty half-crown edition of it, and sent it to every member of Parliament. Muriel, Countess De La Warr, Miss Barbara Villiers, Mr. George Lansbury—before the days of "direct action"—and Mr. John Scurr, were the most prominent members of it.

At the Congress of 1916, at Lucknow, we had a splendid gathering. At many meetings through the year we had hammered out our Scheme, as said above, and it was passed both by the Congress and the Muslim League.

Misfortunes make strange bed-fellows, and the Madras Government, casting about for a new weapon against the irrepressible Home Rulers—who continued their constitutional struggle for Reforms and had now a Congress-League Scheme which they were bent on popularising—formed by some of its members an alliance with Dr. Nair, a powerful writer with a

savage pen, and, regarding the Home Rule movement as chiefly among Brahmanas, pre-eminently the intelligentsia of the country and predominant among Congress leaders, it was resolved to stir up the Non-Brahmanas—who included most of the great landlords and the wealthy merchant class, as well as a majority of the industrial workers—against the Brahmanas. The landlords and rich merchants were even more rigid—being more rarely English-educated—in their exclusion of lower caste Hindus and outcastes than the Brahmanas. In fact, the leaders in the uplift of the submerged classes were mostly Brahmanas, and especially on the West Coast, where outcastes were treated worse than elsewhere, the Brahmanas let the crusade in which—touched by the spirit of Liberty—the outcastes began to establish their right to use all public roads like other citizens; in fact a great memorial against such use was sent up by “high-class non-Brahmanas” to Lord Pentland, when the outcastes, led by a Brahmana, walked in procession through a road which the petitioners tried to keep shut against them. When we returned from the Lucknow Congress of 1916, we found the results of the non-Brahmana movement already marked. It had declared itself against Home Rule, supported the British autocracy, and began a furious attack on all who desired to win political freedom within the British Empire.

In *New India*, January 22, 1917, p. 5, a report is given of a meeting of the newly formed South Indian People’s Association. The movement was then, said Rao Bahadur P. Theagaraya Chetty, only a month old, but they had already Rs. 36,000, and were sure of getting the lakh they wanted to start a paper in a short time. It was a wealthy party. Mr. Kandasawmi Chetty said :

“Government by the people meant that they should have a body of intelligent people. Were they in a position to have Government by the people? Would they prefer to be governed by a typical Englishman, or a typical Brahmana? The Englishman was a selfish creature. He was a mercantile being, but he had also ideals of freedom, justice and fairplay. So he would rather throw himself on the mercy of the liberty-loving Englishman, than of an oligarchy which played upon the people and their

weakness. Their Home Rule meant Anti-Foreign Rule. He could not bring himself to think that an Englishman was a common enemy. He might be an enemy of the Brahmanas, but certainly he was not an enemy of the Non-Brahmanas. Non-Brahmanas did not look upon the Government or Englishmen as enemies."

Thus began the Hymn of Hate against a small but brilliantly intellectual and cultured class ; it became a vendetta, a crusade by rank, wealth, and numbers against a class for the most part poor, but highly educated ; for the Brahmanas, traditionally learned, had grasped at English education, and had thereby risen to posts in which high intellectual ability and knowledge of English were required, while the bulk of the poor of that caste crowded the Government subordinate offices, on miserable salaries as clerks, translators, etc.

The speech was typical not only in its hate but in its misrepresentation. It will be seen from the preceding extracts that the Reformers did not hate the English, though they fought the Bureaucracy that denied liberty to the Nation. Constantly they put forward the English ideals of Liberty, and urged a reform of the system of Government for England's sake as well as for India's. The whole Home Rule movement was designed to benefit both countries, and one of the objects of the All-India Home Rule League was to strengthen the British connection and to win the status of a Free Nation as part of a Commonwealth of Free Nations under the British Crown. Home Rulers recognised that Home Rule was a condition of preserving the British connection.

The alliance between members of the Madras Government and the non-Brahmana, or rather anti-Brahmana, crusade was shown by the presence of Sir Alexander Cardew at a meeting held in Madras on November 24, 1917, when Dr. Nair, Rao Bahadur P. Theagaraya Chetty, K Venkata Reddi Naidu and R. Venkataratnam Naidu, with the Director of Public Instruction were present, to welcome the non-Brahmana graduates of the year, and Dr. Nair emphasised the interest taken by Sir Alexander in Dravidian graduates. Sir Alexander expressed



the hope that there would be many more, and *New India* wrote: "The presence of Sir Alexander Cardew at the above gathering requires notice. He must have known that the Association which he patronised was a separatist one; it is in fact the parent of the body now working mischief as the Liberal Federation. That Sir Alexander Cardew should have so prominently associated himself with that body, and that too in a distinctly sectarian function, is a matter to be considered by the general public. Supporters are being canvassed for such new movements on the plea that its members can expect at any time to bask in official sunshine; and the task of such canvassers is very considerably facilitated by the open way in which high officials of the Government associate with them. The next step will probably be a public appeal by similarly placed gentlemen to join the new movement, or to supply funds to it. Incidents of this type indicate to what undignified lengths persons are now prepared to go in thwarting our National aspirations. (*Loc cit.*, November 26, 1917.

Thus fostered, the movement spread rapidly, and proved to be a veritable sower of the dragon-seeds of hatred against the small class of Brhmanas among the people of the Presidency; later, it was naturally followed by bitter attacks from the out-castes against all who were caste-men.

The early months of 1917—so far as we were concerned—were passed in active propaganda, popularising the Congress-League Scheme. On the other hand, Lord Pentland took occasion to say that in the Legislative Council.

All thoughts of the early grant of Responsible Self-Government should be put entirely out of mind. (*New India*, May 25, 1917, p. 4).

That was impossible, and we went on with our work. Then came a blow which was intended to put a sudden end to the work of the paper, then regarded as the chief advocate of Home Rule; *New India*—as it would not stop for securities—should be stopped by the internment of its Editor, its Assistant Editor, and its liveliest and most pungent contributor—Annie

Besant, B.P. Wadia and G.S. Arundale. An order of internment was issued with a few days grace ; that executed, the press could be sequestered and all would be well. It was served on June 16, the day after the anniversary of the signing of Magna Carta in 1215. No reason assigned, was and we never learnt what was our exact offence. Lord Pentland called me to see him, but refused any information. I suspended *New India* on June 18th, in order to save the security and the press, sold the Vasanta Press to Rai Sahab G. Soobbiah Chetty, and recovered its Rs. 5,000 security on June 19 ; on June 20, I sold *The Commonwealth* Press to Mr. Ranga Reddi, and the *New India* Press to Mr. P.K. Telang, recovering Rs. 2,000 and Rs. 10,000, and issued a notice to *New India* subscribers ; the paper appeared again on the 21st ; it was quick work, but the time was short, and I had to "hustle". So we had three brand new press-owners, under securities of only Rs. 2,000 each, instead of Rs. 17,000. I do not think that the Press Act was intended to have a motor-car, driven by a lady of nearly seventy, rushed through it in this way, like the proverbial "coach and horses". But then it was drawn up by bureaucrats who had had no experience of Home Rulers ; they were accustomed to revolutionaries and even passive resisters, but had never met with constitutional fighters for Liberty, who regarded them with amused unconcern, and perfect good temper. Before we left, Mr. Horniman and Mr. Kelkar kindly came over from Bombay and Poona to offer help, and each wrote an article for *New India* of the 21st ; as they were already editors we thought it was better that Mr. P.K. Telang should assume charge of *New India*, and he promptly filled the gap. He forfeited the security in due course, and another Rs. 10,000 was levied. When I resumed the editorship, Mr. Telang presented the press to Mr. Ranga Reddi, who started again with another Rs. 2,000. The magistrate however most improperly kept the Rs. 10,000 on various excuses for over a year, but when another magistrate took his place, the money was at once refunded. The long fight made good propaganda, and helped Home Rule immensely.

For when we, the interned, foregathered at Ootacamund, a whirlwind broke out, raged up and down the country, stormed over to Britain, Russia, France, America, at several hundred

miles an hour. Questions were asked in the House of Commons and in the Viceroy's Legislative Council, Members of Parliament, like the babes in the wood, were snowed over with leaves—of paper. "Who would have thought," said a very high official pensively, "that there would have been such a fuss about one old woman?" Crowds of people and many popular leaders joined the Home Rule League. Meetings were held, resolutions flew about; C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Jannadas Dwarkadas, Congressmen everywhere, fanned the storm and rode it. They preserved perfect order; never a window was broken; never a riot occurred; never a policeman was assaulted; never a man, a woman or a child went to gaol. For three months the vehement agitation continued unbrokenly, without ever breaking a law, and the students who wanted to strike were kept in their schools and colleges, and then—came the declaration of August 20, 1917, that the goal of Great Britain in India was Responsible Government, and an announcement that the Secretary of State for India was coming thither, to learn the wishes of the people. To "obtain a calm atmosphere" the three interness were to be liberated.

It was a truly constitutional triumph, won by a United India, and was crowned by the election of the Home Rule President as President of the National Congress of 1917.

Mr. Montagu, the Secretary of State, came to India, and travelled with the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, all over India, meeting Deputations representing every type of political opinion. The National Congress and the Muslim League, and the two Home Rule Leagues presented at Delhi on November 26, 1917, memorials asking for Home Rule. The National Congress and the League were represented by a Joint Deputation from their respective Executives, and the memorial was read by Mr. Surendranath Bannerji. After a careful and argumentative presentation of the Indian case, it wound up: "We submit that the reforms for which the National Congress and the Muslim League plead, are needed as much in the interest of the good government of the country and the happiness and prosperity of the people as for the legitimate satisfaction of our National self-respect and for a due

recognition of India's place among the free and civilised Nations of the Empire and the outside world. Nor are they less necessary to strengthen and solidify the British connection with this ancient land. India has given freely of her love and service to England, and she aspires to attain to her proper place of equality and honour in the Commonwealth of Nations, which are proud to own fidelity to his imperial Majesty the King-Emperor. If, as has been said, the British Empire is the greatest secular power on earth making for the good a mankind, India is hopeful and confident that she will not be denied what is in every way due to her, especially after this great War of Liberty, in which it has been authoritatively recognised that she has played a distinguished and honourable part.

The two Home Rule Leagues were represented by Mr. Tilak and myself respectively and we also read our memorials. At Madras, the All-India Home Rule League presented Mr. Montagu with a million verified signatures, gathered in the Presidency, and conveyed to him in three or four carts.

It was the end of a strenuous struggle of three crowded years ; to me the end of another stage in twenty-four years of steady labour ; to the Congress the end of one stage in its thirty-three years of political efforts for liberty.

Thenceforth Liberty's battle entered on another phase.

### THE NEW SPIRIT IN INDIA\*

Writing at the end of 1917, I sketched out what seemed to me to be the Causes of what I called "the New Spirit in India". It was part of my speech as President of the National Congress, the post which, since 1885, had been regarded as the highest place within the Nation's gift, the proof of her fullest confidence and love. Reading that sketch to-day, in 1922, I do not feel that I can better it, so I use it here, and it has the advantage of marking the place held at the end of 1917 by the National Movement in India, as seen by one who was

\*From Annie Besant. *The Future of Indian Politics* Chapter V.

among the leaders in that struggle which had ended in triumph.

Apart from the natural exchange of thought between East and West, the influence of English education, literature and ideals, the effect of travel in Europe, Japan and the United States of America, and other recognised causes for the changed outlook in India, there have been special forces at work during the last few years to arouse a New Spirit in India, and to alter her attitude of mind. These may be summed up as :

- (a) The Awakening of Asia.
- (b) Discussions abroad on Alien Rule and Imperial Reconstruction.
- (c) Loss of Belief in the Superiority of the White Races.
- (d) The Awakening of the Merchants.
- (e) The Awakening of the Women to claim their Ancient Position.
- (f) The Awakening of the Masses,

Each of these causes has had its share in the splendid change of attitude in the Indian Nation, in the uprising of a spirit of pride of country, of independence, of self-reliance, of dignity, of self-respect. The War has quickened the rate of evolution of the world, and no country has experienced the quickening more than our Motherland.

#### *(a) The Awakening of Asia*

In a conversation I had with Lord Minto, soon after his arrival as Viceroy, he discussed the so-called "unrest in India," and recognised it as the inevitable result of English Education, of English Ideals of Democracy, of the Japanese victory over Russia, and of the changing conditions in the outer world. I was therefore not surprised to read his remark that he recognised, "frankly and publicly, that new aspirations were stirring in the hearts of the people, that they were part of a larger movement common to the whole East, and that it was necessary to satisfy them to a reasonable extent by giving them a larger share in the administration".

But the present movement in India will be very poorly understood, if it be regarded only in connection with the movement in the East. The awakening of Asia is part of a world-movement, which has been quickened into marvellous rapidity by the World War. The world-movement is towards Democracy, and for the West dates from the breaking away of the American Colonies from Great Britain, consummated in 1776, and its sequel in the French Revolution of 1789. Needless to say that its root was in the growth of modern science undermining the fabric of intellectual servitude, in the work of the Encyclopaedists, and in that of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and of Thomas Paine. In the East, the swift changes in Japan, the success of the Japanese Empire against Russia, the downfall of the Manchu dynasty in China and the establishment of a Chinese Republic, the efforts at improvement in Persia, hindered by the interference of Russia and Great Britain with her growing ambition, and the creation of British and Russian "spheres of influence," depriving her of her just liberty, and now the Russian Revolution and the probable rise of a Russian Republic in Europe and Asia, have all entirely changed the conditions before existing in India. Across Asia, beyond the Himalayas, stretch free and self-ruling Nations. India no longer sees as her Asian neighbours the huge domains of a Tsar and a Chinese despot, and compares her condition under British rule with those of their subject populations. British rule profited by the comparison, at least until 1905, when the great period of repression set in. But in future, unless India wins Self-Government, she will look enviously at her Self-Government neighbours, and the contrast will intensify her unrest.

But even if she gains Home Rule, as I believe she will, her position in the Empire will imperatively demand that she shall be strong as well as free. She becomes not only a vulnerable point in the Empire, as the Asian Nations evolve their own ambitions and rivalries, but also a possession to be battled for. Mr. Laing once said: "India is the milch-cow of England," a Kamadhenu, in fact, a "cow of plenty"; and if that view should arise in Asia, the ownership of the milch-cow would become a matter of dispute, as of old between

Vashishtha and Vishvamitra. Hence India must be capable of self-defence both by land and sea. There may be a struggle for the primacy of Asia, for supremacy in the Pacific, for the mastery of Australasia, to say nothing of the inevitable trade-struggles, in which Japan is already endangering Indian industry and Indian trade, while India is unable to protect herself.

In order to face these larger issues with equanimity, the Empire requires a contented, strong, self-dependent and armed India, able to hold her own and to aid the Dominions, especially Australia, with her small population and immense unoccupied and undefended area. India alone has the manpower which can effectively maintain the Empire in Asia, and it is a short-sighted, a criminally short-sighted policy not to build up her strength as a Self-Governing State within the Commonwealth of Free Nations under the British Crown. The Englishmen in India talk loudly of their interests; what can this mere handful do to protect their interests against attack in the coming years? Only in a free and powerful India will they be safe. Those who read Japanese papers know how strongly, even during the War, they parade unchecked their pro-German sympathies, and how likely after the War is an alliance between these two ambitious and warlike Nations. Japan will come out of the War with her army and navy unweakened, and her trade immensely strengthened. Every consideration of sane statesmanship should lead Great Britain to trust India more than Japan, so that the British Empire in Asia may rest on the sure foundation of Indian loyalty, the loyalty of a free and contented people, rather than be dependent on the continued friendship of a possible future rival. For international friendships are governed by National interests, and are built on quicksands, not on rock.

Englishmen in India must give up the idea that English dominance is necessary for the protection of their interests, amounting, in 1915, to £365,399,000 sterling. They do not claim to dominate the United States of America, because they have invested there £ 688,078,000. They do not claim to dominate the Argentine Republic, because they have invested there £ 269,808,000. Why then should they claim to dominate

India on the ground of their investments? Britons must give up the idea that India is a possession to be exploited for their own benefit, and must see her as a friend, an equal, a Self-Governing Dominion within the Empire, a Nation like themselves, a willing partner in the Empire, but not a dependent. The democratic movement in Japan, China and Russia in Asia has sympathetically affected India, and it is idle to pretend that it will cease to affect her.

(b) *Discussions Abroad on Alien Rule and Reconstruction*

But there are other causes which have been working in India, consequent on the British attitude against autocracy and in defence of freedom in Europe, while her attitude to India has, until lately, been left in doubt. Therefore, I spoke of a splendid opportunity lost. India at first believed wholeheartedly that Great Britain was fighting for the freedom of all Nationalities. Even now, Mr. Asquith declared—in his speech in the House of Commons reported here last October, on the peace resolution of Mr. Ramsay Macdonald—that “the Allies are fighting for nothing but freedom,” and, an important addition—“for nothing short of freedom”. In his speech declaring that Britain would stand by France in her claim for the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine, he spoke of “the intolerable degradation of a foreign yoke”. Is such a yoke less intolerable, less wounding to self-respect, here than in Alsace-Lorraine, where the rulers and the ruled are both of European blood, similar in religion and habits? As the War went on, India slowly and unwillingly came to realise that the hatred of autocracy was confined to autocracy in the West, and that the degradation was only regarded as intolerable for men of white races; that freedom was lavishly promised to all except to India; that new powers were to be given to the Dominions, but not to India. India was markedly left out of the speeches of statesmen dealing with the future of the Empire, and at last there was plain talk of the White Empire, the Empire of the Five Nations, and the “coloured races” were lumped together as the wards of the White Empire, doomed to an indefinite minority.



The peril was pressing ; the menace unmistakable. The Reconstruction of the Empire was on the anvil ; what was to be India's place therein ? The Dominions were proclaimed as partners : was India to remain a Dependency ? Mr. Bonar Law bade the Dominions strike while the iron was hot ; was India to wait till it was cold ? India saw her soldiers fighting for freedom in Flanders, in France, in Gallipoli, in Asia Minor, in China, in Africa ; was she to have no share of the freedom for which she fought ? At last she sprang to her feet and cried, in the words of one of her noblest sons : "Freedom is my birthright ; and I want it." The words "Home Rule" became her Mantram. She claimed her place in the Empire.

Thus, while she continued to support, and even to increase, her army abroad, fighting for the Empire, and poured out her treasures as water for Hospital Ships, War Funds, Red Cross Organisations, and the gigantic War Loan, a dawning fear oppressed her, lest, if she did not take order with her own household, success in the War for the Empire might mean decreased liberty for herself.

The recognition of the right of the Indian Government to make its voice heard in Imperial matters, when they were under discussion in an Imperial Conference, was a step in the right direction. But disappointment was felt that while other countries were represented by responsible Ministers, the representation in India's case was of the Government, of a Government irresponsible to her, and not the representative of herself. No fault was found with the choice itself, but only with the non-representative character of the chosen, for they were selected by the Government, and not by the elected members of the Supreme Council. This defect in the resolution moved by the Hon. Khan Bahadur M.M. Shafi on October 2, 1915, was pointed out by the Hon. Mr. Surendranath Bannerji. He said :

"My Lord, in view of a situation so full of hope and promise, it seems to me that my friend's Resolution does not go far enough. He pleads for *official* representation at the Imperial Conference : he does not plead for *popular* represen-

tation. He urges that an address be presented to His Majesty's Government, through the Secretary of State for India, for official representation at the Imperial Council. My Lord, official representation may mean little or nothing. It may indeed be attended with some risk ; for I am sorry to have to say—but say it I must—that our officials do not always see eye to eye with us as regards many great public questions which affect this country : and indeed their views, judged from our standpoint, may sometimes seem adverse to our interests. At the same time, my Lord, I recognise the fact that the Imperial Conference is an assemblage of officials pure and simple, consisting of Ministers of the United Kingdom and of the Self-Governing Colonies. But, my Lord, there is an essential difference between them and ourselves. In their case, the Ministers are the elect of the people, their organ and their voice, answerable to them for their conduct and their proceedings. In our case, our officials are public servants in name, but in reality they are the masters of the public. The situation may improve, and I trust it will, under the liberalising influence of your Excellency's beneficent administration, but we must take things as they are, and not indulge in building castles in the air which may vanish "like the baseless fabric of a vision".

It was said to be an epoch-making event that "Indian Representatives" took part in the Conference. Representatives they were, but, as said, of the British Government in India, not of India, whereas their colleagues represented their Nations. They did good work, none the less, for they were able and experienced men, though they failed us in the Imperial Preference Conference, and, partially, on the Indentured Labour question. Yet we hope that the presence in the Conference of men of Indian birth may prove to be the proverbial "thin end of the wedge," and may have convinced their colleagues that, while India was still a Dependency, India's sons were fully their equals.

The Report of the Public Services Commission, though now too obviously obsolete to be discussed, caused both disappointment and resentment ; for it showed that, in the eyes of the majority of the Commissioners, English domination in

Indian administration was to be perpetual, and that 30 years hence she would only hold a pitiful 25 per cent of the higher appointments in the I.C.S. and the Police. I cannot, however, mention that Commission, even in passing, without voicing India's thanks to the Hon. Mr. Justice Rahim, for his rare courage in writing a solitary Minute of Dissent, in which he totally rejected the Report, and laid down the right principles which should govern recruitment for the Indian Civil Services.

India had but three representatives on the Commission ; G.K. Gokhale died ere it made its Report. his end quickened by his sufferings during its work, by the humiliation of the way in which his countrymen were treated. Of Mr. Abdur Rahim I have already spoken. The Hon. Mr. M.B. Chaubal signed the Report, but dissented from some of its most important recommendations. The whole Report was written "before the flood," and it is now merely an antiquarian curiosity.

India, for all these reasons, was forced to see before her a future of perpetual subordination : the Briton rules in Great Britain, the Frenchman in France, the American in America, each Dominion in its own area, but the Indian was to rule nowhere ; alone among the peoples of the world, he was not to feel his own country as his own. "Britain for the British" was right and natural ; "India for the Indians" was wrong, even seditious. It must be "India for the Empire," or not even for the Empire, but "for the rest of the Empire," careless of herself. "British support for British Trade" was patriotic and proper in Britain. "Svadeshi goods for Indians" showed a petty and anti-Imperial spirit in India. The Indian was to continue to live perpetually, and even thankfully, as Gopal Krishna Gokhale said he lived now, in "an atmosphere of inferiority," and to be proud to be a citizen (without rights) of the Empire, while its other component Nations were to be citizens (with rights) in their own countries first, and citizens of the Empire secondarily. Just as her trust in Great Britain was strained nearly to breaking point came the glad news of Mr. Montagu's appointment as Secretary of State for India, of the Viceroy's invitation to him, and of his coming to hear

for himself what India wanted. It was a ray of sunshine breaking through the gloom, confidence in Great Britain revived, and glad preparation was made to welcome the coming of a friend.

The attitude of India has changed to meet the changed attitude of the Governments of India and Great Britain, But let none imagine that the consequential change of attitude connotes any change in her determination to win Home Rule. She is ready to consider terms of peace, but it must be "peace with honour," and honour in this connection means Freedom. If this be not granted, an even more vigorous agitation will begin.

*(c) Loss of Belief in the Superiority of the White Races*

The undermining of this belief dates from the spreading of the Arya Samaj and the Theosophical Society. Both bodies sought to lead the Indian people to a sense of the value of their own civilization, to pride in their past, creating self-respect in the present, and self-confidence in the future. They destroyed the unhealthy inclination to imitate the West in all things, and taught discrimination, the using only of what was valuable in western thought and culture, instead of a mere slavish copying of everything. Another great force was that of Swami Vivekananda, alike in his passionate love and admiration for India, and his exposure of the evils resulting from Materialism in the West. Take the following :

Children of India, I am here to speak to you today about some practical things, and my object in remaining you about the glories of the past is simply this. Many times have I been told that looking into the past only degenerates and leads to nothing, and that we should look to the future. That is true. But out of the past is built the future. Look back, therefore, as far as you can, drink deep of the eternal fountains that are behind, and after that, look forward, march forward, and make India brighter, greater, much higher than she ever was. Our ancestors were great. We must recall that. We must learn the elements of our being, the blood that courses in our

veins ; we must have faith in that blood, and what it did in the past : and out of that faith, and consciousness of past greatness, we must build an India yet greater than what she has been.

And again :

I know for certain that millions, I say deliberately, millions, in every civilised land are waiting for the message that will save them from the hideous abyss of materialism, into which modern money-worship is driving them headlong, and many of the leaders of the new Social Movements have already discovered that Vedanta in his highest form can alone spiritualise their social aspirations.

The process was continued by the admiration of Samskrit literature expressed by European scholars and philosophers. But the effect of these was confined to the few and did not reach the many. The first great shock to their belief in white superiority came from the triumph of Japan over Russia, the facing of a huge European Power by a comparatively small eastern Nation, the exposure of the weakness and rottenness of the Russian leaders, and the contrast with their hardy virile opponents, ready to sacrifice everything for their country.

The second great shock has come from the frank brutality of German theories of the State, and their practical carrying out in the treatment of conquered districts, and the laying waste of evacuated areas in retreat. The teachings of Bismarck and their practical application in France, Flanders, Belgium, Poland and Serbia have destroyed all the glamour of the superiority of Christendom over Asia. Its vaunted civilisation is seen to be but a thin veneer, and its religion a matter of form rather than of life. Gazing from afar at the ghastly heaps of the dead and the hosts of the mutilated, at science turned into devilry, and ever inventing new tortures for rending and slaying, Asia may be forgiven for thinking that, on the whole, she prefers her own religions and her own civilisations.

But even deeper than the outer tumult of War has pierced the doubt as to the reality of the Ideals of Liberty and Natio-

nality so loudly proclaimed by the foremost western Nations, the doubt of the honesty of their champions. Sir James Meston said truly, a short time ago, that he had never, in his long experience, known Indians in so distrustful and suspicious a mood as that which he met in them to-day. And that is so. For long years Indian have been chafing over the many breaches of promises and pledges to them that remain unredeemed. The maintenance here of a system of political repression, of coercive measures increased in number and more harshly applied since 1902, the carrying of the system to a wider extent since the War for the sanctity of treaties and for the protection of Nationalities has been going on, have deepened the mistrust. A frank and courageous statesmanship applied to the honest carrying out of large reforms too long delayed, can alone remove it. The time for political tinkering is past ; the time for wise and definite changes is here.

To these deep causes must be added the comparison between the progressive policy of some of the Indian States in matters which most affect the happiness of the people, and the slow advance made under British administration. The Indian notes that this advance is made under the guidance of rulers and ministers of his own race. When he sees that the suggestions made in the People's Assembly in Mysore are fully considered and, when possible, given effect to, he realises that without the forms of power, the members exercise more real power than those in our Legislative Councils. He sees education spreading, new industries fostered, villagers encouraged to manage their own affairs and take the burden of their own responsibility, and he wonders why Indian incapacity is so much more efficient than British capacity.

Perhaps, after all, for Indians, Indian rule may be the best.

#### (d) *The Awakening of the Merchants*

Of the many forces that have created New India, the awakening of the Merchants into political life is perhaps the most potent, and the most pregnant with happy possibilities. Sir Dorab Tata, in the Industrial Conference in Bombay, 1915, advocated the yoking together of Politics and Industry. It is

now coming about. Hitherto the merchants had remained immersed in their own occupations, but they were awakened by the War to the necessity of taking part in politics by finding that those very occupations were threatened with disaster by the attitude of the Government ; as for instance, the refusal to lend a helping hand to industries which had been connected closely with German trade and were menaced with ruin by the War ; by the refusal to aid the efforts made to replace necessities—hitherto supplied by Germany—by the founding or financing the factories for their production at home ; by the restrictions put on trade under pretext of the War, that prevented the legitimate expansion of promising branches of industry ; by the absence of effort to relieve the stringency of the money market, wealthy merchants being unable to obtain cash to meet their liabilities here, because their English debtors could not transmit the money they owed ; some were even obliged to sell the depreciated Government paper at heavy loss in order to maintain their credit ; in other cases War Bonds were offered to them in lieu of cash for goods supplied. The details have varied in different centres, and the wealthy and independent merchants of Bombay have suffered less than the merchants of Madras, with whose difficulties I am naturally more familiar.

