ever have so far shown little enterprise or originality in the necessary directions which we have indicated above. We need only mention the toy industry of Germany, the straw plaiting work of Luton, and the many cottage industries of Japan, as examples of what can be done when enterprise and organization take in hand the marketing of goods. This really pressing problem confronts any one who would try to put the cottage industries of India on a better footing. Where a greater demand for their products has been created, the artisans have almost invariably sought on their own initiative to improve their means of production, but it requires capital to establish new markets. Not a little of the industrial success of modern Japan is due to the attention that has been paid not only to the education and technical training of cottage workers, but to the building up of business organizations which take over the products of their industry and dispose of them all over the world The little that has been done in India in this direction is full of promise, but it is almost entirely for internal trade. From the great centres of indigenous weaving and metal work goods are sent far and wide but usually only throughout India. The staple products of Benares, Aligarh, Moradabad and Madura, to mention but a few of the larger towns where these industries flourish, are found in most parts of the country, but little or no attempt is made to cater for foreign markets, The nature of their demand, actual or potential, is unknown and there is no one to direct attention to their possibilities. It is true that in south of India there is a considerable export trade in what are known as Madras handkerchiefs and Singapur lunghis, both products of handloom weaving and both specialities which find no sale in India. But Indian merchants have undoubtedly neglected the potentialities of cottage industries and have done nothing to encourage the worker to produce goods of a class which would find a ready market outside the country. The Swadeshi Stores in Bombay are a good example of an active and successful agency for the internal distribution of the manufactures of cottage and other Indian industries and they have been evidently of great assistance to a number of cottage industries by making known to dwellers in large cities like Bombay and Poona what other parts of the country are producing. If the Department of Industries work in co-operation with a business institution of this sort, they will find it a

ready means of introducing the products of both existing and improved cottage industries to extensive markets, which will in turn derive benefit from the information which the Department can place at its disposal."

As regards foreign markets the recent Wembly Exhibition in London where the Indian Court was one of the chief centres of attraction and the exhibition at Philadelphia should prove most useful in widely advertising the arts and crafts of India. The Directors in charge of the Indian section of these two exhibitions should be asked to submit a scheme for the parmanent utilization of the experience of these two exhibitions for the consideration of the Industries Departments of Government. In Bengal unfortunately the Bengal Home Industries Association which was started sometime ago appears to be more or less moribund now, and although there are numerous flourishing Swadeshi concerns in Calcutta, there is no central establishment of the type of the Swadeshi Stores of Bombay ; and I do not think the Industries Department is working in co-operation with any private industrial enterprise as recommended by the Industries Commission. Nor is there in Bengal any Government Department corresponding to the Arts and Handicrafts Department attached to the Government Arts School in Lahore, for instance, for encouraging and improving the art-wares of the Province I visited the showroom of this department in Lahore recently and was struck by the artistic excellence of the fabrics and wares which are now being manufactured under the guidance of the capable curator Mr. S. N. Gupta. The curator told me that the artisans and craftsmen are quick to learn and assimilate any new design in pattern, colour, scheme etc which may be shown to them, and there should be great demand for Indian ware and art products in England, France and America, if emporiums are opened at suitable centres

Help given by Industries and Co-operative Departments.

But fortunately both the Industries and Co-operative Departments are doing a great deal for the organization of the existing smaller industries and for opening up suitable local markets for them. The Administration Report of the Industrial Department

gives the names of various firms, *e.g.*, the North-West Soap Co. Ltd. the Ureka Belting Works Ltd., the Sikdu Iron Works Ltd., the Pioneer Condiment Co. Ltd., the Murarka Paint and Varnish Works Ltd. and other firms whom the Department tried to help by finding extended market facilities. It will be interesting to learn what success attended the efforts of the Department in this most useful field of its activity. But the above industries are all located in Calcutta and are middle urban industries. For purely rural industries the Co-operative Department organised a large number of industrial societies most of which are cotton weavers and silk societies and all are doing useful work. From the Co-operative Department's report for 1924-25 it would appear that the number of weaving societies rose from 174 to 200, the membership from 2,701 to 3,334 and the working capital from Rs. 133,577 to Rs. 178,596. The Bankura societies which are the most important group in this section numbered 54 and these are affiliated the Bankura Industrial Union. When I visited the Union in 1921 I found it doing most excellent work, its total sales during that year amounted to Rs. 1,75,495, while the average earning of the weavers of the different societies under it had gone up from Rs. 7 a month to more than Rs. 15. Most of the societies work either under the *bani* system or the yarn sale system. Under this system the societies are supplied with yarn by the Union and have to prepare goods according to specification. The Union takes over these products for sale after paying the societies (*bani*) wages at a fixed scale. The Union has under this arrangement to find market for the finished goods and it is experiencing some difficulty in doing so under the stress of increasing competition with mill made goods. The recent fall in the price of yarns has also prejudicially affected the large stock which the Union holds. In such special cases of commercial bad luck when it has to contend against circumstances over which it has no control, I think the Union deserves financial assistance from Government.

The Bagerhat Weaving Union—a Model Institution.

As pointed out by the Industries Commission a very important point in connection with the organization of these industries

is the possibility of the development of hand industries on a factory system in centres where there might be a large number of artisans possessing technical skill in a particular industry. The Madras handloom factories were working quite successfully till recently, and it is disappointing to find from the latest reports that these handloom factories are not doing so well now, it is stated, on account of the indolence and indiscipline of the workers. Mr. Pillai, however, thinks that the depression is temporary and "the right way to organize a factory would be to build it around warping mill and the dressing machine; the cardinal objection to grouped labour will disappear if weavers still work in their homes, while the managers of the factory will supply them with warps, and also undertake to finance the trade and place the finished goods on the market."

In the Bagerhat Weaving Union of Khulna, however, we have a most successful example of the organization of handlooms under factory system. From a very small beginning this institution has steadily gained ground and as recently some power looms have been added, it is in many ways a pioneer institution of its kind. We shall fittingly close this section on cottage and small industries with a short account of this noteworthy enterprise.

A humble beginning was made in 1920 by Maulavi Ukiladdin Khondakar and Babu Sailendra Nath Guha, two pleaders of Bagerhat, who gave up practice as a result of non-co-operation movement, and took to spinning and weaving and started with only one handloom. They gradually established a school with about a dozen looms and began to teach spinning and weaving to the boys, about a dozen in number. They then removed their school to Khondhapara. They increased the number of their looms to about 40 and began to sell their products which found a ready market They could not, however, cope with the demand, but poor and handicapped for want of funds, they could not increase their output to any appreciable extent. They struggled on for about 3 years more till they realised the futility of non-co-operation, and they turned to the Co-operative Department for help. In the year 1923 the weaving institute which is now styled the Bagerhat Weaving Union Ltd. was registered under Co-operative Societies Act and the change of management bore immediate fruit and there was rapid expansion of business. The firm employed the poor and the needy in the village

including old women and widows on their handlooms which soon rose to 50. The following extracts from Mr Hoogewerf's inspection of the factory in Februrary 1924 gives interesting information about the factory at the time of his visit:

"The factory is housed in kutch-pucca sheds which provide accommodation for about 90 looms including preparatory machinery, a dye-house and godowns for the storage of yarns etc. The present equipment consists of 70 handlooms of the Serampore fly-shuttle type, two horizontal mill warping machines and other preparatory machinery.

"The labour employed in the factory for working the looms is drawn chiefly from the *bhadrolok* community.

"As regards the preparatory processes, the Managing Director informed me that they are done by *purdanashin* women among whom the work is distributed and recovered when completed. The system introduced has so far proved satisfactory. The labour for the preparation of the material as well as the cloth manufactured is paid for by piece work which averages about 24/- a month for each man and about Rs 10/- for each woman worker. I consider that the wages earned are very satisfactory, allowing that the average working day consists of 6 hours only, i.e. from 9 to 12 A.M. and again from I-30 to 4-30 P. M.

"As regards the nature of the fabrics manufactured at the factory they practically consist of suitings and shirtings similar in design and texture to those made at Cannanore.

"Mr. Khondkar informed me that the average production per loom is from 6 to 8 yards per day which is sold at prices varying from 8 to 12 annas per yard. The production of the looms is marketed locally and through an agent at Calcutta. Hitherto no difficulty has been experienced in the disposal of the woven products which is a very satisfactory feature of the enterprise.

"The Managing Directors now propose to install a power driven plant consisting of about 12 looms to produce the cheaper qualities of fabrics so as to enable them to meet the local demands. The proposal is an excellent one and I would strongly recommend its installation in the near future.

"I had no occasion to go into the details of accounts of the factory as this portion of the work really concerns the Co-operative

Department, but I understand that it is satisfactory and that it is working at a profit."

The concluding observations of the Deputy Director deserve attention:

"It may be said in this connection that this is the only handloom weaving factory of its kind in Bengal which has been established on business lines and has been equipped with a large number of looms, viz., 70, thereby giving itself an opportunity of meeting with success, since experience shows that the most the capitalist can earn from a factory equipped with handlooms is about Rs. 5/- per loom after meeting all expenses including the weavers' wages. During the Swadeshi movement and the recent non-co-operation period, several handloom weaving factories equipped with 5 to 10 looms were started, but unfortunately these factories not being based on commercial principles and not having sufficient capital at their disposal were obliged to close. This had the effect of giving a set-back to the weaving industry rather than otherwise, although it was pointed out to them that their efforts would be futile from their very commencement. However, the Bagerhat Union Ltd. has proved that a handloom weaving factory cannot be made productive with less than about 50 looms and I hope that during the next boom in handloom weaving the capitalists will be guided by the experience gained by this factory. The success which larger handloom weaving factories in South India have met since the last few years is largely due to their having equipped their factories with a sufficient number of looms to make them productive."

During the year 1924-25 the Union gained in membership from 175 to 269 and increased its working capital from Rs. 27,612/- to Rs. 31,436/-. The firm has as the result of experience substituted imported yarn in place of home made stuff and on the advice of the Industrial Department, they installed 4 power looms during the year though the preparatory processes still continue to be done by manual labour. In addition to the 4 power looms there were 25 handlooms. Gradually 12 powerlooms will be installed.

Conclusion.

The review of the possibilities of the revival of small industries in Bengal leads to the conclusion that our attention should

be specially directed to the revival of cottage industries in rural areas both as subsidiary occupation for people whose main occupation is agriculture, and for these artisans and industrial castes whose only occupation is some form of hand industry. The same conclusion was reached in our review of the possibilities of improving the agricultural resources of the country. And amongst cottage industries those aiming at the production of food, such as supply of milk and milk products, pisciculture, poultry rearing, rearing of goats and sheep etc. offer the most hopeful openining for agriculturist. The capital required in these industries will not be much, nor is any special skill required though some amount of practical training would be necessary ; and there is universal demand and ready market for the produce of these industries. Next to food, another elemental need is clothing and the weaving of cloth and the spinning of yarn for the handlooms which have been ancient industries in almost every village should be revived and encouraged by every means possible. The relegation of weaving to a special caste presents a difficulty, but in the growing struggle for a means of livelihood and the enlightenment of the advancing times specially as the handloom and particularly the Charka are being so strongly backed by political propaganda, caste prejudices should not present such obstacles which cannot be overcome. The rearing of silk cocoons and the spinning of silk thread should also prove a most profitable and suitable subsidiary cottage industry in the silk producing districts of Bengal. It developing these village industries the Departments primarily concerned, the department of Agriculture, the Co-operative department and the department of Industries, should work in close co-operation. Along with efforts to help individuals to take up remunerative cottage industries, they should be organized into groups and into co-operative soeieties and the cottage industry should be helped to develop by natural stages into a factory or rather be feeders to a central Co-operative business to be run as a factory. In describing the co-operative dairies of Denmark, an account has been given of the lines on which such central and feeder industries work in close co-operation. The Bagerhat Weaving Union is also an excellent example of the evolution of a successful small scale factory from very small beginnings. The most instructive feature of this enter-

prise is the setting up of power looms alongside of handlooms. There should be scope for the use of small oil engines to supplement hand labour in most of these industries, once they are organized on co-operative lines. But it is obvious that the primary need in this field of work is capital, and the passing of the Industries Loans Bill which will enable small loans to be given to deserving persons for small industries either in the cottage or in small factories should prove a very great help. It would also be desirable to have a department of Industries in each district to examine the industrial resources of the district and develop them. The District Officer should be the proper authority for co-ordinating the efforts of the departments of Agriculture, Co-operation and Industries in reviving old and decaying industries and in establishing new ones, and particularly in recommending loans from Government in suitable cases.

CHAPTER IX.

System of District and Provincial Administration.

I

Axioms of Progress.

Three fundamental truths may be said to have emerged from our study of the problems of rural Bengal. The first is that the problem of rural advancement has an organic unity and must be simultaneously attacked from different directions in order to yield any substantial results. Health may be considered to be the basic factor, but we have seen how close and intimate is the connection between health and nutrition which is another name for food supply. The leading sanitarian of Bengal, Dr. Bentley, holds strongly the view that the decay of agriculture at any particular time and in any particulr area is the direct cause of the prevalence of Malaria, and I believe with equal truth the reverse of the above proposition may also be maintained, for it is obvious that widespread diseases and epidemics decimate and enervate the population and the decline of agricultural and economic prosperity is the inevitable result. The removal of the almost universal illiteracy of the masses and the rescue of their minds from the state of inertia and stagnation to which they have fallen must undoubtedly be one of our cardinal concerns. Unless the leavening and stimulating influence of new ideas and a higher standard of living permeate the minds of the masses of the people, there is very little hope of any real and vital forward movement. But here again there is no hope for any rapid progress of elementary education amongst the masses without a simultaneous improvement in their health and their economic prosperity. The second fundamental axiom which our enquiries have elicited is the need for the conservation of all the forces for progress which are available and for intimate and close co-operation between all the available agencies if any substantial results are to be achieved, the main objective always being to arouse a spirit of self-help and self-reliance amongst the people

themselves. The realisation primarily by the people themselves, of the paramount importance of these objects in building the foundations of national progress and the creation of healthy public opinion in favour of such endeavours must be co-ordinate conditions for that responsive and spontaneous co-operation between the people and the Government which we have advocated. The third and perhaps the most important factor to be considered is the provision of sufficient funds which will enable the lessons of science and the experience of other progressive countries to be employed to improve the economic and hygienic condition of rural Bengal. A point of special importance in connection with this requirement is that if money is to be usefully employed, having regard to the vastness of the problems to be tackled and the extensive area over which our rural population of about 42 millions of people are spread,—the funds should be sufficient for the adoption of suitable measures in their entirety within a reasonable period of time. Small and inadequate sums spread over a large number of years are not only not likely to yield any tangible results but may serve to discredit such ill-equipped humanitarian movements.

Let us now see how far the existing systems of district and and provincial administrations in the province are suitable for work on the lines indicated above.

