

INDIA PEACE OR WAR?

BY

C. S. RANGA IYER

MEMBER OF THE INDIAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

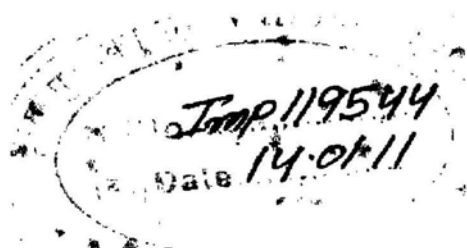
AUTHOR OF 'FATHER INDIA' AND

INDIA IN THE CRUCIBLE



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FOREWORD

INDIA loves peace, but not peace at any price. Her archers of yore drew their arrows to their heads. Her yeomen of the Middle Ages rode through blood. Less than eighty years ago her mutineers unsheathed the avenging sword. To-day a new India, nursed on the lap of Western science, is preparing for resistance as the West would prepare. Bayonets, she feels, are not so bad as chains.

"Break the chains, brave the bayonets, but keep the British connexion," say the elder statesmen. The advice is ignored. Young India has no use for a connexion which denies the pride of power. Without hesitation she sounds the trumpets and waves the standard. The combat thickens.

The Viceroy hurries to England to consult His Majesty's Government. His Excellency knows the limitations of the leaders. The pusillanimous *pundits* and *patels* are not made of the stuff of which heroes are made. The spirit of "either victory, or else a grave" does not animate them.

The Viceroy decided to tempt the leaders as Clive tempted Mir Jaffir, who won Bengal for the British *Raj*. Afraid of the rank and file, *pundit* and *patel* hummed and hawed. The moderates who started the fight swallowed the bait :

He who fights and runs away
May live to fight another day !

The bait was but a conference in Whitehall of Princes and politicians with the King's Ministers.

Politicians are a conceited tribe. They enjoy the music of their voices. A conference is a cheerful prospect. Resolutions will have to be moved ; orations will have to be made. They bury the war-clubs and war-drums, and sing with the joy of children *Rue Britannia*.

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Parliament is pleased. For the first time in its history all parties unite in sending a cheerful message to the Indian people. The message runs thus :

That this House welcomes the evidence of the co-operation of Indian representatives in the settlement of the constitutional question, and relies upon the Government of India to encourage goodwill by the sympathetic conduct of its administrative and executive functions, particularly in relation to the expression of political opinion.

There was not a single dissentient voice. Socialist and Imperialist, Conservative and Radical, are happy. And their Anglicized friends in India say, " Salvation cannot come from within ; it will come from Whitehall ! "

The message, however, leaves Young India cold. She calls it the ancient trick of Clive, whose statue guards the gates of the India Office. Neither a Montagu nor a Benn dare unmake what Clive had made. The Conservative Viceroy will see to it. If he fails the steel frame of the Services will save him from the follies of his sympathy.

The thunder-roar of the Indian Congress is heard in London in Christmas week. It is no longer fearful. The united front in India is broken. The divided front in England is united again.

But are the British parties really united on the question of delaying Indian Home Rule ? If they are, will this union last long ? I venture to prophesy that Socialism will have to make Indian Home Rule its battle-cry, even as Gladstonian Liberalism took up the cause of Ireland in the last century. If no British party makes the Indian cause its own India will cease to draw inspiration from Britain.

My conversations with Socialist Ministers have convinced me that India need not seek isolation. Britain is her best friend. The Right Hon. J. R. Clynes, the Home Secretary, told me that not only Labour but all other parties in England mean to give India her due. Whether other parties play

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The game or not, the Socialists propose to repeat in India the successes they have achieved at The Hague, in Egypt, in America. India must know that they are only in office now. Even in office they have cleverly upset the apple-cart of Lords Reading and Birkenhead.

The most Imperialistic Viceroy and Secretary of State that ever set their hands to Indian affairs, Lord Reading and Lord Birkenhead, had inaugurated a policy to fulfil which the Simon Commission went out to India. In the midst of the Royal Commission's toil and turmoil a new policy was announced. His Majesty's Secretary of State for India proudly claimed that the Conservatives were opposed to his new move. The Liberals were opposed to it. And the Simon Commission was opposed to it. "And what did we do—we governed!" The cheers from the Socialist benches, which did my heart good to witness from my place in the Dominions Gallery of the House of Commons, revealed that India had friends in a great and growing party in England. India, therefore, while pursuing her constitutional agitation, may abandon her programme of warlike preparations at home, and organize a tearing, raging propaganda in England. Educate the masters of Parliament.

An Indian debate in Parliament used to be the dullerest thing in the world. The Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald had made scores of speeches on Indian rights in his unregenerate days, but all to empty benches in the House of Commons. But on that historic day, November 7, 1929, the Prime Minister addressed a House which could not have been more crowded if Britain had declared war on India. And yet her representatives had met in Parliament to discuss what looked like a message of love—an innocent-looking message of peace.

The peace that India seeks is peace with honour :

A peace is of the nature of a conquest ;
For then both parties nobly are subdued,
And neither party loser.

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Is Shakespeare's England prepared to grant India that peace of which his Henry IV spoke? If so, let the Indo-British Conference in Whitehall sound the truce of God to the Eastern skies :

As on the Sea of Galilee
The Christ is whispering, "Peace."