There, added difficulties constantly arise from the favouritism shown by the Presidency Bank to English, as compared with Indian, clients, and the absence of Indians from its Directorate, complained of for years. The anxiety left by the merchants was largely increased by the depreciation of Government paper, and apart from the heavy losses of capital incurred when necessity forced holders to sell for cash, an uneasy feeling arose as to the stability of the Government, when its securities fell so low.

Another disturbing cause was the alienation during many years of lands and minerals to foreigners, the Government looking on with indifference.

The copra and coir industry of the West Coast had passed into German hands ; struck away from them by the War, there

was danger of its being absorbed by the English ; happily the firm of Tata and Sons stepped in the rescued it, and it remains an Indian industry. Ten years ago, the working of the blend known as monazite, an ingredient in munitions, was absorbed by Germany. Indian mica mines became German property. Undressed hides were exported wholesale to Germany, although Mysore had shewn that they could be dressed and tanned better in Indian than in European factories, and only a little encouragement and help were needed to ensure their dressing and tanning, if not also their working, here. Instead of that, the undressed hides were bought up by Government at a price fixed by themselves, and were largely exported to be dressed, tanned and worked abroad. The Viceroy, speaking in the Supreme Council on September 5th last, stated that large orders had been given to "tanners in India," and that experimental work in tanning had yielded results which promised success on a commercial scale ; he expressed the hope that, after the War, the tanning industry would undergo a great expansion for general purposes. But hide merchants are distressed by an order that hides are to be purchased at War prices, the British War Office buying them to provide with leather goods the civilian population in Britain. But what has the War Office to do with providing boots for civilians, and why should India be drained for civil as well as for military purposes ? If the tanning experiments are being carried on with India's money by experts paid by India, and not by British capitalists, then the outcome should be the property of India and enrich the people of the country, not British merchants and manufacturers settled here.

The War has turned the attention of Government to the wisdom of utilising India's immense natural resources, and the Viceroy speaks of organising these resources with "a view to making India more self-contained, and less dependent on the outer world for the supplies of manufactured goods". We heartily endorse this view. This has long been the cry from Indians, for India, with her varieties of soil and climate, can produce all the materials she needs, and with her surplus goods she can as Phillimore said of her in the seventeenth century—"with the droppings of her oil feed distant Nations". But the



East India Company first, the British Government next, and lately exploiting bodies of Imperialist Traders, have vehemently insisted that India should supply raw materials, export them for manufacture abroad, and purchase, preferably within the Empire, the goods manufactured out of them. As Macaulay pointed out, the marvellous expansion of English industry was contemporaneous with the impoverishment of India. The reversal of this policy by the present Viceroy will earn India's undying gratitude, if he fosters Indian industries and not English industries in India. A witness before the Industries Commission stated that India should raise products for use outside, that is, as the East India Company put it, become a plantation for the supply of raw materials. The Viceroy must pardon us, if previous experience has made us anxious on this point. We cannot forget that a century ago the traces of iron were found in the Central Provinces, and that nothing was done to extract the metal—English then being the world's shop for iron to her own huge profit, and not desiring a rival. It was left for Tata to seize the opportunity, and his shares of Rs. 30 are now sold at Rs. 1,180. He started a great industry, and Tata's steel is sought so largely that he cannot meet the demand. Had the iron been raised and worked here during these long years, we should not now be dependent on Britain for our machinery, the want of which cripples the efforts to found new industries and to expand old ones, in order to supply the demand caused by the necessary absorption of factories in Great Britain for War work.

The Viceroy remarks truly that previous efforts were more sporadic than systematic," but proceeds :

"The marked success which has followed the organisation of research and demonstration work in scientific agriculture, and the assistance which has been given to the mineral industries by the Geological Survey, are striking examples that encourage a holder policy on similar lines for the benefit of other and especially the manufacturing industries."

Here, again, we must pause to remark that some of these experiments in scientific agriculture result in efforts to meet

the demands of England, rather than those of India. India works up short-stapled cotton. Especially in her hand-loom industry, short-stapled cotton suits her. Lancashire wants long-stapled, and cannot get enough from the United States and Egypt. Therefore, India should substitute long, for short-stapled cotton. We confess we do not see the *sequitur*. Nor do we find, in our study of English trade, that England, which is set up as an example to be copied, has followed self-denying ordinances, and has regulated her production so as to help foreign countries to her own detriment.

However, the War has done for India, in awakening the interest of the Government in her industries, that which the attempts of Indian patriots have failed to do. The War brought about the Industries Commission, and the need for munitions has forced industrial organisation for their production. It is for Indian merchants to see, by seizing and utilising the political weapon, that the organization and encouragement of industries by Government—unless it be a Home Government, under their own control—does not reduce Indians to a more subordinate position than they now hold. It is this danger which is playing a great part in the fear which has caused the Awakening of the Merchants. The tea industry, for instance, is in the hands of English planters, and while incomes drawn from other agricultural profits have been taxed, incomes derived from tea—which is certainly an agricultural profit—have wholly escaped till lately. If this policy be pursued, and the fostering of industries with Indian money places the industries in foreign hands, Indians will, even more than now, be dubashes, and clerks, and other employces of English-captained firms, and will depend ever more and more on wages, driven lower and lower by increasing competition.

The industrial prospects in India are by no means discouraging, if Indians exert themselves to hold their own. Mr. Tover, in his *British India and Its Trade*, says :

“The cotton and jute manufacturers, already conducted on a large scale, offer scope for still further development. Sugar and tobacco are produced in large quantities, but both require

the application of the latest scientific processes of cultivation and manufacture. Oil seeds might be crushed in India instead of being exported ; while cotton seeds, as yet imperfectly utilised, can be turned to good account. Hides and skins, now largely exported raw, might be more largely tanned and dressed in India. Again, the woollen and silken fabrics manufactured in India are mostly coarse fabrics and there is scope for the production of finer goods. Although railways make their own rolling stock, they have to import wheels and axles, tyres and other iron work. At present steel is manufactured on a very small scale, and the number of iron foundries and machine shops, although increasing, is capable of greater expansion. Machinery and machine tools have for the most part to be imported. Millions of agriculturists and artisans use rude tools which might be replaced by similar articles that are more durable and of better make. Improved oil presses and hand looms should find a profitable market. Paper-mills and flour mills might be established in greater numbers. There are openings also for the manufacture of sewing machines, fire-works, rope, boots and shoes, saddlery, harness, clocks, watches, aniline and alazarine dyes, electrical appliances, glass and glassware, tea chests, gloves, rice, starch, matches, lamps, candles, soap, linen, hardware and cutlery.

Obviously, India might be largely self-sufficing, and, as of old, export her surplus. But now her imports are rising, and under the present system her exports do not enrich her as they should.

Imports were steadily rising before the War, but dropped with it (amounts given in pound sterling) :

1911-12—	92,383,200	Piece Goods	28,592,000
12-13—	107,332,490	—	35,536,000
13-14—	122,165,203	—	38,758,000
14-15—	91,952,600	—	28,643,000
15-16—	87,560,169	—	25,175,000

The previous five years also show generally rising imports (amounts given in rupees) :

1906-7—135,50,85,676  
7-8—162,71,55,234  
8-9—143,89,75,796  
9-10—154,48,36,214  
10-11—169,05,72,729

Exports exceeded imports, and the War has made difficulties in the way of realising payment. [Amounts given in pounds sterling.)

1911-12—147,879,060  
12-13—160,899,289  
13-14—162,807,900  
14-15—118,323,300  
15-16—128,356,619

Indian merchants have seen the swift expansion of Japanese trade, and know that it is fostered by the Japanese Government both by protection and with bounties. They have to compete with it in their own land. Is it any wonder that they desire an Indian Government? They see Japanese goods underselling them and flooding their own markets. It is any wonder that they desire a Home Government, that will put duties on these foreign goods and protect their own products?

The furious uprising of the European Associations, ever indifferent to politics which only concern Indian interests, has shown them that their trade rivals dread the transfer of power, because they fear to lose the unfair privileges and advantages which they have always enjoyed, since the humble traders of the seventeenth century became the masters of India. They are not accustomed to a struggle on equal terms, and the prospect dismays them. They want privilege, not justice and a fair field. Much of their fear and anger, the need felt by Sir Hugh Bray for English dominance for the protection of English interests, lie in the fact that they dread the Budget of a Home Government, even more than they dread a fair trade competition.

The Indian merchants now realise that in the trade-war after the end of the present War, they will go down, unless they

have power in their own country. Trade, commerce, industry, organised by the countrymen of the European Chambers of Commerce and Trade Associations, mean ruin to the Indian merchants, traders and manufacturers. The favouritism of Governments and English Banks has spelt hard struggle during the period when organisation was wanting. When it is accompanied by organisation created and ruled by the foreigners, it will spell ruin. Mr. J.W. Root has rightly observed that to give Great Britain, under present circumstances,

the control over Indian foreign trade and internal industry that would be secured by a common tariff would be an unpardonable iniquity. .. Can it be conceived that were India's fiscal arrangements placed to any considerable extent under the control of British legislators, they would not be regulated with an eye to British interests? Intense jealousy of India is always cropping up in everything affecting fiscal or industrial legislation.

Indian merchants are fully alive to this danger, and to avert it they are welcoming Home Rule.

The merchants also realise that fiscal autonomy can only come with political autonomy. Only the illogical demand fiscal autonomy and reject Home Rule. A budget framed by an Indian Finance Member would aim at a much increased expenditure on education, sanitation and irrigation—an expenditure that would result in increased capacity and increased health for the citizens and increased productiveness for the land. Railways would be constructed out of loans raised for the particular project, not out of revenue. Administration charges would be reduced by the reduction of salaries and greater economy. They have increased in a decade by Rs. 160 millions.

On the revenue side, the taxation on land would be lightened, so that cultivators might make a decent living by their labour. Exports of Indian monopolies, such as jute and indigo, would be heavily taxed. Imports would be taxed according to India's needs, and heavy duties laid on bounty-fed products. Imported liquors would carry a prohibitory

duty, and they were imported in 1910-11 to the value of Rs. 1,89,81,666. Provisions, which were imported to the value of over 3 crores of rupees, might also be heavily taxed, being a luxury. Sugar rose in five years from 10 crores of rupees to 14 crores, and should be heavily taxed, so as to encourage its growth here. Cotton piece-goods have risen from 37 crores to 41 crores and India should supply herself, as well as with silk piece-goods, risen from  $1\frac{3}{4}$  crores to  $2\frac{3}{4}$  crores. Army expenditure at the moment cannot be reduced, but later, Territorial Armies would be raised and large reserves gradually formed. For a time English troops would remain, as in the South African Union, but the short service system would be abolished, and recruiting charges reduced.

Even so hasty a glance over the economic condition of India makes very plain the reasons for the awakening of Indian Merchants, and their entry into the Home Rule Camp.

(e) *The Awakening of the Women*

The position of women in the ancient Aryan civilisation was a very noble one. The great majority married, becoming, as Manu said, the Light of the Home; some took up the ascetic life, remained unmarried, and sought the knowledge of Brahman. The story of the Rani Damayanti, to whom her husband's Ministers came, when they were troubled by the Raja's gambling; that of Gandhari, in the Council of Kings and warrior Chiefs, remonstrating with her headstrong son; in later days, those of Padmavati of Chittoor, of Mirabai of Marwar, the sweet poetess, of Tarabai of Thoda, the warrior, of Chand Bibi, the defender of Ahmednagar, of Ahalaya Bai of Indor, the great ruler—all these and countless others are well known.

Only in the last five or six generations have the Indian women slipped away from their place at their husbands' side, and left them unhelped in public life. Even now, they wield great influence over husband and son, but lack thorough knowledge to aid. Culture has never forsaken them, but the English education of their husbands and sons, with the neglect

of Samskrt and the Vernacular, have made a barrier between the culture of the husband and that of the wife, and have shut the woman out from her old sympathy with the larger life of men. While the interests of the husband have widened, those of the wife have narrowed. The materialising of the husband has tended also, by re-action, to render the wife's religion less broad and wise, and by throwing her on the family priest for guidance in religion, instead, as of old, on her husband, has made the religion entirely one of devotion ; and lacking the strong stimulus of knowledge, it more easily slides down into superstition, into dependence on forms not understood.

The wish to save their sons from the materialising results of English education awoke keen sympathy among Indian mothers with the movement to make Hinduism an integral part of education. It was, perhaps, the first movement in modern days which aroused among them in all parts of India a keen and living interest.

Then the troubles of Indians outside India roused the ever-quick sympathy of Indian women, and the attack in South Africa on the sacredness of Indian marriage drew large numbers of them out of their homes to protest against the wrong.

The Partition of Bengal was bitterly resented by Bengali women, and was another factor in the outward turning change. When the editor of an Extremist newspaper was prosecuted for sedition, convicted and sentenced, 500 Bengali women went to his mother to show their sympathy, not by condolences, but by congratulations. Such was the feeling of the well-born women of Bengal.

The Indentured Labour question, involving the dishonour of women, again, moved them deeply, and even sent a deputation to the Viceroy composed of women.

These were, perhaps, the chief outer causes ; but deep in the heart of India's daughters arose the Mother's voice, calling on them to help her to arise, and to be once more mistress in her own household. Indian women, nursed on her old literature, with its wonderful ideals of womanly perfection, could

not remain indifferent to the great movement for India's liberty. And during the last few years the hidden fire long burning in their hearts, fire of love to Bharatamata, fire of resentment against the lessened influence of the religion which they passionately love, instinctive dislike of the foreigner as ruling in their land, have caused a marvellous awakening. The strength of the Home Rule movement is rendered tenfold greater by the adhesion to it of large numbers of women, who bring to its helping the uncalculating heroism, the endurance, the self-sacrifice, of the feminine nature. Our League's best recruits and recruiters are among the women of India, and the women of Madras boast that they marched in procession when the men were stopped, and that their prayers in the temples set the interned captives free. Home Rule has become so intertwined with religion by the prayers offered up in the great southern Temples—sacred places of pilgrimage—and spreading from them to village temples, and also by its being preached, up and down the country, by Sadhus and Sannyasins, that it has become in the minds of the women and of the ever-religious masses, inextricably intertwined with religion. That is, in this country, the surest way of winning alike the women of the higher classes and the men and women villagers. And that is why I just said that the two words, "Home Rule," have become a Mantram.

(f) *The Awakening of the Masses*

This is another startling phenomenon of our times, due of late of the teaching of Sadhus and Sannyasins and the campaign of prayer, just mentioned, but much more to the steady influence of the educated classes permeating the masses for very many years, the classes which, as we shall see, have their roots struck deep in the villages. It must be remembered that the raiyat, though innocent of English, has a culture of his own, made up of old traditions and legends and folk-lore, coming down from time immemorial. He is religious, knows the great laws of Karma and Reincarnation, is industrious and shrewd. He cares very little for who is the "Sirkar," and very much for the agents who come to collect his tax, or to meddle with his fields. In the old days, which, for him still live, the



Panchayat managed the village affairs, and he was prosperous and contended, save when the King's tax-gatherer came, or soldiers harried his village. These were inevitable natural evils, like drought or flood ; and if a raid came or an invasion, they felt they were suffering with their King, as in the tax they were sharing with their King, whereas they are crushed now in an iron machinery, without the human nexus that used to exist.

Home Rule has touched the raiyat through his village life, where the present order presses hardly upon him in ways that I shall refer to when dealing with agricultural conditions. He resents the rigid payment of tax in money instead of the variable tax in kind, the King's share of the produce. He resents the frequent resettlements, which force him to borrow from the money-lender to meet the higher claim. He wants the old Panchayat back again ; he wants that his village should be managed by himself and his fellows, and he wants to get rid of the tyranny of petty officials, who have replaced the old useful communal servants.

We cannot leave out of the causes which have helped to awaken the masses, the influence of the Co-operative Movement, and the visits paid to villages by educated men for lectures on sanitation, hygiene, and other subjects. Messrs. Moreland and Ewing writing in the *Quarterly Review*, remarked : "The change of attitude on the part of the peasant, coupled with the progress made in organisation mainly through the Co-operative propaganda, is the outstanding achievement of the past decade, and at the same time the chief ground for the recent confidence with which agricultural reformers can now face the future."

In many parts of the country, where Conferences are carried on in the vernacular, the raiyats attend in large numbers, and often take part in the practical discussions on local affairs. They have begun to hope, and to feel that they are a part of the great National Movement, and that for them also a better day is dawning.

The submerged classes have also felt the touch of a ray of hope, and are lifting up their bowed heads, and claiming, with more and more definiteness, their place in the Household of the Mother. Movements, created by themselves, or originating in the higher castes have been stirring in them a sense of self-respect. The Brahmanas, awakening to a sense of their long-neglected duty, have done much to help them, and the prospect of their future brightens year by year.

By a just karma the higher castes are finding that attempts are being made by official and non-official Europeans to stir this class into opposition to Home Rule. They play upon the contempt with which they had been treated, and threaten them with a return of it, if "Brahmana Rule," as they call it, is gained. Twenty years ago and more, I ventured to urge the danger to Hindu Society that was hidden within the neglect of the submerged, and the folly of making it profitable for them to embrace Islam or Christianity, which offered them a higher social status. Much has been done since then, but it is only a drop in the ocean needed. They know very well, of course, that all the castes, not the highest alone, are equally guilty, but that is a sorry comfort. Large numbers of them are, happily, willing to forget the past, and to work with their Indian fellow-countrymen for the future. It is the urgent duty of every lover of the Motherland to draw these, her neglected children, into the common Home.

Mr. Gandhi's capital idea of a monster petition for the Congress-League Scheme, for which signatures were only to be taken after careful explanation of its scope and meaning, has proved to be an admirable method of political propaganda. The soil in the Madras Presidency had been well prepared by a wide distribution of popular literature, and the Propaganda Committee had scattered over the land in the vernaculars a simple explanation of Home Rule. The result of active work in the villages during the last year showed itself in the gathering in less than a month of nearly a million signatures. They have been taken in duplicate, so that we have a record of a huge number of people, interested in Home Rule, and the

hosts will increase in ever-widening circles, preparing for the coming Freedom.

### *Why India Demands Home Rule*

India demands Home Rule for two reasons, one essential and vital, the other less important but weighty : First because Freedom is the birthright of every Nation ; secondly, because her most important interests are now made subservient to the interests of the British Empire without her consent, and her resources are not utilised for her greatest needs. It is enough only to mention the money spent on her Army, not for local defence but for Imperial purposes, as compared with that spent on primary Education.

#### **I. The Vital Reason**

##### *(a) What is a Nation ?*

Self-Government is necessary to the self-respect and dignity of a People ; Other Government emasculates a Nation, lowers its character, and lessens its capacity. The wrong done by the Arms Act, which Raja Rampal Singh voiced in the Second Congress as a wrong which outweighed all the benefits of British Rule, was its weakening and debasing effect on Indian manhood. "We cannot," he declared, "be grateful to it for degrading our natures, for systematically crushing out all martial spirit, for converting a race of soldiers and heroes into a timid flock of quill driving sheep." This was done not by the fact that a man did not carry arms—few carry them in England—but that men were deprived of the *right* to carry them. A Nation, an individual, cannot develop his capacities to the utmost without Liberty. And this is recognised everywhere except in India. As Mazzini truly said : "God has written a line of His thought over the cradle of every people. That is its special mission. It cannot be cancelled ; it must be freely developed."

For what is a Nation ? It is a spark of the Divine Fire, a fragment of the Divine Life, outbreathed into the world, and

gathering round itself a mass of individuals, men, women and children, whom it binds together into one. Its qualities, its powers, in a word, its type, depend on the fragment of the Divine Life embodied in it, the Life which shapes it, evolves it, colours it and makes it One. The magic of Nationality is the feeling of oneness, and the use of Nationality is to serve the world in the particular way for which its type fits it. This is what Mazzini called "its special mission," the duty given to it by God in its birth-hour. Thus India had the duty of spreading the idea of Dharma, Persia that of Purity, Egypt that of Science, Greece that of Beauty, Rome that of Law. But to render its full service to Humanity it must develop along its own lines, and be self-determined in its evolution. It must be Itself, and not Another. The whole world suffers where a Nationality is distorted or suppressed, before its mission to the world is accomplished.

(b) *The Cry for Self-Rule*

Hence the cry of a Nation for Freedom, for Self-Rule, is not a cry of mere selfishness, demanding more Rights that it may enjoy more happiness. Even in that there is nothing wrong, for happiness means fulness of life, and to enjoy such fulness is a righteous claim. But the demand for Self Rule is a demand for the evolution of its own nature for the Service of Humanity. It is a demand of the deepest Spirituality, an expression of the longing to give its very best to the world. Hence dangers cannot check it, nor threats appal, nor offerings of greater pleasures lure it to give up its demand for Freedom. In the adapted words of a Christian Scripture, it passionately cries : "What shall it profit a Nation if it gain the whole world and lose its own Soul ? What shall a Nation give in exchange for its Soul ?" Better hardship and freedom than luxury and thralldom. This is the spirit of the Home Rule movement, and therefore it cannot be crushed, it cannot be destroyed, it is eternal and ever young. Nor can it be persuaded to exchange its birthright for any mess of efficiency-pottage at the hands of the bureaucracy.

*(c) Stunting the Race*

Coming closer to the daily life of the people as individuals, we see that the character of each man, woman and child is degraded and weakened by a foreign administration, and this is most keenly felt by the best Indians. Speaking on the employment of Indians in the Public Services, Gopal Krishna Gokhale said : "A kind of dwarfing or stunting of the Indian race is going on under the present system. We must live all the days of our life in an atmosphere of inferiority, and the tallest of us must bend, in order that the exigencies of the system may be satisfied. The upward impulse, if I may use such an expression, which every schoolboy at Eton or Harrow may feel, that he may one day be a Gladstone, a Nelson, or a Wellington, and which may draw forth the best efforts of which he is capable, that is denied to us. The full height to which our manhood is capable of rising can never be reached by us under the present system. The moral elevation which every Self-governing people feel cannot be felt by us. Our administrative and military talents must gradually disappear owing to sheer disuse, till at last our lot, as hewers of wood and drawers of water in our own country, is stereotyped."

The Hon. Mr. Bhupendranath Basu has spoken on similar lines : "A bureaucratic administration, conducted by an imported agency, and centering all power in its hands, and undertaking all responsibility, has acted as a dead weight on the Soul of India, stifling in us all sense of initiative, for the lack of which we are condemned, atrophying the nerves of action, and, what is most serious, necessarily dwarfing in us all feeling of self-respect."

In this connection the warning of Lord Salisbury to Cooper's Hill students is significant. "No system of Government can be permanently safe where there is a feeling of inferiority or of mortification affecting the relations between the governing and the governed. There is nothing I would more earnestly wish to impress upon all who leave this country for the purpose of governing India than that, if they choose to be so, they are the only enemies England has to fear. They are

the persons who can, if they will, deal a blow of the deadliest character at the future rule of England.”

I have ventured to urge this danger, which has increased of late years, in consequence of the growing self-respect of the Indians. But the ostrich policy is thought to be preferable in my part of the country.

This stunting of the race begins with the education of the child. The Schools differentiate between British and Indian teachers; the Colleges do the same. The students see first class Indians superseded by young and third-rate foreigners; the Principal of a College should be a foreigner; foreign history is more important than Indian; to have written on English villages is a qualification for teaching economics in India; the whole atmosphere of the School and the College emphasises the superiority of the foreigner, even when the professors abstain from open assertion thereof. The Education Department controls the education given, and it is planned on foreign models, and its object is to serve foreign rather than native ends, to make docile Government servants rather than patriotic citizens; high spirits, courage, self-respect, are not encouraged, and docility is regarded as the most precious quality in the student; pride in country, patriotism, ambition, are looked on as dangerous, and English, instead of Indian, Ideals are exalted; the blessings of a foreign rule and the incapacity of Indians to manage their own affairs are constantly inculcated. What wonder that boys thus trained often turn out, as men, time-servers and sycophants, and, finding their legitimate ambitions frustrated, become selfish and care little for the public weal? Their own inferiority has been so driven into them during their most impressionable years, that they do not even feel what Mr. Asquith called the “intolerable degradation of a foreign yoke”.

#### *(d) India's Rights*

It is not a question whether the rule is good or bad. German efficiency in Germany is far greater than English efficiency in England; the Germans were better fed, had more

amusements and leisure, less crushing poverty than the English. But would any Englishman therefore desire to see Germans occupying all the highest positions in England? Why not? Because the righteous self-respect and dignity of the free man revolt against foreign domination, however superior. As Mr. Asquith said at the beginning of the War, such a condition was "inconceivable and would be intolerable". Why then is it the one conceivable system here in India? Why is it not felt by all Indians to be intolerable? It is because it has become a habit, bred in us from childhood, to regard the Sahab-log as our natural superiors, and the greatest injury British rule has done to Indians is to deprive them of the natural instinct born in all free peoples, the feeling of an inherent right to Self-determination, to be themselves. Indian dress, Indian food, Indian ways, Indian customs, are all looked on as second-rate; Indian mother-tongue and Indian literature cannot make an educated man. Indians as well as Englishmen take it for granted that the natural rights of every Nation do not belong to them; they claim "a larger share in the Government of the country," instead of claiming the Government of their own country, and they are expected to feel grateful for "boons," for concessions. Britain is to say what she will give. The whole thing is wrong, topsy turvy, irrational. Thank God that India's eyes are opening; that myriads of her people realise that they are men, with a man's right to freedom in his own country, a man's right to manage his own affairs. India is no longer on her knees for boons; she is on her feet for Rights. It is because I have taught this, that the English in India misunderstand me, and call me seditious; it is because I have taught this, that I am President of this Congress to-day.

This may seem strong language, because the plain truth is not usually put in India. But this is what every Briton feels in Britain for his own country, and what every Indian should feel in India for his. This is the Freedom for which the Allies are fighting; this is Democracy, the Spirit of the Age. And this is what every true Briton will feel is India's Rights, the moment India claims it for herself, as she is claiming it now. When this Right is gained, then will the tie between India and Great Britain become a golden link of mutual love and service,

and the iron chain of a foreign yoke will fall away. We shall live and work side by side, with no sense of distrust and dislike, working as brothers for common ends. And from that union shall arise the mightiest Empire, or rather Commonwealth, that the world has ever known. a Commonwealth that, in God's good time, shall put an end to War.

## II. The Secondary Reasons

### (a) *Tests of Efficiency*

The Secondary Reason for the present demand for Home Rule may be summed up in the blunt statement : "The present rule, while efficient in less important matters and in those which concern British interest, is inefficient in the greater matters on which the healthy life and happiness of the people depend." Looking at outer things, such as external order, posts and telegraphs—except where political agitators are concerned—main roads, railways, etc., foreign visitors, who expected to find a semi-savage country, hold up their hands in admiration. But if they saw the life of the people, the masses of struggling clerks trying to educate their children on Rs. 25 (33s. 4d.) a month, the masses of labourers with one meal a day, and the huts in which they live, they would find cause for thought. And if the educated men talked freely with them, they would be surprised at their bitterness. Gopal Krishna Gokhale put the whole matter very plainly in 1911. "One of the fundamental conditions of the peculiar position of the British Government in this country is that it should be a continuously progressive Government. I think all thinking men, to whatever community they belong, will accept that. Now, I suggest four tests to judge whether the Government is progressive, and further whether it is continuously progressive. The first test that I would apply is : What measures it adopts for the moral and material improvement of the mass of the people, and under these measures I do not include those appliances of modern Government which the British Government has applied in this country, because they were appliances necessary for its very existence, though they have benefited the people, such as the construction of Railways, the introduction



of Post and Telegraphs, and things of that kind. By measures for the moral and material improvement of the people, I mean what the Government does for Education, what the Government does for Sanitation, what the Government does for Agricultural development, and so forth. That is my first test. The second test that I would apply is: What steps the Government takes to give us a larger share in the administration of our local affairs—in municipalities and local boards. My third test is: What voice the Government gives us in its Councils—in those deliberative assemblies, where policies are considered. And, lastly, we must consider how far Indians are admitted into the ranks of the Public Service.” On all these tests, Mr. Gokhale points out the British Government has definitely failed! But we cannot afford the space to follow out that matter here.