II

Present System of District Administration.

The central pivot of the entire scheme of district administration in Bengal is the District Officer. There are 27 districts with an average area of 3,047 square miles and a population of 17,62,675 persons. Each district is divided into sub-divisions in charge of a Sub-divisional Officer working under the control of the District Officer. On an average there are three sub-divisions to each district. The chief functions of the District Officer have hitherto been as District Magistrate the preservation of law and order in his district, and as Collector to collect the revenue realizable in his district. Prior to 1916, as long as he was the ex-officio chairman of the District Board, the District Officer was also in charge of the administration

of the only organization that exists in Bengal districts for attending to the material needs of the people. The development and maintenance of communications, the organization of medical relief and the adoption of sanitary measures, the maintenance and administration of elementary and middle schools, are all in charge of District Boards. The principal source of income of these bodies is derived from the Road and Public Works Cesses levied together at the rate of one anna per rupee on the value of all agricultural lands in that district, which impost is shared equally by the raiyats and the landholders. Previous to the year 1913 a moiety of the above impost went to provincial coffers, but in view of the growing needs of the District Boards the whole of this income is now made over to the District Boards. They also derive some additional income from their pounds and ferries. Small special grants are also made by Government for definite objects. In 1926 the total receipts for the 27 District Boards of Bengal amounted to Rs. 133 lakhs. After the decision of Government to withdraw the District Officer from District Boards he has vacated not only his place as an ex-officio chairman of that body, but he is no longer even a member of that body. District Boards have on an average between 24 to 33 members, 2/3rds of whom are elected and the remaining 1/3rd nominated by the Commissioner. The Sub-divisional Officer can be a member of a District Board and he does usually find a place on the Board as a nominated member The Central District Board representing the whole district has Local Boards for each sub-division. The Local Boards, however, have no independent financial resources and are the local agents of the District Boards for the administration of some unimportant roads and the distribution of educational grants to the schools situated in the subdivision. The Sub divisional Officer cannot be a member of a Local Board. The decision of Government authorising unofficial elected chairmen for District Boards is in pursuance of the general policy of Government followed since the creation of District Boards in the time of Lord Ripon in the eighties of giving increasing powers to the people to manage their own local affairs as they gain in experience. Within recent years there has been another notable measure for consolidating the foundations of district administration in rural areas and, as such, we will first deal with the advance of village self-government in Bengal within recent years, before

offering any comments on the recent developments in the scheme of the central district administration.

Progress in village self-government : creation of Circle System and Union Boards.

Bengal being a Permanently Settled province and the land revenue being collected from zamindars by the aid of Revenue Sale Laws, there is no revenue staff of the rank of Tahsildars etc. for the collection of rent etc., from raiyats as in the raiyatwari areas of India. Thus, besides a Sub-Divisional Officer for a whole sub-division of the average size of 956 square miles with a population of 5,53,401 souls, there are no other local Government officers to bring the administration into closer touch with the people. The staff of rural police maintained by local taxation known as village chaukidars, and the staff of regular police stationed in thanas under the charge of a thana officer, have only definite police duties to perform. During the stress of the political unrest following the partition of Bengal, this weakness of the district administrative machinery of the province came prominently into view. The idea of having smaller administrative units under each sub-division in convenient circles to be placed under an administrative officer to be called a Circle Officer was first evolved in the province of Eastern Bengal about the year 1910. As a result of the recommendations of special officers deputed to try the experiment of a Circle System in small definite areas and of the special committee called the Bengal District Administration Committee of 1913-14, the Circle System was introduced into the province. The objects of the scheme were two-fold. The first was to make administration more efficient by introducing an agency which will bring Government and the District Officers in closer touch with the people, and the second was to evolve an agency by which the people would be able to attend to their own material needs and serve as the last unit of the administration for helping the central administration to carry forward schemes of material and moral advancement of the rural population. The above objects were sought to be obtained by action in two directions— first by the division of sub-divisions into Circles under Circle Officers, and secondly by developing the available

village organizations into more popular and efficient bodies. The creation of the Circle System and the appointment of Circle Officers needed no legislative enactment, but the village organization had to be re-organized under the provisions of an enactment known as the Bengal Village Self-Government Act of 1919. It would hardly be necessary in this note to trace at any length the successive stages of the progress of village self-governing institutions in Bengal, but it will suffice to point out that the two frameworks available were the Chaukidari Panchayeti Unions based on the Chaukidari Act of 1870 for the organization of a system of rural police and the Union Committees constituted under the Local Self-Government Act of 1885 as amended by Act V of 1908, for looking after the material amenities of the areas under their control. The Chaukidari Panchayeti system, however, was unpopular as the Panchayets had no general municipal duties and were only employed in the thankless task of raising a local tax for the maintenance of rural police, and the few Union Committees which had been established were also in a moribund condition. Though originally intended under the Bill of 1883 to have independent powers of initiation etc., the Union Committees had little independent powers as they finally emerged under the Act of 1885, and received little encouragement from either the District Boards or the Local Boards. Besides, these infant institutions suffered from the lack of an agency to supervise and encourage their activities. The obvious remedy was to amalgamate the Chaukidari Panchayets with the Union Committees and evolve a system of village administrative units which will be responsible for rural police duties as well as for municipal duties for the area under their control. With this view the legislative enactment known as the Village Self-Government Act of 1919 came into being. In many ways this Act is the most beneficial measure which has passed into law within recent years. The new administrative units to be known as Union Boards have from 6 to 9 members, 2 3rds of whom are elected from rate-payers paying a chaukidari rate or cess of rupee one per annum and 1/3rd nominated by the District Magistrate. For the maintenance of the rural police a compulsory tax has to be raised on the lines of the old chaukidari tax, whereas for the municipal duties an optional tax is provided in the Act. The average size of a Union is roughly 10 square miles with a population of 8,000 souls. They

are grouped in circles with about 30 Union Boards, and placed under the charge of a Circle Officer. Circle Officers are recruited from the cadre of the Junior Bengal Civil Service, hitherto known as Sub-Deputy Collectors, their pay ranging from Rs. 200/- to Rs. 400/-, with prospect in exceptional cases of promotion to the Executive Branch of the Bengal Civil Service. Besides generally having a seat on the Local Board as a nominated member, the Circle Officer has no statutory powers of control over the Union Boards, though as the agent of the District Magistrate and Sub-Divisional Officer he has in practice large controlling and advisory powers Besides the District Magistrate, the District Board and the Local Board have general powers of supervision of the administration of the Union Boards within their jurisdiction.

Since the passing of the Village Self-Government Act in 1919 up to 1926, out of possible 6,700 Unions in the province, Union Boards have actually been constituted in 2,159 Unions, or roughly in one-third of the province, although sanction to the establishment of 2,762 Union Boards has been given. This slow progress may seem somewhat disappointing. But it must be remembered that it was intended that Union Boards should be established with a certain amount of caution, only in areas where the local people through their Local Board and District Board express a willingness for these municipal institutions, and where in the opinion of the District Officer the people are fit to shoulder the wider responsibilities created by the Act. Besides the Union Boards which have already been established, propaganda work in other areas is being carried on by Circle Officers and Sub-Divisional Officers. In fact, the want of a sufficient number of Circle Officers has also accounted to some extent for the slowness of the progress. But the matter is receiving the special attention of Government and the present cadre of 139 Circle Officers is to be shortly increased to 155, and it is hoped that with 190 officers by a re-adjustment of Circles it would be possible to spread the system all over the province. But the chief impediment has no doubt been the spurious agitation which has been engineered in some districts against these institutions as a part of the non-co-operation propoganda. It is alleged that the Act places too much power in the hands of the executive officers of Government, and the tax for general purposes acts as a hardship. Fortunately, however, the members of the most

progressive Union Boards themselves, far from resenting the presence of Circle Officers, welcome their assistance and co-operation, and the people of the localities concerned are now realising the material benefits to their Union from the small sacrifices which they make in the shape of contributions under section 37 (b) of the Act. As I have very often pointed out, the tax is entirely local and has to be spent in the area where it is raised. The incidence is so small that although it benefits all it hurts none. As a matter of fact the Union Boards are showing increased public spirit in this matter, and in the year 1926 the sum available for water-supply, communications etc., rose to four lakhs from three lakhs in the previous year. In the Burdwan Division, as already stated, Union Boards banded together to establish and maintain Union Boards Dispensaries with the result that the number of medical institutions nearly doubled themselves in three years. Gratifying proof of the capacity of these infant institutions to shoulder responsibility was also furnished by the manner in which they supplemented the small Government grants for water-supply which they received during last year through the District Magistrate by raising funds from the people to be benefited by the works, and also by undertaking to have them executed by their own men instead of making them over to professional contractors. All this is very much in advance of the days when everything had to be done by sending out officers either from the headquarters of the sub division or the district. There cannot be any doubt in the mind of any honest and impartial critic that an agency has now been created which under proper direction and with suitable encouragement, financial and otherwise, could be entrusted with the task of working out its own economic salvation. It would seem, therefore, a matter of great importance and urgency to adopt all such measures as might be necessary for the development and the wider extension of these village institutions.

Growth of rural Co-operative organizations—no antagonism with Union Boards.

But before I proceed to make my submissions in this connection it is necessary to refer to another potent agency which is

growing up, and which I have already described at some length in the previous chapters. I mean the co-operative movement which should undoubtedly supply a most powerful and valuable motive power for the solution of the social and economic problems of rural Bengal. It is very important, however, to clearly realise that there is no antagonism either in principle or in practice between these two organizations—the rural Union Boards and the rural primary Co-operative Societies. In principle, the aims and objects of both movements are the same—to stimulate a spirit of self-help amongst the people and to organize them for co-operative work for the good of the public—the members of the society in the case of the co-operative society, either credit, industrial, agricultural, irrigation, or health society, and the people of the Union as a whole, in the case of the Union Board. And in practice I have seen many Union Boards encouraging the formation of anti-malarial co-operative societies in their Unions, and very often important members of the Union Boards are also secretaries and other office-bearers of the rural co-operative societies. Co-operative societies are perhaps in a sense more unofficial than Union Boards, but some amount of official initiation and financial assistance even the co-operative societies require, as do the Union Boards, the audit and inspection of their accounts by official auditors being essential in the case of both organizations. Far from there being any antagonism in principle there seems to be no reason why both should not be powerful allies in the common task of arousing a spirit of co-operation, self-help, and self-reliance amongst the people. Thus all the co-operative societies working within the area of a Union Board might conveniently be grouped for the purpose of supervision under that Union, and the Union Board might thus be also the co-operative Union for those Societies. In any case, it is most essential that the public and the departmental officers connected with these two movements should take special care that there should not grow up any rivalry or departmental jealousy between them.

Need for the development of Circle System.

Now to return to the Circle system and its component, Union Boards, and the manner in which they may be developed and be

more fully organized. The Circle Officer is, as I have said before, a Sub-deputy Collector and Magistrate, and there is still a tendency to regard him as only a gloried Chaukidari Officer, whose main duty is to look after the village rural police organizations. It is true that it is also his duty to organize and supervise Union Boards and these bodies besides their rural police duties have also municipal duties to perform in connection with their roads, sanitary and medical institutions, primary schools etc. Unfortunately, however, while 20 lakhs were necessary and had to be raised last year by the Union Boards for the provision of their rural police force, only 4 lakhs were available for their municipal requirements, and naturally these departments did not demand a great deal of attention of Circle Officers. What is necessary is to formulate a radical change in the duties and responsibilities of these officers and to regard them as circle development officers rather than as circle chaukidari officers. Accordingly, although they might be recruited from the ranks of the Junior Bengal Civil Service as at present, they should form a distinct and separate branch of that service altogether, and the present system of employing the same officer periodically for circle system work and then for general revenue and magisterial duties as a Sub-deputy Magistrate and Collector should be discontinued. In fact, I would strongly recommend that a new service to be styled the Rural Development Service should be established with a suitable scale of pay and openings for future advancement. I will have to say more of this service as I proceed. If this service is separated it would be unnecessary to require a Circle Officer to receive the same training and pass the same departmental examinations in criminal and revenue law etc. as is required in the case of junior members of the Bengal Civil Service. On the other hand, he should receive some training and instruction in elementary agricultural theory and practice, rural sanitation and hygiene, co-operative credit organization, and such other matters regarding the economic and material welfare of the people with which his duties as circle development officer will bring him in daily contact. A separate training school for such officers may not be feasible, but they should receive practical training and instruction successively for short periods at some Government Agricultural and Cattle Farm, under the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, and

the Director of Public Health. At present the want of any preliminary training in such departments is a great handicap and naturally does not give the Circle Officer that bias for these duties which it is so essential that he should have.

Then again in the rural circle we must make provision for the practical working of the principle to which I have so often drawn attention that all the departments of rural welfare should receive simultaneous attention, and there should be team work and closest co-operation between all departments of Government working in this field. Along with the Circle Officer should there be associated a circle agricultural officer, a circle co-operative organizer, a circle sanitary officer and also a circle primary education officer. It will be the duty of the circle officer to co-ordinate the activities of these officers and put them in touch with the Union Boards of his Circle, which bodies will be primarily responsible for carrying out all schemes of public utility with regard to their Unions. We will thus have a colony of local officers in each circle working in close touch with the self-governing village institutions of the circle, and under the guidance of the District and Sub-divisional Officers on the one hand, and on the other of the departmental heads of the special departments concerned.

Attention will have to be paid to some other important practical needs. At present for want of a suitable house for his occupation at the head-quarters of the circle and inspection bungalow for the interior the Circle Officer is not able to be in as close touch with the Union Boards of his circle as is desirable. Steps should, therefore, be taken to build small houses for Circle Officers at their head-quarters, such as thana police officers have been provided with. District Boards should also give more attention to the provision of inspection bungalows in the interior of their districts. Mr. Hart who was placed on special duty in connection with the working of Village Self-Government Act has recommended that the Circle Officer at the head-quarters of the district or the sub-division should have his office in the premises of the District Board or Local Board Office, so that he may be in constant communication with the chairman and other office-bearers of these bodies. This would be an obvious advantage, and I have frequently recommended this to the District Officers of the

divisions where I have served. This is already the practice in some districts.

The development of Union Boards.