### **SELF-GOVERNMENT FOR INDIA\***

Here we come, at last, to the bedrock of our claim for Self-Government. India is a Nation, and in Nationhood is included the natural, inherent, indefeasible right to Self-Government. No one civilised Nation can permanently keep another civilised Nation in bondage; Egypt is said to have tried it with Israel, but the results were not encouraging, even though the civilisation and the wisdom of Egypt were incomparably higher than those of the Hebrews. The claim of Great Britain to decide when and how far India will be “fit for Self-Government” is a piece of arrogance that would be intolerable, were it not so naïvely unconscious. Let England think what she would feel if, owing to internal dissensions, the Chinese had invaded her, and had conquered her with the help of a large part of her own population. If, thereafter, all the Government of the country were in Chinese hands; if they themselves were deprived of arms; shut out of the higher posts in their own army and navy; not allowed to volunteer in defence of their own coasts; the Prime Minister and all his Cabinet Chinese; the Lord Chancellor a Chinaman; all the

\*A pamphlet issued by Annie Besant in 1915.

higher offices filled by Chinese ; all the Education shaped by Chinese ; the money raised by taxation used to make strategic railways, while education was starved, and the masses left illiterate ; examinations to fill posts in England held in China ; the taxes on Christians used to pay Buddhist priests and to encourage Buddhist education and Buddhist propaganda ; compelled to learn Chinese in order to hold the subordinate offices open to them ; looked down upon by the Chinese as an inferior race, and treated as foreigners in their own country. Would *they* be contented ? would *they* never aspire towards freedom ? would there be no "unrest" in England under such conditions ?

"Do Indians feel like that ?" as Civilian Judge once asked me, quite surprised. "They feel just like that," I answered. "It never struck me in that way," he replied thoughtfully. And that is so. It never strikes them. They honestly feel that they are ruling India so much better than Indians could rule it. None the less does a Nation prefer being even badly ruled by itself to being well ruled by benevolent foreigners. Moreover, we have above pointed out some advantages of Self-Rule.

O English Nation ! Great and free and proud. Cannot you see ? Cannot you understand ? Cannot you realise that you, Indian brahms feel now as you would feel than ? That to be a stranger in your own country, and then in your own land, with no rights save these given by the grace of a Government not your own, your inferiority taken for granted, your capacities weighed in alien scales, and measured by the wand of another Nation—you could not bear such a state, such an outlook. India is patient, as you would not be. She does not to break the link ; she wants to remain part of the Empire ; but an equal part, a Self-Governing Community, standing on a level with the Self-Governing Dominions. Is this passionate longing, sedition ? Is this ineradicable hope, treason ? You dare not say so, you who bred Hampden, and Sidney, and Milton, you whose glory is your Freedom, you who boast of your Empire as an Empire of the Free. Who dared to ask if you were fit for freedom ? Charles I asked it. James II asked it. History records the answers that you gave.

Is India fit for Freedom ? She claims it as her Right. You will not say her, Nay. She proved her equality in death on the battle field. Will you refuse it when the peace she has made possible, broods over your homes ? Would they have been as safe from the German, if Indian breasts had not formed part of your shield ?

What does India want ? She wants everything that any other Nation may claim for itself. To be free in India, as the Englishman is free in England. To be governed by her own men, freely elected by herself. To make and break Ministries at her will. To carry arms ; to have her own army, her own navy, her own volunteers. To levy her own taxes : to make her own budgets ; to educate her own people ; to irrigate her own lands ; to mine her own ores ; to mint her own coin ; to be a Sovereign Nation within her own borders, owning the paramount power of the Imperial Crown, and sending her sons to the Imperial Council. There is nothing to which any man can aspire in his own land from which the Indian must be shut out here.

A large claim, you say. Does the Englishman ask less for himself in England ? If yes, what is there strange that an Indian should ask the same for himself in India ? What is the radical difference between them which should make an Indian *content* to be a thrall ? It is not the "angle of vision" that needs changing. It is the eye, purified from pride and prejudice, that can see clearly, and the heart, purged from arrogance, that can beat with healthy strokes.

England and India hand-in-hand. Yes, that is our hope, for the world's sake. But that it may be so, Justice must replace inequality ; for India can never be at rest, till she is free.

### **HOME RULE AND THE EMPIRE\***

Now, I have said that India has a right to Home Rule, like the Self-Governing Dominions of the Empire. But I am not the

\*A lecture delivered by Annie Besant in 1916.

first to say it, although the particular phrase "Home Rule" has caught the popular fancy. The Congress has been saying it year after year during its splendid life, and you remember how in 1906 when the Grand Old Man of India, Dadabhai Naoroji, came out of his retirement to be President of the Calcutta Congress, too feeble to read his own speech so that another read it for him, he yet read the words which claimed Swaraj—Self-Rule—and the crowd leapt up and echoed "Swaraj". It chanced that a year ago I used the words "Home Rule" instead of Self-Government. The first is shorter: *Self-Government* is four syllables and *Home Rule* only two. For a popular cry a short name is better than a long one. Moreover, it was a more explicit phrase, because Self-Government might mean independence, and so, to show you did not mean a break between Great Britain and India, it was necessary to add "within the Empire," and so you have a great mouthful "Self-Government within the Empire on Colonial lines". I prefer to call it *Home Rule*. The advantage is that it is a cry for Freedom without separation. Home Rule does not mean that England and India ought to be torn apart. It means only that India shall be mistress in her own household. Home Rule has been given to Ireland, although the Act is hung up in a way that an Act was never hung up before. Still it is on the Statute Book, and so Home Rule is now a most respectable phrase. When a modern scientist rediscovered what we used to call mesmerism, he called it hypnotism. Mesmerism was discredited because the first man who discovers a thing is always called a quack. When another man finds it out, he gives it a new label, and then it becomes respectable in polite society. I baptised this movement with the name of Home Rule, because Home Rule had been admitted to and had gone through the House of Commons, and was made into law. To my astonishment, I find it is the most disreputable thing to say. Yet I read in *The Madras Times* that Home Rule is inevitable, and that every one who looked at it saw that it must come: the only thing was that it must not come in a hurry.

We are not asking for it until the reconstruction of the Empire takes place, and that is a matter of a very considerable number of years. All we are asking now is that we may be

allowed to educate the people in a constitutional and law-abiding way, so that when the reconstruction of the Empire comes, India may be ready, as the Colonies are getting ready to-day—a modest enough request.

I am told that some people believe that I desire separation. Friends, I have been speaking in India now for three and twenty years. My first lecture was given in the Madras Presidency when I visited your larger Madras towns, and that was in 1893. We are now in 1916. In those first lectures of mine I spoke strongly in favour of maintaining the union between Great Britain and India, and from that day to this I have never wavered in that belief. I have taught year after year that the welfare of both Nations is bound up in their union, that England and India together can do what neither England nor India separated could ever do, and that their union is God-prepared and God-given. How often have I lectured, showing how the different European Nations came here, how the Dutch came, how the Portuguese came, how the French came, and how at last the English came, and England was the only one that came to remain and to build up a mighty Empire that is the wonder of the world? England with her practical ability, with her business strength, with her scientific knowledge, with her practical brain is the complement of India spiritual, philosophical and somewhat lacking nowadays in the qualities that are pre-eminently British. It has not always been so. There was a day when to be an Indian was to be full of energy, full of life, full of power, where the Kshattriyas of India were soldiers who had not their match for courage and for chivalry in any Nation of the world. It may be that in courage a German is as good as a Rajput, but the Rajput's courage was in his own heart while the courage of the German is in the battalion. He would never ride out as Rajputs rode out one by one until they fell dead on the battlefield, too proud to yield, too gallant to submit. This modern idea of the "mild Hindu," as they say, is a very modern idea, and it goes with the great mistake that had been made in India some years ago—the same mistake as is made by some people in England—that the teaching that is given to the Sannyasin was meant to be a teaching given to

every one at large. You have forgotten the old Ashramas. All men speak as if they were going to be guided by the teaching of the Sannyasin while they cling to power, gold and the interests of the daily life of man. Hypocrite is the man who claims to say : "I am Brahmin," and yet is a slave to the lusts of the flesh. So, with that failure in her religion and with the loss of spirituality, India lost the courage, strength and vigour of the earlier days. India to-day is misjudged and is thought to be a Nation of visionaries so that all the other Nations of the world may plunder her. But the old spirit lives in India still. A century and a half of foreign rule does not suffice to break the spirit of India, and when the word went out calling on her to learn self-respect once more, when Hinduism was held up even by the foreigner as the noblest and the sublimest religion that had come to man, when from one end of the country to another her ancient religion revived and the other great religions of the past began to reappear, when the Buddhist began to hold up his head instead of being ashamed of his religion, then it was that the breath of new life breathed through India and she woke from the slumber of one hundred and fifty years. It was hard work—the reawakening of India. But now that India is awake, England ought to realise it for the sake of the Empire, for India's Home Rule would be England's salvation. Then and then only will she have the primacy of Asia, and then and then only will she be able to hold her own against China and Japan, and guard her colonies and realise that her wide Empire is really a unit, united heart and soul. For England's sake, were I pleading her cause, I should ask for Indian Home Rule, for then, India would become the buttress of the Empire, and there would be no more distrust of Indians, for they would be the greatest citizens that the world has known. I hold that there is no Nation greater and nobler than Britain in her-age long assertion of liberty, and she has won for herself in modern days the place of the Mother of Liberty. I can never forget the childhood's memory when sitting, looking down on the crowds that filled the streets, I saw an opening out of the crowd as the carriage came along, and in it, standing up, the red-shirted Garibaldi, the Saviour of Italy. That was after Mazzini was an exile from Italy, when no

country in the world save England opened her doors to call the Italian exile in. I remember that England also sheltered Prince Kropotkin, and sheltered Stepniak, the man of the Red Terror, vowed to assassinate the Tsar of Russia. Fugitives of liberty all the world over came to that little Island, and in that little Island they found a peaceful home ; and for the sake of the world's rebellions, for the sake of the world's heroes and martyrs and exiles, England's name shall ever shine in Liberty's sky as one of the brightest stars that shine therein. I cannot forget it all, although I am not English but Irish. But for the sake of those old memories, I would fain that India had Home Rule—it will make that little Island of Liberty safe.

Again, I must remind you that Home Rule is absolutely necessary for the sake of the youth of India, for India's younger generation are being miseducated, misled and mis-trained under the education that they are receiving. Those lads in College and those boys in School are full of unrest and discontent, breaking now and then into those unhappy strikes which no lover of students can sanction. The boys are helpless, and many ruin their whole lives in the madness of the moment. But those boys in England would be the pride of their Nation, high spirited, self-respecting, and they would be cherished as the future heroes of their native land ; for the self-respect of a boy is a precious possession, and if you kill it in the heart of the boy, it is hard to revive it in the heart of the man when the boy has come into man's estate. Why is it that Indian boys are told that they should be so submissive, should behave in a way which is against all Indian tradition of boyish thought and feeling ? The men who made England's Empire were not good obedient boys—they were "bad boys" like Clive, naughty, troublesome and rebellious, because they were strong and vigorous. The "docility" of Indian students is due to an over-worked brain and under-nourished body, and the sooner the educational authorities recognise that, the better it will be for our boys. The Indian tradition, for boys who are not to be teachers, is one of vigour, manliness, martial spirit, strong bodies, dexterous in arms, in horsemanship, in all exercises. Their Gurus encouraged their virility and pride of race, they did not try to cow them. The broken-spirited boy is the

cringing subservient man. We must have Home Rule for the sake of our boys.

We must have Home Rule for the sake for our women, before they are denationalised and despiritualised by a mongrel education. Two great classes of Indians are marked down as "illiterate," our women and our raiyats. Yet both of these may be said to be intellectually literate, though they may not be able to read and write, for they understand the great problems of human life and the sublime teachings of the Hindu religion, better than many of their would-be teacher.

It is a greater thing to be educated in life than to be educated in books. We want Home Rule in order that India may have the kind of education that Indians require and that only Indians can give.

We want Home Rule in order that India may have economic freedom, so that her dying industries may be revived. How can you be prosperous when you have no control over your own finances? If you had control over your finances, you would largely increase your irrigation works and you would spend less money on railways, and insist on reasonable freight charges. The protection of industries in India is based on a topsy-turvy system. Here we have the English Government protecting the industries of German manufacturers and of Lancashire manufacturers against Indian manufacturers. They give concessions to foreign companies to exploit your lands.

It is not only these considerations that make me desire Home Rule for India, but it is also because I know that the Indian character is priceless to the world, that it is unique in its characteristics. It is a character so strong and yet so loving, so powerful in will and yet so gentle, and that character will never grow to its full stature until an Indian is a free man in a free country. As Mr. Gokhale said, we are asking for India what every free Nation has—that an Indian may be in India what an Englishman is in England, and what a Frenchman is in France; may feel that he is a citizen of the British Empire, may realise that he has a splendid birth-right which he will



hand on to the generations that will come after him in the days to come, holding up his head, speaking out his thought, and never softening it for fear of what the Government may do.

Friends, is it not true that while you sympathise with me in heart, you dare not say so openly, for fear of the officials? I do not blame you. Every man cannot be a hero. You have wives and little children, and your children look to you for bread, and your wife looks to you for the food of the children dearer to her than her own life. Dare I blame you then?

I desire Home Rule for India because I love India and Indians as I love no other country, no other race on earth; because all dearest memories of the past are bound up for me with this Nation, and not with other peoples. I went to the West to take this white body, because it is more useful to India, because it gives me strength to plead, and because it gives more weight to what I say—even with you, alas, the words from a white mouth have a little more influence; not so much now, thank God, but it was so when I first came here—and because of that, I—knowing that many of you will do tomorrow that which for the moment is not wrong but is dangerous—I say all this. To stand for freedom against autocracy is a dangerous thing; but more and more people are coming forward and speaking out, and expressing readiness to sacrifice their means and their careers for the sake of India. I believe that more and more are desirous to give themselves up for the Motherland; and this I knew, that if in this great battle for Home Rule I go down, where I fall, a thousand will rise to carry on the struggle for freedom. When a Nation is once resolute to be free, there is no power on earth nor in heaven that can keep her back from freedom.

## GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE

[G. K. Gokhale (1866-1915) is generally, though not very correctly, is regarded as the leading light of the moderate school of Indian nationalism. In spite of the fact that he acted like a loyal companion of M. G. Ranade and a sincere follower of Phirozeshah M. Mehta, he, in the words of Pattabhi Sitaramayya, had "the remarkable knack of saying the hardest things in the gentlest language". His expressions were invariably moderate, but the tone was also invariably sharp. If Naoroji propounded the irrefutable theory of 'economic drain' to denounce the system of British imperialism, Gokhale laid stress on his doctrine of 'moral drain' with the same motive. His attack on the 'white bureaucratic rule in the name of suppressing essential freedoms of the people by making Draconian laws and, in particular, his frank denunciation of the ways of Lytton and Curzon—the author of the partition of Bengal—was so vehement that one could easily rank him in the category of the extremist leaders. It placed him in an unenviable position in the sense that while the zealous nationalists disparaged his moderation, the callous English bureaucrats deprecated his extremism. And yet like P. M. Mehta and S. N. Banerjea, he continued the tradition of reminding the British rulers of their duty towards India. Perhaps N. G. Chandravarkar (who presided over the Lahore Congress of 1900) could make a proper assessment of Gokhale's position when he described him as the true interpreter between the rulers and the ruled.]

**ENGLAND'S DUTY TO INDIA\***

Sir Henry Cotton, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I feel very grateful to the Political Committee of the National Liberal Club for their kind invitation to me to address them this evening on the subject of India. Political reformers in India are, in one sense, the natural allies of the Liberal Party in England; for we, in India, are struggling to assert in our own country those very principles which are now the accepted creed of the Liberal Party in England. Peace, retrenchment and reform are our watch-words, as they are yours. We are like you seeking to throw open to the unprivileged many the advantages which at present are a monopoly of the privileged few; and we are fighting against the predominance of the interests of a class over those of the mass of the people. It is true that I use the word 'allies' only in a limited sense—in the sense of parties that have a common aim, even though they do not take joint or common action in pursuing that aim. And I recognize that, as things are, we can't claim to be allies of the Liberal Party in any fuller sense of the term, for the simple reason that we have nothing to offer the Liberal Party in return for what it can do for us, except the gratitude and attachment of a helpless people, and this may not count for much in the eyes of many. However, of one thing I am certain—that we are entitled to look for sympathy and support from the Liberal Party when we address our appeal to that party for a large and steadily increasing measure of self-government being conceded to the people of India. Ladies and gentlemen, it is now, roughly speaking, a hundred years since, the destinies of India and England came to be linked together. How we came under your rule is a question into which no useful purpose will be served by enquiring on an occasion like this. But two things I wish to say for my countrymen. First, that because we came under the rule of foreigners, it does not mean that we are like some savage or semi-civilized people whom you have subjugated. The people of India are an ancient

\*Speech delivered at the National Liberal Club London, on 15 November, 1905 at a function held under the chairmanship of Sir Henry Cotton.

race who had attained a high degree of civilization long before the ancestors of European nations understood what civilization was. India has been the birth-place of great religions. She was also the cradle and long the home of literature and philosophy, of science and arts. But God does not give everything to every people, and India in the past was not known for that love of liberty and that appreciation of free institutions which one finds to be striking a characteristic of the West. Secondly, because the Indians are under the rule of foreigners, it does not follow that they are lacking in what is called the martial spirit ; for some of the best troops that fight the battles of the Empire-to-day are drawn from the Indians themselves. I mention these two things because I want you to recognize that, though we have lost our independence, we have not, on that account, quite forfeited our title to the respect and consideration of civilized people. Your earlier race of statesmen, indeed, never failed to recognize this freely. They perceived the finger of Providence in the succession of the events which ultimately set a small island at one end of the world to rule over a great country at another end of the world ; and they were quite sincere when they stated that they regarded India as a solemn trust and that they would administer the country in the spirit in which all trusts ought to be administered, i.e., with the sole object of promoting the best interests of the Indians themselves. Well, a hundred years have now elapsed since then and no one can charge us with being in a hurry to pronounce an opinion, if we now pass under review the results of your hundred years' rule in India. The first task that confronted your statesmen in India was naturally the consolidation of your rule, and this they proceeded to effect by introducing into that country the appliances of your material civilization and by elaborating there an administrative machinery conforming to the type that prevails in the West. And, on the whole, this work has been extremely well done. The country is now covered with Railways and Post Offices and Telegraphs. Peace and order reign throughout the land, Justice, though costly, is fairly administered as between Indian and Indian, though, when it comes to be a matter between Indian and Englishman, it is another story. Of course, the machinery of administration that has been evolved is by no means perfect—there are obvious defects

of a serious character which need not be there—but, on the whole, I repeat, this part of your work has been extremely well done and you are entitled to regard it with a just sense of satisfaction. Side by side with consolidation, your statesmen had to undertake another work—that of conciliation. And this work of reconciling the people of India to the rule of foreigners—a difficult and delicate task—has also been satisfactorily accomplished. This result has been achieved by the Parliament and the Sovereign of England enunciating a noble policy towards India and by the introducing into that country of what is known as Western education—the same kind of education that is given to your youths in your schools and colleges—an education that, among other things, inspires one with a love of free institutions. Three-quarters of a century ago, your Parliament passed an Act, known as the Charter Act of 1833, laying down the principles, on which the government of India was to be based. And twenty-five years later, the late Queen addressed a Proclamation to the people of India reiterating the same policy. The Charter Act of 1833 and the Proclamation of 1858 pledge the word of your Parliament and your Sovereign to the people of India—and these are the only two authorities that can speak in your name—that the sole aim of British rule in India is the promotion of the interests of the Indian people and that, in the government of the country, there would be equality for the two races, no disability of any kind being imposed on any one by reason merely of race or colour or creed. A policy so enunciated was bound to win all hearts and it went a long way to reconcile the people of India to your rule. Among with this enunciation of the principles of your government, came the opening of schools and colleges such as you have in your own country, and it is a remarkable fact that the three older Universities of India were established almost during the dark days of the Mutiny. Be it remembered, also, that the gates of Western knowledge were thrown open to us with a clear anticipation of the results that were likely to follow; and in a well-known speech Lord Macaulay used memorable language in this connection. He observed that it was, perhaps, inevitable that the people of India, having been brought up in Western knowledge, would in course of time demand European institutions in the government of their country,

and he said : "Whether such a day will ever come I know not ; but never will I attempt to avert or retard it. Whenever it comes, will be the proudest day in English history."

Thus your declared policy towards India and the introduction of Western education, joined to your higher Western standards of government, effected the work of conciliation in a satisfactory manner, and twenty years ago, an Englishman going out to India would have found on every side a frank acceptance by the people of British rule as their national rule, as they then fully believed that, under that rule, they would be allowed to work out their own salvation and eventually attain the colonial type of government—so that they could remain within your Empire and yet have a position worthy of their self-respect. And if to-day this faith has been seriously weakened, it is because your statesmen have now been hesitating at the third stage that has become inevitable after consolidation and conciliation—the stage of reconstruction. When you first started your work in India, when Western standards of administration had to be introduced into the country and there was no Western education to enable us to understand those standards, it was, perhaps, indispensable that all power should be lodged in the hands of a few English officials. But now that the schools and colleges and universities have been doing their work for half a century and more, and when a large and steadily increasing class of men educated after the Western model—a class qualified and anxious to take part in the administration of the country—has come into existence, you must reconstruct the foundations of your rule so as to find room for these men inside the administration, if the pledges given in your name are intended to be redeemed. Unfortunately it is here that the statesmen responsible for the government of India are hesitating, with results which already threaten to be disastrous. Twenty-five years ago, indeed a noble attempt was made by a great Englishman, who went out to rule there as Viceroy, at such reconstruction and his name is cherished to the present day with feelings of the deepest affection and gratitude throughout India. Lord Ripon—that is that Viceroy's name—strove hard and manfully for

five years to liberalise the foundations of British rule in India and introduce, to some extent, those changes in the administration of the country which the people had been led to expect and which the spread of Western education among them had rendered inevitable. He gave the country a little local self-government ; he gave an important stimulus to education ; and he tried to remove some of those glaring inequalities between the Indian and the Englishman which at present prevail in that country. What was the result ? He exposed himself to such fierce persecution at the hands of his own countrymen in India, that no successor of his has ventured to repeat his experiment. Not only that ; during the last few years, a reactionary policy has been pursued towards the educated classes of the country and this reaction has taken the form of active repression during the last three years of Lord Curzon's administration. Now, I want you to see that such repression can never succeed. According to the last census, there are a million men in India to-day who have come under the influence of some sort of English education. You cannot hope to keep this large and growing class shut out completely from power, as at present. Even if it were possible to perpetuate the present monopoly of power by the bureaucracy, your national honour demands that such an attempt should not be made. But it is not possible, and any attempt to achieve the impossible can only end in disaster. Already great harm has been done. The faith of my countrymen in British rule, so strong at one time, has been seriously weakened and large numbers of young men are coming forward who do not believe in it at all. The situation is one that must fill all thoughtful minds with serious apprehensions about the future, and unless you here realize it properly, it is difficult to see how it is to mend.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have admitted that your countrymen are entitled to great credit for having introduced into an Oriental country the Western type of the machinery of administration. But, after all, such machinery is a means to an end—it is not the end in itself. It is, therefore, necessary to consider how far the best interests—material and moral—of the people of India have been promoted by your administration during the last hundred years. This, in reality, is the

main test—I had almost said the supreme test. If the results, judged by this test, were satisfactory, however much one might object on principle to the present form of government maintained in India, there would be something to be said in its favour. If, on the other hand, these results are found to be on the whole unsatisfactory, for the sake of your national honour as also in the interests of the Indian people themselves, a reconsideration of the existing arrangements becomes necessary. Let us first consider the moral results. These, it will be found, are of a mixed character. There is a great deal in them which you may regard with satisfaction and even pride. The blessings of peace, the establishment of law and order, the introduction of Western education, and the freedom of speech and the appreciation of liberal institutions that have followed in its wake—all these are things that stand to the credit of your rule. On the other hand, there are great evils too, and of these none, to my mind, is so great as the continuous dwarfing or stunting of our race that is taking place under your rule. Our rigorous exclusion from all power and all positions of trust and responsibility, on a scale never before attempted in the history of humanity, involving, as it does, an enforced disuse of our national abilities—is leading to a steady deterioration of our race, and this, I venture to think, is a cruel, an iniquitous wrong you are inflicting upon us. According to a Parliamentary return published in 1892, there are in India altogether about 2,400 officers carrying a salary of £700 and upwards, and of these only about 60 are held by Indians, and even most of these are of a comparatively low level. Another great evil is indicated by the present political status of the Indian people. All the three hundred millions of them put together have not got, under the constitution, as much power as a single elector in England to affect the position of the Government. Then the entire population is kept disarmed and as though it was not enough humiliation to the Indians to be deprived thus of their natural right to bear arms in defence of their hearths and homes. England has recently entered into an alliance with another Oriental nation—a nation that has borrowed much in the past from India—to repel foreign aggression on the borders of India and, incidentally, to perpetuate the present state of bondage for



the Indians themselves. This is our position in our own country. If we go to your Self-governing Colonies like Natal, we are treated as outside the pale of civilisation, and they object to our walking on the footpaths, or travelling in first-class carriages, or in seeking accommodation at hotels! In Crown Colonies like the Transvaal, our humiliation is even more complete. Among the reasons for which you went to war with those two Boer Republics, wiping them, in the end, out of existence, you made rather prominent mention of certain ordinances which the Boer Governments had promulgated against the Indians residing within their territories. But though these ordinances existed on paper in the time of the Boer Republics, they never were actually enforced, because those Governments were afraid of the mighty arm of England that they thought was behind the Indians. But now that the territories have become Crown Colonies, and are under the control of the English Colonial Office, these same ordinances, incredible as it may seem, are being rigorously enforced against us. If this is our position in your Empire after our having been a hundred years under your rule, I am sure no one will pretend that the moral results of your rule may be regarded with satisfaction. Let us now turn to the material results, and here, I am sorry to say, the verdict is even more emphatic against your rule. I firmly believe, and I say this after a careful study of about twenty years of the question, that the economic results of British rule in India have been absolutely disastrous. That the mass of the people in India are at present sunk in frightful poverty is now admitted by all, including the most inveterate official optimist. A few facts, however, may be mentioned to bring this home clearly to your minds. Your average annual income has been estimated at about £42 per head. Ours, according to official estimates, is about £2 per head and according to non-official estimates, only a little more than £1 per head. Your imports per head are about £13; ours about 5s. per head. The total deposits in your Postal Savings Bank amount to 148 million sterling and you have in addition in the Trustees Savings Banks about 52 million sterling. Our Postal Savings Bank deposits, with a population seven times as large as yours, are only about 7 million sterling and even of this a little over one-tenth is held by Europeans.

Your total paid-up capital of joint-stock companies is about 1,900 million sterling. Ours is not quite 26 million sterling and the greater part of this again is European. Four-fifths of our people are dependent upon agriculture and agriculture has been for some time steadily deteriorating. Indian agriculturists are too poor and are, moreover, too heavily indebted to be able to apply any capital to land, and the result is that over the greater part of India agriculture is, as Sir James Caird pointed out more than twenty-five years ago, only a process of exhaustion of the soil. The yield per acre is steadily diminishing, being now only about 8 to 9 bushels an acre against about 30 bushels here in England; the losses of the agricultural community during the famines of the last eight years in crops and cattle have according to a competent Commission, amounted to 200 million sterling. Forty millions of people, according to one great Anglo-Indian authority—Sir William Hunter—pass through life with only one meal a day. According to another authority—Sir Charles Elliot—seventy millions of people in India do not know what it is to have their hunger fully satisfied even once in the whole course of the year. The poverty of the people of India thus considered by itself, is truly appalling. And if this is the state of things after a hundred years of your rule, you cannot claim that your principal aim in India has been the promotion of the interests of the Indian people. But this is not all. I think there is ample evidence to show that even this deplorable condition of the mass of people in India has been further deteriorating steadily. Thus famines are growing more frequent, their extent is larger and the suffering they occasion more acute and widespread. Then during the last seven years, the plague has been ravaging the country in addition to famines. Now to those who consider the matter superficially, the plague may appear to be only a Providential scourge. But it really carries away hundreds of thousands of people, because, owing to constant under-feeding, the people have not got the stamina to resist the attacks of plague. Then it will be found that in the last decade of the 19th century, the population in the older provinces of India has been stationary and in some of them it has even declined! But the most conclusive testimony on this point—a testimony that there is no getting over—is supplied

by the death-rate of the country. Let us take the last twenty years—I take this long period of twenty years, because we shall not then be open to the charge that we have only taken a few years rendered abnormal by famine or plague—and to emphasize the situation, let us compare the movement of the death-rate in India with that of the death-rate in England during the same time. Let us divide these twenty-years into four periods of five years each—that is the only way to present a fairly reliable generalization—and what do we find? In the first period of five years, an average annual death-rate was between 24 and 25 per thousand; yours at that time was about 20 per thousand. In the next five years, ours rose from under 25 to about 28 per thousand. Yours, on the other hand, owing to the greater attention paid to the condition of life of the working classes, fell from 20 to between 18 and 19. In the third period of five years, our death-rate further mounted from 28 to 30 per thousand. Yours again came down from over 18 to about 17. Finally, in the last period, ours went up still higher—from 30 to about 32, while yours has fallen still further from 17 to less than 16. For the last year it stands, according to the Statistical Abstract for British India recently published, at about 35 per thousand. Thus during the last twenty years, while your death-rate has been steadily declining, ours has risen by no less than 10 per thousand, which on a population of three hundred millions means three million deaths annually more than was the case twenty years ago. Surely this is a frightful sum of human misery and you must find out where the responsibility for it is, for there must be responsibility somewhere. I think I need not say anything more on the subject of the material condition of India. To any one who looks beneath the surface, this fearful impoverishment was bound to result from the peculiar character of British rule. The administration by a foreign agency is so costly and the dominant position of the Englishman's position in every field gives him such an advantage in acquiring wealth in India, that a large drain of wealth has continuously gone on for years and years from India to England. During the last forty years, the net excess of our exports over imports has amounted to about a thousand million pounds. No country—and least of all a poor country like India—can stand so large

a drain ; and steady impoverishment has been the natural consequence. Well, things cannot go on at this rate for long, and the only remedy for the state of things must be sought in the steady association of the people of India with the administration of their own affairs till at last the colonial type of government is reached. As things are managed at present, the real interests of the people do not occupy the first place nor the second place nor even the third place on the state of Government. Nearly half the net revenue is eaten up by army charges. Large salaries are paid to English officials and the charge on their account is steadily rising. Nearly one-third of the net revenue is withdrawn from India to be spent in this country for purposes of the Government. Railway extension has taken precedence of irrigation in the past, because English capitalists are interested in the former. The progress of the people is obviously bound up with the spread of primary education—but how little so far has been done may be seen from the fact that, at the present moment, four villages out of every five are without a school-house and seven children out of eight are growing up in darkness and all the moral helplessness which comes of such darkness. The greatest need of the hour at present in India is industrial education, and yet there is not a single decent technical institute in the whole country. The truth is, there is nobody at present in the Government of India whose interests are permanently identified with those of the people. As long as this state of things continues, it is hopeless to expect that large questions which are urgently pressing for solution and which must be dealt with in a statesman-like manner with the sole aim of promoting interests of the people—such as the spread of primary education and of industrial education, the fearful indebtedness of the peasantry and such others—will receive the attention they require.

Ladies and gentlemen, I think I have said enough to establish to you the necessity of reconstructing the present bureaucratic form of administration in India on more liberal lines so as to associate the people of the country with that administration. At present there is no real control on the actions of this bureaucracy anywhere. We in India have, of course, no

control whatever. The Secretary of State for India is expected to control the administration generally, but he is a man who has never been to India and has, therefore, no personal knowledge of anything. The constitution, recognizing this disadvantage, has given him a Council of ten members to advise him. But as there is no Indian on this Council, and most members are retired Anglo-Indian officials, the bias of the Council is all in favour of the purely official regime. The Parliament in theory has the power of controlling the Government of India, but the Secretary of State for India, being a member of the Cabinet, can always count on a standing majority to support him and the control of Parliament thus becomes purely nominal. There is thus practically no real control anywhere, and every Liberal must admit that this is a very serious evil. Well, what the people of India ask now is that they themselves may be given an opportunity to exercise some sort of control over the Government. We recognize the enormous difficulties of the position and we don't ask for democratic institutions at once. Our immediate demands are, in fact, so moderate, that you will, I have no doubt, be astonished at our moderation. Take the Viceroy's Legislative Council in India. It consists of 25 members of whom only 4 are elected Indians. This Council is allowed to discuss the finances of the country one day in the year, but there is, of course, no real discussion and no votes are taken and no amendments allowed to be moved, as the Budget has not to be passed. Well, we ask in the first place, that half the number of this Council should be elected and the other half nominated by Government, the Viceroy, moreover, retaining the power of veto. We further ask that the Budget should be passed formally, and that we should have the right to move amendments, the right for the present being limited to, say, one amendment each member. This is as regards the Viceroy's Council. In the smaller Provincial Councils, we ask for larger opportunities to influence the administration of the finances, as the Provincial Governments deal only with internal affairs. Then we ask that of the ten members of the Secretary of State's Council, at least three should be Indians, so that he should have an opportunity to understand the Indian view of things before he makes up his mind on any question. Finally, we

ask that at least half-a-dozen Indians—two for each of the three leading Indian Provinces—should be allowed to sit in the House of Commons. Six in a House of 670 will not introduce any disturbing factor, and we certainly shall not affect the fate of ministries. But, in the first place, such representation will definitely associate us with a body which controls the whole Empire and will thereby raise our status. Secondly, the House will have an opportunity to know first-hand the Indian view of things ; and though we may be only six, when we are unanimous, we shall represent a moral force which it will not be easy to ignore. It may be said that if India is allowed representation in the House of Commons the Colonies will ask for the same. But the Colonies have their own Parliaments and the English House of Commons is not expected to exercise any direct control over their Governments. I may mention that the French Colonies send deputies to the French Chamber. These, ladies and gentlemen, are our immediate demands. Of course, these measures will have to be supplemented by a large amount of decentralization of authority in India, providing checks on the actions of the bureaucracy on the spot. But for this our agitation must be in India and not in England. I trust you are satisfied that we are aiming at nothing revolutionary and that what we are immediately asking for is only a small instalment in the direction of self-government. The time is more than ripe for such an instalment being conceded, and I trust our appeal to the Liberal Party of England for its sympathy and support in the matter will not have been addressed to it in vain.

### **THE SWADESHI MOVEMENT\***

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I propose to speak to you to-day of the economic condition of India and the Swadeshi movement. One of the most gratifying signs of the present times is the rapid growth of the Swadeshi sentiment all over the country during the last two years. I have said more than once here, but I think the idea bears repetition, that

\*Speech delivered in Lucknow on 9 February, 1907 at a function held under the chairmanship of Raja Rampal Singh.

Swadeshism at its highest is not merely an industrial movement, but that it affects the whole life of the nation—that Swadeshism at its highest is a deep, passionate, fervent, all-embracing love of the Motherland, and that this love seeks to show itself, not in one sphere of activity only, but in all : it invades the whole man, and it will not rest until it has raised the whole man. Now the first thing I want to say about this movement is that it has come here to stay. We often have movements which make a little noise for a time and then disappear without leaving any permanent mark behind. I think it so to say, that the Swadeshi movement is not going to be one of that kind, and my own personal conviction is that in this movement we shall ultimately find the true salvation of India. However, ladies and gentlemen, I do not wish to speak to you to-day about Swadeshism in general. The more immediate question before us is Swadeshism as applied to the present economic situation of India—its scope and character, the materials with which it has to work, and the difficulties it has to overcome before it can achieve in any degree the true industrial regeneration of the country.

Gentlemen, as Mr. Ranade once pointed out, the industrial domination of one people by another attracts much less attention than the political domination of a foreign people. The industrial domination is less visible and does its work in a more insidious manner. The disadvantages of a political domination lie very much on the surface. We see a foreign race monopolising all power and authority and keeping the people in a state of subjection. These are facts which we observe and feel every day of our lives. Human feelings often matter more to humanity than human interests, and when your feelings are hurt in various directions, as in a state of subjection, they are bound to be—I do not mean to throw any unnecessary blame on any one—their thought fills you night and day and makes you think constantly of the fact that you are living under a foreign domination. On the other hand, the industrial domination of one people by another may come in an attractive garb. If, as has been the case with India, this foreign domination comes in the shape of more finished articles—especially articles that administer to the daily wants

of a community—you unconsciously welcome the domination, you fall a victim to its temptations and its attractiveness. And it is only when the evil grows beyond certain limits, that your attention is drawn to it. Now this is precisely what has happened in the case of India. As soon as Western education came to be imparted to the people of this country, their first thoughts were directed to their political status. Of course, they also thought of their social institutions. Those who are acquainted with the history of the last fifty years, know that the struggle for political and social reforms started almost simultaneously, but I do not wish to go into that on this occasion. What I want to point out is that the thought of the industrial domination of India by England did not really occur to men's minds at that time. At any rate, it did not occur in that pointed manner in which the thought of political domination did. The result was that the main current of our public activity came to be directed towards the realization of our political aspirations, and about 22 years ago when the Congress came into existence for the political advancement of the people, the question of this industrial domination, though it had struck a few thoughtful minds, did not receive that consideration at the hands of the leaders of the people that it deserved. However, the industrial problem and its importance are now receiving their due recognition, and to-day at any rate we appear to have gone so far in this direction that there is now the risk of the industrial problem actually throwing into the shade the political problem which, however, to a great extent lies at the root of the industrial problem.

Gentlemen, when we come to this question of India's industrial domination by England, we come to what may be described as the most deplorable result of British rule in this country. In other matters there are things on the credit side and things on the debit side. Take, for instance, the political and administrative results of British rule. We have here the shutting out of a whole race from positions of real trust and responsibility where powers of initiative can be developed, and this is producing disastrous results on the character of the people. We also see that the forcible disarming of a population is bound to crush the manhood of the nation. In these directions we find



that a steady deterioration of the race has set in. But there are compensating advantages, and I am not sure that the balance is not on the latter side. Thus, the introduction of Western education, with its liberalising influence, has been a great blessing to the people. We now understand better the necessity of equal treatment for all ; we also see that unless the status of woman is raised, man by himself will not be able to advance very far ; and altogether this Western education is doing most noble work in the country. Then the British have established, on the whole, equal justice between Indian and Indian—as between European and Indian, that is a different matter—but between Indian and Indian it is equal, though it is costly, and that is more than can be said of previous rulers. Railways, Telegraphs, Post Offices and other modern appliances of material civilization have also been introduced into India by the present rulers, and it is fair to acknowledge that these things have added greatly to the comforts and conveniences of life and are a powerful help to our progress. Lastly, there are the blessings of peace and of order well and firmly established. These are things which must be set against the steady deterioration of which I have already spoken, and I am not prepared to say that the balance is not, on the whole, on the side of the advantages. But when you come to the industrial field, you find that the results have been disastrous. You find very little here on the credit side and nearly all the entries on the debit side. Now this is a serious statement to make, but I think it can be substantiated. I would ask you, first, to glance at what India was industrially before the English came into this country. It is true that there is very little direct or statistical evidence on this subject. But the statements made by travellers who come to this country supply a fair indication of how things were, though they do not enable us to establish a conclusion accurately or satisfactorily. We find, for instance, praise of India's riches in every place ; we find also here and there a description of the poverty of the mass of the people. And, on the whole, I think it is fair to say this—that, compared with other countries, India could not have been worse, and very probably she was better off than most other countries, and I think this description may well apply to her right up to the end of Mahomedan rule. India's reputed wealth was the attracting

cause of so many invasions. Large wealth must, therefore, have been accumulated in some hands, and so far as the bulk of the population was concerned, as the land was fertile and the people were industrious and thrifty and, on the whole, free from vices, such as drink, it is fair to conclude that the people must have enjoyed a considerable degree of rude agricultural prosperity. It is not proper to compare the West of today, with all its production of machinery and steam, with the India of 200 years ago. Before steam and machinery were employed in the West, the West too was largely agricultural, and she had then no special advantages for the production of wealth over us. And I believe that, judged by the standards of those days, we could not have been poorer, and very probably we were richer than most Western countries. Then there was the excellence of our productions which attracted the attention of Western nations—the fine muslins and many other things exported from this country showed what a high level of excellence had been reached by our people in industrial production. When the Mahomedan rulers came, they settled in this country, and there was no question of any foreign drain. Things, therefore, must have, on the whole, continued as they had been before their time.

Then we come to British rule. Gentlemen, I refer, on this occasion, to the past only in order that, in the light of it, we might understand the present and derive therefrom guidance and assistance for the future. The early days of the East India Company's rule were as bad as could possibly be from the standpoint of India's industrial system. Deliberate steps were taken by the Company to destroy the industries of the people and to make room for Western manufacturers. This has been acknowledged by English writers themselves. This was England's policy, not towards India alone, but towards America and Ireland also. America got rid of it by shaking off England's dominion altogether. Ireland struggled to do the same, but did not succeed. India suffered the worst under the operation of the evil policy. The object aimed at by the East India Company was to reduce India to the level of a merely agricultural country producing raw material only, without

factories to manufacture the same. This was the first stage in our industrial decay. The second stage began when England forced on us the policy of free trade, i.e., of leaving the door wide open to the competition of the whole world. England's own policy for centuries had been that of Protection, and by that policy she had built up her vast industrial system. But about sixty years ago, after Protection had done its work, she decided to give up the old policy and adopt Free Trade, mainly to set right the abuses to which Protection had given rise. England depends on foreign countries for most of her raw materials, and she supplies manufactured articles practically to the whole world. It was, therefore, to the advantage of England that there should be no export or import duties, as one result of such duties was to add to the cost of the articles supplied to foreign countries. But forcing this policy of free trade upon a country, circumstanced as India was, was a wholly different thing and was bound to produce results of a most disastrous character. Our things were made with the hand; we did not possess anything like the combination, skill or enterprise of the West. Steam and machinery were unknown in the country. Our industries were, therefore, bound to perish as a result of the shock of this sudden competition to which they were exposed, and as a matter of course the introduction of Free Trade in this country was followed by the rapid destruction of such small industries as had existed in the country, and the people were steadily pressed back more and more on the one resource of agriculture. I should not have deplored even this destruction of our indigenous manufactures if the Government had assisted us in starting others to take their place. The German economist—List—whose work on Political Economy is the best that Indian students can consult, explains how the state can help an old-world agricultural country, suddenly brought within the circle of the world's competition, to build up a new system of industries. He says that the destruction of hand-industries is a necessary stage through which an industrially backward country must pass before she can take rank with those which use steam and machinery and advanced scientific processes and appliances in their industrial production. When hand-made goods are exposed to the competition of machine-made goods, it is inevit-

able that the former should perish. But when this stage is reached there comes in the duty of the State. The State by a judicious system of protection should then ensure conditions under which new infant industries can grow up. And until the new industries can stand on their own legs, it becomes the duty of the State to have a protective wall around. This is what America—already one of the richest nations in the world, and one which will yet reach the foremost place—has done, and the case is the same with France and Germany. The result of England's policy in India has, however, been to facilitate more and more the imports of foreign commodities, until there is no country on the face of the earth to-day which is so dependent on the foreign producer as India is. At the present moment about 70 per cent of our exports are raw material raised from the soil and exported in that condition. If we had the skill, enterprise, capital and organisation to manufacture the greater part of this material, there would be so many industries flourishing in the country. But the material goes out and comes back in the shape of manufactured commodities, having acquired a much higher price in the process of manufacture.

Again, if you look at your imports, you will find that 60 per cent. of them are manufactured goods. They are goods which have been made by other people, so that all you have got to do with them is to consume them. If this was all, if the steady rustication of India—her being steadily pushed back on the one resource of agriculture—was all that we had to deplore as the result of the present policy, the situation, bad enough as it would undoubtedly have been, would not have been so critical. But coupled with political domination, this has produced a state of things which can only be described as intolerable. The total imports of India are worth about 100 crores of rupees every year. Our total exports, on the other hand, amount to about 150 crores a year.

In other words, every year about 100 crores worth of goods come to us, and we part with 150 crores worth of goods. After taking into consideration the precious metals that come into the country to redress a part of the balance, we still find that a

loss of about 30 to 40 crores a year has to be borne by India. Now, I will put a simple question to those present here. If a hundred rupees come into your house every month and a hundred and fifty rupees go out, will you be growing richer or poorer? And if this process goes on year after year, decade, after decade, what will be your position after a time? This has been the case with India now for many years. Every year between 30 and 40 crores of rupees go out of India never to come back. No country—not even the richest in the world—can stand such a bleeding as this. Bleeding is a strong word, but it was first used with regard to this very process by a great English statesman—the late Lord Salisbury—who was Prime Minister of England for a long time and was before that Secretary of State for India. Now this bleeding is really at the root of the greater part of the economic mischief that we have to face to-day. It means that this money, which would have been available to the people, if it had remained in this country, as capital for industrial purposes, is lost to us. The result is that there is hardly any capital of our own forthcoming for industrial purposes. Do not be misled by the fact that a few individuals appear to be rich and have a little money to invest. You must compare India in this matter with other countries, and then you will find that there is hardly any capital accumulated by us to be devoted to industrial development. One of the greatest students of Indian Economics—the late Mr. Justice Ranade—once calculated that our annual savings could not be more than 8 to 10 crores of rupees. Put it even at 20 crores; what is that in a vast country like India compared with the hundreds and thousands of crores accumulated annually by the people of the West! This, then, is at the root of our trouble. I do not say that there are no considerations on the other side. It might, for instance, be said that the railways in this country have been constructed with English capital. About 375 crores have been so far spent to build these railways, and it is only fair that for this capital India should pay a certain sum as interests. Englishmen have also invested British capital in indigo, tea, and other industries. A part of this capital has no doubt come out of their own savings made in this country, but whether the money has been earned here or imported from England, the investors are, of course entitled to a reasonable

rate of interest on it. But after a deduction is made on account of this interest, there still remains a sum of over 30 crores as the net loss that India has to bear year by year. You may ask what politics has got to do with this. Well, the greater part of this loss is due to the unnatural political position of India, and I think we shall not be far wrong if we put the annual drain, due to political causes directly and indirectly, at about 20 crores of rupees. The greater part of the 'Home Charges' of the Government of India, which now stand at about 18 millions sterling or 27 crores of rupees, comes under this description. To this has to be added a portion at least of the annual savings of European merchants, lawyers, doctors, and such other persons, as the dominant position of the Englishman in the country gives these classes special advantages which their Indian competitors do not enjoy. Then there are the earnings of the English officials and the British troops in the country. And altogether I am convinced that it is not an extravagant estimate to put the annual cost to India of England's political domination at 20 crores of rupees, the remaining ten crores being lost on account of our industrial domination by England.

This, then, is the extent of the 'bleeding' to which we are subjected year after year ! It is an enormous economic evil, and as long as it is not substantially reduced, the prospect cannot be a cheering one. After all, what can you do with a small amount of capital ? You must not be led away by the fact that, from time to time, you hear of a new industrial concern being started here or there. The struggle is a much bigger one than that. It is like the struggle between a dwarf and a giant. If you will form the least idea of the resources of the Western people, then you will understand what a tremendously difficult problem we have to face in this economic field. If this continuous bleeding is to cease, it is incumbent that our men should be employed more and more in the service of the State, so that pensions and furlough charges might be saved to the country. The stores which the Government of India purchases in England should be purchased locally as far as possible. In other directions also our position must be improved. But, I think, we should not be practical, if we did

not recognize that any important change in the political relations between England and India could come only gradually. It is not by a sudden and violent movement that relief will come. It will only come as we slowly build up our own strength and bring it to bear upon the Government. As this strength is increased, so will the drain be diminished. The industrial drain—due to the fact that we depend so largely for our manufactures upon foreign countries—is really speaking but a small part of the drain—about one-third or ten crores of rupees a year. This means that if we ever succeeded in reaching a position of entire self-reliance industrially, it would still leave about two-thirds of the present annual drain untouched. Moreover, such entire dependence upon yourselves for industrial purposes is a dream that is not likely to be realised in the near future. I am sorry I must trouble you with a few figures, but a question of this kind cannot be adequately considered without bringing in statistics. What, then, is the position? India, as you know, is for the most part an agricultural country. Sixty-five per cent. of the population, according to the last census reports—80 per cent. according to the computation of Lord Curzon—depend upon agriculture. The soil is becoming rapidly exhausted and the yield per acre is diminishing. If you compare the yield to-day with what it was in the time of Akbar, as given in the *Ain-i-Akbari*, you will be astonished to see what deterioration has taken place in the soil. This makes agricultural improvement a matter of great difficulty. You have got to abolish old methods as much as possible and effect improvements by introducing the methods of the West. You have got to introduce agricultural science and improved agricultural implements, and the question is complicated by the fact that our agricultural production in this country generally is on, what is called, a small scale. Land is divided and sub-divided, and most of the holdings are so small as not to lend themselves to the use of advanced appliances. The ignorance and resourcelessness of the people also stand in the way and altogether agricultural improvement is bound to be a matter of slow growth. But this is one direction in which you young men can help the country. Instead of scrambling for Government service or overcrowding the already crowded Bar, let a few at least among you acquire agricultural education

abroad acquaint themselves with the use of advanced agricultural appliances, and then settle down to agricultural work in this country. You will thereby not only improve agriculture for yourselves, but you will also show the way to others, and they will follow when they see the good results obtained by you. The Government, which has only recently awakened to its duty in this matter, has already taken agriculture in hand, but the greater part of this work must be done by ourselves. Our next industry, after agriculture, is the textile industry--the cotton industry. Now, taking only the production of mills, we find that last year about one-fourth of what the whole of India needed was produced in India, and three-fourths came from outside. The capital that is invested in this country in the textile industry is between 16 and 17 crores of rupees. This may seem a large amount to some of you, but what is it compared with the capital invested in this industry in England? In Lancashire alone 300 crores of rupees are invested in this textile industry, and every year the amount is increasing by leaps and bounds. On a rough calculation you will find that, if our present production is to be quadrupled, about forty to fifty crores of rupees of additional capital would be wanted. That cannot be a matter of a day. The hand-loom is doing good work, and has some future before it. But do not let us be under a delusion. The main part of the work will have to be done by machinery. It is only in this way that we shall be able to stand the competition of producers of other countries. If we are able to find this capital in the course of the next 10 or 15 years, I for one shall be content. My own fear is that it will take more than that. If by the end of ten years we are able to produce all the cotton cloth we require, I think we shall have done exceedingly well. We must all bend our energies in that direction and try to capture or rather recover this field as soon and as completely as possible. But then, gentlemen, I would say this. The task, even under the most favourable circumstances, is a formidable one, and it is in the highest degree unwise to add to its great difficulty by unnecessary, bitter or lamentable controversies. You require for a satisfactory solution of this problem co operation from all quarters, including the Government of the country. We have to depend, for the present at any rate, upon foreign



countries for our machinery. If, in pursuing our object, care is not taken to avoid causing unnecessary irritation to others, there is nothing to prevent this Government from hitting back and imposing a heavy tax, say, of 20 or 25 per cent. on machinery, which would practically destroy all our chances of increasing our production of cotton goods. The problem is also largely a problem of the necessary quality of cotton being obtained in this country. At one time India produced very fine cotton and the finest muslins were made of it. Unfortunately the cultivation of that cotton has, in course of time, owing to various causes, been given up and the present cotton is of short staple which gives you only a comparatively coarse thread. Now we know from past experience that this land can grow superior cotton. And the Bombay Government have been for a number of years making experiments to introduce into the country Egyptian cotton, and have at last been able to produce a cross between the Egyptian and the Indian, which has taken root. If all the area irrigated in Sind—the conditions of which are similar to those of Egypt—succeeds in growing this cotton, then the finer fabric problem will have been solved. The co-operation of Government in this matter is thus essential, and those who have occasion to talk of the Swadeshi question should not fail to realize that a great responsibility rests upon them. They only unnecessarily increase the difficulties in our path when they talk as though we could do without Government assistance in the matter; and thereby they damage, without meaning to do so, such chances as exist for real industrial progress. But in the case of this cotton industry, I think the outlook, on the whole, is a most hopeful one.

I turn next to the sugar industry. At one time we exported sugar, but at the present time sugar comes into this country to the amount of 7 crores a year. Foreign Governments have been helping their people with bounties, and they have discovered methods whereby the cost of production has been greatly reduced. We, on the other hand, still adhere to our old-world methods of production. Sugarcane is plentiful in all parts of India, especially in your province. If we make up our minds to encourage Indian sugar as far as possible, and in this case I am glad to be able to say "have nothing to do with

foreign sugar"—we should be able, with the co-operation of Government, in a brief time to produce all the sugar we want. In this connection I was glad to notice a statement made by your Lieutenant-Governor the other day in the matter. He said he would rejoice if even a single ton of sugar did not come from other countries. By co-operation, therefore, between the people and the Government the sugar problem would be solved practically at once. In Bengal, again, they import a good deal of salt from England though other provinces consume mostly Indian salt. With such a vast sea-board as India possesses, India ought certainly to be able to produce her own salt. Again, about 20 lakhs worth of umbrellas, 50 lakhs worth of matches and 60 lakhs worth of paper come into the country every year from abroad. All these articles are now being produced here, and with a determination on our part to use these articles as much as possible and encourage their production and consumption, we should soon be able to shut out the foreign supply.

But, after all is said and done, I want you to recognise that the possibilities in the near future are not very large. I say this not to damp any one's enthusiasm, because I do want that your enthusiasm should sustain itself at its highest glow in this matter. But remember that the competition before us is like that between a giant and a dwarf. Even if we successfully make up our minds to have nothing to do with foreign goods, even then the industrial salvation of India will not have been accomplished. We are the poorest country in the world at the present moment; England, on the other hand, is the richest. The production per head in India is £ 2 or Rs. 30 according to Government calculation, and about Rs. 20 according to Indian calculation. England's production per head is £ 40, i.e., about 20 or 30 times greater than that of this country. Take again the buying power of the people as judged by the imports. In England the average imports per head are about £ 15 or Rs. 235; in the self-governing colonies of England they are £ 13; even in Ceylon they are £ 2 per head; but in India they are only six shillings or 4 to 5 rupees per head. There are other figures equally startling. Take, for instance, the deposits in banks. Of course banking is in a much more backward

condition in this country than in England. But even making allowance for that, you will see that the disproportion is very great. The deposits in English banks are about 1,200 crores of rupees for a population of about 4 crores. We are 30 crores and our deposits are only 50 crores for the whole of India, and these deposits include also the amount held by European merchants and traders in the country. Again, take the Savings Banks. In the Savings Banks and Trustees Banks in England there are 300 crores deposited today, as against about 12 crores in this country—less than seven annas per head against about Rs. 75 per head in England. You can easily see now how terrible is the disproportion between England's resources and our own. Add to this the fact that machinery has to come from England, and by the time it is set up here, there is already some improvement effected in England. The problem before us is, therefore, a vastly difficult one and it is a solemn duty resting upon every one, who is a real well-wisher of the Swadeshi cause, not to add to that difficulty, if he can help it.