Turning to the Union Boards, as was originally intended in the Bill of 1883, these village institutions should be the real link between the central local authority and the rural areas which they represent. It follows, therefore, that as District Boards have been finally accepted for Bengal there is no room for Local Boards to stand between District Boards and the Union Boards, specially as the Circle system has provided a suitable agency for the supervision and control of the Union Boards. The total abolition of Local Boards is, therefore, in contemplation of Government. With the abolition of Local Boards a change in the system of representation and election to the District Boards will be required. At present there is direct election to the Local Boards and the Local Boards send up representatives to the District Board. The Union Boards under the present system have no special representation on the District Boards. So whether Local Boards are abolished or not it is very necessary to make some provision for the representation of rural interests on the central District Board and to allow Union Boards to send up some representatives. Perhaps the best course would be to throw open 2/3rds of the elected seats for direct voting by all cess payers and reserve 1/3rd for election by the Union Boards. Simultaneously greater responsibilities and powers should be placed on Union Boards As already stated, the recent policy in connection with the utilization of the special grants of Government for rural water-supply and health work has been to encourage Union Boards to undertake suitable schemes from these grants, supplemented by other funds collected from the people to be benefited by the works. A recent Government circular has also issued pointing out to District Boards the desirability and practical advantage of confiding Union Boards with the management and maintenance of their own village roads, pounds and ferries, schools and other local institutions.

But it is obvious, however, that if real progressive work in all the directions indicated before is to be taken up seriously and

Union Boards are to discharge their legitimate share of duties in any such comprehensive scheme, they must receive much larger and more regular financial assistance from District Boards and Government than they do at present. We have seen that the total amount available for the municipal duties of the Union Boards of Bengal was only 4 lakhs last year which works out to an average of Rs. 179 for each Union Board. It needs no stretch of the imagination to see that with their existing financial resources public welfare work by Union Boards can only be a make-believe. Far greater financial resources will have to be created if a genuine and comprehensive effort is to be made for the reconstruction of the rural areas of Bengal. The major portion of the money will have to come from provincial revenues and a system will have to be evolved under which Union Boards showing greater public spirit and desire for self-help with local funds will receive proportionately larger financial encouragement. The financial arrangements which I propose will be discussed later on in this chapter.

Scheme of welfare work for Union Boards.

For the present, however, a start should at once be made and attention concentrated on three objectives. To begin with each Union Board should have a Union farm with about 20 bighas of land. It will be very desirable if the Union farm could be run by a central agricultural co-operative association with feeder association in the interior of the Union. Special facilities should be given to the central agricultural association for getting loans from Government either under the Land Improvement Act or the Agricultural Loans Act. With the farm there should be a seed store where manures and seeds should be stored for sale. The farm should be chiefly used for the growing of suitable kinds of seeds and fodder crops. A few selected breeding bulls, specimen milch and draught cattle and calves should also be kept at the farm. Wherever practicable we should have a Demonstrator of the Agricultural Department in charge of the farm. But if so many Demonstrators be not available the Secretary of the Union Board

should receive some practical training in a Government farm, and kept in charge till a qualified Demonstrator could be employed. In the Rangpur district we trained some Union Board Secretaries in our Government farms, and they were very useful for general agricultural work of their Unions. The Demonstrator in charge of the Union farm should also have some training in treating the ordinary diseases of cattle, and should be able to inoculate and protect cattle against infectious diseases as it may be too costly to entertain a separate staff for elementary veterinary work of the Union. The Union farm should also be utilized for the practical training of the boys of the central Union school to which I shall persently refer. The second municipal institution of the Union will be the Union medical store and depot for anti-malarial work, and a centre for anti-kala-azar injection work under a Union medical officer. This officer should also be in charge of rural sanitary and preventive work of the villages in the Union. In the case of the Union medical institution also it will be most desirable if it could be organized jointly by a central co-operative health association and the Union Board. The central health association should have feeder associations for anti-malarial and sanitary work in the important villages within the Union. As a matter of fact the whole scheme of rural reconstruction work should be based on the joint foundations of the co-operative organizations and the Union Boards. The third institution will be a central Union school with accommodation for the training of 100 to 150 boys. The Union farm should be utilized for giving practical agricultural training to the boys of the central school, and manual work of the farm on alternate mornings should be compulsory for all boys. For this purpose the boys should be divided into two batches. There should also be an industrial class attached to the school, where survey, carpentry, smithery and some useful and profitable cottage industries will be taught. The attendance of half of the boys alternately at this class every morning should also be made compulsory. A central girls' school should also be established in some convenient village in the Union.

The total annual cost for maintaining the farm would roughly be Rs. 1,000, of the Union medical and health institution Rs. 1,000, and of the two schools Rs. 2,000, or a total roughly of Rs. 4,000. If there are to be 6,700 Unions in the province we shall want two

crores and sixty eight lakhs of rupees for the introduction of the scheme, the major portion of which may have to be found from provincial revenues. Fresh local taxation would, therefore, be necessary, but if the money to be raised by local taxation is supplemented on a generous scale by grants from provincial revenues and if the entire sum is utilized for the benefit of the Union concerned, I do not think there will be any serious objection to the imposition of an additional local tax.

III

Suitability of District Administration and the present position of the District Officer.

I now proceed to consider the present position of the District Officer and the suitability of the central organization of district administration for an efficient discharge of the duties which have been outlined before. I have already touched on the special position of the District Officer in Bengal which is a permanently settled area, and where a District Officer perhaps has not the same occasion and facilities for coming into close contact with the economic and material requirements of the people of his district as in rayatwari areas where the Collector is practically also the landlord of his district. It is not of course suggested that a District Officer of Bengal does not consider it his duty to acquaint himself with the material and economic needs of the people of his district, but that land revenue in Bengal being collected from zamindars there is no occasion for the maintenance of an elaborate revenue collecting agency to work under the Collector, and there is a consequent lack of opportunity for the Collector to come into the same close and intimate touch with the people as in raiyatwari areas. This difference in the outlook was brought forcibly to my notice when I left the Khurda sub-division of the Puri district, where I was a Sub-divisional Officer for about 3 years. The whole of that Sub-division is a Government Khas Mahal with an average rental of about 5 lakhs of rupees which had to be collected directly from the raiyats, and the Sub-divisional Officer was brought intimately in

touch with his tenants and raiyats through the agency of the chief Tahsildar or Manager and the subordinate staff of *Sarbarkars* or village collecting officers. At each periodical settlement of the sub-division, the Sub-divisional Officer is closely associated with the work of the Settlement Officers in settling the rate of rents and preparing a record-of-rights. Although as the result of the district settlements which are now proceeding in the province valuable documents regarding the economic and material condition of the people are being prepared by officers who also subsequently work as District Officers, and these reports pass through the hands of Collectors and Commissioners, yet they do not arouse the same interest as, for instance, the settlement report of the Khurda sub-division does for its Sub-divisional Officer. I have alrerdy stated how to mitigate to some extent this practical disadvantage of a District Officer of Bengal, the Circle system has been evolved; I have also stated that in a Bengal district the District Board is the only organization which is directly concerned with the material needs of the district. It is obvious, therefore, that the recent policy of Government initiated since 1915 by which the District Officer has ceased to have any direct connection with the administration of the District Board has very seriously affected his position. His position, for instance, compares unfavourably with that of the Chairman of the District Board, for whereas as District Magistrate he is responsible for the maintenance of law and order and is associated with the meting out of punishment to all wrong-doers, and as Collector he is responsible for collecting taxes not only for Government but also for the District Board itself, he cannot, however, help the people in even such matters as the sinking of a well for the supply of drinking water or the construction of a village road or the establishment of a village dispensary. Weak as has been the hold of the Collector in Bengal under the Permanent Settlement in all matters relating to the economic progress of the district, the recent policy of completely dissociating him from the administration of the District Board has still further undermined his position. How normally to repair the impaired position of the District Officer is in my opinion one of the most serious administrative problems in Bengal.

Need for stabilising position of District Officer.

I, of course, fully realise that the old system of paternal Government by the District Officer must gradually give place to a system which will give increasing scope to the people to look after their own affairs. In fact, efforts in this direction have been consistently made by Government ever since the days of Lord Ripon, although it is true that it is only since the memorable declaration of 1918 that definite steps have been taken to introduce important constitutional and administrative changes into the country. It is also realised that the Reforms and the new system of Government since introduced connot be confined to the central and provincial schemes of administration alone but must be felt throughout the whole chain of the administration, and the system of district administration must also be materially affected. It is, therefore, not suggested that there should be any reversal of the policy by which the administration of the affairs of the District Board has been placed in the hands of the non-official chairman. What I submit, however, is that whereas on the one hand it is very necessary even in the present transitional stage, which intervenes between the paternal and national form of Government, that full scope for local self-government must be afforded to the people and the chairman of the District Board, and the other office-bearers and members of the self-governing local bodies must feel that the responsibility for all schemes of local utility principally rests on them, yet on the other hand it is equally important that the position of the District Officer must be stabilised and sufficient powers must be left in his hands to enable him to coordinate the efforts of Local Bodies with the activities of the special departments of Government in charge of the 'nation-building' departments in carrying through suitable schemes in his district. It will be readily admitted that as long as the present system of district administration is maintained and a highly paid and specially trained District Officer is placed at the head of the district administration, it would be obviously unwise to alienate his sympathy with all progressive activities in his district by reducing him to a state of impotence in such matters.

As regards the system of district administration itself I am

strongly opposed to too great a hurry in introducing any drastic changes into it. The people have long been used to the personal rule of the District Officer, and now that suitable avenues have been found by which the people who are interested in the welfare of their district will be able to take an honourable part in co-operating with the District Officer and the Government in advancing the best interests of the district, sufficient time must be allowed for the constitutional changes to achieve the objects for which they have been conceived before any fresh and drastic innovations are again made. The great advantage of the present system of district administration lies in the fact that it vests power and responsibility in the hands of an officer who has no local and personal interests. As an Indian I am free to maintain that the people themselves greatly value this advantage, and as the Indianisation of the services is an important plank in the programme of the Reforms, there should be very soon as many Indian District Officers as Europeans. I think, therefore, that there is a very strong case for the stablisation of the position of the District Officer and for the authoritative revision of the old official conventions in the light of the new conditions and rescuing the district administration from the state of chaos and uncertainty into which it is in the danger of drifting.

For, the Reforms have also in other ways impaired the influence and prestige of the District Officer. Under the old system the District Officer was the only recognized channel for access to the higher authorities of Government. Now the Ministers from their very position have to be directly accessible to the people and their political followers have naturally considerable personal influence over them. The Indian Members of the Executive Council to maintain their position in the Legislative Council have also to act similarly with the result that the old traditions and conventions of the administrative machinery are being broken up. The nominations to the Local Bodies, the District Boards and the Municipalities still leave some patronage and influence in the hands of the District Officer and Commissioner ; but even in this matter also there is constant interferance by Ministers under powers taken by a recent executive ruling of the Government, which in my humble opinion is hardly supported by a strict interpretation of the provisions of the Local Self-Government Act, as it stands. In the matter of recom-

mendations for titles and honours also the influence of the local officers is distinctly on the wane. From what I have stated above I think I have made it sufficiently clear that one of the most urgent needs in Bengal at the present moment to ensure the satisfactory working of any comprehensive measures calculated to improve the moral and material condition of the people is the stabilising of the scheme of district administration with a view to making it a really efficient and workable scheme.

How to improve District administration.

The first requisite for attaining the above object in my opinion is the issue of a comprehensive resolution by Government drawing the attention of District Officers to the changed conditions in modern India and requiring them to give far more attention to what are known as the nation-building departments. At present although in a general way the moral and material prosperity of his district is a matter of concern to the District Officer in Bengal, yet there are no specific instructions of Gevernment defining his duties and his responsibilities in this connection. Some officers take special interest in this sphere of their work, whereas others are under the impression that as the District Board administration has been taken away from his hands he has no longer any direct responsibility in this matter. Not only should the attention of the District Officers be drawn to this important matter by the issue of a circular but it should be definitely laid down that in judging of the merit and efficiency of a District Officer special attention will be paid to the amount of interest taken by him in all such matters and the help he is able to give to such special departments of Government as Agriculture, Co-operation and Industries and to his ability in initiating and advancing suitable schemes of public utility in his district. But the issue of such an order alone without a simultaneous provision of necessary opportunities and suitable powers would obviously remain a barren measure. As it would be the duty of the District Officer to render all possible assistance to the efforts of special departments as far as his district is concerned, it should also be enjoined on the heads of these special departments that it would

be their duty and of their subordinates to act in close co-operation with the District Officer and his subordinates. The District Administration Committee and MacLagan Co-operation Committee strongly recommended, before the Reforms, that there should be a Development Commissioner for each province to co-ordinate the activities of the different departments concerned with the material and economic progress of the people and to ensure a continuity of policy. How far that recommendation is now practicable under the Reforms when these departments have been placed under separate Ministers, we shall consider later. I think, however, there can be little doubt that the activities of such special departments as Agriculture, Co-operation, Industry etc., acting either independently or through a co-ordinating officer or central Board of Development, would be seriously handicapped, unless they receive continuous and effectual assistance from the District Officer and unless the District Officer considers himself to be the Development Officer of his own district. I have just outlined a scheme for rural welfare work in Union Board by which the activities in the district in such directions could be still further decentralised and brought nearer the homes of the masses of the people themselves by the utilization of the Circle system under the charge of a Circle Development Officer. If these additional duties are, however, to be placed on the District Officer, I would suggest that he should have a Personal Assistant for this work to be called the Deputy Development Officer of the district. This officer should be selected from amongst the senior Circle Officers and should belong to the superior grade of the Rural Development Service to which I have referred already. Another important administrative measure which will have to be adopted would be to fix the life of a District Officer in a particular district by statute to a period of 5 years. At present the average life of a District Officer in any particular district seldom exceeds two years. It is obvious that however capable and zealous a District Officer may be there cannot be any continuity of policy, nor can he acquire first-hand knowledge of the requirements of his district and sufficient influence over the people to enable him to enlist their co-operation and support in carrying through important remedial measures, unless he is kept in the district for a sufficiently long period. Attention was drawn to this important point by a circular issued in the time of Lord

Curzon, but as all executive orders on the subject have proved of little avail it seems necessary to have recourse to legislation, so that an officer placed in the executive charge of a district should be required to serve the full period of his tenure of office. Short leave may be permissible, but he should not be allowed to avail of long leave except on medical grounds till he has served his full period. If necessary, the new leave rules should be modified in the light of the above recommendation. It might be necessary also to have special allowances for unhealthy or unattractive districts.