Our resources then are small, and our difficulties are enormous. It behoves us, therefore, not to throw away any co-operation from whatever quarter it may be forthcoming. Remember that, though there is a certain scope for small village industries, our main reliance now—exposed as we are to the competition of the whole world—must be on production with the aid of steam and machinery. From this standpoint, what are our principal needs to-day? In the first place, there is general ignorance throughout the country about the industrial condition of the world. Very few of us understand where we are, as compared with others, and why we are where we are and why others are where they are. Secondly, our available capital is small, and it is, moreover, timid. Confidence in one another in the spirit of co-operation for industrial purposes is weak, and joint stock enterprise is, therefore, feeble. Thirdly, there is a lack of facilities for higher scientific and technical instruction in the country. Lastly, such new articles as we succeed in manufacturing find themselves exposed at once to the competition of the whole world, and as, in the beginning at any rate, they are bound to be somewhat inferior in quality and probably higher in price, it is difficult for them to make their

way in the Indian market. Now as our needs are various, so the *Swadeshi* cause requires to be served in a variety of ways, and we should be careful not to quarrel with others, simply because they serve the cause in a different way from our own. Thus, whoever tries to spread in the country a correct knowledge of the industrial conditions of the world and points out how we may ourselves advance, is a promoter of the *Swadeshi* cause. Whoever again contributes capital to be applied to the industrial development of the country must be regarded as a benefactor of the country and a valued supporter of the *Swadeshi* movement. Then those who organise funds for sending Indian students to foreign countries for acquiring industrial or scientific education—and in our present state we must, for some time to come, depend upon foreign countries for such education—or those who proceed to foreign countries for such education and try to start new industries on their return, or those who promote technical, industrial and scientific education in the country itself—all these are noble workers in the *Swadeshi* field. These three ways of serving the *Swadeshi* cause are, however, open to a limited number of persons only. But there is a fourth way, which is open to all of us, and in the case of most, it is, perhaps, the only way in which they can help forward the *Swadeshi* movement. It is to use ourselves, as far as possible, *Swadeshi* articles only and to preach to others that they should do the same. By this we shall ensure the consumption of whatever articles are produced in the country, and we shall stimulate the production of new articles by creating a demand for them. The mass of the people cannot contribute much capital to the industrial development of the country. Neither can they render much assistance in the matter of promoting higher scientific, technical or industrial knowledge among us, but they can all render a most important and a most necessary service to the *Swadeshi* cause by undergoing a little sacrifice to extend a kind of voluntary protection to *Swadeshi* industries in their early days of stress and struggle. In course of time, the quality of *Swadeshi* articles is bound to improve and their cost of production to become less and less. And it is no merit if you buy them when they can hold their own against foreign articles in quality or price. It is

by ensuring the consumption of indigenous articles in their early stage, when their quality is inferior or their price is higher, or when they labour under both these disadvantages, that we can do for our industries what Protectionist Governments have done for theirs by means of State protection. Those, therefore, who go about and preach to the people that they should use, as far as possible, *Swadeshi* articles only, are engaged in sacred work and I say to them—go forward boldly and preach your Gospel enthusiastically. Only do not forget that yours is only one way out of several of serving the *Swadeshi* cause. And do not do your work in a narrow, exclusive, intolerant spirit which says—‘whoever is not with us is against us.’ But do it in the broader, more comprehensive, more catholic spirit, which says—‘whoever is not against us is with us.’ Try to keep down and not encourage the tendency, which seems to be almost inherent in the Indian mind of to-day, to let small differences assume undue importance. Harmony, co-operation, union—by these alone can we achieve any real success in our present state.

In this connection I think I ought to say a word about an expression which has, of late, found considerable favour with a section of my countrymen—‘the boycott of foreign goods.’ I am sure most of those who speak of this ‘boycott’ mean by it only the use, as far as possible, of *Swadeshi* articles in preference to foreign articles. Now such use is really included in true *Swadeshi*; but unfortunately the word ‘boycott’ has a sinister meaning—it implies a vindictive desire to injure another, no matter what harm you may thereby cause to yourself. And I think we would do well to use only the word *Swadeshi* to describe our present movement, leaving alone the word ‘boycott’ which creates unnecessary ill-will against ourselves. Moreover, remember that a strict ‘boycott’ of foreign goods is not at all practicable in our present industrial condition. For when you ‘boycott’ foreign goods, you must not touch even a particle of imported articles; and we only make ourselves ridiculous by talking of a resolution which we cannot enforce.

One word more and I have done. In the struggle that lies before us, we must be prepared for repeated disappointments.

We must make up our minds that our progress is bound to be slow, and our successes, in the beginning at any rate, comparatively small. But if we go to work with firm faith in our hearts, no difficulties can obstruct our way for long, and the future will be more and more on our side. After all, the industrial problem, formidable as it is, is not more formidable than the political problem. And, to my mind, the two are largely bound together. Ladies and gentlemen, the task which the people of India are now called upon to accomplish is the most difficult that ever confronted any people on the face of the earth. Why it has pleased Providence to set it before us, why we are asked to wade through the deepest part of the stream—to be in the hottest part of the battle—Providence alone knows. But it is my hope and my faith that we will successfully achieve this task. The situation requires us to devote ourselves to the service of our Motherland in an earnest and self-sacrificing spirit. But what can be higher or nobler or holier or more inspiring than such service? In working for India, we shall only be working for the land of our birth, for the land of our fathers, for the land of our children. We shall be working for a country which God has blessed in many ways, but which man has not served so well. And if we do this work as God wants us to do it, our Motherland will yet march onwards and again occupy an honoured place among the nations of the world.

### **THE HINDU-MAHOMEDAN QUESTION\***

Till recently the differences between Hindus and Mahomedans which from time to time assumed an acute form and attracted public attention were generally in regard to matters involving religious sentiment, such as cow-killing and street music. No doubt complaints were occasionally heard in the addresses presented by Mahomedan Associations to men in authority, or in the columns of the Press about the Mahomedans not securing a sufficient share of the public services, or a sufficient representation on Municipal and Local Boards. But a separate

\*English version of a speech delivered in Marathi at a public meeting held on 4 July, 1902 under the auspices of the Deccan Sabha, Poona.

organized movement of Muslem leaders, with a comprehensive programme of their own, to win special concessions for Mahomedans as a community in the administration of the country was a matter of the last two or three years only, and while there was undoubtedly a cause for sincere congratulation that their Mahomedan brethren had at last shaken off their apathy of years in political matters, their separate organisation and their demand for special concessions did not tend to diminish their growing difficulties of their public life. After glancing briefly at the past history of the two communities and the contributions made by them to the progress of the world, Mr. Gokhale proceeded to consider their respective positions at the present day in India. The Mahomedan minority, who were a little over one-fifth of the whole population, was very unequally divided among the different Provinces. In the Punjab and East Bengal they actually formed a majority of the population, being a little over one-half in the Punjab and about three-fifths in East Bengal. In Bombay, on the other hand, they were only one-fifth, in West Bengal between one-fifth and one-sixth, in the United Provinces one-seventh, in Madras about one-sixteenth, and in the Central Provinces less than one-twentieth. The bulk of the Mahomedans did not differ from the Hindus in race, but they had to remember that religion was a most powerful factor in life and it modified and sometimes profoundly modified race characteristics. In numbers, in wealth, in education and public spirit, the advantage at present lay with the Hindus. They had also so far contributed far more than the other community to the present national awakening in India. But they were greatly hampered by caste, and by temperament they were mild and passive. On the other hand, the Mahomedans were burdened with fewer divisions, their social structure rested on a more democratic basis, they had more cohesion among them, and they were more easily roused to action. The worst of the situation was that over the greater part of India the two communities had inherited a tradition of antagonism, which, though it might ordinarily lie dormant, broke forth into activity at the smallest provocation. It was that tradition that had to be overcome. And though there were certain special difficulties in their way and the task at times appeared well-nigh impossible, it was no more impossible

than what Europe had to face for more than two centuries in the fierce antagonism between Protestants and Catholics. Spread of education, a wide and efficient performance of civic duties, growth of national aspirations and a quickening of national self-respect in both communities were among the forces which would ultimately overcome the tradition. The progress in that direction was bound to be slow and there were sure to be repeated set-backs. But they must believe in final success with all their will and persevere ceaselessly against all odds. It was a common-place of Indian politics that there could be no future for India as a nation, unless a spirit of co-operation of a sufficiently durable character was developed and established between the two great communities in all public matters. They could not get over that, no matter how angry they might be at times with one another. And those among them who wished to devote themselves to the promotion of such co-operation had no choice but to refrain as far as possible from joining in controversies likely to embitter the relations between the two sides, and exercising forbearance and self-restraint themselves to counsel it in others. The speaker was of opinion that a special responsibility lay in the matter with the Hindus, who had an advantage over the other community in regard to the spread of education and who were therefore in a better position to appreciate the needs of a growing nationality. They could also do a great deal toward the establishment of better relations if some of them devoted themselves to educational and other useful work among Mahomedans for the special benefit of that community. Such work could not in course of time fail to be appreciated, and it would powerfully help in gradually substituting confidence and goodwill and co-operation in place of the present distrust and suspicion and aloofness.

Having thus dealt with the general position Mr. Gokhale proceeded to express his view of the controversy that had agitated the country during the last six months. Much of the excitement, he said, had been due to a misapprehension of the character and scope of the new reforms. Mr. Gokhale stated his own position in the matter quite frankly. He had all along been in favour of special separate electorates for impor-



tant minorities but he wanted such electorates to provide not the whole of the representation to which the communities were entitled but only so much of it as was necessary to redress the deficiencies and inequalities of general elections ; and he wanted the same treatment to be extended to other important minorities than Mahomedans where necessary. Mr. Gokhale held strongly that in the best interests of their public life and for the future of their land they must first have elections on a territorial basis in which all communities without distinction of race or creed should participate and then special separate supplementary elections should be held to secure the fair and adequate representation of such important minorities as had received less than their full share in the general elections. He had urged that view publicly from his place in the Viceroy's Legislative Council last March, and he had been called hard names by both sides for it. He, however adhered to his view that in the present circumstances of the country, that was the only course which reasonably safeguarded the interests of all communities and prevented injustice to any one of them in practice. As far as they could see, the Government of India's original proposals had been very much on those lines. And if the Secretary of State had not unfortunately disturbed them in first instance, very probably they would not have heard much of the demands they had since been made. No doubt, under those proposals special treatment was proposed to be accorded only to Mahomedans, but there was nothing to prevent the same treatment being extended to others later on if necessary. The Secretary of State, however, having proposed, from the highest motives as they could all see, a scheme of his own and having afterwards found it necessary to abandon it and fall back again on the Government of India's proposals, did so in language which opened the door to large demands by the Moslem League. Straightway the League threw the Government of India's proposals overboard and began to urge the grant of large concessions. Mr. Gokhale made no complaint of this. Indeed so far as the League urged this substitution of election in place of nomination for all special seats, his sympathies were with the League. But when some of the leading spokesmen of the Moslem community demanded a large representation than they were justly entitled to on grounds such as

special importance and higher loyalty traditional or otherwise, an occasion undoubtedly arose when it became the duty of the other communities in the country to protest strongly against such claims. His own feeling in the matter was the same as that of their great leader Sir Pherozeshah Mehta than whom the country had no wiser or more patriotic guide.

Mr. Gokhale associated himself fully with the telegram recently despatched, and as he knew, most reluctantly despatched by Sir Pherozeshah Mehta to the Government of India. He had assented to that telegram personally, having specially attended the meeting of the Presidency Association for the purpose. When any one said that his community was important and should receive fair and adequate representation, the claim was entitled to the sympathetic consideration of all. But when any one urged that his community was specially important and should therefore receive representation in excess of its fair share, the undoubted and irresistible implication was that the other communities were comparatively inferior and should receive less than their fair share. That was a position to which naturally the other communities could not assent. British rule was based on equal treatment for all communities, and the speaker trusted that the Government would never be so weak as to lean for support or any one community in particular. It was urged that the Mahomedans had ruled in India for five centuries. It must not, however, be forgotten that the Hindus had ruled for countless centuries before them and even afterwards, before the British came on the scene, the Mahomedan power had been broken and displaced over nearly the whole country by a revival of Hindu rule. Then it was said that there were large Mahomedan populations in other countries—some of them self-governing countries—and that invested the Mahomedans of India with special importance. Mr. Gokhale could not see how that mattered in determining the extent of the representation which the Government of India should grant to its own subjects, unless it was on the assumption that in the administration of this country, those whose whole heart was not with India were to have preference over those whose was. Moreover, the same ground could with equal reason be urged by Indian Christians and by Buddhists. Lastly, as regards the

higher traditional loyalty of Mahomedans to British rule, the claim was not historically tenable. And even during the last two or three years Mahomedan names had not been altogether absent from the lists of those speakers and writers against whom the Government had thought it necessary to proceed, though it must be admitted that the number of such names had been extremely small. Before concluding, Mr. Gokhale referred to the speech recently made by His Highness the Aga Khan. He said that he read portions of that speech with considerable astonishment, and he could not help regretting that so well informed and broad-minded a gentleman as His Highness should have been labouring under so much misapprehension. His Highness had said that unless larger concessions were made to the Mahomedans, the Hindus would be exultant and triumphant. All that Mr. Gokhale could say about this was that His Highness was evidently not in touch with Hindu feeling in the matter. Not only was there no disposition among the Hindus to exult or to feel triumphant but there was actually a sullen feeling of resentment throughout the country, a feeling daily growing deeper and stronger that the Government had not held the balance even and that it had already leaned too much on the Mahomedan side. His Highness had further said that unless additional concessions were made to Mahomedans, it would mean a monopoly of political power to the Hindus. Mr. Gokhale said that he rubbed his eyes as he read that statement. Surely the Aga Khan could not be under the impression that what the Government proposed to do was to hand over the administration of the country to elected Councils with Hindu majority in them. No even with the Councils reconstituted as proposed the last word would still be with the officials. The enlargement of the Councils and the increase in the proportion of elected members were no doubt important matters, but they were not so important as to afford to any community a shadow of an opportunity to obtain a monopoly of political power in the country. As the speaker had often pointed out, the most important and the valuable part of the reform of Legislative Councils was the power proposed to be conferred on members to raise discussions on administrative matters. This power, if wisely exercised, would gradually give the country an administration conducted in the light of day

and under the scrutiny of public discussion in place of the present administration carried on in the dark and behind the backs of the people. For this purpose what really mattered was the capacity, the public spirit, and the sense of responsibility of the members. How many members were returned by any particular community was not of much consequence, and a member or two more or less on this side or that would not make the smallest difference in practice. Mr. Gokhale earnestly trusted that Government would soon close the question in a definite manner and he was confident that before long the present soreness of feeling would disappear and normal relations again return between the two communities. When once the new Councils commenced to work it would be realised that there was no demand or scope there for work on sectarian lines and the man who worked for all would find his service appreciated by all communities. Controversies like the present were occasionally inevitable, but if they took care not to employ words or express sentiments which would leave soreness behind, they might succeed in averting the injury which otherwise was likely to result to the best interests of their growing nationality. They were all of them trustees of those interests, and the world and their own posterity would judge them by the manner in which they discharged that trust.

### **EAST AND WEST IN INDIA\***

The object of the Universal Races Congress has been described by the organisers to be "to discuss, in the light of modern knowledge and the modern conscience, the general relations subsisting between the peoples of the West and those of the East, between so-called white and so-called coloured peoples, with a view to encouraging between them a fuller understanding, the most friendly feelings and a heartier co-operation." With the commencement of the twentieth century, the relations between the East and the West may be regarded as having entered on a new phase, and it is, I think, in accord with the changed spirit of the times that the West should

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\*A paper read at the Universal Races Congress held in London in July, 1911.

think of summoning a Congress, where the representatives of all races, "with developed types of civilisation might meet each other face to face and might, in friendly rivalry, further the cause of mutual trust and respect between Occident and Orient." To the people of the East such a desire on the part of the people of the West is naturally a matter of profound interest and of far-reaching significance. The traditional view, so well expressed by the poet, of the changeless and unresisting East, beholding with awe the legions of the West, as they thundered past her, bowing low before the storm, while the storm lasted, and plunging back again in thought, when the storm was over, seemed for centuries to encourage—almost invite—unchecked aggression by Western nations in Eastern lands, in utter disregard of the rights or feelings of Eastern peoples. Such aggression, however, could not go on for ever, and the protest of the Eastern world against it, as evidenced by the steady growth of a feeling of national self-respect in different Eastern lands, has now gathered sufficient strength and volume to render its continuance on old lines extremely improbable, if not altogether impossible. The victories of Japan over Russia, the entry of Turkey among constitutionally-governed countries, the awakening of China, the spread of the national movement in India, Persia and Egypt, all point to the necessity of the West revising her conception of the East—revising also the standards by which she has sought in the past to regulate her relations with the East. East and West may now meet on more equal terms than was hitherto possible, and as a first step towards such meeting the value of the Universal Races Congress cannot be overestimated.

The problem—how to ensure "a fuller understanding, the most friendly feelings and a heartier co-operation" between the East and the West—so difficult, everywhere, is nowhere else so difficult and so delicate as it is in India. In the case of other countries, the contact of the West with the East is largely external only; in India the West has, so to say, entered into the very bone and marrow of the East. For a hundred years now, more or less, India has been under the political sway of England, and the industrial domination of the country has been no less complete than the political. This peculiar relation-

ship introduces into the problem factors of great complexity, and the conflict of interests, which it involves, has to be harmonised before attempts made with the object which the Congress has in view, can possess an enduring value or produce solid results.

It is recognised on all sides that the relations between Europeans and Indians in India have grown greatly strained during the last quarter of a century. And yet Englishmen started with uncommon advantages in India. Owing to India's peculiar development, the establishment of British rule, so far from being resented, was actually regarded with feelings of satisfaction, if not enthusiasm, by the people over the greater part of the country. It is true that England never conquered India in the sense in which the word "conquer" is ordinarily used. She did not come to the country as an invader, nor did she fight her battles, when she had to fight them, with armies composed of her own people. The establishment and the consolidation of her rule, which undoubtedly is one of the most wonderful phenomena of modern times, was entirely the result of her superior power of organisation, her superior patriotism and her superior capacity for Government, applied to the conditions that prevailed in India during the second half of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century. And, strange as it may seem to many, the new rule was accepted by the mass of the people as bringing them welcome relief from a more or less chronic state of disorder, and conferring on them advantages, outweighing all considerations on the other side. This was due to the fact that with all her contribution to human progress in many fields—religion, philosophy, literature, science, art—a contribution which the world is coming to recognise more and more every day, and of which Indians may well remain proud for all time—India did not develop the national idea or the idea of political freedom as developed in the West. Who exercised the sovereign authority was to her people a minor matter, as long as it was well exercised and did not seriously interfere with their religious, social or communal life. And it cannot be denied that in many essential respects, the standards of Government of the new rulers compared favourably with those of the indigenous powers that

were then struggling for supremacy in the land. The advantageous start thus secured was further improved by the declarations of wise and far-seeing statesmen, made from time to time in those early days, as regards the policy in accordance with which the affairs of this country were to be administered. India, they declared, was to them a trust. Not England's profit but India's moral and material well-being was to be the object of the rule; Englishmen were not to form a governing caste in the country; the people of India were to be helped to advance steadily to a position of equality with them so that they might in due course acquire the capacity to govern themselves in accordance with the higher standards of the West. To fit the youth of the country for their new responsibilities, institutions were started for imparting to them Western education, and the class thus trained in the ideas of the West was expected to act as interpreter between the Government and the people, bringing its active goodwill to the support of the former. The establishment of Universities and Queen Victoria's noble Proclamation, addressed to the princes and people of India, on the morrow of the mutiny, set the final seal on this large-hearted policy.

It is necessary to bear these facts in mind to understand clearly the estrangement that has taken place, as observed above, during the last quarter of a century, between Englishmen and Indians especially that class among the Indians which has come directly or indirectly, under the influence of the education of the West. Numerically this class still constitutes but a small proportion of the whole population, but it is undoubtedly the brain of the country, doing its thinking for it, and determining its public opinion. For several years this class was keenly appreciative of England's work in India and its attitude towards Englishmen, on the whole, was that of pupils to their teachers—an attitude of respect, of confidence, even of affection. The first effect of Western teaching on those who received it was to incline them strongly in favour of the Western way of looking at things, and under this influence they bent their energies, in the first instance, to a re-examination of the whole of their ancient civilisation—their social usages and institutions, their religious beliefs, their literature, their science,

their art, in fact, their entire conception and realisation of life. This brought them into violent collision with their own society, but that very collision drove them closer to the Englishmen in the country, to whom they felt deeply grateful for introducing into India the liberal thought of the West, with its protest against caste or sex disabilities and its recognition of man's dignity as man—a teaching which they regarded as of the highest value in serving both as a corrective and a stimulant to their old civilisation. On one point they entertained no doubt whatever in their minds. They firmly believed that it was England's settled policy to raise steadily their political status till at last they fully participated in the possession of those free institutions, which it is the glory of the English race to have evolved. This belief, so strong at one time, began, however, gradually to weaken, when it was seen that English administrators were not in practice as ready to advance along lines of constitutional development as had been hoped and that the bulk of Englishmen in the country were far from friendly even to the most reasonable aspirations of Indians in political matters. With the rise of the new Imperialism in England, during the last quarter of a century, new and clearer signs became visible of a disinclination on the part of the ruling nation to carry into effect the policy to which it stood committed. Then indeed the faith of Indian reformers in the character and purposes of British rule, already tried by a feeling of suspicion, began definitely to give way. Suspicion was followed by surprise, by disappointment, by anger, and these inevitably produced a rapidly-rising anti-English feeling, which especially affected the younger minds throughout the country. Things now came to be regarded in a new light. The old readiness to acknowledge freely and gratefully the benefits which India had derived from the British connection, gave way to a tendency to indulge in bitter and fault-finding criticism, directed indiscriminately against everything done by Englishmen. "Wrong in the one thing rare," what mattered it to the Indians what Englishmen did, or how they conducted themselves in other respects? While this development was taking place within the borders of India, the whole East was already being driven by those mysterious forces, which shape great events to a new life, in which a new longing to enjoy



the solid advantages of a constitutional government and realise the dignity of nationhood, was combined with a new pride in the special culture and civilisation of the East, a new impatience of Western aggression and Western domination and a new faith in the destiny of Eastern peoples. India could not but be affected by those thought-currents with the rest of Asia, and the influences at work naturally received a powerful stimulus when Japan astonished the world with her victories over Russia. The steady growth of the anti-English feeling in the country was recognised by all thoughtful persons to be fraught with a serious menace to the cause of peaceful progress and the outlook was undoubtedly very dark, when English statesmanship came to the rescue and by granting to the country a measure of constitutional reform, sufficiently substantial to meet the more pressing requirements of the day, helped largely to ease the tension and restore a more friendly feeling between the two sides.

There is no doubt whatever that the reform measures of two years ago arrested the growing estrangement between Europeans and Indians in India, and since then the situation has undergone a steady and continuous change for the better. So marked is this change over the greater part of the country that there are many who hold that the desire to understand each other and respect each other's feelings and susceptibilities was never so great as it is at the present moment. For how long these relations will thus continue to improve, and whether they will again tend to grow worse, and if so when, are questions more difficult to answer. It is well to remember that certain causes are constantly at work to produce misunderstandings and make harmonious relations between the two sides a matter of considerable difficulty. Thus the differences in temperament, the natural predisposition to look at questions from different standpoints, the tone habitually adopted by a section of the Press, both English and Indian, these make a demand on the patience of either side, which it is not always easy to meet. Then there are those cases of personal ill-treatment--happily rarer now than before--which, from time to time, attract public attention and cause infinite mischief--cause in which Indians are found to suffer insult and even violence at the hands of

individual Englishmen for no other reason than that they are Indians. These are, so to say, among the standing factors of the situation, and they must, I fear, be accepted as inevitable, at any rate, in the present circumstances of the country. Were these the only elements tending to give rise to misunderstanding and friction, the matter would be comparatively simple, for the interests which depend on the two communities working together with a sufficient degree of harmony are so vast and of such paramount importance to both that it would not be a very difficult task to keep within reasonable limits such misunderstanding and friction, whenever it arose. But the real sources of trouble, which invest the future with uncertainty, lie much deeper. Is British rule to remain a rigidly foreign rule, as long as it lasts, or will it conform more and more to standard which alone may be accepted in these days as compatible with the self-respect of civilised people? What is to be the objective of England's policy in India? How is the conflict of interest between the two communities to be reconciled and what sacrifices may be reasonably expected from either side to render such reconciliation a living and potent reality? These and other allied questions, which really go to the root of England's connection with India, have to be answered before any prediction about the probable future of the relations between the Englishmen and Indians in India can be hazarded. The opinion is often expressed that if only Indians and Europeans will mix more largely socially, or if Indians will participate in the games and sports of Englishmen in greater numbers, a better understanding between the two sides will be established, resulting in better relations generally. There is, of course, a certain amount of truth in this, and it is necessary to acknowledge that earnest efforts very recently made in several places by prominent members of the two communities to provide facilities for a better social intercourse, have contributed their share to the improvement in the situation that has taken place. But apart from the fact that such freer intercourse, unless it is restricted to individuals on either side, who are anxious to see each other's good points and are tolerant, to each other's weaknesses, may produce difficulties of its own, I am firmly persuaded that as long as the consciousness of political inequality continues to be behind such intercourse,

it cannot carry us far. I have no doubt that there are Englishmen in India who put away from them all thought of such inequality in their dealings with Indians, and there are also Indians who are not influenced by this consideration in their relations with Englishmen. But when this admission is made, the fact remains that as things are to-day, the humblest Englishman in the country goes about with the prestige of the whole Empire behind him, whereas the proudest and most distinguished Indian cannot shake off from himself a certain sense that he belongs to a subject race. The soul of social friendship is mutual appreciation and respect, which ordinarily is not found to co-exist with a consciousness of inequality. This does not mean that where equality does not exist, the relations are necessarily unfriendly. It is not an uncommon thing for a party which is in what may be called a state of subordinate dependence on another to be warmly attached to that other party. But such relations are only possible, if the subordinate party, assuming of course, that its sense of self-respect is properly developed, is enabled to feel that its dependent state is necessary in its own interest and that the other party is taking no undue advantage of it for other ends. And this, I think, is roughly the position, as between India and England. It must be admitted that the present inequality between Englishmen and Indians, as regards their political status, can only be reduced by degrees and that a considerable period must elapse before it is removed altogether. Meanwhile Indians must be content to continue in a position of subordinate dependence, and the extent to which a "a fuller understanding, the most friendly feelings and a heartier co-operation" can be promoted between them and Englishmen, must depend upon how they are enabled to realise that British rule is necessary for their progress and that British policy in India has no other aim than their advancement. Any doubt on this point in the Indian mind will mean the weakening of the tie which binds the two countries and will not fail in the end to nullify the results of the most beneficent administrative measures. Assured on this point, on the other hand, Indians will not allow even serious administrative mistakes to alienate them in feeling or sympathy from the country under whose sway they

find themselves placed, and with whose guidance they hope to advance to their appointed destiny.

It may appear to some that too much stress is being laid in this paper on what may be termed the political development of the people of India and that no attempt is being made to discuss how, leaving political considerations alone, Europeans and Indians may be helped to acquire a deeper and more sympathetic understanding of each other's special culture and civilisation and how a heartier co-operation may be established between them in the pursuit of knowledge, or the service of humanity—"for the greater glory of God and the relief of man's estate." So far as the understanding of Europe by India is concerned, the work is being carried on with great vigour under the auspices of the Indian Universities, which have now been in existence for more than fifty years. The very object of these Universities is to promote Western learning in the land and successive generations of Indian students have been and are being introduced by them to a study of Western literature and history, Western philosophy and Western science. And various missionary bodies have been presenting, for a century and more, the religion of the West to the people of India. Through these agencies, a knowledge of Western society, of its traditions, its standards, its achievements, its ideals its, outlook on life and its problems, its methods of realising itself—has been rapidly spreading in the country and the insight thus acquired is, on the whole, sympathetic and marked by deep and genuine appreciation. It is to be regretted that on the English side there is no corresponding attempt to study and understand India. It is true that individual Englishmen have done monumental work in interpreting India to the West, but neither in England nor among Englishmen in this country is there any sympathetic study of Indian culture and civilisation, with the result that very few Englishmen, in spite of a fairly prolonged stay in this country, acquire any real insight into them. It is a curious fact, and one of no small significance, that in this matter Germany is far ahead of England, and even America bids fair to go beyond her. It is obvious that there is great room for improvement here, and if one result of the present Congress will be to stimulate among Englishmen a study of

Indian culture and civilisation in a sympathetic spirit, the Congress will have rendered a great service to India. But while it is undoubted that such study, especially if it leads to increased respect for India by Englishmen, will contribute materially to improve the relations between the two sides, there is no getting away from the fact that as the contact between England and India at present is predominantly political, it is on the attitude of Englishmen towards the political advancement of India that the future of these relations will mainly turn. The question, therefore, how to promote "the most friendly feelings" between the East and West in India resolves itself largely into how England may assist India's political advancement.