But all the above measures will prove of little avail unless sufficient funds are placed at the disposal of the District Officer to enable him to take an active part in the development work of his district. To begin with it will rehabilitate his position in the eyes of the people of the district if he is able to give suitable financial assistance for the removal of the material needs of the people. He will be able to direct the policy of his District Board by being in a position to supplement its activities by making substantial grants. Over the Union Boards his influence ought to be still more potent and his financial support of still greater importance. During the last two years small sums of money have been placed at the disposal of the Commissioner for the distribution to districts for rural water-supply. How even with the assistance of these small grants, District Officer and Sub-divisional Officers have been able effectually to co-operate with the District Board and Union Boards in stimulating a spirit of local self-help and carrying through important programmes has already been described. This year the Government have allocated funds for kala-azar and anti-malarial work and the duty of distributing the grants to the District Boards has been imposed on the Director of Public Health. It might be desirable to issue supplementary instructions associating District Officers and Commissioners with the distribution of these grants to insure their full and proper utilization by local bodies and other unofficial organizations engaged in this work. The only District Board in Bengal which has yet undertaken anti-kala-azar work on an adequate scale is the District Board of Alipore, and the whole policy of this Board and the actual work connected with the execution of that policy has been materially influenced by the personal intervention of the Commissioner and the Magistrate. In fact, as the result of the experience of the medical relief work

actually being done by the District Board of Alipore, it has been found that the active co-operation of the District Officer and the Subdivisional Officers, is most invaluable. But it is not only in distributing special Government grants to District Boards and other local bodies that the District Officer should have a hand, but adequate grants should be placed at the disposal of the Commissioner and the District Officer for schemes of district improvement. Collectors used to get special grants for works of minor improvement. These grants should be revived and both the District Officer's grant and the Commissioner's grant should be very greatly increased.

Suggested improvements in District Board administration.

We may now refer to the position of the District Board in connection with schemes of district improvement work. As we have seen the District Board is the only organization in the district which has any resourses for taking up such schemes and carrying on this work. But here again financial difficulties have stood in the way of any comprehensive and adequate measures being adopted. Even with the assistance of the public work cess the total income of all the District Boards of Bengal in the year 1926 amounted only to Rs. 133 lakhs which works out to an average of Rs. 3 per head of population. After paying for the cost of the establishment etc. the available resources are obviously totally inadequate for the adoption of any comprehensive and adequate remedial measures for the vast population we have to deal with. I need hardly say that the small palliative measures such as the making over to District Boards of the Government ferries will have no appreciable effect. Far larger sums from provincial revenues will have to be made available, and these grants for definite objects and for schemes to be approved by the technical departments of Government should be distributed as just recommended, through the agency of the Commissioner and the District Officer. How this additional money is to be found we will have to discuss presently. In the meanwhile it might be pointed out that even with their present income a more liberal policy might be pursued by at least the more well-to-do District Boards. The District Board of

Alipore has set a notable example in this respect. A comprehensive scheme for anti-kala-azar work has been elaborated and during last year two lakhs of rupees were set apart for this object. The scheme originated with the Sub-divisional Officer of Baraset who happened to be a most influential member of the Board, and he was able to carry through his proposals mainly with the support of the nominated members of the Board. This demonstrates conclusively the value of the nominated elements on the District Board and the danger of still further attenuating this element by reducing the proportion to 1/4th from 1/3rd of the total number which is the case at present. The procedure adopted by the District Board of Alipore in carrying out its programme of health and medical relief work of the district has afforded another valuable object lesson. Under the advice of the Commissioner the District Board has appointed a central medical committee to supervise its anti-kala-azar work of which the Director of Public Health is the President and the District Magistrate is the Vice-President. Proper and adequate supervision being the most important requisite of all such schemes, the valuable help which the District Board is receiving from its medical committee is proof of its wisdom and foresight. Other District Boards will also find, as the premier District Board of Alipore has already experienced, that the ultimate good of the people of the district whose representatives they are is not to be attained merely by too jealous a guardianship of their own powers and privileges, but by a wise and tolerant utilization of the good offices of the District Officer and the special technical officers of Government who are there to help them. Even under present conditions it is quite possible to make for harmonious co-operation between the District Board and the District Officer and his subordinates, and I have strongly urged the formation of district health committees and district improvement committees for other districts of the division.

There is just another aspect of the present system of District Board administration to which I must refer in this connection. We do not cavil at the temporary loss of efficiency which the substitution of non-official chairman in the place of the District Officer may have resulted in some District Boards. The main object of the measure is admittedly educative, and the people can only be

educated in self-government by actual experience. But there is one important drawback of the present scheme to which attention must be directed with the object of rectifying it as far as possible. Unless the non-official chairman of the District Board is able to come into close touch with the masses of the people in the rural areas by constant touring and otherwise, there is danger of the District Board losing touch with the real needs of the people and guided more and more by vested and vocal interests. A non-official chairman is generally either a successful and busy pleader, a zamindar or a man in business not unoften residing out of the district. Only the other day when I visited an important fair where normally a lakh of pilgrims congregate and where the District Board has to organize elaborate sanitary measures to prevent epidemics etc., I was greatly disappointed to find that the chairman had been unable to supervise the arrangements, because being a member of the Legislative Council he was attending the Council, and the Vice-Chairman had also been prevented from being present on account of private reasons, and a member of the District Board was alone representing the Board. A paid non-official chairman who would be able to give his District Board his whole attention and service might be suggested, but against this might be urged that we will not then secure men of the same standing and position as is possible to secure at present. The best solution to my mind would, therefore, be the appointment of a paid Deputy Chairman for all the important District Boards of Bengal whose main duty would be to keep in touch with the masses of the cess payers by constant touring and who will not be removable without the approval of Government. This officer also might be recruited from the senior grades of the Rural Development Service which might be placed under a Board with the Minister in-charge of Local Self-Government as the President.

IV.

Suitability of 'Reform' system and Provincial Administration.

We may proceed to consider the adaptability of the system of provincial administration inaugurated under the Reforms

for the objects outlined before. For, it is clear that District administration must draw its inspiration from the Central administration of the Province. Not only must the general line of policy be laid down by Government, but it is Government which will have to guide and control the work of the District administration, and what is probably more important, find the money which the various schemes of public welfare will require for their execution.

Under the Reforms the various departments of Government directly concerned with the moral and material advancement of the people, such as Local Self-Government, Agriculture, Industries, Co-operation and Education, have been placed under the Ministers.

Although a review of the achievements of the new form of administration inaugurated by the Reforms is hardly called for here, yet we may be permitted to observe that in this Province at least there is a general feeling of disappointment, for although there has been increased activity in the department of health and medical relief and the question of rural water-supply has also received greater attention, yet it cannot be said that the new form of Government has yet been marked by any bold departures and the inititation of any comprehensive remedial measures. It may be true that having regard to the vastness of the problems to be tackled and the comparative shortness of the period during which the new regime has been in force, judgment on its achievements cannot afford to be too harsh. Nor can it be maintained that the pre-Reform era was more conspicuous by its achievements in this sphere. Indeed, in Bengal the Ministry made a most hopeful start, and few who came in personal contact with the first Minister of Bengal, the late Sir Surendra Nath Banerji, failed to realise that he was in the presence of a really great Tribune of the people, who would do great things for them, if only he had the means and the opportunity.

That such means and therefore opportunity have been denied to the Ministers will, I think, be universally admitted. His excellency Lord Lytton in his farewell address to the Legislative Council pointed out that the principal cause of failure of the Reforms in Bengal has been financial embarrassment of the province and the consequent inability of Government to place at the disposal of the Ministers sufficient funds to enable

them to administer their departments with efficiency and to carry through any comprehensive and suitable remedial measures. If this impeding cause is admitted to be a fact, there would be hardly any necessity for exploring other causes which might have helped to nullify the potential possibilities of progress conceived by the Reforms. Want of opportunity and the lack of funds could not have failed to deter not only politicians of the extreme school of thought from undertaking the responsibilities of office as Ministers, but also more moderate men about whom there cannot be any question of their desire to co-operate to the best of their abilities to make the Reforms a success.

There have been other incidental difficulties also to which reference might suitably be made. It has been considered that the present life of the council of 3 years is too short. By the time the Minister, new as he very often is to his departments, begins to get the threads of the administration into his hands, it is time for him to vacate his office. It may be true that if a Minister really commands the confidence of the constituencies, there is no reason why he should not come into office for a second time. But having regard to the unformed state of public opinion in the country in this period of transition, it would be desirable to provide that the Government of one Ministry should last sufficiently long to enable policies to be evolved and examined and to be put into execution at least partially during the tenure of one Ministry. I think, therefore, there are strong grounds for the extension of the life of a Council and of the Ministry to 4, possibly to 5 years. The Act and the Constitution already provide for the dissolution of the Council by the Governor at any time to meet special emergencies.

Another complaint which even Ministers who cannot be accused of unreasonable impatience with the constitutional restraint of their position have made is the excessive interference from the Financial Department in the exercise of their discretion in allocating funds for the different schemes of their departments, inspite of funds being provided for in the budget passed by the Council. The Ministers would, therefore, require far greater freedom of action within their budget than they seem to have hitherto possessed.

Besides the above obstacles there are deeper constitutional draw-backs in the general scheme of the present form of adminis-

tration to which His Excellency Lord Lytton did not refrain from making a reference. The difficulties of working any system of representative Government, in however diluted a form, in which the executive is independent of the legislature and is not removable by it, are bound to create an atmosphere of constant opposition on the part of the elected members of the Council to the permanent executive of the Government. This was painfully reflected in practice in the Bengal Council by the complete want of support of the Ministers by the Council whose representatives they were in theory. Not only was there no support, but there was constant opposition. The best part of the energies of a Minister is devoted under present conditions to keeping the members of the Council in good humour and in a mood to pass his salary and his budget. Without, therefore, some constitutional means for stabilising the position of the Ministers, it would be quite hopeless to expect them to devote that time and attention to their own legitimate duties which their responsible position demands. Though it is easy to point to the difficulty it is far more difficult to point a suitable remedy for this evil. For, in any scheme of parliamentary Government the constitutional control of the Legislature over its Ministers must necessarily be maintained. Of course, the normal working of this scheme aims at making the Ministers the executive officers and the representatives of the party in the majority in the council. This ideal, however, failed of realisation because of the unwillingness of the leading political party in Bengal to accept the responsibility of office. Whether a remedy will be found and a more harmonious working of the Reforms secured by extending still further the scope of the Transferred Departments and also by carrying the present scheme of constitutional responsibility to its logical conclusion by requiring the leader of the party in the majority in the Council to form his own Ministry, or whether a more drastic and fundamental change in the whole scheme of the administration will have to be resorted to, is a matter on which we are hardly justified to speculate, particularly on the eve of the appointment of the next Royal Parliamentary Commission to investigate into these very questions.

Lastly, if one of the most important aims of the Reforms was to evolve a scheme by which the best available Indian brains outside the official fence would be available for the administration of

the departments dealing with the problems of their own national advancement, it is an open question how far this object has been realised at least in this province. If non-official Indians are to be entrusted with the duties of administering important departments requiring a cultivated mind, technical knowledge and wide experience, it would seem essential to provide that in making such appointments efficiency and capacity to shoulder heavy responsibilities should be the criterions before which all other considerations must give way.

Although it would be unjustifiable to pursue any further the broader aspects of the constitutional problems with which the next Parliamentary Commission will have to deal, it should probably be permissible to urge that whatever scheme is sponsored by the Commission

(1) It should facilitate the adoption of comprehensive and adequate measures for the material and moral welfare of the people including the provision of adequate funds for the purpose;

(2) It should provide for a continuity of policy in carrying through all such schemes to a successful issue; and

(3) While providing suitable control by the Ministers, it should at the same time safe-guard against undue interference with the work of the District and Departmental Officers.

To ensure the important point of providing a continuity of policy and supplying the driving power and energy which will be necessary for carrying through important schemes in the different spheres of rural and national welfare which I have attempted to describe in the previous chapter, it would be worth considering whether a permanent Board of Rural Reconstruction with a senior civilian as President should not be organized for each province. Further, it should be considered whether to harmonise the work of the provinces and to ensure the attainment of a minimum rate of progress in each province, it would not be necessary to have an all-India Board for these departments as well. The difficulty, however, would be to harmonise the working of so many authorities for the administration of the same departments

We will now pass on to the consideration of the all-import-

ant subject of Finance. For, there is complete unanimity of opinion in the Province that with the present financial resources of Bengal it is barely possible to keep the administration going, and there is no possibility whatsoever of undertaking any comprehensive remedial measures for the moral and material advancement of the people. It is also felt that in this matter the Reforms instead of easing the situation in any way has made the position of Bengal still more hopeless than it was before the Reforms. Before the inauguration of the Reforms, taking the major provinces, we find that according to the Budget Estimate of 1920-21, the provincial expenditure of Bombay was 12 crores and 67 lakhs, of Madras 12 crores and 54 lakhs, of U.P. 12 crores and 34 lakhs, of the Punjab 8 crores and 87 lakhs, while that of Bengal was only 10 crores and 38 lakhs. The population of Bengal, however, is 45·6 millions, whereas that of Bombay 19·6 millions, of Madras 41·4 millions, of the Punjab 19·9 millions and of U. P. 47·1 millions. But while Bombay's expenditure per head of population was Rs. 6·5 and that of Madras Rs. 3, Bengal's was only Rs. 2·2 per head of population. Thus it will be seen that inspite of the notoriously unhealthy climatic condition of Bengal and the many acute economic and sanitary necessities of the province, she had been subjected to this unequal treatment even during the pre-Reform period. One would have naturally expected, however, that under the financial arrangements entered into after the Reforms the province would be placed on a more satisfactory footing, so that the Ministers would be able to administer their departments on a scale adequate to the requirements of the province But as I have just said the Reforms made the financial position of Bengal even worse than before. For, taking the figures for the year 1924-25, we find that according to budget estimate, the revenue for Bombay was 15 crores and 65 lakhs, of Madras 16 crores, of U. P. 6 crores and 18 lakhs, while that of Bengal was only 11 crores and 56 lakhs Thus it will be seen that whereas after the Reforms the Provincial revenue of Bombay increased from Rs. 13 crores and 19 lakhs in 1919-20 to Rs. 15 crores and 65 lakhs in 1924-25, that of Madras from 12 crores and 85 lakhs to 16 crores, of U. P. from Rs. 10 crores and 85 lakhs to 16 crores and 18 lakhs, that of Bengal increased by a little over one crore only. So while after the Reforms Bombay and Madras were able to allocate increased expenditure of Rs. 7

and Rs. 4 per head of population, Bengal's allocation per head remained almost stationary, viz., Rs. 2·44, as against Rs. 2·2 of the pre-Reform days.

The cost of administration under the Reforms having very greatly increased, Bengal was faced with a cycle of financial stringency the like of which it has never been her misfortune to go through. She was faced with successive deficit budgets and in the attempt to attain financial equilibrium she had to impose three new taxes and introduce drastic retrenchments in all the departments of the administration amounting to 89½ lakhs. The Bengal National Liberal League in their representation in the year 1923 to the Secretary of State for India pointed out that on the figures for 1920-21, the year after the Meston Award, Bengal contributed more than 75 p. c. of her revenues to the Government of India and was allowed to retain less than 25 p c. for provincial expenditure, while Madras was allowed to retain nearly 50 p. c. and Bombay over 34 p. c. Succeeding years have not lessened but intensified this glaring disparity. In the year 1924-25 the Central Government appropriated 28 crores and 51 lakhs, while the Province was left with 10 crores and 31 lakhs only. Not only has Bengal to give up the major portion of her revenues to the Central Government but she has been left with the least expanding sources of income. For, while there was a net increase of revenue of 3 crores and 14 lakhs under the Imperial heads from the previous year, the Provincial heads of income showed an increase of 18 lakhs only. Some of the extraordinary anomalies of the present situation will be obvious when we consider that under the present arrangement Calcutta yields no less than 25 crores of rupees to the Imperial Exchequer of which the Provincial administration gets no share whatsoever, although she has to meet all the heavy expenses necessary for the policing of the town, for the protection of the population from whom income tax and customs duties are realised, and for the maintenance of the law courts and educational institutions etc., which are all necessary to enable the firms and the mercantile population of the city to carry on their daily business. Equally anomalous is the spectacle of jute, almost a monopoly agricultural produce of Bengal, yielding a tax of over 3½ crores of rupees to the Central Government, and not a farthing of which is available for the

benefit of the poor producers and tillers of the soil. "Poor and financially crippled as the province is, is it to be wondered at that she has been able to make a very poor contribution for the moral and economic advancement of her people. While Bombay, for instance, has been able to more than double her expenditure on mass education within the last ten years—in Bengal the expenditure on this all important sphere of rural welfare has remained almost stationary."

It is not surprising, therefore, that there is almost a consensus of opinion that the Meston award is in need of drastic revision. As far as Bengal opinion is concerned three successive Governors, the Legislative Council and representatives of all classes and communities have inveighed bitterly against it. In his farewell address to the Council His Excellency Lord Lytton said "The Meston Settlement has been a millstone round the necks of successive Governments, rendered all the heavier by the period of trade depression which followed the inauguration of the Reforms. The remission of all provincial contributions which we are promised in the near future will not help but only accentuate the handicap, which has been placed upon Bengal, for the inequity consisted not in the amount of our contribution to the Government of India but in the inadequacy of the sources of revenue made available to the Province."

I am not qualified perhaps to express an opinion on such a difficult and technical subject, but if the legitimate needs of the Central Government could be satisfactorily met by an arrangement by which each province will surrender a fixed and uniform proportion of its entire revenue from all sources, that arrangement will have the great advantage of inspiring the Provinces with a sense of true autonomy about their financial resources and stimulate them to further exertions for enhancing their revenues under the much needed assurance that their increased resources will be available for their own progress and advancement. I am not quite aware on what principle certain heads of revenue have been selected for appropriation by the Central Government. One hears it very often said that Bengal has herself to blame if her Land Revenue is such an inelastic source of income under the Permanent Settlement. But it is unfair to hold Bengal responsible

for an arrangement deliberately entered upon by one of the greatest and wisest of Viceroys, and as we have just seen, Bengal has to bear a disproportionately heavy share of the tax of the Central Government, and if account is taken of both Imperial and Provincial revenues, Bengal is much more heavily taxed than any other province. It is hardly necessary, however, to labour this point any further. What we have rather to consider is by what practical means revenue at all adequate to the needs of the population of 45 millions of people can be made available.

Let us consider for a moment what the present position in Bengal is. If we take Public Health, Agriculture, Irrigation (without Communication), Co-operation, Industries and Mass Education to be the principal departments of Government concerned with the moral and material advancement of the people, we find the total expenditure in Bengal from all sources for all these departments amounts to Rs. 85 lakhs, which works out to an expenditure of less than quarter rupee per head of population. Turning to the resources of local bodies, we have seen that the total income of all the District Boards of Bengel was only 133 lakhs and that of the Union Boards for municipal purposes about 4 lakhs of rupees. Leave alone extensive scientific schemes for the physical and intellectual improvement of the country and the people, with such paltry financial support it is difficult to carry on even a hand-to-mouth policy of meeting the most urgent needs of the administration. With our present resources and the present rate of progress, it will take decades and even centuries before any substantial advance is made. It is melancholy to note that in the twentieth century in this province, there are only 18·1 p. c. of males and 2·1 p. c. of females who are literate and the average wealth of the people per head of the population is only about Rs. 50 per annum, while the productive capacity of the people per head is only Rs. 40. And yet surely the pace of progress can be accelerated and the vast masses of the people of India can be rescued from the slough of inertia into which they seem to have irretrievably fallen. The most paramount need, therefore, is to find far larger sums of money than has hitherto been available in order to enable the remedies taught by science and the experience of more progressive countries to be far

more extensively employed in India than they have hitherto been done. If comprehensive schemes for improving drainage and irrigation facilities could be prepared and carried through within a reasonable time ; if extensive measures could be adopted to replenish the depleted soil with suitable manures; if the productive capacity of the people in agriculture and other industries could be materially enhanced; if the impecunious and struggling Municipalities and District Boards could receive large State subventions to enable them with the further aid of a special sanitary tax to undertake and carry through schemes of rural and urban health and sanitary improvements on a sufficiently comprehensive and adequate scale ; if the illiteracy of the masses could be removed, and if suitable institutions for imparting industrial and scientific education could be started and cottage and home industries as well as small power industries could be developed on the lines indicated before, and above all, if the people themselves would learn and practise the invaluable lessons of self-help and self-restraint;—then only could we expect to see such advance made which would within a reasonable time raise the people to a higher plane of comfort and well-being

The possible means by which more money can be found for the nation-building departments under the Ministers would be either by general economy and retrenchment, the diversion of some funds from the reserved to the transferred departments, or by a general increase of revenue, either by the release of a portion of the income now appropriated by the Central Government, or by the adoption of wise policy of reproductive wealth, or lastly by fresh taxation, or by the raising of loans on the hypothecation of the provincial revenue

I have referred above to the paramount claim of Bengal for the readjustment of the present financial engagement with the Central Government. I am convinced that unless this is done local provincial efforts alone will be of very little avail.

Turning to economy and retrenchment, we have already stated that under pressure of dire financial straits to which the province was subjected after the Reforms, extensive retrenchments resulting in a saving of 89½ lakhs have already been made in this province. It may be doubted, however, whether retrenchments in such departments as Agriculture and Co-operation were justified

and whether the axe should not have been more freely applied in other quarters. A readjustment of the provinces with a view to reduction in their number and their re-grouping on ethnical and linguistic basis has been repeatedly urged by responsible critics. As far as Bengal and its adjacent provinces are concerned, very high authorities have long been in favour of two major provinces instead of three as at present. Linguistically and ethnically the Bengali-speaking, the Assamese and the Ooria-speaking races might be placed under one Governor. If a readjustment of the provinces be not practicable, possibilities of the reduction in the personnel of the Government would seem to require careful investigation. It is difficult to conceive that a change in the form of administration, however far-reaching, would require such an overwhelming and disproportionate increase in the higher departments of administration. It is not so long ago that Bengal, Behar and Orissa used to be administered by only one Lieutenant-Governor, with the assistance of three Secretaries. Now for only just over half of this charge, we have in Bengal, a Governor, four Members of the Executive Council and two Ministers. It is also a matter of serious concern that the Secretariat Staff is constantly on the increase and almost as many Secretaries and their Assistants are now employed as there are District Officers for all the districts of Bengal. Personally, I greatly doubt whether there is room in Bengal for both Commissioners of Divisions and a centralised and extensive Secretariat staff. If the administration is centralised and made top-heavy and cumbersome, not only must the departments requiring funds for the advancement of the country be necessarily starved, but the responsiveness and efficiency of the administration itself will be hampered in the folds of its ramifications. There would, therefore, appear to be a very strong case, and I know there is almost unanimity of non-official opinion on this point, for drastic measures for introducing greater simplicity and directness in the higher grades of the administration and for a reduction in the personnel of the Government and of the Secretariat staff. It is hardly necessary to enter into a detailed examination of other possible economies in the existing scheme of administration, but there is a general feeling that the standard of the outturn of work in the Government services is not as exacting as in private business and that some economy may perhaps be possible by

the reduction of the cadres of most of the superior services. In making the above suggestions I am perfectly aware that their adoption in practice will mean the surmounting of difficulties which are by no means imaginary. But I hold very strongly with Lord Morley that if there is one guiding principle which should govern the Indian Administration it is the observance of the strictest possible economy in all its departments, and that the case for the expenditure of even one additional rupee should be carefully examined before it is sanctioned. In this connection it should be remembered that an additional recurring expenditure of four crores of rupees has been necessary to work the Reforms and a further sum of a crore and half is now required to keep the services satisfied under the new regime. It is to be sincerely hoped that the new instrument of Government will more than justify this enhanced expenditure by a more efficient advancement of the best interests of the country.

Although admittedly the economic condition of the mass of the people of the Province is far from satisfactory, and the Bengal peasant pays as much in rents and indirect taxes on crops like jute as any other cultivators in India, yet the desirability of imposing fresh taxation on land with a view to securing the moral and material advancement of the masses might well be considered. As we have seen there are proposals for fresh taxation for rural sanitation and mass education, and I am of opinion that only one fresh impost to be styled the rural development tax should suffice and there should not be separate taxes for each department of rural welfare. I am also very strongly of opinion that this additional tax should not be heavier than the existing public works and road cess tax of one anna in the rupee of rents to be borne equally by the cultivators and the landowners. But fresh taxation will only be justified when Government will be in a position to initiate comprehensive and suitable remedial measures from funds to be obtained principally from provincial revenues.

Lastly, we may refer to the urgent need of adoption of measures which will increase the revenue of the country. Sir M. Visvesvaraya in his informing book "Reconstructing India' expressed the opinion "that Indian revenue can easily be doubled in ten years and trebled in fifteen, if a satisfactory policy for the development of education and of production from industries

ond agriculture is adopted and many of the restrictive influences incidental to the position of a dependancy is removed." The same authority points out that "Canada with a population of little over 80,00,000 persons yielded a revenue of more than £34,000,000 in 1916, or £45,000,000 including provincial revenue. With a population thirty times as large British India yielded only double that amount." Again, "while during the twenty years ending 1913-14, the revenue in India increased by about 36 per cent., during the same period it expanded 115 p. c. in the United Kingdom, 245 p. c. in Canada and 640 p. c. in Japan. These figures, sufficiently accurate to serve as a basis of comparison, show that while those countries have been making rapid progress, India has practically stood still." I am quite aware that too much stress cannot be laid on doctrinaire opinions based on statistics culled from countries where the conditions are so widely divergent as in Canada and India, but even allowing for differences in the climate and people, it is undeniable that in India there is a lamentable lack of such policies which have succeeded in transforming within a comparatively short time progressive countries like Canada and Japan. There is another suggestion of Sir M. Visvesvaraya which I heartily endorse and to which I must refer. "As National exigencies demand the development of education and industries at an unprecedented rate and since for some years it is not possible to provide out of current revenue the large sums needed for the purpose, it is necessary that a loan averaging about fifteen crores per annum be raised for these purposes during the next ten years." For all the above reasons, I am strongly in favour of granting the provinces complete financial autonomy so that they may be in a position to work out their own economic salvation.

Before leaving this topic I wish very strongly to draw attention to the vicious circle which is in danger of being established in India. Economic poverty of the masses and unemployment of the middle classes lead to political unrest and crime. These require the continuous strengthening of the police and the army, which means that there is less and less left for the nation-building departments. The result is greater discontent and dissatisfaction, particularly amongst the educated and the thinking portion of the population. This must in its turn be followed by greater stringency and increase in the coercive force of the

Government. The time has come for taking bold and comprehensive measures for breaking through this vicious circle, even at the risk of a temporary weakening of the coercive resources of the Government and the efficiency of the administration. A little patience and wise statesmanship is sure to be rewarded by the advent of a new era of contentment and progress.

The Government stand committed to granting India the inestimable boon of responsible and national Government, but as trustees of the Indian people, in the heat and stress of the moment, they cannot afford to forget that the end of all Governments is the happiness and prosperity of the people, and a mere engrafting of the progressive forms of Government without a corresponding advance in the moral and material prosperity of the people will be like building imposing castles on foundations of sand. But it must not be forgotten that in the mighty task of the reconstruction of India the principal architects must be the Indians themselves, for no Government, whatever their resources and however single-minded in the pursuit of their ideals, will be able to achieve very much without the continuous and genuine co-operation and help of the people themselves. It is to the consideration of this aspect of the problem that we shall turn in the next and concluding chapter of this work.

CHAPTER X.

Patriotism and Citizenship

I

Vital Problems.

The eyes of the civilised world are turned on India and watching the progress of what is undoubtedly one of the greatest experiments in political history. If the Reforms fulfil their destiny and succeed in securing the political emancipation of one-fifth of the human race by a process of constitutional evolution, it will form one of the most memorable chapters in the history of civilisation, and will vindicate the sovereignty of moral forces in shaping the destinies of a nation in a manner of which history records no parallel. We can, however, only glance at the larger world issues of the great Indian experiment. Our immediate concern is to refer to the optimistic view taken by such competent critics as Lord Reading and the first President of the Imperial Legislature, Sir Frederick Whyte, regarding the fitness of Indians to shoulder the responsibilities of Parliamentary institution. Even in Bengal where most critics would perhaps be inclined to think that the Reforms had definitely broken down, the late Governor retired from his high office with "unshaken faith in the necessity for developing the Indian constitution as rapidly as possible on lines which will provide for national self-expression." At the same time, impartial and well-meaning critics have no doubt also pointed to the many shortcomings of the people and the serious difficulties which have already been encountered and the still more formidable ones which may be lying ahead. Sir F. Whyte pointed to the serious impediments presented by the dominance of religious fanaticism and superstition in the path of India's political advancement and His Excellency Lord Lytton referred to the obstacles presented by communal rivalries in Bengal and the pursuit of politics, not on lines of party principle but on the lines of communal

and personal ambitions. But, nevertheless, His Excellency was full of hope. "Difficulties are made to be overcome," he said, 'it is the test of statemanship to reorganize them and with unwearied patience and undiminished faith to overcome them." He added "there is no need, gentlemen, to wait for Parliament to decide the time and form of the next stage in the development of the Indian constitution, if you can yourself find a solution of the admitted difficulties which beset the path of constitutional development." It is to this appeal to our own responsibility in overcoming our difficulties and shortcomings on which I desire particularly to dwell. We have to remember that we must be ready not only to pass through the ordeal of an examination of our shortcomings and achievements by the next Parliamentary Commission, but it is the Bar of History and our own national conscience which we will have to satisfy that we have made the fullest use of our opportunities in building the foundation of our national life. I have already discussed the many needs in the life of the masses of the people which require immediate attention, and I wish now to conclude with an examination of some of the most vital questions with regard to the life of the nation as a whole.

II

The Role of Young Bengal.