The political evolution to which Indian reformers look forward is representative Government on a democratic basis. The course of this evolution must necessarily be slow in India, though it need not be as slow as some people imagine. It is true, as Lord Morley pointed out three years ago, that a long time must elapse before India takes those countless, weary steps that are necessary to develop a strong political personality. But a beginning has been made and the movement can now only be forward and not backward. The difficulties that tend to retard the movement are undoubtedly great and at times they threaten to prove quite overwhelming. But every day the forces that urge us grow stronger and in the end the difficulties will be overcome. It is unnecessary to say that it is largely in England's power to hasten or delay this evolution. If England wants to play her part nobly in this mysterious and wonderful drama, her resolve to help forward this advance must be firm and irrevocable and not dependent on the views, predilections or sympathies of individual administrators, whom she may, from time to time, charge with the direction of Indian affairs. I think the time has come when a definite pronouncement on this subject should be made by the highest authority entitled to speak in the name of England, and the British Government in India should keep such pronouncement in view in all its actions. There is a class of thinkers and writers among Englishmen, with whom it is an axiom that Oriental people have no desire, at any rate, no capacity for representative institutions. This cool and convenient assumption is not stand-

ing the test of experience and in any case no self-respecting Indian will accept it ; and it is astonishing that those men who thus seek to shut the door in the face of Indian aspirations, do not realise how thereby they turn the Indian mind against those very interests for whose support they probably evolve their theories. The first requisite then of improved relations on an enduring basis, between Englishmen and Indians, is an unequivocal declaration on England's part of her resolve to help forward the growth of representative institutions in India and a determination to stand by this policy, in spite of all temptations or difficulties. The second requisite is that Indians should be enabled to feel that the Government under which they live, whatever its *personnel*, is largely and in an ever-increasing measure *national* in spirit and sentiment and in its devotion to the moral and material interests of the country. Thus, outside India, Indians should feel the protecting arm of the British Government behind them, ready to help them in resisting oppression and injustice. The monstrous indignities and ill-treatment to which the people of this country are being subjected to in South Africa, have aroused the bitterest resentment throughout the land. On the other hand, the recent action of the Government of India in prohibiting the supply of indentured labour from this country to Natal, has evoked a feeling of deep and widespread satisfaction, which cannot fail to have its effect on the general relations between Europeans and Indians in the country. Among matters bearing on the moral and material well-being of the people, the Government should lose no more time now in dealing with education in all its branches, in a national spirit—especially with mass education and technical education. It is a humiliating reflection that while in most other civilised countries universal elementary education has long been accepted as one of the first duties of the State, while within the borders of India itself, the Feudatory State of Baroda has found it practicable to introduce a system of free and compulsory primary education for both boys and girls. In India seven children out of eight are still allowed to grow up in ignorance and darkness, and four villages out of five are without a school ! And as regards technical education, while our Engineering Colleges, which were started as far back

as fifty years ago, are still training only subordinates for the Public Works Department of the Government, Japan, starting much later, has already provided herself with a complete system of technical education in all its grades. The third requisite, on which it is necessary to insist, is that England should send out to India less and less of those who are not of her best. From the best Englishmen, Indians have yet to learn a great deal, and their presence in the country will strengthen and not weaken India's appreciation of what she owes to England. But it should be realised that though the Indian average is still inferior to the English average and will continue to be so for some time, individual Indians are to be found in all parts of the country, who in character, capacity and attainments, will be able to hold their own anywhere. And when Englishmen, inferior to such men, are introduced into the country and placed in higher positions, a sense of unfairness and injustice comes so pervade the whole Indian community, which is very prejudicial to the cultivation or maintenance of good feeling. Fewer and better men, sent out from England, better paid if necessary, will prevent England's prestige from being lowered in India, and thus in present circumstances is a consideration of great importance. The fourth and last requisite that I would like to mention is the extreme necessity of such Englishmen as come out to this country realising the profound wisdom of the advice, urged on them some time ago by Lord Morley, that while bad manners are a fault everywhere, they are in India "a crime". I think Englishmen in India cannot be too careful in this respect. The only safe thing that any one can say about the future of India is that it is still enveloped in obscurity, but I believe wholeheartedly in a great destiny for the people of my land. We still retain many of those characteristics which once placed us in the van of the world's civilisation—the depth of our spirituality, our serene outlook on life, our conceptions of domestic and social duty. And other races that have from time to time come to make their home here have brought their own treasure into the common stock. The India of the future will be compounded of all these elements, reinforcing one another, but a long process of discipline and purification and real adjustment is

necessary, before she gathers again the strength required for her allotted task. In this work of preparation, it has been given to a great Western nation to guide and help her. And if craven or selfish counsels are not allowed to prevail, England will have played the noblest international part that has yet fallen to the lot of humanity. When the men and women of India begin again to grow to the full height of their stature and proclaim to the world the mission that shall be theirs, a great stream of moral and spiritual energy, long lost to view, will have returned to its channel, and East and West, white and dark, and yellow and brown—all have cause alike to rejoice.

## THE OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT

### I\*

Sir, this Bill, both in its principle and its details, is open to such grave objection that it is a matter for profound regret that Government should ever have thought of introducing the measure. The *Englishman*, in a recent issue, describes the Bill as calculated to Russianize the Indian Administration, and says that 'it is inconceivable that such an enactment can be placed on the Statute-book even in India.' This, no doubt, is strong language, but I think, it is none too strong, and in view of the quarter from which it comes, it should give Government pause. Fourteen years ago, when the Indian Official Secrets Act was passed, there was no discussion in the Council, as the measure was introduced and passed at Simla. But there were two considerations in its favour: first, that a similar Act had already been passed in England and it was applicable to all the dominions of His Majesty, including India, and so the Indian Act was a mere Indian edition of the English Law already in force in India; and, secondly, it related principally to Naval and Military Secrets, and it could be argued that, as such secrets concerned questions of the country's safety, it was necessary for

\*Speech in the Imperial Legislative Council on 4 December, 1903 in opposition of the Bill. A member (A.T. Arundel) had moved that the Bill to amend the Indian Official Secrets Act be referred to a Select Committee.



Government to have drastic powers for preventing their disclosure. The present Bill, however, proposes to make alterations of so astounding a nature in that Act that it is difficult to speak of them with that restraint which should characterize all utterances in this Chamber. To state the matter briefly, the Bill proposes to make three principal changes in the old Act : first, it proposes to place Civil matters on a level with Naval and Military matters ; secondly, in place of the present provision that a person who enters an office *for the purpose of wrongfully obtaining information* is liable to be punished under the Act, it is now proposed to enact that whoever, 'without lawful authority or permission (the proof whereof shall be upon him), goes to a Government office,' commits an offence under the Act ; and, thirdly, it is proposed to make all offences under the Act cognisable and non-bailable. Now, Sir, it is difficult to imagine that any responsible officer of Government conversant, in any degree, with the administration of the country, and possessing the least regard for the professed character of British rule, could have drafted these amendments. Take the first proposal to place Civil matters on a level with Naval and Military matters. The Civil administration of the country ranges from the highest concerns of State policy which engage the attention of the Viceroy down to the pettiest detail of the routine work of a village official. The word 'secret' is nowhere defined, and it must, therefore, include all official information not authoritatively notified by the Government to the public. And I want to know if it is seriously intended to make the publication of even the most trivial news in connection with this vast Civil administration of the country penal—such news, for instance, as the transfer of a Government officer from one place to another—unless it has first appeared in a Government resolution or any other official notification. And yet this would be the effect of the proposed amendment. The *Englishman* calls this Russianizing the administration, and he is entitled to the thanks of the public for his powerful and disinterested criticism. For the Bill, even if it becomes law, will not in practice affect him or the other editors of Anglo-Indian papers. I would like to see the official who would venture to arrest and march to the police that the editor of an Anglo-Indian paper. But so far as Indian editors are concerned, there are, I fear, officers in

this country, who would not be sorry for an opportunity to march whole battalions of them to the police thana. It is dreadful to think of the abuse of authority which is almost certain to result from this placing of Indian editors, especially the smaller ones among them, so completely at the mercy of those whom they constantly irritate or displease by their criticism. It might be said that, while Government have no objection to the authorised publication of official news of minor importance, they certainly want to prevent the publication of papers, such as the confidential circulars about the wider employment of Europeans and Eurasians in the Public Service, which were published by some of the Indian papers last year. Now, in the first place, the Bill does not distinguish between matters of smaller and greater importance. And, secondly, even on the higher ground on which the measure may be sought to be defended, I submit that the Bill, if passed into law, will do incalculable mischief. I think, Sir, that in a country like India, while Naval and Military secrets require to be protected, if anything, with even greater strictness than in England, the very reverse is the case with matters concerning the Civil administration. The responsibility of the Government to the people in this country is merely moral; it is not legal, as in the West. There is no machinery here, as in Western countries, to secure that the interests of the general public will not be sacrificed in favour of a class. The criticism of the Indian Press is the only outward check operating continuously upon the conduct of a bureaucracy, possessing absolute and uncontrolled power. I can understand the annoyance caused to the officers of Government by the publication of circulars, such as were made public last year. But are Government wise in permitting this feeling of annoyance to so influence them as to make them come forward with a proposal to close an obvious safety-valve and drive popular discontent inwards? The proper and only remedy, worthy of the British Government, for whatever is really deplorable in the present state of things, is not to gag newspapers as proposed in this bill, but to discourage the issue of confidential circulars which seek to take away in the dark what has been promised again and again in Acts of Parliament, the Proclamations of Sovereigns, and the responsible utterances of successive Viceroys. From the standpoint of rulers, no less than that of

the ruled, it will be most unfortunate if Indian papers were thus debarred from writing about matters which agitate the Indian community most. What happened, for instance, last year, when those circulars were published? For some time before their publication, the air was thick with the rumour that Government had issued orders to shut out Indians from all posts in the Railway Department, carrying a salary of Rs. 30 and upwards a month. It was impossible to believe a statement of this kind, but it was not possible to contradict it effectively when it was practically on every tongue. The damage done to the prestige of Government was considerable, and it was only when the circulars were published that the exact position came to be understood. The circulars, as they stood, were bad enough in all conscience, but they were not so bad as the public had believed them to be. What was laid down in them was not that Indians were to be shut out from all appointments higher than Rs 30 a month but that Eurasians and Europeans were to have, as far as practicable, a preference in making appointments to such posts. The fear that such lamentable departures from the avowed policy of Government might be dragged into the light of day act at present as an effective check on the adoption of unjust measures, and I think it will have a disastrous effect on the course of administration, if this check were to be done away with and nothing better substituted in its place. As regards the second amendment, which would make a man's merely going to an office without lawful authority or permission an offence, I am sure Government have not considered what this will mean in practice. A very large amount of the work of lower officials is transacted by the people concerned going to their offices without permission expressly obtained. Petitioners, for instance, often have to go to offices for making inquiries about what has happened to their petitions. They rarely receive written replies, and it will how be in the power of any police officer to get a man against whom he has a grudge, or from whom he wants to extort anything, into trouble by alleging that he had gone to an office of Government 'without lawful authority.' This will be putting a most dangerous power into the hands of the lower police, about whose character, as a class, the less said, the better. Even an innocent friendly visit by a private individual to an official friend of his at the latter's office can,

under this Bill, be construed into an offence I am sure nothing could be farther from the intention of Government, and I am astonished that greater care was not taken in drafting the Bill to confine it to the object Government had in view. Lastly, it is proposed to make offences under this Act cognizable and non-bailable—which means that a person charged with an offence under this Act is to be arrested at once, but he is not to be liberated on bail—and yet there is to be no trial till the sanction of the Local Government has been obtained. This may take weeks and even months, and, finally, it may never be accorded, and the person arrested is all the while to rot in detention. I cannot understand how a procedure so abhorrent to ordinary notions of fairness should have commended itself to Government. The only redeeming feature in this most deplorable business is that among the opinions which the Government of India have received from their own officers, there are some that strongly deprecate the measure—at least in its more serious aspects. And I think it is a matter for special satisfaction that the Government of Bengal has spoken out so plainly against placing Civil matters on a level with the Naval and Military. Sir, I protest against the very introduction of this Bill. I protest against the spirit in which it has been conceived. I protest against its provisions generally. And as I cannot imagine any possible amendment of the measure which can make it acceptable to me, my only course is to vote against this motion to refer it to a Select Committee.

## II\*

My Lord, I desire to say a few words on the Bill as amended by the Select Committee before this motion is put to the vote. When the Bill was referred to the Committee in December last, my Hon'ble friend Nawab Saiyid Muhammad and myself deemed it our duty to enter an emphatic protest against the general character and the leading provisions of the proposed measure, because in the form in which it then stood, it was

\*Speech in the Imperial Legislative Council on 4 March, 1904 in opposition to the Bill. A member (A.T. Arundel) had moved that the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill be taken into consideration.

impossible to have any patience with the Bill. Since then, however, thanks to the assurances given by Your Lordship on your return to Calcutta, and the conciliatory attitude adopted by the Hon'ble Member in charge of the Bill in the Select Committee, the Bill has been largely altered, and I gladly recognize that several most objectionable features have either been wholly removed or have been greatly softened. Having made this acknowledgment, I deem it necessary, my Lord, to submit that unless the Bill is further amended on the lines of the more important amendments of which notice has been given, the alterations made so far will fail to allay the apprehensions that have been so justly aroused. My Hon'ble friends Mr. Bose and Nawab Saiyid Muhammad and myself have signed the Report of the Select Committee subject to dissent only on two points, and we have expressed that dissent in the mildest terms that we could possibly find to convey our meaning. We did this both to mark our sense of the conciliatory manner in which the Hon'ble Member in charge of the Bill received many of our suggestions, and in the hope that, by thus removing from our dissent all trace of the angry criticisms to which the Bill has been subjected, we might make it easier for Government to proceed further in the direction of meeting the objections urged by the public. My Lord, I earnestly trust that in this hope we shall not be altogether disappointed. I do not wish to anticipate anything I may have to say when the amendments of which I have given notice come up for consideration. But I cannot let this motion be put to the vote without saying that the Bill, even as amended, is open to serious objection, that no case has been made out for it, that the safeguards to which the Hon'ble Member referred in presenting the Report of the Select Committee are more or less illusory, and that unless the Bill is further amended, it must tend unduly to curtail the liberty of the Press, not so much perhaps by what Government may actually do, as by the fear of what they may do. The striking unanimity with which the entire Press of the country, Anglo-Indian as well as Indian, has condemned the measure must convince the Government that the opposition to the Bill is not of a mere partisan character, but that it is based upon reasonable grounds, which it is the duty of Government to remove. If, however, Government are not prepared to do this, I would respectfully urge even

at this last moment that the Bill should be abandoned altogether.

*[At the same meeting the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale moved that in clause 2 of the Bill as amended, in the proposed definition of "affairs," in sub-clause (b) the words "or any other matters of State" be omitted. He said :—]*

Government are no doubt aware that these are the words to which the greatest exception has been taken both by the Press and by public associations in the country, and if this proposal to omit them is accepted, the greater part of the opposition to this measure will, I think, disappear. On the other hand, if the words are retained, they will render the attempted definition of 'civil affairs' practically valueless, by conferring on Government almost as wide and dangerous a power to interfere with the liberty of the Press as under the original Bill. My Lord, a definition is no definition unless it specifies, or at any rate indicates with some degree of definiteness, what it is that is intended to be included within its scope, so that a person of average intelligence may have no difficulty in understanding that scope. In the present case, this test fails altogether on account of the use of such vague and all-embracing words as 'any other matters of State' in this attempted definition. I see that the Hon'ble Sir Arundel has given notice of an amendment to insert the word 'important' before the words 'matters of State.' Any other important matters of State is, however, as vague and may be made as all-embracing as the expression 'any other matters of State,' and I do not think the Hon'ble Member's amendment will improve matters in any way. It may be argued, as the Hon'ble Member did when presenting the Report of the Select Committee, that the definition of 'civil affairs,' even as it stands, need cause no apprehension ; because, before any conviction is obtained, Government would have to prove (1) that the information published was of such a confidential nature that the public interest had suffered by its disclosure ; (2) that it had been wilfully disclosed ; and (3) that the person disclosing it knew that in the interest of the State he ought not to have disclosed it at that time. Now, my Lord, these safeguards look

very well on paper ; but I fear in practice they will not be found very effective. When the Government come forward to prosecute a newspaper on the ground that it had disclosed confidential information relating to matters of State, and that such disclosure had harmed public interests, I am afraid a great many Magistrates in India will require no other proof than the opinion of Government to hold that the information published was confidential, and that it had prejudicially affected the interests of the State. As regards wilful communication, that too will be held to be established as a matter of course, unless the newspaper proves that the publication was due to inadvertence. The knowledge on the part of the editor that such publication should not have been made at the time in the interests of the State will, no doubt, strictly speaking, be more difficult to prove, but Magistrates of the average type in India, in the peculiar relation in which they stand to the Executive Government, will not be very reluctant to presume such knowledge from the fact that the information published was regarded by Government as confidential, and from other attendant circumstances. Let me take, as an illustration, the publication last year by some of the Indian newspapers of a confidential circular addressed to railway authorities in this country by the Under-Secretary to the Government of India in the Public Works Department in the matter of the wider employment of Europeans and Eurasians. My Lord, in the statement made by Your Lordship in December last on the subject of the Official Secrets Bill, Your Lordship was pleased to state that I had directly attributed the introduction of this Bill to the annoyance caused to Government by the publication of this circular. May I respectfully ask leave to correct this misapprehension ? I had mentioned this circular only to illustrate my meaning as to the distinction which I thought Government might make between civil matters of smaller and of greater importance. My exact words were : 'It may be said that, while Government have no objection to the unauthorized publication of official news of minor importance, they certainly want to prevent the publication of papers such as the confidential circulars about the wider employment of Europeans and Eurasians in the public service, which were published by some of the Indian papers last year.' And later on, when I spoke

of the annoyance caused to the officers of Government, I spoke of 'the annoyance caused by the publication of circulars such as were made public last year.' I had thus used the circular only for the purpose of an illustration, and I beg leave to use it for a similar purpose again to-day. It is probable that, as this circular had been issued without Your Lordship's knowledge or the knowledge of the Member in charge of Public Works as stated by Your Lordship on a previous occasion, Government would not sanction a prosecution in this case; but supposing for the sake of argument that they did, how would the matter stand? Government might urge that the publication of the circular had inflamed the minds of many Hindus, Muhammadans and Parsis against the Government and had thus led to increased disaffection in the country. And if the trying Magistrate came to accept this view, the task of the prosecution would be comparatively simple. The injury to public interests would be held to lie in the alleged increased disaffection, and the circular being confidential, the Magistrate would have no difficulty in holding that the publication was wilful; and the editor would be presumed to have known what the consequences of such a publication would be. It may be that on an appeal to the High Courts or similar authority, the conviction may be set aside. But the worry and expense caused to the editor by such a prosecution might, in themselves, prove a heavy punishment, especially when it is remembered that the prosecution would have behind it all the prestige, power and resources of the Government. Even if no prosecution were actually instituted by the Government under the proposed legislation, the mere fact that the Government was armed with the power to prosecute cannot fail to affect prejudicially the liberty of the Press in this country. My Lord, nowhere throughout the British Empire is the Government so powerful relatively to the governed as in India. No-where, on the other hand, is the Press so weak in influence, as it is with us. The vigilance of the Press is the only check that operates from outside, feebly it is true, but continuously, upon the conduct of the Government, which is subject to no popular control. It is here, therefore, if anywhere, that the Legislature should show special consideration to the Press, and yet here alone it is proposed to arm Government with a greater power to control the freedom of the



Press than in any other part of the Empire. My Lord, we often hear Government complaining of the distrust shown by the people in this country, and the people complaining of the Government not trusting them enough. In such a situation, where again the question is further complicated by a tendency on the part of the Government to attach undue importance to race or class consideration, the wisest and safest and most statesmanlike course for it is to conduct its civil administration as far as possible in the light of day. The Press is in one sense, like the Government, a custodian of public interests, and any attempt to hamper its freedom by repressive legislation is bound to affect these interests prejudicially, and cannot fail in the end to react upon the position of the Government itself. My Lord, I fear, that the retention of the words 'or any other matters of State, in the definition of 'civil affairs' will unduly curtail the liberty of the Press in India, and I, therefore, move that these words be omitted from the definition.

*[At the same meeting, Arundel having moved that the Bill, as amended, be passed, Gokhale opposed the motion in the following speech :—]*

My Lord, the motion now before the Council is only a formal one. But as it marks the conclusion of our discussion of this important measure, I would like to say a few words. My Lord, I greatly regret that Government should not have seen their way to accepting even a single one of the more important amendments of which notice had been given. This is the first time within my experience that a legislative measure has been opposed by all classes and all sections of the public in this country with such absolute unanimity. Of course with our Legislative Councils as they are constituted at present, the Government has the power to pass any law it pleases. But never before, I think, did the Government dissociate itself so completely from all public opinion—including Anglo-Indian public opinion—as it has done on the present occasion. I recognize that the responsibility for the good administration of the country rests primarily on the shoulders of the Government. But it is difficult to allow that

this responsibility can be satisfactorily discharged, unless the Government was supported in its legislative and executive measures by some sort of public opinion. My Lord, Your Lordship has often declared that it was your constant aspiration to carry the public with you as far as possible in all important acts of your administration. I do not think it can be said that that aspiration has been in the smallest degree realized in the present case. The whole position is really most extraordinary and very painfully significant. Here we had a law, already in force, identical in character and identical in wording with the law obtaining in the other parts of the British Empire. The British Government in England, with its vast naval and military concerns and its foreign relations extending over the surface of the whole globe, has not found its law insufficient for its purpose. How then has the Government of India, with its more limited concerns, found it necessary to make the law more drastic in India? The explanation I think, is simple. It is that, while in England the Government dare not touch the liberty of the Press, no matter how annoying its disclosure may be, and has to reconcile itself to the latter regarding them as only so much journalistic enterprise, in India the unlimited power which the Government possesses inclines it constantly to repressive legislation. This single measure suffices to illustrate the enormous difference between the spirit in which the administration is carried on in England. My Lord, as the Bill is still open to serious objection, I must vote against this motion to pass it.

### **THE SEDITIOUS MEETINGS ACT\***

For many years now it has been a well established practice of this Council that no important legislation—especially of a controversial character—should be enacted at Simla, but it should be reserved for the session at Calcutta,

\*Speech in the Imperial Legislative Council in November, 1907. Sir Harvey Adamson had moved that the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill to make better provision for the prevention of meetings likely to promote sedition or to cause a disturbance of public tranquillity be taken into consideration.

where alone the assistance of all Additional Members is available. This practice has behind it the authority of a clear instruction from the Secretary of State. Thirty-two years ago, on the Government of Lord Northbrook passing an important measure at Simla, Lord Salisbury, then Secretary of State for India, deemed it necessary to address a remonstrance to the Governor-General in Council in the following words :—

“In providing that laws for India should be passed at a Council consisting not only of the Ordinary Members of the Executive Government, but of Additional Members specially added for the purpose (of whom some have always been unofficial) it was the clear intention of Parliament that in the task of legislation the Government should, in addition to the sources of information usually open to it, be enlightened by the advice and knowledge of persons possessing other than official experience.”

Of these you were unfortunately deprived in discussing the subjects in respect to which the assistance of non-official Councillors is of special value. My Lord, it is a matter for deep regret that the Government of India should have thought it proper to depart from this wise and salutary practice in the present instance. But the absence of most Additional Members from to-day's meeting is not my only ground of complaint against the course adopted by Government. I think it is no exaggeration to say that this Bill has been received throughout the country with feelings of consternation and dismay, and yet it is being rushed through this Council in such hot haste, that practically no time has been allowed to the public to state its objections to the measure. The Hon'ble Sir Harvey Adamson, in introducing the Bill last Friday, observed :—

“From the date of its publication in the Gazette to the date on which it will be finally considered, an interval of twenty days has been allowed. I am confident that the time is sufficient for a full consideration of the merits of the Bill.”

I suppose the Hon'ble Member was indulging in a bit of cynical humour when he said this. Else, my Lord, it is not possible to understand his statement. I presume the object of publication is to give the public affected by the proposed legislation an opportunity to say what it thinks of the measure. This it can only do after it has had time to examine the provisions of the Bill, and such examination must, in fairness to Government, be made in the light of the reasons adduced by the Member in charge in introducing it. Now, my Lord, this Bill was published at Simla on 11th October, and its provisions, as telegraphed from here, appeared in the columns of the daily press of the country on the morning of the 12th. There are only seven or eight towns in the whole of India which have a daily press of their own. Of the others, the more important ones, which are served by these same dailies, have to wait for a day or two, and, in some cases, for even three or four or five days, before they get their daily budget of news. The smaller towns have, as a rule, to content themselves with weekly newspapers only. The Hon'ble Member must, therefore, allow at least a week's time for anything telegraphed from here to spread all over so vast a country as India. Then, my Lord, the Bill was introduced in this Council only on 18th October, and a telegraphic report of the Hon'ble Member's speech in introducing it appeared in the dailies only on the morning of the 19th. Allowing another week as the very least time required for the speech to penetrate into the interior of the country, it brings us down to 26th October as the earliest date by which the whole case of the Government may be assumed to have been before the people. After this, some time would be required for deliberation, for the formulation of objections and for these objections to reach the Government; and even if a month had been allowed for this purpose, it would hardly have sufficed. Meanwhile, what happens here? The Select Committee, to whom the Bill was referred for consideration, meets on 22nd October, concludes its deliberations on 23rd, and makes its report on 24th! Now, every one knows that once the Select Committee has made its report, the door is closed on all further modifications, and therefore for any

expression of public opinion to be of the slightest value in influencing the character or details of a Bill, it must reach the Government before the Select Committee finishes its labours. It is for this reason that the Rules of this Council lay down that ordinarily a Select Committee shall not make its report sooner than three months from the first publication of a Bill in the *Gazette of India*. In the present case the Select Committee had not the advantage of a single expression of public opinion to assist it ; and even those few telegraphic protests, which had been received by the Government and of which some of us had received copies independently, were not laid before the Committee. My Lord, in the face of these facts, to speak of having allowed sufficient time to the public for a full consideration of the Bill is to mock public opinion. Better for that the Hon'ble Member had said : "The Legislature exists in India only to register the decreases of the Executive. The passage of a Bill through the Council is a mere formality, and on occasions like the present an inconvenient formality. We are facing the inconvenience in this case simply because we must face it. But the people may as well spare themselves the trouble of making any representations to us. For we have made up our mind and nothing they can possibly say will affect our determination to make this addition to the Statute-book. Moreover, it is not for them to reason why or to make reply. Their only business is to obey." That the Hon'ble Member is not wholly unconscious of the fact that he has given practically no time to the public for what he calls "a full consideration of the merits of the Bill" may be seen from his providing himself with a second line of defence. He says that though the Bill has been before the public for a few days only the Ordinance which was promulgated in May last for the Provinces of East Bengal and the Punjab has been before the country for the last five months ! He might as well have said that we had the History of Ireland before us all these years, or that we could not be altogether ignorant of what was taking place before our eyes in Russia !

My Lord, I can imagine circumstances of such extreme urgency and such extreme gravity as to necessitate the passing of a law of this kind and passing it even in the manner the

Government have adopted. Had there been an active and widespread movement of resistance to authority a foot in the country, if breaches of public peace had been frequent, if incitements to violence had been the order of the day, I can understand the Executive wanting to arm themselves with these vast powers of coercion. But, my Lord, can any one truthfully say that such a state of things has arisen in the country? On the contrary, I assert, without fear of contradiction, that there is nothing in the circumstances of the land which constitutes even a distant approach to such a situation. It is true that there is widespread discontent throughout the country and very acute discontent in one or two Provinces, and to this discontent is now being added a fresh feeling of resentment—daily growing deeper and stronger—on account of the policy of repression on which the Government have embarked. But of active disaffection there is really very little anywhere, and whatever there is, is due to causes which lie almost on the surface, and should, therefore, be not difficult to understand. The statement of Objects and Reasons, appended to the Bill, says :—

“The occurrences of the last six months have convinced the Government of India that it is necessary, for the preservation of the public peace and for the protection of the law-abiding members of the community, to incorporate in the general law an effective measure for the prevention of seditious meetings and to take power to bring its provisions into operation in any part of India as occasion may require.”

And the Hon'ble Member, in introducing the Bill, observed :—

“We had hoped that the need for an enactment of this kind would cease before the Ordinance expired, but in this hope we have been disappointed. It has become painfully apparent that persistent attempts continue to be made to promote sedition and to cause such ill-feeling as is calculated to disturb the public tranquillity, and that these attempts are not confined to the two Provinces which came under the scope of the Ordinance.”