Of these the one likely to exercise the most far-reaching influence is the guidance of the youth of Bengal in forming correct notions of nationality and citizenship. It needs little imagination to realise that the whole future of the country is in the hands of young Bengal and there is no agency so important in moulding the national destiny as the youth of the country. The University Commission calculated that about 26,000 students pass through the gates of Senate House every year and enter the various colleges in Bengal. Their number might have swollen since the days of the University Commission, but even with 26,000 students annually if their services could be directed to serving the country even for five years under a self-denying ordinance to be imposed by themselves, there would be every year an army of a lakh of young men for helping the solution of the many economic, social, and moral

problems of modern Bengal. It is the fashion to run down the multiplicity of schools and colleges in Bengal and the extravagant proportion of the youth of the country who seek education at these institutions. The form of education imparted is also subjected to criticism on the score of its not being in touch with real requirements of the country and not producing the type of young men needed for the country. I could hardly discuss here the academic aspects of higher education in Bengal. No doubt many improvements are possible and are being attempted in the direction of making education more practical and also in the direction of developing the personality of the student as a whole—his physique, his character and his mind—and not only in helping him to pass difficult examinations. But one important truth must not be lost sight of. The system of education in vogue in a country at any time is very often a reflex of its political and intellectual atmosphere, and it is not only the system of education which evolves any particular type of manhood in the country but the opportunities and environments which the country presents to her young men are equally powerful factors in evolving character and personality. After all there is not much fault to find with our young men who come out of the schools and colleges. I have intimate knowledge of the stuff of which our young men are made. No more self-sacrificing chivalrous and brave young men; keener and more ardent worshippers of high ideals, are to be seen any where in the world. What is necessary is to mould and guide them, to set definite ideals of exertion before them, to free them from the curse of aimless sentimentalism, and to set them on definite lines of action and work for the uplift of their country.

As I find that I have very little to add to the very full submission in this connection which I made in 1920 in addressing the students of the Hooghly College, I make no apology for reproducing it in full.

The function of education in developing the political sense of Indian students.

"Far from discouraging independent thought and healthy curiosity amongst young men I have always held that the youth

in India cannot be treated any differently from the youth of other modern civilised countries in the East or West, and one of the most important functions of education in modern India is to help the student to realise for himself the fundamental factors in the national life of modern India, and the true relationship in which the young men of India stand towards the national problem. For what undoubtedly is the most overmastering passion in the breast of the young Bengalee student? In its beautiful expose of the psychology of the Bengalee student the Calcutta University Commission refers to the painful dilemma from which the mind of the young Bengalee student suffers in having to choose between the two cultures of the East and the West, respectively, and between two loyalties—the loyalty to the old order and the loyalty to the new. But to my mind the root of the underlying pessimism of the Bengalee youth and the fits of depression to which he is so often a prey lies deeper in his emotional nature. It is the visible symbol of the smouldering fire of dissatisfaction with what he considers to be his national disqualifications and a passionate desire to right the wrongs of his country and to sacrifice everything in the service of his motherland. In so far as this sentiment is the outcome of a desire for the national regeneration of his country, it is not only perfectly legitimate, but is a highly laudable trait. But in so far as this sentiment breeds only discontent and instead of setting free the fountains of love and a desire for service and self-sacrifice engenders feelings of bitterness and calls to its support and sustenance ill-assimilated historical data and unsound principles of political philosophy, it perverts the noble sentiment of patriotism. The chief object of my address to-day is to endeavour to enable you to eliminate the gold from the dross, and to help you to appraise those influences which are really for the good of the country and to eschew those which although clothed for the moment in the lustre of meretritious patriotism are really hollow and rotten at the core like the Dead Sea apple. The danger of neglecting to build the foundations of a correct political sense in the Indian student was referred to by that great and far-sighted patriot, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, in his famous address to the Students Brotherhood, Bombay, in 1909. Specially at the present

time when the country is entering upon a most momentous stage of its national evolution, when we are without the guidance of any leaders of commanding and unquestioned authority, neither have we the saving grace of inherited civic instincts born of the accumulated experience of past efforts—successes and failures; when we appear to have been suddenly thrown into the vortex of strong world currents of political and economic theories and ideals which have to be considerably modified to suit our national requirements—the need for calm introspection and the exchange of ideas and views is paramount. And it is necessary to appeal to young men because any impressions created on the table of your minds now are bound to exercise the most abiding influence throughout your life. But needless to say that if the appeal is to bear any fruit your acceptance of the views which might be advanced, must be spontaneous and the result of reasoned comprehension. It is necessary to appeal to your judgment, to your faculty of reasoning and to help you to arrive at correct ideals of the highest form of Indian patriotism at the present moment. For we shall never be able to get the best that there is in the Indian youth and still the throbbings of his ardent aspirations unless we are able to make him feel spontaneously that by being born in this country he is not debarred from aiming at and achieving the highest and best that is open to the sons of any other civilised country in the world.

The ideal of Indian patriotism under present conditions.

"Let us pause for a moment to analyse the sentiment of patriotism, and consider what should be the standards for judging of the suitability and excellence of a political ideal for a people under certain definite conditions. As you are no doubt aware the sentiment of patriotism has both an emotional as well as a utilitarian basis. Adverting to the utilitarian aspect of this emotion that form of political existence must be considered to be the best which will secure the greatest happiness and well-being, moral, intellectual and mental, of the greatest number of the people of the country. Moral and material well-being

presupposes equal opportunities for all and scope for developing the latent powers of the people either in individual or corporate spheres in all the departments of life, social, economic and spiritual. Besides such general standards, a special point for consideration in the case of a particular people is whether the order of existence sought to be attained is likely to correct any special shortcomings either caused by the climate or imposed by heredity, and whether at the same time it gives scope for full maturity and development of any special virtues and powers which might be latent in the people or the race. Another important aspect of the question is whether the political status sought to be attained has the elements of permanence, and whether it is likely to secure for the people the enjoyment of the blessings of social solidarity for a comparatively long period and protect them from external aggression. This reflection points to the physical basis of political institutions and of modern civilisation. The waging of war by one people against another, the subordination of one nation to another and the constant preparation by all the nations of the world for defence and aggression are all proofs of the physical basis of human society as it is still constituted. It is necessary to lay stress on this aspect of the question in any reasoned analysis of a political ideal which is likely to be best suited for the Indian people. Turning now to the emotional and moral aspect of the question it is clear that no ideal of political existence will be considered worthy of the name, which, besides satisfying the physical and utilitarian conditions, will not also guarantee self-respect and national dignity, freedom of action and equality of opportunities, and will not call into being emotions which form such important elements in man's love of his country and patriotism and which alone can fire his imagination and inspire him to deeds of self-sacrifie, devotion, and heroism in the service of his country. The love of political freedom and liberty which may now be accepted as an inherited instinct of civilised man is based on the belief that under the above conditions alone is it possible to satisfy in the highest degree the physical, utilitarian, and emotional aspirations of the race.

"It would be obviously out of place here to trace the

successive stages by which India has attained her present political position or to refer to the causes which have brought about such a wonderful transformation in her political status. Suffice it to say that by the inscrutable decree of Providence India is now placed in a position in which to her sons are open the highest and noblest avenues of endeavour and achievement. I am sure you all know that now for the first time in the history of modern India she has been put in the way of taking her place, by successive stages of constitutional progress, in the federation of self-determining States of the British Empire and of the free nations of the civilised world. You are doubtless aware that some distinguished representatives of India were among the signatories to the great Peace Treaty signed at Versailles, and our great and ancient country has been admitted into the hegemony of the League of Nations and will have a voice in shaping the future decrees of that august body. What, however, will perpahs bring a more vivid picture to your mind's eye is if I remind you that at the present moment an Indian Peer is the Under-Secretary of State for India and there is nothing to prevent his coming home to India as the ruler of one of the major Provinces. It is not long ago that our national poet won the much coveted Nobel prize for literature, a striking recognition of his genious by the whole civilised world. In the domain of science our eminent scientist Sir J. C. Bose has just been admitted to the fellowship of the most distinguished scientific body in the world, the Royal Society. Now at last the military career has also been thrown open to the sons of India and there is nothing to prevent any of the young Indian cadets, who are coming out of Sandhurst, rising in course of time to be the Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's forces in India. Simultaneously with this momentous change in the political status of India the war has brought about a definite change in our ideals of patriotism and nationality, and the aim of all the enlightened nations of the world is no longer isolation based on competitive selfishness, but federation and unity based on harmony and community of interests and ideals. And this changed ideal is not merely a sentimental and emotional transformation. It is the reflection of a most potent historical fact. No State, great or small, will be able to maintain its position in the future as an isolated political unit against the attack of a federation of

States, and "power will necessarily fall into the hands of States which are not nations." The weapons of offensive warfare as revealed in the last war were terrible enough, but according to experts we have had only a glimpse of the powers of destruction and carnage which science and human ingenuity are capable of inventing in the future. The only means of saving modern civilisation and avoiding a world cataclysm even greater than that of the last war is a league of all the civilised nations of the world. Amongst all the States of the ancient and modern world English is the head of the greatest conglomeration of self-determining and free nationalities. No State in the world either in modern or ancient history has made justice so consistently the watch-word of its world-wide Empire. In this federation which is at once the most powerful as well as the most liberal in the world, India has now definitely taken her place. In any future world conflict all the resources of the mighty British Empire will be arrayed on the side of India and a position of safety will always be assured to us. To those familiar with the feverish anxiety and the almost unbearable strain which are imposed on modern States to be in a state of readiness for future world entanglements this will be considered no small gain. Thus the door is now open to a higher and nobler destiny than perhaps could have been achieved by freedom and independence in the language of the old school of political philosophy. From another point of view also the present situation is full of a far-reaching promise. Viewed from the pedestal of world history, the connection of England and India during the last century and a half is clearly not an accident but the slow unfolding of a high purpose, by which the greatest achievement of modern history, the true union of the East and the West, will be brought to pass. And so to India will fall the noble task which Japan has failed to achieve—of being the gateway of the meeting of the civilisations of the East and West—of supplying to the West what it lacks in spirituality and self-effacement and to the East what she lacks in virility of action and fruitful energy. Thus alike from the standpoints of utility, security and fecundity of emotional inspiration—the different standards which I proposed for adjudging the value of political ideals—the future destinity of India as now disclosed is one of the noblest visions recorded in either modern or ancient history.

How that ideal is to be reached.

"Let us admit then that a great opportunity has come to us. How are we to take advantage of the momentous turn in our fortunes, how are we to reach the goal, the door to which is now open before us ? Let us not forget that on the use we make of our present opportunities will depend the whole of our future destiny : as some of our friends have reminded us, the eyes of the whole of the civilised world are upon us. The answer to the question how the goal is to be reached will be found in a correct and historical analysis of how the present stage has been reached. Such an analysis will disclose that the present political position of India is the result of the co-ordinate operation of three sets of causes : the first and most important of these is the contribution made by Indians themselves in the task of the political salvation of their country. You may depend upon it that for all the political betterment which has been attained a great deal of patient work has had to be done. It was possible for great Indians from Raja Ram Mohan Roy downwards to make such a heroic and strenuous fight for political privileges because we inherited a civilisation and a vitality for political and social existence which would not be obliterated by or amalgamated with any other civilisation or system of political and social life. But the inheritance of our present and past leaders would have been of little avail without the fostering and paternal care of the British Government and the elevating and solidifying influence of British policy steadfastly pursued for over a century. The last and perhaps the most dramatic contribution has been made by world forces over which neither the Government nor the Indian people had any direct control. I refer to such causes as the great upheaval of Eastern aspirations since Japan's dramatic entry into the arena of world power, and the stupendous influences of the last world war which determinded the present Reforms. For the war brought about a vital change in the political ideals of English statesmen, and revealed the urgent need for the reconstruction of the bases of the whole of the British Empire. More potent was the revelation of the latent powers and the resources of the Indian Empire and the capacity of the Indian people to rise at the supreme moment of trial to the full height of their responsibilities and respond to the

call of duty and loyalty both to their King and to a great cause and ideal. Thus the war and the part played by India in the war made the present Reforms inevitable. And it is safe to say that the last war accelerated the progress of India's political emancipation by many years. But it is one thing to have a scheme of political reforms mapped out for us and quite another matter for the Indian nation itself to travel forward on the path of national progress in all its spheres and by its own exertions reach the stage of advance marked out on the programme. For the Morley-Minto and the Montague-Chelsford Reforms are undoubtedly one of the greatest experiments in political constructiveness recorded in history and the question which should concern us most vitally at the present moment is how the ultimate success of these momentous experiments may be insured. We all know that there is a school of Indian publicists who chafe at all restraints and who are impatient of delay and who consider the pace indicated for the present Reforms to be far too slow and halting. They would have us assume duties and responsibilities which other nations have been able to take upon themselves after centuries of arduous endeavour and patient toil. Instead of calling upon the people to turn their whole attention to the task of making the most of the great opportunities which have now opened before them and concentrating the whole force of their nascent energies to the task of laying deep and true the foundations of our national regeneration, these idealists would try to make us believe that the infinitely complex structure of a modern State can be built up in a day by the help of some magic lamp of the Arabian Nights—the secret of which is hidden in their own inventive brains. But those of you who have studied the history of the rise of civic power in ancient and modern States are no doubt aware that the laws of political evolution are as inexorable as those of the physical and the natural world. The world has perhaps uses for these visionaries and idealists, but they have also done great harm to States both in ancient and modern times ; and I think, we can safely say that we are in much more need in India to-day of hard, strenuous, and self-less workers than those who seek either fame or power by denouncing authority and preaching the gospel of a millennium which can be ushered in according to them by means which are as dangerous as they are visionary. It is easy enough to sow the

seeds of discord and disruption, to paralyse authority and to make the task of orderly progress more difficult than it would otherwise be, but it is hard to believe that such men can really persuade themselves that in so doing they are serving the best interests of their country. The disruption and chaos which have overtaken the Russian continent ought to be a standing lesson to those who would either openly or secretly pander to the forces of disintegration which may be still lurking in the dark corners of our national life To a plain man it must seem obvious that as in the past so in the future we must work for our own salvation, and as we advance in the path of our political emancipation we must be prepared to bear an increasingly heavier share of the burden. The paternal stage of the British connection is over ; now that we have learnt or are beginning to learn to stand on our own feet we cannot and should not expect the Government to help us to the same extent as hitherto in our internal affairs. Nor can we always rely on the future world forces helping us in the same way as the last war has done. Judging from the course of history the chances of the next world disturbance being all against us are just as great as of their being in our favour. But whatever may be the future trend of extraneous forces the desire and the strength to fight and labour for our own salvation will be always in our keeping, and it is to this factor that we will have to attach increasingly greater importance. It is the obvious duty of all true Indian patriots, who wish to see India emerge as a permanent and self-determining political entity, to take full advantage of our present opportunities and to see that the cementing and unifying influences of the British connection have full scope to work deep and wide so that in any future world cataclysm the edifice of the Indian nationality may remain unshaken and not crash down to the ground. You must, therefore, steadfastly lay hold of the fundamental axiom that nothing will avail us but hard, unremitting, self-less and constructive work. That is the gospel of Indian nationality which you must adopt. You must not, however, think that I am suggesting that you should now while you are still in *status pupillari* take any active part in politics or devote any appreciable portion of your time to attending political meetings. My object is simply to help you according to my humble lights to lay hold of the funda-

mentals of Indian politics. The future of India is with you, you are the future citizens of this great commonwealth and it behoves you to turn your gaze in the right direction and get ready to shoulder the burden as soon as the call comes, as it must come for us all.

The psychology of Indian Nationality.

"Having grasped the supreme importance of self-help and unremmitting labour in improving the condition of the country, the next step is to realise the cosmopolitan character of the Indian nationality. You are all familiar with the fact that India is the home of different races and religions and it has witnessed the ebb and flow of diverse civilisations. Take ourselves ; we Bengalees have Aryan, Mongolian, and perhaps Dravidian blood in our veins. There are in this presidency two major religions and a host of minor ones. There is nothing to be ashamed of in this. For, above and besides these diversities of race and religion, we have the encircling and overmastering fact that we are Bengalees. Perhaps a blend is an advantage, it certainly ought to give us a broader outlook. But we should never forget the fact that the modern Bengalee is as much a product of Aryan civilisation as of Moghul and Dravidian, and equally, in a more vital sense of western and more particularly British civilisation. It is true that the British have not settled in this country, but the impress of their labours, of their civilisation permeates every sphere of our national life, and it seems needless to labour this point. The most vital symbol of the Indian nationality is the noble English language which is the *lingua Franca* of all educated Indians, and in which I have the privilege of addressing you to-day. Indeed not only has the historical past of modern Bengal and of India a cosmopolitan background, but we can see for ourselves that to-day India is the home of many interests and the play-ground of diverse and conflicting forces, whereas our future is irrevocably committed to a cycle of advance in which we are to take a more and more clearly defined place in the self-determining and federated states of the British Empire, and in fact in the federated States of the civilised world.

"Thus the need is obvious of a breadth of view and non-sectarian sympathies and of sincere and hearty co-operation with all the forces and all the influences for good which are working within the British Empire, and sustaining and guiding that Empire to its rightful place 'as the greatest human institution for good which exists under the sun.' It is this point of view which we have to acquire : namely, that in harmony and co-operation and service and not in rancour, race hatred, jealousy and self-seeking will the best interests be served of the land in which we live and which we love. Fortunately this sentiment can be cultivated even within the precincts of your colleges and schools, in your love and regard for your fellow students of no matter what religion and creed and for your professors and teachers, both Indian and European.

"In calling upon you to rise to this higher patriotism and to sacrifice your parochial sentiments of nationality at the altar of a more reasoned devotion to the best interests of country, I do not wish to hide from myself the fact that there is a very wide-spread antipathy to the British connection and that some would even go so far as to advocate the renunciation of western culture and western civilisation altogether. This antipathy it is not difficult to understand. The political dependance of one people on another, no matter how fruitful of advantage that connection may be to the dependent people, is bound to breed discontent and dissatisfaction which has a tendency to increase in proportion as the national feeling permeates into the country. But the principal object of my address to-day is to make you realise for yourselves that conditions have altogether changed now and the recent authoritative promulgamation of the great principle of the inalienable right of India to achieve equal partnership within the Empire in due course of time should make it easy and natural for the Indian to take the Englishman by the hand as a brother and comrade. It is the British connection which has paved the way to our present position and it remains entirely with us how soon the goal of complete political emancipation is reached. And there is another point which is too often lost sight of. In our just indignation against the discourteous and unsympathetic conduct of some Europeans in this country against which Lord Morley inveighed in such eloquent terms, we are apt to saddle the British Govern-

ment with the sole responsibility for actions of individuals with whom the Government have very little to do. It is by the cultivation of a spirit of manliness and self-reliance and not so much by declaiming against the Government that we will be able effectually to compel all those who want to live in India to treat Indians as their equals and fellow citizens. Even the occasional lapses in the administration, which are likely to occur and which do actually occur at any time and in any country, should not blind us to the obvious and many-sided blessings of the British connection and the soundness and liberality of the great principles which have been the key-note of the British administration in this country. But I cannot afford to linger much longer on this topic. The hand of comradeship and equal partnership in the greatest empire that the world has ever seen, has been extended to us. Shall we grasp that hand or shall we stand aside and let the golden moment pass? And the occasion appeals not only to our political sense to seize this opportunity for a momentous advance in the status of the country but also to the best and highest instincts of our spriritual and emotional nature. Although the devastating war is over, yet if you look around you and mark what is going on in almost every civilised country in the world you will not fail to notice that the whole civilised world is arrayed into two hostile camps, and a mightier and more far-reaching spiritual war is being waged. On one side are the champions of reasoned progress, those who while candidly admitting that a reconstruction of the bases of political and economic polity of the world is necessary with the object of securing equal opportunities for all and a just appropriation of the fruits of one's own industry and toil, still hold that a true betterment of the world can be achieved only by wider sympathies, deeper concord and more unflagging and unselfish labour. On the other side are arrayed the champions of racial and class hatred fired with green-eyed jealousy for the well-being of others, who having nothing to lose themselves would not hesitate to unleash the demons of anarchy and chaos so that brute force may batten on the welter of a world in ruins. We helped, as far as lay in our power, the champions of justice and freedom to win the great War. Are we going now to desert the cause of faith and order and justice and join hands with the champions of brute force, discord and disruption. I feel confident that the real issues

have only to be placed before you and you will throw in your young and ardent spirits in the cause of concord and orderly progress. Indeed every page of our own past history teaches us that in unity will be our strength and in disunion and discord our decadence and ruin. The Hindu must look upon the Moslem as his brother and the sentiment must be genuine and born of spontaneous conviction and good will, and both must look upon the Englishman as his comrade and fellow-worker, and, needless to say, every Englishman living in India must reciprocate that feeling.

"Before I take leave of this topic, I must say one word about the advocates of what I would like to describe as the Eastern version of the pernicious doctrine that the East is East and the West is West, and that the two civilisations can never meet in harmony. But surely human civilization at its core is really one and indivisible, and all the races of the earth ever since the day humanity took upon itself the conscious task of marching through appointed stages to the kingdom of God have realised that they have the same great cause to fight, and despite internecine wars and struggles, the rise and fall of empires and races, all humanity, at any rate, the best that there is in the human race, is a single great brotherhood which has the same common burden to bear and whose faces are set towards the same shining goal. But even if physical conditions and surroundings have had some influence in shaping differently the mental habits and propensities of the people of the East and the West, it is the high mission of India to be the gateway of the East and the West, so that there may be a harmonious blending of the spiritualism and self-abnegation of the East with the positivism and virility of the West."

III

Defence

It is now generally recognised that the Reforms setting India on the path leading to full responsible Government would be incomplete without suitable provision being made at the same time

whereby the people could take upon themselves a share of the responsibility of the defence of the country. There is thus a growing desire on the part of the intelligentsia of the country for undertaking this responsibility which is evidenced by the pressing demand made in recent years for giving the Indians opportunities to enter the Indian Army on equal terms with British soldiers and British officers. Nor could there be a better proof of the genuineness of England's desire to help India to take her rightful place in the comity of nations than that while England is engaged in teaching Indians the art of self-government, she is equally anxious to teach them the invaluable lesson of self-defence and offering to Indian youth increasing facilities for entering the higher ranks of the army.

It is obvious that military training and defence must be based on an adequate and suitable system of the physical training of our boys and youths from the earliest days of childhood. It is not my desire, however, to examine at any length the different directions in which the physical culture of our young men is receiving attention both from the public and the educational authorities. But it is the consideration of the kind of training which will be actually necessary to fit young men for taking a share in the defence of the country to which I wish to draw attention. From this point of view the Boy Scouts movement which has already made such satisfactory progress in this province deserves the serious attention and warm support from all interested in the movement. It is needless to point out the many directions in which this movement very substantially helps to form the character and develop the mental and physical potential qualities of boys. It creates a sense of discipline amongst the boys and fosters feelings of comradeship and co-operative exertion among them. It makes them keen and alert to grasp any striking points with regard to their physical environments. The movement is also well adapted for being modified with a view to utilising the troops for social service and sanitary work in rural areas. It is a hopeful sign of the times that the movement has already succeeded in establishing a stronghold in most of the districts of Western and Central Bengal. In Murshidabad there was not a single boy scout two years ago, but there are now over 50 troops. The success of the movement in that district is entirely due to the personal interest

taken by the late District Judge Mr. Blank. In the Nadia district also remarkable progress was made, and in two years, owing to the personal interest taken by the District Officer Mr. Graham, there are now 13 troops with 340 scouts and 3 packs with 65 cubs. The scouts formed the guard of honour to His Excellency the Governor during his visit to Krishnagar. The report of the Bengal Provincial Association of the Boy Scouts for the year 1924-25 shows that a great deal of progress has been made throughout the province. The total number of scouts in the province increased from 1870 in 1922 to 3045 in 1925. Besides this number where troops have already been formed, other troops have been formed or are in the course of formation in different centres, like Dacca, Chittagong, Comilla, Faridpur, Ghoom, Hooghly, Howrah, Jessore, Kalna, Konnagar, Kulti, Malda, Midnapore, Mymensingh, Murshidabad, Rangpur and other places. Scouts masters have gone back to these places after taking the training at the various scouters' camp run at Tollyganj and are already at work. The report points, however, to the difficulties experienced during the year in accelerating the rate of progress owing to the lack of a sufficient number of scout masters. It is also pointed out that the Association has not got a camping ground of its own, nor has it got a tent equippage of its own. I understand that the Government of Behar and Orissa has made a handsome grant to this movement, and there is no reason why similar grant should not be made in this province from provincial revenues both for the recurrent and capital expenditure of this most important and useful national movement on which so much of the future of our boys depends. In our last Divisional Conference of the Presidency Division, a resolution was passed recommending the District Boards and other public bodies to give suitable encouragement to the movement, and it was also suggested that the District Officer should open a fund for giving the necessary financial assistance to the movement. While I was Commissioner of Burdwan, I raised such a fund and was able to give assistance to local scout masters for attending a scout camp.

Another most important movement to which perhaps not much attention has so far been paid, but which deserves consideration alongside of the scout movement, is the growth of the Volunteer Defence Forces in the different districts of Bengal for village

defence and for helping the regular police in detecting and controlling crime. The movement is now about 15 years old in Bengal, and I remember when I was placed on special duty in connection with circle system in 1911-12, I took the opportunity of encouraging the formation of such forces in all the districts I visited. In the Conference held at Burdwan, this was one of the important subjects which came up for discussion, and I was able to point out the great advantage of organizing volunteer defence forces both for towns as well as for villages on my experience of the splendid work which such organizations did in Rangpur district when I was the Magistrate of that district. In the Presidency Division also the matter has received special attention in our Divisional Conferences.

The excellent work which is being done by these forces will be apperant from the following extract of the last year's Bengal Police Administration Report.

"It is impossible with the limited number of regular police posted to police stations covering an area of 100 square miles or more to do anything much in the way of regular patrols without assistance from the public and the increase in the number of defence parties affords gratifying proofs of the realisation of this fact and of the growth of self-reliance on the part of the villagers. There are now 1,450 defence parties in the province who effected during the year 179 arrests of which 144 were made without the aid of the police. It is reported that wherever these parties have been formed active crime has decreased to a great extent, and the Governor in Council is glad to be able to acknowledge the assistance rendered by the public-spirited persons composing the defence parties whose good work has been brought to the special notice of Government by the Inspector-General of Police. He trusts that the movement will grow and will under proper guidance and control be able to show a better record of prevention of crime and arrest of criminals as time goes on. He attaches great importance to the development of the system not merely on account of the actual work done but on account of the promise which it offers of solving the problems of the satisfactory policing of Bengal and the development of the co-operation between the public and the police which is so essential to the welfare of both."

It is a matter of great satisfaction that the importance of the

movement has been recognized and that a bill on the subject is under the consideration of the Government of India. It is needless, however, to point out that the success of this movement in the mofussil districts depends entirely on the interest which the District Officers, particularly the Superintendents of Police, take in the matter, and the sympathy and encouragement which they are prepared to give to the members and the office-bearers of these forces. I remember in Hooghly in the Burdwan Division His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay made it a point to call up the Captains of the Defence Forces at the head-quarters of the division and personally commended and encouraged them for their good work. His Excellency Lord Lytton also met them and suitably encouraged the members and the office-bearers of some of the best forces who were called up specially for the purpose of meeting His Excellency. In Calcutta, during the riots there was a great spontaneous demand on the part of the most public-spirited citizens of the town to be allowed to form themselves into defence companies and help the police in restoring peace and order in the metropolis. Needless to say that such spontaneous offers on the part of the public deserve encouragement from the Government.

Lastly, we shall here refer only briefly to the movement in the direction of the Indianisation of the Military services. The Esher, Shea and the Skeene Commissions have all examined the different avenues for satisfying the growing aspirations of the Indian people in this direction. Of the Provincial Territorial force of Bengal, which is a direct successor of the Indian section of the Indian Defence Force created during the War for a second line of defence of the country, I do not propose to speak much. One of the officers of 11-19 Hydrabadi Regiment, however, was good enough to give me some information about the progress of this force in Bengal. He had no special complaints, but he told me that the use of improved instruments of war so essential to infantry battalions like the machine gun is not taught to the recruits. This, he considers, a great handicap and he urged that the anomaly should be remedied.

I am, however, much more interested in the University Training Corps Battalion of the Province. Recently I had an opportunity of discussing the present situation with one of the most efficient Indian officers of this corps, and I was disappointed

to learn that there was a considerable amount of disappointment among both officers and men in connection with the treatment which the battalion had recently been receiving. Although the men fully realised that the main object of the organization of the battalion is to teach discipline and to form character, yet they had all along understood that they were to serve as a source of supply, and form a nucleus of a future national militia. They have all long had the impression that the men and the officers had the rank of British regiments. It has unfortunately quite recently been ruled that British rank has been given as a matter of courtesy only, and that the real rank of the battalion is that of an Indian Sepoy regiment. As a consequence, this officer informed me, that although previously he had no difficulty in finding recruits for his platoons, he is now finding considerable difficulty in filling up vacancies. Naturally, he told me, young men of ambition and social position do not like to come to the battalion if they have no future, and if they cannot get hopes at any time to rise to the rank of British Officers, particularly as there are other avenues now by which such an ambition can be realised. The officer also told me that although both the men and officers fully realised that they must be prepared to go through all the hardships of military training and must obey orders and maintain the usual discipline of the army, yet a great deal of efficiency of the instruction and the "morale" of the battalion depends on the sympathy and treatment which they receive from the British Officers This treatment, he complained, was unfortunately not always satisfactory. He bitterly complained, for instance, of the treatment which the Bengal Light Horse organized about 1917 during the war received during the last six months of their training. As long as they had a sympathetic commanding officer everything went on satisfactorily, and after six months of training under a sympathetic Commander and equally sympathetic Adjutant, they were a fine body of 400 cavalry soldiers. But the Light Horse fell on evil days when an unsympathetic and inefficient officer took charge, who was not only most rude and unkind, but also gave the men very little opportunity for receiving proper training. As a result the company lost heart, most of the efficient and promising men left and ultimately it had to be disbanded.