My Lord, these are serious but vague statements, and I am astonished that the Hon'ble Member has not seen the necessity of supporting them by the testimony of facts. He mentions no cases, no statistics; one general assertion that persistent attempts continue to be made to promote sedition, and he thinks he has established the need for enacting drastic law of this kind for the whole country! With due deference, I submit this is not a fair proceeding, and the vast bulk of the people throughout India, who are perfectly law-abiding, have just cause to resent it. Let us examine the Hon'ble Member's contention a little closely. He says, first, that he had hoped that after the expiry of the Ordinance of May last, it would be unnecessary to renew its policy in the two Provinces in which it was in force, but that in this hope he has been disappointed; and, secondly, that unless that policy is extended to all the other Provinces of India, public tranquillity in those Provinces also would be in danger of being disturbed. Now, what are the facts? Let us take the Punjab first. In the whole of this Province there has been, as far as I am aware, only one public meeting since the promulgation of the Ordinance. It was held in Delhi, before Delhi was proclaimed; it was attended by both Hindus and Mahomedans, and its object was to express regret at Lala Lajpat Rai's deportation. There has been no disturbance of public tranquillity anywhere in the Province during the time. The Hon'ble Member will very probably say—"But this is all due to the Ordinance"! Assuming for a moment, for the sake of argument, that it is so, the fact remains that the Hon'ble Member has no reason to complain of any disappointment in the Punjab. Turning next to East Bengal, we find that there too, after the Hindu-Mahomedan disturbances, which led to the promulgation of the Ordinance, were over, there has been no public disturbance. There have also been no public meetings held in defiance of the Ordinance, so far at least as the public is aware. A District Conference was proposed to be held at Faridpur with the District Magistrate's permission, but on his objecting to two of the resolutions on the Agenda paper—one about the deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai, and the other about the boycott of foreign goods—the organisers thought it best to

abandon the Conference. There was great public indignation and disappointment in consequence, but there was no breach of the peace. It is possible that the Secret Police have been sending up to Government reports of meetings held surreptitiously in private houses in proclaimed areas in Eastern Bengal, and indeed the Hon'ble Member says as much in his speech of 18th October. But, in the first place, it is necessary to accept with great caution what the Secret Police say in their reports, as the trial at Rawalpindi and other recent events have shown. And, secondly, even assuming that such meetings have been held, there have been no breaches of the peace, and no serious harm seems to have been done ; and I think in affairs of State, no less than in private life, it is often the part of wisdom to wink at things, which it is difficult to prevent and which do no serious harm to anybody. So much about the two Provinces in which the Ordinance has been in force since May last. Outside these Provinces, public disturbances have taken place only in two places in all India—one at Cocanada, in the Madras Presidency, some time ago, and the other at Calcutta more recently. The former had its origin in an assault made by a European officer on a student for shouting the words *Bande Mataram*. In the latter, the Police themselves are alleged to have been the aggressors. But whatever the origin of these two disturbances, and however much one may deplore them, they certainly do not furnish any justification for saddling the whole country with such a measure as the Council is asked to pass into law to-day. As regards public meetings in the different Provinces, with the exception of some held in Calcutta, I do not think that they have been of a character to attract special public attention. Strong things have no doubt been said at some of these against the Government and even wild things have probably been said at a few, but this has been largely due to the measures of repression which the Government have thought fit to adopt since May last. My Lord, I do not think there is really anything in the situation of the country which may not be dealt with adequately by the ample powers which the Government already possess under the existing law, if those powers are exercised with tact, judgment and firmness. In any case there is nothing of such urgency and such gravity as to require an immediate resort to the



dangerous provisions of this Bill and to justify its being rushed through this Council in this manner. The Hon'ble Member says that as the Ordinance of May last expires on 10th November, unless the Bill is passed before that date, there would be a *hiatus*. This applies only to Eastern Bengal and the Punjab, and of these, the Punjab has been so absolutely quiet that the Government of India may well give it a chance of being again under the ordinary law. And as regards East Bengal, if the situation showed signs of real anxiety, the Government could issue another Ordinances, or legislation might be undertaken in the Local Legislative Council. In such matters it seems to me far fairer that if there must be legislation, it should be undertaken by Provincial Governments in their own Councils. Such a course will ensure a proper discussion, with full knowledge on both sides, of all the special circumstances of a Province on which the Executive base their demand for extraordinary powers. It will also obviate the risk of enacting coercive legislation for those Provinces for which the ordinary law ought to suffice.

My Lord, the bulk of the educated classes in India feel, and feel keenly, that during the last six months, their aims and their activities have been most cruelly misrepresented before the British public, and that they have not had fair-play during the time. Exaggerated importance has been attached to the utterances of a few visionaries, and advantage has been taken of every accidental circumstance to represent an agitation for reform and for the removal of specific grievances as a moment of revolt. The malignant activity of certain unscrupulous Press correspondents has been largely responsible for achieving this result, but unfortunately colour has been lent to their stories by the series of repressive measures which the Government themselves have adopted. The saddest part of the whole thing is that the Secretary of State for India has fallen a victim to these grievous misrepresentations. Possessing no personal knowledge of the people of this country, and overwhelmed with a sense of the vast responsibilities of his office, he has allowed his vision to be obscured and his sense of proportion to be warped. From time to time he has let fall ominous hints in the House of Commons, and more than

once he has spoken as though some great trouble was brewing in India, and the country was on the eve of a dark disaster. My Lord, in these circumstances, the passing of a Bill like the present and in such hot haste, is bound to have the effect of confirming the false impression which has been already created in England, and this cannot fail to intensify and deepen still further the sense of injustice and injurisdiction the silent resentment with which my countrymen have been watching the course of events during the last few months. I think the Government are repeating in this matter the great mistake they made when they partitioned Bengal. Whatever advantages as regards administrative efficiency may have been expected from that measure, it has cost the Government the goodwill of the vast majority of the people of that Province, and this is a loss which no amount of administrative efficiency can balance or compensate. Similarly, for one man whose wild talk the Government may be able to prevent by this Bill, nine hundred and ninety-nine will smart under a sense of injury that they have been placed under a law which they have not deserved and their minds will drift away silently and steadily from the Government, till at last their whole attitude towards the administration is changed.

My Lord, so much has of late been said and heard of sedition in India, that a brief inquiry as to how far it really exists and to the extent to which it may exist, what is its origin and its character, may not be out of place at to-day's meeting. Five years ago, when Lord Curzon announced to the whole world at the Delhi Durbar that the people of India were frankly loyal to the British connection and the British Crown, I believe he stated but the bare truth. Now, when any one speaks of loyalty in India in this connection, he speaks not of a sentiment similar to that of feudal Europe or of Rajput India, but of a feeling of attachment to British rule, and of a desire for its stability based on enlightened self-interest—on an appreciation of what the rule has on the whole done for the people in the past and of the conditions which it ensures for future progress. In this sense the educated classes of India have been from the beginning entirely loyal. It was, however, inevitable that they should gradually grow more and more

dissatisfied with their own position in the country and with the existing system of administration, and twenty-two years ago they started an organized agitation for reform. This agitation, perfectly constitutional in its aims and methods, rapidly grew all over the country from year to year. It had not received much encouragement from the Government, but no serious obstacles had anywhere been thrown in its way, and it current flowed more or less smoothly and on the whole free from racial bitterness till Lord Curzon's time. Then came a great and, in some respects, a decisive change. Lord Curzon's reactionary policy, his attempt to explain away the Queen's Proclamation, his unwise Convocation speech at Calcutta—all these produced intense exasperation throughout India. This exasperation was the worst in Bengal, because, though Lord Curzon's measures affected all India, they fell with special weight on Bengal. And when on the top of these measures the Partition of Bengal was carried through, a bitter and stormy agitation sprang up in that Province, in which the general agitation for reform soon got completely merged. The bitterness of Bengal agitation gradually came to communicate itself to the reform movement all over the country by a sort of sympathetic process. Bengal has always been the home of feeling and of ideas more than any other part of India. The people took to heart very deeply the failure of their agitation against the Partition, and then the more reckless among them began to ask themselves new questions and came forward to preach what they called new ideas. It is true that they have received a certain amount of hearing in the country, but that is more on account of the passion and poetry of their utterance than on account of any belief in the practicability of their views. Their influence, such as it is to-day, is due to the alienation of the public mind from the Government, which has already occurred, but which the Government have it still in their power to set right. Measures of repression will only further alienate the people, and to that extent will strengthen this influence.

At the beginning of this year, another acute agitation sprang up, this time in the Punjab, against the Colonisation Bill and other agrarian grievances, and a fresh element of

bitterness was added to the situation by the State prosecution of the *Punjabee* on a charge of exciting racial ill-will, when the *Civil and Military Gazettee* had been let off with only a gentle remonstrance. This agitation too on its side swallowed up for the time the general reform agitation in the Punjab, and the reform movement in other parts of India could not escape being affected by it. Then came the demonstrations at Lahore and the disturbance at Rawalpindi, and then the repressive measures of the Government—notably the deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai, the arrest and prosecution of Rawalpindi pleaders and the Public Meetings Ordinance. The whole country was convulsed and while the Punjab itself was paralysed, in other parts of India even the most level-headed men found it difficult to express themselves with due restraint. That a man like Lala Lajpat Rai, loved by thousands not in his own Province only, a man of high character and of elevated feeling, a keen religious and social reformer, and a political worker, who, whatever his faults, worked only in broad daylight, should have been suddenly arrested and deported without a trial—this was a proceeding which stunned the people throughout India. And as regards the Rawalpindi case, what shall I say ! For four months the whole country witnessed the spectacle of the venerable Lala Hansraj, a man as incapable of promoting disorder as any member sitting at this table—with other gentlemen equally respectable, rotting in the lock-up on a charge of inciting to violence and conspiring against the Crown ! My Lord, it will be long before the memory of the sufferings of these men is wiped from the public mind. Meanwhile the country is waiting to see how the authorities deal with those who brought these sufferings on them by producing evidence which the trying Magistrate has pronounced to be ‘most untrustworthy and probably fabricated’ ! My Lord, with these things happening in the country, is it any wonder that the voice of those who counsel patience and moderation and self-restraint should be for the time at a discount among their countrymen ? The occurrences of the last six months have afforded ample encouragement to those who like to talk strongly and do not occasionally mind talking wildly.

This then is the position. A few men in Bengal have now taken to preaching a new gospel, and here and there in the country one occasionally hears a faint echo of their teaching. But their power to influence the people—to the extent to which they are able to influence them—is derived mainly from the sense of helplessness and despair which has come to prevail widely in the country, both as regards the prospects of reform in the administration and as regards the removal of particular grievances. The remedy for such a state of things is therefore clearly not mere repression but a course of wise and steady conciliation on the part of Government. Your Lordship has already taken a most important step in the direction of such conciliation so far as the Punjab is concerned by vetoing the Colonisation Act. Let the work of conciliation be carried further, let the deported prisoners be brought back, and if the Government have anything against them, let them have a fair trial; and let the Province remain under the ordinary law after the Ordinance expires. As in the Punjab the Colonisation Act has been vetoed, so in Bengal let Partition be modified in some manner acceptable to the Bengalees. The causes of acute discontent in these two Provinces will then have disappeared and the old stream of a movement for reform will be separated from the bitter tributaries that have recently mingled with it. The Government can then deal with the question of reform on its own merits, and if it is handled in a spirit of broad-minded statesmanship a solution may be arrived at which will give general satisfaction. In this connection, I would like to say a word about a remark that fell from the Hon'ble Sir Harvey Adamson on 18th October. Speaking of the necessity of coercion, the Hon'ble Member said: 'The Government of India have all along recognised that unrest is not solely the outcome of seditious agitation, but has its basis on the natural aspirations of the educated Indians. To meet these aspirations and to associate Indians more closely in the administration of the country, we formulated a large and generous scheme of reform which is now before the public for criticism.' And he proceeded to express his disappointment at the reception which the schemes had met with and to complain that that reception showed that the Government had to deal with a section of irreconcilables. My Lord, I am sure the Hon'ble Member had

no intention of branding all who are unable to grow enthusiastic over the Government proposals as 'irreconcilables.' The words employed by him have, however, been so understood, as may be seen from the telegram of the Bombay Presidency Association, and this is rather unfortunate. But what I want to say is this. If the Hon'ble Member expected that the publication of the Government scheme of August last would allay the discontent in the country in any degree, he was bound to be disappointed. The scheme is neither large nor generous and in some respect it is not a scheme of a reform at all. And the general disappointment which it has occasioned has necessarily intensified the prevailing feeling of discontent. As though this was not enough, the language employed in explaining the proposals is in some places unnecessarily offensive to certain classes. And taken as a whole, the document, I regret to say, lacks that dignity of statement which one always likes to see associated in an important State paper.

My Lord, it has been said that though this Bill may be passed for the whole country, yet the people of any given place have two safeguards before they actually come under its provisions. The first is that the Government of India must extend this Act to their Province and the second is that the Local Government must notify the place as a proclaimed area. A little consideration will, however, show that there is really not much in either of these safeguards. The first is purely nominal. A place may be absolutely free from sedition of any kind and yet if it is thought that some other place in the same Province requires the application of the provisions of this Act, the Government of India have no option but to extend the Act to the whole Province. And thus for the sake of even one place, a whole Province will have this Act applied to it. Again, when the Act has thus been extended to a Province, any place therein may find itself suddenly proclaimed for the seditious activity, real or supposed, of only a few persons, though the vast bulk of the population may be perfectly law-abiding and free from the faintest suspicion of sedition. And once an area is proclaimed, the whole population will be indiscriminately made over to police rule. It is this fear which, apart from other objections, lies at the root of the great anxiety and alarm

with which the Bill is regarded in all parts of the country. The Hon'ble Member says that when it is thought necessary to proclaim an area, 'it is reasonable that law-abiding persons residing within that area should be prepared to suffer some slight inconvenience for the public good.' I wonder what the Hon'ble Member's idea of a slight inconvenience is. Is it a slight thing to be exposed to the annoyance and unpleasantness of domiciliary visits? Or to have social parties of more than twenty persons raided upon or broken up, and the host and even guests hauled up for holding a 'public meeting' without notice? The presumption of clause 3 sub-clause (3) may be successfully rebutted in Court and the Magistrate may acquit. But think of the trouble and misery which may be most needlessly caused. My Lord, with the kind of police we have in the country—men, for the most part, without scruple and without remorse—these are not imaginary fears. We have just seen at Rawalpindi what they are capable of. Other instances can also be cited, where cases have been manufactured from start to finish. It is true that the intention of the Bill is not to interfere with social parties. It is also true that under section 4, notice has to be given only of such public meetings as may be called for the discussion of particular subjects. But a Police-officer who is interested in getting any man into trouble can always pretend that a gathering of more than twenty persons was a public meeting, and it will not be difficult for him to arrange for a little evidence that the gathering was held for the discussion of a political subject. And under the plea that an offence was taking place, viz., that a public meeting was being held without notice, he may want to be admitted to the place of the gathering. If the host is a strong man and knows his legal rights well, he may resist the officer and decline to admit him. But he may then find himself hauled up before a Magistrate and must be prepared to face a trial. But for one strong man who will thus defy the Police, nine will tamely yield. Moreover, in those cases which may go before a Court, how the Magistrate will construe the definition of 'public meeting' must always remain a matter of uncertainty. A curious illustration of this is supplied by the Hon'ble Member himself. Last Friday, the Hon'ble Member told the Council that the object of adding sub-clause (3) to clause (4) was to

exempt meetings like Municipal meetings from the requirements of notice or permission. 'If the provision,' he observed 'were construed rigidly, it might be necessary to give notice or obtain permission before holding Municipal meetings in a proclaimed area' In the Hon'ble Member's view, therefore, a Municipal meeting is a public meeting. My Hon'ble friend, Dr. Ghose, on the other hand, tells me that Municipal meeting cannot be a public meeting under the definition given in the Bill. Now, the Hon'ble Member was Chief Judge of Burma before he became Home Member of the Government of India. and Dr. Ghose is one of the most learned and distinguished lawyers in the country. A difference of opinion between two such authorities in construing the definition of public meeting, even before the Bill has become law, augurs ill for the manner in which the definition may be dealt with by plain or inexperienced Magistrates !

My Lord, there are other objectionable features of the Bill, but I do not wish to tire the Council with any further observations. The Bill is a dangerous one, and the only satisfactory way to improve it is to drop it. But more than the Bill itself is, to my mind, the policy that lies behind the Bill. I consider this policy to be in the highest degree unwise. It will fail in India as surely as it has failed everywhere else in the world. It will plant in the minds of the people harsh memories which even time may not soften. It will by no means facilitate the work of the administration, and it will in all probability enhance the very evil which it is intended to control.

*When Sir N. Adamson moved that the Bill as amended be passed, Gokhale said :*

My Lord, I have not intended saying more than just a word at this stage of the Bill and that only by way of an appeal to Your Excellency. But certain remarks have fallen from the Hon'ble Member in charge of the Bill with regard to the responsibility for this legislation which makes it necessary that I should say a few words in reply as it is impossible to allow those remarks to pass unchallenged. The Hon'ble Member says that the responsibility for this Bill really rests



with those who are described as the Moderate section of the Reform Party in India. Now, I for one have never been in love with the terms Moderates and Extremists. There is at times a great deal of moderation among some of those who are called Extremists and, on the other hand, there is no small amount of what is the reverse of moderation among some who are called Moderates. However, I fear the terms as they are now in use will stick and for the purpose of my present observations I will take them as they have been used by the Honourable Member. My Lord, I think it most unfair to put the responsibility for such sedition as there may be in existence in this country on what is called the Moderate Party.

In the remarks which I made at an earlier stage of to-day's proceedings, I went at some length into the question as to how the present situation has come to be developed. I do not want to go over the same ground again, but there are one or two things which I would like to mention and emphasize. My Lord, when the officials in the country talk of sedition they do not always mean the same thing. Different officials have different ideas of sedition. There are those who think that unless an Indian speaks to them with 'bated breath and whispering humbleness', he is seditious. There are others who do not go so far but who still think that any one who comments adversely on any of their actions or criticises the administration in any way or engages in any political agitation is guilty of sedition. Lastly, there are those who take a larger view of the situation and recognise that the term sedition should be applied only to those attempts that are made to subvert the Government. Now, I have no wish to say anything on this occasion about the first two classes of men. I will take sedition in the sense in which it is used by the third class and I will say this, that if such sedition has come into existence it is comparatively of recent growth, a matter of the last three or four years only—and the responsibility for it rests mainly if not entirely on the Government or rather on the official class. My Lord, from 1885, i.e., since the close of the beneficent Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon, the Congress has been endeavouring to secure much needed reform in the

administration. The present form of the administration is about fifty years old. We have long out-grown that now and the fact is admitted even by officials. But while they admit, in a general sort of way, that changes are necessary they have some objection or other to urge against every change that is proposed. The result is that there has been hardly any movement forward, in spite of our efforts all these years and the patience of the more impatient among my countrymen has at last given way. In the earlier years of the Congress there used to be some room for a hope that the desired changes in the administration would come. After Lord Ripon came Lord Dufferin who was not unfriendly to the Congress though he was somewhat suspicious and he gave us the Public Service Commission. After him came Lord Lansdowne. He too was, on the whole, friendly though he was overcautious and he gave us the first form of the Legislative Councils. Then came Lord Elgin and from his time the fortunes of the Reform Party have been at a low ebb. Lord Elgin's term of office was darkened by plague, famine and frontier wars and towards its close came repressive legislation against the Press. Then came Lord Curzon. He was a consummate master of glowing speeches and during the first two years of his regime, high hopes were raised in the country. These hopes, however, were soon dashed to the ground on account of a series of reactionary measures which he forced on the people. This disappointment coupled with the sense of constant irritation which we felt during the last three years of his rule proved too much for a section of the Congress Party and they began to declare that their old faith in England's mission in this country was gone. Then came the Partition as the proverbial last straw. The people of Bengal did all they could and all they knew to avert Partition. Hundreds of meetings were held all over the Province. Prayers and protests poured in upon the Government and the people used every means in their power to prevail upon Lord Curzon to abandon his idea. But he simply treated the whole agitation with contempt and carried his measure through. The men who are called "Moderates" pointed out again and again to the Government the unwisdom of its course. They warned them that the measure if forced on the people in spite of all the furious opposi-

tion that was being offered to it would put too great a strain on their loyalty and that some of them, at any rate, would not be able to stand that strain and events happened as they had been foreseen. The Hon'ble Member complains that open disloyalty is now being preached in Bengal but no heed was given to the words of the "Moderates" while there was time. And now when the mischief has been done, the Hon'ble Member turns round and wants to throw the responsibility for what has happened on us !

As regards the question of the "Moderates" denouncing the Extremists, it is not such an easy matter. In the first place, I am not sure that there is such an absence of disapproval or remonstrance as the Hon'ble Member imagines. But, secondly, such denunciation is largely a question of temperament. All people do not always denounce whatever they disapprove. I will answer the Hon'ble Member's question in the matter by a counter question. There are certain Anglo-Indian newspapers which constantly revile Indians. Has the Hon'ble Member ever denounced anything that has appeared in their columns ? I am sure he and many others like him would disapprove what often appears in the columns of the *Civil and Military Gazette* or the *Englishman*, but have any Englishmen in any place ever met together and expressed their condemnation of these papers. I hope the Hon'ble Member will now see that the question of denouncing those whose conduct you disapprove is not such an easy one. Moreover, with us there is an additional reason. We do not want to make confusion worse confounded. There are already enough divisions, in all conscience, in the country and we do not want to have a fresh cause of contention if we can help it. But let me say this to the Hon. Member whether the "Moderates" remain silent or denounce the Extremists, it will make very little difference in the hold which the Extremists are acquiring on certain minds of India. There is only one way in which the wings of disaffection can be clipped, and that it is by the Government pursuing a policy of steady and courageous conciliation.

My Lord, before this motion is put to the vote I would like to say just a few words. Now that the Government have

armed themselves with these drastic powers of coercion, I would humbly say to Your Lordship—keep these powers in reserve : do not use them immediately as far as possible, and conciliate Bengal. My Lord, there is the root of the trouble : with Bengal unconciliated in the matter of Partition there will be no real peace, not only in Bengal but in any other province in India. The whole current of public life in the country is being poisoned by the bitterness engendered in Bengal over this question of Partition. My Lord, I am not a Bengali, and therefore I can say these things with the less reserve and without any fear of being misunderstood. The people of Bengal are the most emotional people in all India and they will far sooner forget a material injury than one to their feelings. Now in this matter of the Partition—whatever its advantages or disadvantages, I am not concerned with that just now—there is no doubt whatever that the deepest feelings are involved. They feel that they been trampled upon—and while they feel like that, there can be no peace. Already great alienation has taken place between them and the Government, and every day the position is growing worse.

The refusal of the sufferers in the recent disturbances to appear before Mr. Weston to give evidence is a significant illustration of the change that is coming over Bengal. The Government propose to meet this change by a policy of repression. My Lord, knowing them—the people of Bengal—as I do, I venture to predict that they *will* not be thus put down by force. The Bengalees are in many respects a most remarkable people in all India. It is easy to speak of their faults. They lie on the surface, but they have great qualities which are sometimes lost sight of. In almost all the walks of life open to the Indians the Bengalees are among the most distinguished. Some of the greatest social and religious reformers of recent times have come from their ranks. Of orators, journalists, politicians, Bengal possesses some of the most brilliant. But I will not speak of them on the occasion because this class is more or less at discount in this place ; but take science or law or literature. When will you find another scientist in all India to place by the side of Dr. J.C. Bose or Dr. P.C. Ray or a jurist like Dr. Ghose or a poet like

Rabindra Nath Tagore. My Lord, these men are not mere freaks of nature. They are the highest products of which the race is regularly capable ; and a race of such capability cannot, I repeat, be put down by coercion. One serious defect of national character has often been alleged against them—want of physical courage ; but they are already being twitted out of it. The young men of Bengal have taken this reproach so much to heart that if the stories in some Anglo-Indian papers are to be believed, so far from shrinking from physical collisions they seem to be now actually boiling for them. My Lord, if the present estrangement between the Government and the people of Bengal is allowed to continue, ten years hence there will not be one man in at housand in that province who has a kindly feeling for the Englishmen. The Government will have on their hand a tremendous problem, for there are thirty-three millions of Bengalees and the unwisdom and the danger of driving discontent underground amidst such a population will then be obvious.

My Lord, I appeal to Your Lordship to stanch this wound while there is yet time. I know the question is now complicated by the fact that the Mahomedan population of Bengal expect certain educational and other advantages to accrue to them from partition. No real well-wisher of India can desire that any of these advantages should be withdrawn from them, for the more the Mahomedan community progresses, the better for the whole country. But surely it cannot be beyond the resources of statesmanship to devise a scheme. While the expected advantages are fully secured to the Mahomedans, the people of Bengal may also have their great grievance removed. My Lord, considerations of prestige which have so far stood in the way of this work of conciliation may continue to obstruct it. I cannot understand how a Government, with the vast strength of a mighty Empire behind it, will suffer in prestige by such a line of action. But one thing is certain. Your Lordship has it in your power to set this matter right. And you will earn the blessing not only of Bengal but of all India if this source of continued bitterness and ill-feeling is removed from the land.

**THE PRESS BILL\***

My Lord, it is a cruel irony of fate that the first important measure that comes before the Reformed Council is a measure to curtail a great and deeply cherished privilege which the country has enjoyed, with two brief interruptions, for three-quarters of a century. But while the plans of statesmen have matured slowly, events designed by malignant fates to frustrate their purpose have moved faster. And thus we find that just when the scheme of reforms has materialised, the sky is dark with clouds which probably will roll away before long, but which for the time wear a threatening aspect. My Lord, I confess that the regret with which I approach a consideration of this Bill has been deepened by the fact that the measure is being hurried through its several stages by suspending the standing orders and without giving the country practically any opportunity to express its opinion on it. In saying this, I do not forget the fact that Lord Lytton's Act of 1878 was introduced and passed at one sitting, nor do I overlook the consideration shown by Your Lordship, after deciding to suspend the standing orders, in giving us at least these three days for consideration and in referring the Bill to a Select Committee. But, my Lord, was this unusual procedure necessary? Surely a week or ten days' delay in enacting this measure would not have made any appreciable difference to anybody, since the Bill seeks to apply to the situation what at best can only be a slow remedy. However, I do not wish to pursue this point further; I might not have said even this much, had it not been for the fact that the Government has been reproached in certain quarters for giving us even these three days.

My Lord, in the minute of dissent which my Hon'ble friend Mr. Mudholkar and I have appended to the Report of the Select Committee, we have briefly stated our position in regard to this measure. That position I would like to amplify

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\*Speech in, the Imperial Legislative Council on 8 February, 1910. The Home Member Sir H. Risley had moved that the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill be taken up for consideration.

in the few minutes for which I propose to occupy the attention of the Council. It is admitted on all hands—the Hon'ble Member in charge of the Bill has admitted it in his speech—that the Penal Code is amply sufficient to *punish* sedition and that the special legislation of last year can effectively put down incitements to violence. What is contended however is that the punishment of seditious writings and utterances under the Penal Code, so far from restricting the area of sedition, actually widens it by reason of the unhealthy excitement it causes and keeps up for months, the rush of natural sympathy of the public to the accused, the crown of martyrdom that comes to be placed on their heads and the amount of odium which the proceedings bring to the Government. And it is urged that the Government is convinced that the right plan to deal with sedition is to proceed by way of prevention rather than by way of punishment. Now, my Lord, I will at once admit that there is considerable force in the whole of this contention. But even so, section 108 of the Criminal Procedure Code which is a means of prevention and which was introduced into the Code twelve years ago for the express purpose of placing such a means at the disposal of the Government, should have been sufficient, and what I cannot quite understand is why it has not been found effective. The only explanation I have heard is that the proceeding under that section being judicial and liable to revision by the High Court, it practically means a trial for sedition, with this difference only that the person proceeded against, instead of being severely sentenced, is merely called upon to give security. But this was precisely the chief merit claimed for the section when it was enacted in 1858, as a reference to the proceedings of the Council of that time will show. My Lord, I cannot help saying that it would have been fairer to the Legislature if the Government had tried section 108 of the Criminal Procedure Code in some cases, instead of allowing it to remain practically a dead letter, before applying for fresh powers. Or if it was considered that the time had gone by when the section, as it stood, could be usefully applied—I myself am inclined to think that in some parts of the country the evil has now gone beyond the stage where section 108 could be applied with much effect—a proposal to amend the section so as to make its operation

more simple and expeditious would have caused less disturbance to our ideas on this subject and would undoubtedly have been more acceptable.