It is hardly necessary to point out that it is of the utmost

importance to give every encouragement to the University Training Corps of Bengal. There is no reason why the force should be confined only to one battalion of 640 men. Besides, at present there is convenience of training for the Calcutta College students only. The only mofussil college which has a platoon is the Chinsurah College. I am glad I was able to give some assistance to the Principal of that college in organizing this platoon. I think it is very important that facilities should be given for the formation of battalion from mofussil colleges and that more battalions should be formed out of the 30,000 undergraduates who go to the University every year.

I should like also to say one word about the young cadets who are being selected from different parts of India for training at Sandhurst. I personally know of three cases, all of them Bengali lads, who after receiving training for nearly two years at Sandhurst were sent away on the ground of their lacking in the faculty of command. Nobody can deny that it is essential that if Indians are to be placed in command of military regiments they must be very carefully selected, and only such of them as are able to satisfy the officers in charge of the training institution that they possess the necessary faculty of enforcing command and discipline should be finally selected. But at the same time although such tests are indispensable and some disappointment in the beginning inevitable, yet there is a feeling that the young lads do not receive that impartial and sympathetic treatment which may go a long way to helping them to develop suitable military qualities. In fact, it is the opinion of all patriotic Indians who are interested in this movement that a great deal will depend on the spirit in which all orders in connection with the Indianisation of the army are carried out and the care with which suitable sympathetic officers are selected for carrying out the wishes of Government in this most important sphere of Indian national aspiration.

IV

Social Reform.

Social reform as a moral force dead in Bengal which carried the torch of social uplift to other parts of India? Social

reform is at the root of political regeneration and too much emphasis cannot be laid on this all important problem the consideration of which is of such vital interest to the life of the nation. The principles underlying social reform are to bring about an improvement in the social life of the people by putting down pernicious practices and discarding what are in disaccord with physiological and rational rules of conduct. The reform of social usages and customs aims at teaching the youth of Bengal the duties which he, as a true citizen; owes to himself, to his brothers and sisters at home, and to the members of the community at large. Its main object in Bengal at the present moment should be to afford women equal rights and opportunities with men to better their condition in life and to enter on equal terms all the fields of social and national activity. We will never obtain the same driving force of public opinion and enlightened citizenship unless men and women fall in line on equal footing and are able to support and encourage one another in the great task of the uplift of the country. The agitation against child marriage, for instance, is directed to educate young men against taking upon themselves the responsibilities for maintaining a family before they have got the means to do so. It is also a campaign against a system which infringes physiological laws and tends to lower the physique of the race. The agitation in favour of the extension of female education and widow-remarriage is aimed at raising the status of women in society and giving them the same chances and placing them on an equal position with men.

It is not the place here to enter on any detailed survey of the progress of social reform in Bengal or to compare its progress with that of other provinces or to examine the causes of its retarded progress. But suffice it to say that though Bengal does not now possess such eminent champions of social reform as in the past, yet the spirit of reform has permeated the different sections of the community and taken deep root in the life of the people, and there is steady though slow progress noticeable in every direction. The marriageable age of the girls has risen amongst all classes and young men of Bengal do not now take upon themselves the serious responsibilities of matrimony in the same unthinking and light-hearted way as they did before. True, we have not amongst us now the clarion voice of a Rammohun

Roy or Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar to lead us towards greater light and progress and the vitalising influences of the Brahmo Samaj movement itself seem to have lost much of its strength and force, yet the spirit of reform is much more abroad now than it was before. It would be for the youth of Bengal who have come under the broader influences of the times to get above the prejudice of customs and usages and to speed up the pace of progress in the reform of those evils which sap the foundations of our social and political life.

When the new Rangpur college was established in 1917 I strongly advised the promoters of the institution to organise an Association of the students, and one of the Articles of Association was to be that no one was ordinarily to consent to get married till he had acquired the means to maintain his family and that he would pledge himself to give his sister the same opportunity in life as he possessed himself. The other day I was greatly impressed when my friend Rai Behari Lall Mitter Bahadur, an octogenarian of orthodox views, told me that he had written a book in which he had very strongly insisted that no girl was to be married before she was 18 and no young man to marry till he was able to earn Rs. 50 a month at least.

Female education which must come in the forefront of the programme of social reform is still in a neglected condition, and literacy among women of Bengal is still disappointingly low. But a forward movement is visible everywhere and our Muhammadan brothers and Muslim leaders must be congratulated that they have begun to appreciate the need of educating their girls and women. The establishment of the Sakhwat Memorial school in Calcutta is a sure indication that the Muslim leaders are not indifferent to the question of female education. The attention of the Muhammadan leaders should be pointedly drawn to the remarkably forcible utterances of Mrs. Hussain that the Muslim ladies are being subjected to slow gas poisoning in the zenana.

In the Eastern Bengal districts where I spent some years of my service, there is remarkable keenness on the part of the parents of the Muhammadan girls to give education to their children. As a result, in Noakhali, in Bogra and in Rangpur I was able to multiply girls schools at a rapid pace, and I well remember in some of the girls schools Muhammadan girls of the age of 14 and 15

were not uncommon in the higher classes. The conditions prevailing in Western Bengal are not, however, so encouraging. The lack of interest and stagnation in the matter of female education in this part of the province is to my mind due to the general decadence in the economic and health conditions of the people. The most hopeful sign, however, is the advent of lady pioneers in Calcutta in the field of female education who have made the cause of female education the mission of their life. Among such pioneers the place of honour must be given to Mrs. P. K. Roy and Lady Jagadish Bose, two sisters who have shown an example of devotion to the cause of higher female education in Bengal which might well be emulated by the leaders among men. The special point of interest in connection with the type of female education which is being imparted at the Gokhale Memorial School or the Brahmo Girls' School or the School of the Narisikha Samity is that education for women is being specialised and separated from the general curricula adopted for men. These schools are doing extraordinarily good work embracing not only cultural education but also general social service work. Industrial training for helpless women, such as widows, to enable them to earn a living, is being undertaken by the Narishikha Samity and by the Saroj Nalini Memorial Association organised by Mr. G. S. Dutt, I.C.S. Both these organizations have central schools at Calcutta and a net-work of schools and associations in the mofussil districts of Bengal, and I know from personal experience that a great deal of useful work is being done at these centres by these schools. Nor must I forget to mention the splendid educative work which is being carried on by the Victoria Institute—perhaps one of the oldest girls' school in Calcutta, which, in addition to providing first grade literary instruction, has also classes for music, painting, first aid, needle work etc., the special feature of the school being the attention which is given to developing character and to imparting moral and religious instruction. I have purposely refrained from making any reference to the Government institutions of which many fine specimens exist both in Calcutta and mofussil, because I wish particularly to lay stress on voluntary non-official efforts, on the part of the women of Bengal to raise the status of their sisters and to widen the door of facilities for higher female education in Bengal.

V

Communal Discord.

We approach with very great diffidence the question of Hindu Muhammadan rivalry and animosity which has led to such serious disturbances all over India recently, and which is a matter of such vital importance to the national well-being. The importance of the subject from the point of view of the Government, the national aspirations of the people, and the building up of the foundations of rural welfare are too obvious to need expatiation at length. The reports of the progress of Local Self-Government in the United Provinces, in the Province of Behar and Orissa, and in this Province also, bear testimony to the serious handicap to the progress of self-governing local institutions experienced during past year on account of active jealousy and animosity of the two communities which has now unfortunately gradually spread even to the rural areas of the country. The manner in which communal jealousy has prevented the Reforms from being worked satisfactorily in Bengal was referred to at length by His Excellency Lord Lytton in his farewell speech. Bengal is particularly unfortunate in this matter because in this province the two communities are almost equally matched, and unless there is complete and genuine harmony and unity of purpose amongst the two communities progress in any direction is quite impossible.

The root cause of this unfortunate difference between the two communities and serious troubles to which it has led is no doubt the prevailing ignorance of the masses and the powerful sway of superstition and religious fanaticism over the minds of the people. We are now passing through the throes of the acutest and most widespread hatreds and animosities which have ever disgraced our annals. The noble efforts alike of idealist like Mahatma Gandhi and far-seeing and high-souled statesman like Montague seem to have failed to heal the ravages of centuries and instal national unity amongst the people of India on a firmer and securer foundation. What is the moral ? What lesson does this teach ? The festering sores have not been healed, the mass of the people are poor, ignorant and superstitious and an easy prey to the machination and designing activities of interested people. As long as these conditions last not much real progress is likely to be

achieved either by appealing merely to the sentiments of the people or by the introduction of more liberal political formulas. The spread of education, the capacity to gauge their own permanent interests with a clearer and longer vision, the subordination of religious fanaticism to public spirit and higher ideals of citizenship, are the only permanent cures for this trouble.

The connection between the Reforms and the outbreak of violent friction between Hindus and Muhammadans has been so marked that it would be difficult to avoid the conclusion that there is some causal connection between the two. His Excellency Lord Lytton thought that it is the attempt of one community to utilise the reformed constitution for the exclusive benefit of his own community which has been the cause of these troubles. Other critics attribute the communal form of representation adopted for the reformed constitution as the root cause. As is well known the authors of the Reforms scheme were unwilling to adopt this form of representation and adopted it as a compromise and they meant it to be only a temporary contrivance till the national sense of the country was sufficiently developed to realise the futility of attempting to build up national unity on a foundation of discord and disunion. It is a most encouraging sign of the times that the leaders of both communities are just now engaged in examining means by which a satisfactory scheme of a common electorate can be adopted during the next stage of the Reforms. For, there can be little doubt that the communal system of representation offers a direct encouragement to short-sighted political leaders to pose as special champions of their own community by backing up some weakness, such for instance, the stoppage of music before mosques. If there were a joint electorate and a candidate, either Hindu or Muhammadan, realised that his chances of entering into political life depended on the good will of the voters of both communities he would be very careful not to make the mistake of constituting himself a bigoted champion of either community, with an avowed programme of opposition to the interests of the rival community. But in all the negotiations that are now going on and have been going on for some time past, and the "pacts" and understandings which may be arrrived at as a result thereof, it is worth while to point out that no pact is likely to stand the the test of the clash of interests, if it is based merely on the bargainings of self-interest

and is not dictated by higher considerations of citizenship and patriotism. Unless the Muhammadans feel that India is their motherland which at least for the Bengali Muhammadans is undoubtedly a fact, and unless the Hindus also realise that their fellow Muhammadan brothers have a right to equal opportunities for advancement in this country, and it is the common interest of both the communities to advance the political and economic regeneration of India, no amount of pacts between self-appointed leaders based on a bargaining of their personal political advantages will be of much avail.

Considerable attention will also have to be given to watching that the national system of education helps to develop national feelings among the students to the exclusion of sectarian and communal sentiments. Not long ago an English District Officer took exception to the manner in which the Muhammdan Inspector of Schools had been trying to encourage sectarian sentiments amongst the boys and had gone to the length of instructing the Head Master to take special care that the Muhammdan boys put on a special head dress to distinguish them from their Hindu brothers. As the District Magistrate pointed out, it is in the rough and tumble of school life that the boys have the best chance of imbibing sentiments of personal love and respect for one another. From this point of view, I am also extremely doubtful if State patronage of communal education in any form, apart from, education in any particular classical language, is at all desirable in India. For the same reason, I view with grave anxiety the suggestion that in the new scheme for universal primary education in the country religious instruction will form an integral part of the curricula of the schools. Another most hopeful field for the inculcation of common national feelings amongst the people are the self-governing institutions and the co-operative organizations. As it has been well pointed out it is in these co-operative and self-governing institutions where the people will actually learn that in the long run they stand to gain far more by learning to work together than in fighting with their nearest neighbours in the villages at the instigation of fanatics and town politicians.

Lastly, it is in the higher sphere of broadening the basis of religion and the preaching of the gospel of the universality of all religions that the only permanent solution of the difficulty

should be looked for. From this point of view, the inauguration of the "Fellowship movement" initiated by my theosophist friend, Hirendra Nath Dutt and other leaders of both communities, is greatly to be welcomed.

VI

Co-operation.

One last word about the supreme need in India at the present moment for the conservation of all our available resources and a whole-hearted and genuine co-operation between all available agencies for progress and utilisation to the fullest extent of the wonderful opportunities which have now been placed within our reach. There have been many sad tragedies in the past history of India, but surely the saddest and blackest tragedy will be if after coming in sight of the promised land, if on account of the unwillingness of some to respond to the call of England and the undue haste and impatience of others, or on account of the growth of sinister racial and communal differences and animosities, there should be internal disruption and disintegration ; or a worse fate should overtake us in the shape of foreign aggression and conquest. We must not be lulled into the belief that whatever happens and whatever use we make of our opportunities the arm of the British Empire will be an ever existing factor for our protection from outside aggression. The course of the world's events, the rise and fall of empires, and inscrutable decrees of Providence are not in the keeping of man. The sooner India realises her supreme obligation to form one united nation capable of standing on her own legs, the nearer will be our approach to the goal which we ought to set before us. The fight for constitutional progress can be carried on much more effectively by conserving our energies and building up our national strength than merely by mendicancy and agitation and the more attention is given to internal growth of the body politic the better for the country. An upheaval of patriotic fervour has swept over the country and galvanized even the masses of the people in a manner which was unknown in India even 20 years ago. Is this wave of political aspirations to be

utilised by our leaders for permanent constructive work, or is it going to be allowed to run waste, leaving shoals and sand banks behind, as has so often been the fate of the many upheavals of religious and sentimental fervour which have swept over India in the past ?

That a true spirit of federation holds the only key to our national progress should never be forgotten. There should be federation and unity between all the different communities inhabiting India—between Indians and Englishmen, and between Hindus and Muhammadans ; and in the stress of the struggle for provincial autonomy there is need for the development of an all-India sentiment and the drawing closer of the bonds of federation between the different provinces of India ; and lastly, there is the fundamental need of a genuine and continuous co-operation between the Government and the people. There is need, therefore, for the rise of a new party in Bengal, the party of constructive progress—a party which will measure its strength not by the extent of its opposition to the Government but by its earnestness and devotion to the best interests of the country—a party under whose banner all true servants of India will be able to march together till the goal is reached and India is installed on a higher pedestal of strength and prosperity.

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