My Lord, the principal addition which the Bill makes to the powers already possessed by the Government for dealing with sedition is that it makes the taking of security from printing-presses and newspapers a purely executive act. It also empowers the Executive to order the forfeiture of such security and even the confiscation of printing presses on the ground that an offence has been committed, though here an appeal is allowed to a Special Tribunal of High Court Judges. These are the main provisions and they embody what may be called the principle of the Bill. My Lord, in ordinary times I should have deemed it my duty to resist such proposals to the utmost of my power. The risks involved in them are grave and obvious. But in view of the situation that exists in several parts of the country to-day, I have reluctantly come, after a careful and anxious consideration, to the conclusion that I should not be justified in opposing the principle of this Bill. It is not merely the assassinations that have taken place, or the conspiracies that have come to light, or the political dacoities that are being committed, that fill me with anxiety. The air in many places is still thick with ideas that are undoubtedly antagonistic to the unquestioned continuance of British rule, with which our hopes of a peaceful evolution are bound up and this is a feature of the situation quite as serious as anything else. Several causes have contributed to produce this result, of which the writings in a section of the Press have been one. And to the extent to which a remedy can be applied to these writings by such executive action as is contemplated in the Bill, I am not prepared to say that the remedy should not be applied. There is no doubt that even if the powers conferred by the Bill are exercised judiciously some inconvenience and even hardship is inevitable to well-intentioned concerns. And if the powers are not exercised with care, great harm is bound to follow. Moreover, as long as this law continues in force, even the best Indian concerns must work in an atmosphere of uncertainty and apprehension. But all these risks may be temporarily borne if they help in some measure to free the air



of ideas of which I have spoken. Only it is of the utmost importance that they should be temporary, and I therefore most earnestly urge that the operation of this law should be limited to a period of three years only. Further, I think the rigour of some of the provisions can well be softened without rendering the Bill less effective. With these, however, I will deal when I move the amendments of which I have given notice.

My Lord, I have said that the situation in several parts of the country is an anxious one. That however does not mean that in my opinion things are really going from bad to worse. On the contrary, I entirely share the view which was so clearly and firmly expressed by Your Lordship on the opening day of this Council—a view in such striking contrast to the nervous opinions that one hears on so many sides, especially in this city—that the general situation is far easier to-day than it ever was during Your Lordship's time. There is no doubt whatever that the Reform Scheme, despite considerable dissatisfaction about details, has largely eased the tension of the situation and has brought over to the side of the administration factors that might otherwise have remained sullenly or helplessly aloof. There is no doubt also that these wicked assassinations and dacoities which have been disfiguring the page of Indian history since last year have at last roused the Indian community to a sense of the great danger in which it stands. Our community is a slow-moving community, but once it begins to move, it moves surely. And any one who can read the signs may see that it has shaken off its lethargy and begun to advance to the support of law and order. My Lord, the crop of violence that has now come to the surface had its grounds prepared five years ago. I sincerely believe that no new ground is being added to it, and though we may not have seen the last of these outrages, I think we are nearer the end than many imagine. But the juncture is a most difficult and delicate one, and if ever any juncture called for the utmost tact and conciliation, such as we have now learnt, despite repressive measures to which you have been from time to time driven, to associate with Your Lordship's name, that juncture is the present. Angry cries for reprisals, however natural and even justified, will not mend matters and will certainly not assist the task that lies before

the Government. My Lord, I am not one of those who think that any appreciable section of the Indian Press has always been seditious or that the press in India has, on the whole, done more mischief than good. On the contrary, our Press has been in the main a potent instrument of progress ; it has quickened our national consciousness ; it has spread in the country ideas of justice and equality not only between man and man but also between class and class ; it has stimulated our public spirit ; it has set us higher standards of public duty. And till five years ago, I do not think that, barring a very few exceptions, any section was actually seditious, if by sedition a desire to see British rule overthrown is understood. A considerable proportion was no doubt often ill-informed, prejudiced, even intolerably bitter in its comments on the administration and its measures ; but this sprang mainly from ignorance and from feeling that grievances were not redressed, and not from any actual hostility to the rule itself. During the last five years seditious ideas have no doubt spread more or less in all parts of the country and in some parts more rapidly and extensively than in others. This, however, has been due to special causes which are now well understood and over which it is unnecessary to dwell. I think, my Lord, my countrymen are now growing alive to the fact that nothing is more surely destructive of our hopes of future progress than the spread of these ideas in the land. In my opinion, our first duty is to help in removing these ideas from the air, and because I feel this most strongly, I am prepared to let the Government apply to the situation even the drastic remedies contemplated by this Bill. I do not know if we shall succeed in overcoming the evil altogether. Even if it lies dormant for a time, there is much in the situation itself which will constantly tend to stir it into fresh activity. I have already said that several causes have combined to bring about the present state of things. It is of course impossible to go into all of them, but one of them may be mentioned—it is the writings in a section of the Anglo-Indian Press. My Lord, I doubt if many Englishmen realise how large a share these writings have had in turning so many of my countrymen against British rule. The terms of race arrogance and contempt in which some of these papers constantly speak of the Indians and specially of educated Indians cut into the mind more than

the lash can cut into the flesh. Many of my countrymen imagine that every Anglo-Indian pen that writes in the Press is dipped in Government ink. It is an absurd idea, but it does great harm all the same. My Lord, I feel bound to say that this Bill by itself cannot achieve much. It is even possible that the immediate effect of its passing will be to fill the public mind with a certain amount of resentment. And unless the powers conferred by it are used with the utmost care and caution, the evil which they are intended to combat may only be driven underground. Force may afford temporary relief, but it never can prove a permanent remedy to such a state of things as we have in this country. It is only in the co operation of all classes and the steady pursuit of a policy of wise conciliation on the part of Government that the best hopes of thoughtful men on both sides for the future of this land must lie.

#### **THE ELEVATION OF THE DEPRESSED CLASSES\***

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—The proposition which has been entrusted to me runs thus : “That this Conference holds that the present degraded condition of the low castes is in itself and from the national point of view unsatisfactory, and is of opinion that every well-wisher of the country should consider it his duty to do all he can to raise their moral and social condition by trying to rouse self-respect in these classes and placing facilities for education and employment within their reach.”

Gentlemen, I hope I am not given to the use of unnecessarily strong language and yet I must say that this resolution is not as strongly worded as it should have been. The condition of the low castes—it is painful to call them low castes—is not only unsatisfactory as this resolution says—it is so deeply deplorable that it constitutes a grave blot on our social arrangements ; and, further, the attitude of our educated men towards this class is profoundly painful and humiliating. I do not propose to deal with this subject as an antiquarian ; I only want to

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\*Resolution moved at the Dharwar Social Conference held on 27 April, 1903.

make a few general observations from the standpoint of justice, humanity, and national self-interest. I think all fair-minded persons will have to admit that it is absolutely monstrous that a class of human beings, with bodies similar to our own, with brains that can think and with hearts that can feel, should be perpetually condemned to a low life of utter wretchedness, servitude and mental and moral degradation, and that permanent barriers should be placed in their way so that it should be impossible for them ever to overcome them and improve their lot. This is deeply revolting to our sense of justice. I believe one has only to put oneself mentally into their place to realize how grievous this injustice is. We may touch a cat, we may touch a dog, we may touch any other animal, but the touch of these human beings is pollution ! And so complete is now the mental degradation of these people that they themselves see nothing in such treatment to resent, that they acquiesce in it as though nothing better than that was their due.

I remember a speech delivered seven or eight years ago by the late Mr. Ranade in Bombay, under the auspices of the Hindu Union Club. That was a time when public feeling ran high in India on the subject of the treatment which our people were receiving in South Africa. Our friend, Mr. Gandhi, had come here on a brief visit from South Africa and he was telling us how our people were treated in Natal and Cape Colony and the Transvaal—how they were not allowed to walk on foot-paths or travel in first-class carriages on the railway, how they were not admitted into hotels and so forth. Public feeling, in consequence, was deeply stirred, and we all felt that it was a mockery that we should be called British subjects, when we were treated like this in Great Britain's colonies. Mr. Ranade felt this just as keenly as any one else. He had been a never-failing adviser of Mr. Gandhi, and had carried on a regular correspondence with him, but it was Mr. Ranade's peculiar greatness that he always utilized occasions of excitement to give a proper turn to the national mind and cultivate its sense of proportion. And so, when every one was expressing himself in indignant terms about the treatment which our countrymen were receiving in South Africa, Mr. Ranade came forward to ask if we had no sins of our own to answer for in that direc-

tion. I do not exactly remember the title of his address. I think it was "Turn the search-light inwards," or some such thing. But I remember that it was a great speech—one of the greatest that I have ever been privileged to hear. He began in characteristic fashion, expressing deep sympathy with the Indians in South Africa in the struggle they were manfully carrying on. He rejoiced that the people of India had awakened to a sense of the position of their countrymen abroad, and he felt convinced that this awakening was a sign of the fact that the dead bones in the valley were once again becoming instinct with life. But he proceeded to ask :—Was this sympathy with the oppressed and down-trodden Indians to be confined to those of our countrymen only who had gone out of India? Or was it to be general and to be extended to all cases where there was oppression and injustice? It was easy, he said, to denounce foreigners, but those who did so were bound in common fairness to look into themselves and see if they were absolutely blameless in the matter. He then described the manner in which members of low caste were treated by our own community in different parts of India. It was a description, which filled the audience with feelings of deep shame and pain and indignation. And Mr. Ranade very justly asked whether it was for those who tolerated such disgraceful oppression and injustice in their own country to indulge in all that denunciation of the people of South Africa. This question, therefore, is in the first place a question of sheer justice.

Next, as I have already said, it is a question of humanity. It is sometimes urged that if we have our castes, the people in the West have their classes, and after all, there is not much difference between the two. A little reflection will, however, show that the analogy is quite fallacious. The classes of the West are a perfectly elastic institution, and not rigid or cast-iron like our castes. Mr. Chamberlain, who is the most masterful personage in the British Empire to-day, was at one time a shoemaker and then a screw-maker. Of course, he did not make shoes himself but that was the trade by which he made money. Mr. Chamberlain to-day dines with Royalty, and mixes with the highest in the land on terms of absolute equality. Will a shoemaker ever be able to rise in India in the social scale in a

similar fashion, no matter how gifted by nature he might be? A great writer has said that castes are eminently useful for the preservation of society, but that they are utterly unsuited for purposes of progress. And this I think is perfectly true. If you want to stand where you were a thousand years ago, the system of castes need not be modified in any material degree. If, however, you want to emerge out of the slough in which you have long remained sunk, it will not do for you to insist on a rigid adherence to caste. Modern civilisation has accepted greater equality for all as its watchword, as against privilege and exclusiveness, which were the root-ideas of the old world. And the larger humanity of these days requires that we should acknowledge its claims by seeking the amelioration of the helpless condition of our down-trodden countrymen.

Finally, gentlemen, this is a question of National Self-interest. How can we possibly realise our national aspirations, how can our country ever hope to take her place among the nations of the world, if we allow large number of our countrymen to remain sunk in ignorance, barbarism, and degradation? Unless these men are gradually raised to a higher level, morally and intellectually, how can they possibly understand our thoughts or share our hopes or co-operate with us in our efforts? Can you not realize that so far as the work of national elevation is concerned, the energy, which these classes might be expected to represent, is simply unavailable to us? I understand that that great thinker and observer—Swami Vivekananda—held this view very strongly. I think that there is not much hope for us as a nation unless the help of all classes, including those that are known as low castes, is forth-coming for the work that lies before us. Moreover, is it, I may ask, consistent with our own self-respect that these men should be kept out of our houses and shut out from all social intercourse as long as they remain within the pale of Hinduism, whereas the moment they put on a coat and a hat and a pair of trousers and call themselves Christians, we are prepared to shake hands with them and look upon them as quite respectable? No sensible man will say that this is a satisfactory state of things. Of course, no one expects that these classes will be lifted up at

once morally and intellectually to a position of equality with their more favoured countrymen.

This work is bound to be slow and can only be achieved by strenuous exertions for giving them education and finding for them honourable employment in life. And, gentlemen, it seems to me that, in the present state of India, no work can be higher or holier than this. I think if there is one question of social reform more than another that should stir the enthusiasm of our educated young men and inspire them with an unselfish purpose, it is this question of the degraded condition of our low castes. Cannot a few men—five per cent., four per cent., three, two, even one per cent.—of the hundreds and hundreds of graduates that the University turns out every year, take it upon themselves to dedicate their lives to this sacred work of the elevation of low castes? My appeal is not to the old or the middle aged—the grooves of their lives are fixed—but I think I may well address such an appeal to the young members of our community—to those who have not yet decided upon their future course and who entertain the noble aspiration of devoting to a worthy cause the education which they have received. What the country needs most at the present moment is a spirit of self-sacrifice on the part of our educated young men, and they may take it from me that they cannot spend their lives in a better cause than raising the moral and intellectual level of these unhappy low castes and promoting their general well-being.

### OUR POLITICAL SITUATION\*

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—It is difficult for me to find words to convey in any adequate manner my sense of the overwhelming kindness with which you have received me this afternoon. I hope there may arise no circumstances which may ever lead you to regret the welcome—the generous welcome—that you have accorded to me today; and, for my part, I shall only say this, that the recollection of this kindness will not easily fade from my memory. Gentlemen, in a vast concourse

\*Speech delivered at a public meeting held in Madras on 25 July, 1904 under the chairmanship of Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswami Row.

like this, it is hopeless to expect that my words will reach every one of you. I will, however, try to say what I have to say in as brief a manner as possible so as not to detain you long in any case. You are, perhaps, aware that I have come to Madras in my capacity as Joint Secretary of the Indian National Congress. It was in this city of Madras that I was appointed to this office last December. Unfortunately pressure of duties elsewhere prevented my coming to Madras at the time when my appointment was made. But perhaps it was as well, seeing the weather at that time did not permit the men who came from different parts of the country to have anything like a large interchange of ideas. Well, I have come now to have that interchange of ideas and compare notes with friends here; and my only regret is that I am unable, owing to the shortness of the time at my disposal, to visit those centres of political activity in the mofussil to which I have been so kindly invited and which I myself would be very glad to go and see. However, I hope that it is for me only a pleasure postponed and that circumstances will permit my making a somewhat extended tour of this Presidency some time next year.

Gentlemen, I have now been for about twenty years in public life, I mean such public life as we have in this country, and this means that I have been able to follow the fortunes of the National Congress from its very start, because this is the twentieth year since that institution first came into existence. During the last few years I have also had special opportunities to become acquainted with the trend of thought and events in various parts of India, and one thing I have noticed which there is no mistaking. In many of our papers, in the utterances of many of our leading men, in the discussions that take place, in the freedom of private conversation, you find everywhere that the predominant note in regard to political agitation is one of despair. It seems that a kind of despondency is setting over the national mind. People have already begun to ask openly the question, what has the Congress done during the nineteen years that it has been in existence. Some others alter the form of the question and ask, is it possible for the Congress to achieve anything substantial, if its work is



continued on the lines on which it has been carried on so far? There are some who go even further and try to urge on us the practical futility of political agitation such as that in which we are engaged. They say that the history of the world furnishes no instances in which such an agitation has ever brought any privileges to those who agitated, and they advise us that it would be the part of wisdom on our part to give up political agitation and devote our energies, such as they are, to the industrial development of the country. Thus, whatever you may think of these views, one thing is clear, that our leading workers, many of them, not all, are gradually, but steadily, losing faith in our political agitation. Now, if there were any real justification for this feeling of despair, the outlook would be dark indeed. But is there any real justification? That is the question that I would like to put to you, just as that is the question that I very often put to myself whenever a feeling of despair tends to assail me. The whole position requires to be examined calmly and dispassionately. And for that purpose you have to ask yourselves two or three questions. You may first of all ask yourselves what were the thoughts and ideas of those who began this political work? What were the hopes and aspirations that were close to their hearts? Then you have to ask yourselves what were the conditions under which this work was undertaken by them? What are the conditions under which this work has to be done now, and whether there has been any change or alteration of late in these conditions? These are the questions which you must put to yourself if you are anxious to examine the situation correctly. With regard to the first question as to what were the thoughts and ideas of those who started this work, and what were the hopes and aspirations that lay close to their heart, the answer is, I believe, not far to seek. Those men first of all wanted to act as interpreters between the rulers and the ruled, to explain, on the one hand, to the people the intentions of the Government, and to represent, on the other, to the rulers the grievances of people. This was the first part of political agitation, and it is being performed on the whole not badly, though of course there is considerable room for improvement. But more than this, they wanted to work for the triumph of those larger principles

on which our hopes for the future of our country are based. It was their aspiration that the disabilities under which we labour at present might become less and less, and that in the fulness of time we should have the full rights of that British citizenship to which we have been admitted only in name at present. This was the second, and in one sense the higher, part of our political agitation. It is in connection with this that the principal difficulties of the position arise, and the judgements that are so often pronounced about the success or failure of political agitation are also mostly in reference to these. Now, gentlemen, let us turn to the second question. What were the conditions under which the proposed work was to be done : what were the conditions which our leaders then had got to realise and which we, who taken up their work, have got now to realise in connection with this work ? We have got to realise that on one side of us are arrayed forces of racial ascendancy, of monopoly, of power, and on the other side is a vast mass of ignorance, apathy and moral helplessness. Between these two we have to work to face, try to overcome the forces marshalled against us on one side and to quicken into life and to move into energetic action the vast mass on the other. Now this meant a most formidable task, and we had no right or business to imagine that it would prove to be any other. We had no reason to expect that the citadel of monopoly would capitulate at the first assault and we have only ourselves to thank if we are now disappointed in such unjustifiable expectations. Remember, gentlemen, that those who are arrayed against us and in whose hands there is the monopoly of power—they have behind them practically the vast resources of Government, in any case they have behind them the moral support of the Government of the country. Moreover, it is but fair to acknowledge that they are a body of picked men, that man for man they are better men than ourselves ; they have a higher standard of duty, higher notions of patriotism, higher notions of loyalty to each other, higher notions of organised work and of discipline, and they know how to make a stand for the privileges of which they are in possession. We have no right to complain that they are what they are. If we understood the true dignity of political work, we should rejoice that we are confronted by opponents

such as these. We should look upon it as a privilege that we have got to struggle with men of this calibre, and instead of giving ourselves up to despair, we should look upon every failure, as though it was intended by Providence to strengthen us for the next effort we have to make. As regards the vast mass which we have on the other side, of which I have spoken, it is an exceedingly difficult work to energise this vast mass, to put life into it, to make it move along with us; and the work is bound to be slow, and it is being very slowly done. My point in mentioning these two facts, *viz.*, the forces ranged on one side and the mass lying on the other, is to show to you the tremendously difficult nature of the task that lies before us, the enormous difficulties of the problem which confronts us. I want you to realize these difficulties properly, to consider what has been the extent of your effort to overcome them and the measure of success which has so far attended that effort, and then I feel sure you will not give yourselves up to despair or indulge in counsels such as those which of late we have been hearing. Remember, gentlemen, that it is only for the last 19 years that this Congress has been working, and when you think of the work that you are doing—which, after all, is much less than what it might be—and when you think of the results that have so far been achieved, I for one find no cause for despair. What has been achieved during these 17 years? If you will range your eye over the achievements, you will find that there are some results to our credit which need not be despised at all. Our first agitation was in connection with the raising of the age for the Indian Civil Service. That point we were able to carry and the age was raised from 19 to 23. Our next agitation was for the expansion of Legislative Councils. That reform ultimately came about, and the Legislative Councils are more real and more living deliberative bodies to-day than they were 16 or 17 years ago. They are not yet perfect bodies. There is great room for improvement in their composition and their scope of work. But there is no doubt, whatsoever, that the general level of debate in these bodies is higher to-day than it was ever before. The character of the speeches delivered by non-official members in the various provinces shows as a whole a better grasp of public question and it shows also that the public takes closer and more watchful interests in the legislative

and administrative acts of the Government. I think here is a result on which we may well congratulate ourselves. Then, gentlemen, we find that during the last 15 or 20 years, the Press of the country has become a more potent instrument of progress than was the case before. It is quite true that some of the journals are not up to a very high standard, but, taking one journal with another, they exercise a far greater influence on the progress of the country than was the case before. The resolutions that you pass in your Congress filter down to the mass of our educated people and they, are in one form or another constantly pressed on the attention of the authorities and the people in the columns of the Press. The work of political agitation, which the Congress has undertaken, is thus being carried day after day, and week after week, by the Press, and this greater activity of the Press you must also put to the credit of the Congress. Again, you find that the different provinces of the country feel now drawn closer together than was the case before ; that we throb with the same national impulse, rejoicing over the same failures and sharing in the same hopes. And here I think is a test of a growing nationality, if ever you had a test. All these things stand to the credit of the Congress. Having achieved these things during the last 15 or 16 years with such feeble efforts as we have put forth, I think it is not open to any one to indulge in language of despair.

I am not blind to the fact that, to a certain extent, the difficulties of political agitation have increased of late in this country. On account of the Congress, local political organizations have been overshadowed ; on account of the Congress, Imperial questions have cast into the shade Provincial questions. Politicians in different parts of India do not now feel interested to the same extent in local and provincial questions as before. This fact has got to be admitted. Further, the opposition that is offered to us on the other side has become more organised. When the Congress itself did not exist, it was possible for many Englishmen to express a sort of platonic sympathy with our aspirations. Now, however, that they find that we are in earnest and are making organized efforts to realize our aspirations, there are not many who are anxious to associate

themselves with us in this work of agitation. Further, our difficulties have increased of late on account of the growth of a spirit of narrow imperialism—not the nobler imperialism which would work for the elevation of all who are included within the Empire, but the narrower imperialism which looks upon the world as though it was made for one race only and which is found in season and out of season of setting up an image of its own achievements and standing in adoration before it. To this imperialism we owe the tendency which has been too much in evidence of late to explain away, and at times even openly to repudiate solemnly given pledges, and it constitutes a phase of the situation which certainly may cause us some anxiety. But, after all, these new difficulties come to nothing very much. They only mean that we must redouble our efforts, put more energy and life into our work, and rise equal to the occasion. There are men who say that nothing is to be gained by our political agitation, that history does not afford us an example of people gaining anything by such methods and that we must, therefore, concentrate our efforts on what they think to be more likely to be achieved, namely, the industrial development of the country. A friend of mine, Mr. Chowdhury, who presided over the last Provincial Conference of Bengal, delivered the other day an address, some parts of which I read with great admiration but other parts of which I failed to comprehend altogether. He laid down the somewhat startling proposition, that a subject-race can have no politics. Now this is one of those half-truths which are really more dangerous than untruths themselves. If you understand the word "politics" in the sense of international politics, then, of course, the proposition is correct; but if politics is the term wider than international politics, as we know it is, a subject-race has as much right and as much reason as, and perhaps more right and more reason to have politics of its own than the races which are self-governing and dominant. You have to fight against the ascendancy of a dominant class, you have to fight to get admittance into those ranks of power which are at present closed to you. All this implies political work of the highest character. Do not, therefore, be misled by propositions of this kind. In regard to the advice that we should now concentrate our efforts on the industrial develop-

ment of the country, while I have the deepest sympathy with all efforts for our industrial advancement, I beg you to remember there are great limits to that kind of work also. It is with me a firm conviction that unless you have a more effective and more potent voice in the government of your own country, in the administration of your own affairs, in the expenditure of your own revenues, it is not possible for you to effect much in the way of industrial development. And I have no doubt in my own mind that those who are asking you to-day to give up political agitation and confine yourselves to industrial development only will ten years hence be as despondent about the results achieved in the industrial field as they are to-day about political agitation. I do not mean to say that we should be satisfied with such political work as is being at present done in the country. Far from it—I think no man feels more keenly than myself that things should be as they are. But that only means that we must work more strenuously, not that the work done in the past deserves to be condemned, not that the methods of the past deserve to be discredited and discarded. It is our duty to recognise the demands which the present makes on us, by putting more life and energy into our work. Our public life is really feeble and ineffective because it is so faint-hearted and so soulless. Very few of us have really faith in the work we are doing. When men take up work in a mechanical spirit, without believing in it, you should not be surprised if no great results are achieved. We all admire and talk of the achievements of Japan. Many of us have of late been reading the history of Japan. I too am trying to follow the story of Japan. What do I find? In the first place there has always been a tremendously strong national feeling in that country. That has been Japan's own. It was not brought into the country by those Western methods which Japan adopted forty years ago. Such national feeling is bound to be a plant of slow growth in this country. In addition to that national feeling, what strikes me most in the history of Japan is the marvellous manner in which the lead of the leaders has been accepted by the bulk of the people of the land. Therein to my mind lies the great secret of Japan's success. Leaders of thought in that country laid down lines of work and the bulk

of the people willingly accepted them, and patiently and quietly proceeded to do their part. The result was that there was a great concentration of effort which enabled Japan to cast off, so to say, its ancient dress and to put on new habiliments. This, then, is the lesson we have to learn from Japan, that if our work is to be successful, our efforts must be concentrated, and efforts cannot be concentrated unless leaders receive from followers that disciplined obedience which you find in Japan. It is true that we have not got many single-minded leaders in the country to lead us, but we are not wholly without them. We have one such man in Sir Pherozeshah Mehta; earnest and patriotic, possessing high abilities, and qualified in every way to lead the country. But these men must receive more implicit support from the bulk of our educated men. It is a good habit to think for one-self, but where concentration of efforts is needed, unless questions of conscience are involved, men must be prepared to subordinate their judgment to that of those whom they are expected to follow. There must be more discipline in our public life. At the same time there must be a greater realisation on the part of the leaders of the responsibilities that devolve upon them. The day has gone by when politics could afford to be amateurish in this land. It has been amateurish in the past; but the struggle is growing keener and keener and it is necessary that men should take up the duties and responsibilities of public life in the same manner as they choose their profession and devote their energies to it. For such work we have a right to look to the class from whose ranks the members of our Legislative Councils are drawn. I do not expect every one of these members to give up his daily occupation and to take up this work. But surely in every province, the country has the right to expect at least one or two men to come forward and give more of their time and energy to the building up of the public life, whose weakness we all so much deplore. These men could then be centred round whom our young men could group and band themselves together, and it would then be possible to build up a much higher type of public life than now. I have tried so far to establish two or three propositions. There is nothing whatsoever in the situation to make us despair. Those that indulge in counsels of despair, those that use language such as I have

already referred to— who say that nothing is to be gained by political agitation—they really do a great disservice to the country ; they do nothing themselves and they only paralyse the efforts of others. It is said that history furnishes no example of a subject-people rising by such methods as ou.s. Now, gentlemen, I have myself paid some attention to history ; and if I have been convinced of one thing more than another, it is this ; that you can never have a perfect parallel in history. It is impossible for circumstances to repeat themselves, though you have the common saying that history repeats itself. It may be that the history of the world does not furnish an instance where a subject-race has risen by agitation. If so, we shall supply that example for the first time. The history of the world has not yet come to an end, there are more chapters to be added ; therefore we must not be discouraged by the lessons which some people profess to draw from history. Gentlemen, I do not wish to detain you longer. The great need of the situation is that you should have more faith in the work in which you are engaged and that you should be ready to make more sacrifices for that work. Considering the manner in which we have been working so far, there is no reason to be dissatisfied with what has been achieved. It is true that, for some time past, the forces of reaction have been gaining in strength. Reactionary legislation against which the whole country had protested has been fixed on the country in spite of the protest. Some recent utterances of men in high authority have been conceived in a spirit calculated to spread a feeling of uneasiness. But all these are passing features of the situation. I am quite confident these things will pass away and in proportion as we put forth greater efforts, in that proportion shall success be achieved by us. Our cause is a cause for which every one of us can do something. Those who have money can give funds ; those that have leisure can give time ; those that have ability can devote, can contribute to the formation of public opinion on different questions. Young men might come forward to take up the work of missionaries in connection with this cause. There is a great deal of quiet work to be done for which we want young men, who will be willing to take their instructions from their elders, willing to go among the public, without noise or fuss, not anxious to address



meetings but willing and content to do quiet work. If we all recognise our respective duties in this spirit, we shall be able to turn our present efforts into a great, rousing movement for the political emancipation of this land. In the presence of such a movement all our petty personal differences will sink, all our squabbles will vanish, our faith will shine radiantly, sacrifices will be made to the extent they are necessary and the country will march onwards, will press onwards to the realisation of that destiny of which we should dream by night and on which we should muse by day.