India has had enough wars. Her warlike sons long to retire to some poetic nook and watch the ripening harvest. Will England let them bury the hatchet by applying to India the principles of her policy which has triumphed in the Colonies and the Dominions ?

C. S. RANGA IYER

31 HAYMARKET, LONDON
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CHAPTER I

PARLIAMENT AND INDIA

THE reforms of 1919 did not inaugurate a new era, as has been hurriedly assumed by some Indian politicians, but gave tangible shape to the working of a principle—faint enough in the beginning—which dominated the constitutional development of Parliamentary government in England.

Modern England had its beginnings in the people's resistance to George III, who described politics as "a last resort of rascals"—a term of abuse for a large number of his subjects who were hostile to his methods of government. The loss of the American colonies which later came to be known as the United States created a new outlook in England in regard to her overseas territories.

Even before the American War of Independence the movement to liberalize the English constitution found expression through Blackstone and Burke. Burke's enthusiasm for Voltaire and Montesquieu was infectious. The popularity of Burke's fervid orations on Conciliation with America showed the new spirit which was animating public life in England.

In his Edmund Burke Bicentenary Commemoration Address (1928) at Trinity College, Dublin, Lord Birkenhead said that in the inception of the campaign against Warren Hastings there was no small degree of exaggeration, and in its development no small degree of extravagance, but there lay behind it one who was most deeply and closely moved by the spectacle of helpless and defenceless suffering. It was entirely right, opined Lord Birkenhead, that Warren Hastings should have been acquitted; and yet it was entirely right that some of the happenings which formed the subject

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of the charges should, in the interests of humanity, and for the purpose of continuing the sacred charge incurred toward so many hundreds of millions of helpless Indians, have been examined.

The Regulating Act of 1773 and Pitt's Act of 1784 relating to India were passed at a time when there was a great awakening of the public conscience in England, when more attention began to be paid by her to her far-flung Dominions and dependencies.

The Indian sceptic reads in these Acts the enlightened self-interest of England, and not a desire in her to create the democratic institutions of a future date. But even the most sceptical and the least generous of critics cannot deny the effect in India, however remote, of the Liberal upheaval in England. This is discernible in the Charter Act of 1833, which is a reflex of the democratic progress in England, which crystallized in the Parliamentary reforms of 1832.

It may be urged by the critic that the Parliamentary reforms of 1832 gave so much to England and the Charter Act of 1833 so little to India. The forces which were at work in England were absent in India, and therefore it was natural that India should not share these benefits to the same degree as England, but undeniably the new reforms in England had their repercussions in India.

England derived from the New Model Parliament benefits such as the Poor Law of 1834, which brought untold relief to the working classes, and the municipal reforms, which made local self-government a reality. To India the first reformed Parliament gave the Charter Act of 1833. And throughout the Empire, in the same year, slavery was abolished, thanks to Wilberforce and the Evangelicals, whose parish was the world and whose constituency was humanity.

The spirit of equality, fraternity, and humanity which animated the liberation of the slaves within the British Empire also inspired the Act of 1833. It anticipated the

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Queen's proclamation of 1858. The Charter Act laid it down that

No native of the said territories shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them, be debarred from holding any place, office, or employment under the Company.

This strong and clear declaration of equality of status and opportunity, be the King's subjects Indian or British, was worthy of the new faith in democracy which had come to dwell in old England. No better apostle of that faith could there be than Macaulay, who threw open to India the flood-gates of Western education in his famous minute of February 2, 1835. India's contact with the main stream of the world's thought and learning was bound to change her face and outlook. That was Macaulay's set purpose. That was England's mission in India.

With Western education came Western ideas of liberty and a desire for Parliamentary institutions, which Western writers described as "the Indian unrest." The Indian National movement came into existence, and found a medium for its expression in the Indian National Congress.

The history of the Congress is briefly surveyed in another chapter, as it is the history of the evolution of India's nationalism and self-assertion. Suffice it to say that the birth of the Congress coincided with the new Liberal spirit which found powerful expression in England. In 1880 Gladstone came into power, and interested himself in the political progress of India as no Prime Minister before him had done. "Our title to be in India," said Gladstone, "depends on a first condition, that our being there is profitable to the Indian nations; and on a second condition, that we can make them see and understand it to be profitable."

After the famous "Midlothian" election campaign, when Gladstone defeated Disraeli, Lord Lytton, who was a Conservative, resigned his Viceroyalty. Gladstone appointed as

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his successor Lord Ripon, who was steeped in the spirit of Liberalism.

Lord Lytton's Viceroyalty had created in India acute disappointment. Instead of conciliating the educated classes, who had expected that they would be given a larger share in the administration of their country, Lord Lytton had passed repressive laws to suppress the Press and platform. He was carrying out the Imperialist policy of Disraeli.

Lord Lytton himself had cynically described his Indian policy in words which, when they received unexpected publicity in India, surprised the Indian public. "We all know that their claims and expectations," he wrote, referring to those based by Indians on the Queen's pledges, "never can or will be fulfilled. We have to choose between prohibiting them and cheating them, and we have chosen the [less] straightforward course."¹

Lord Lytton himself had no doubt in his own mind that both the Governments of India and England were "unable to answer satisfactorily the charge of having taken every means in their power of breaking to the heart the words of promise uttered to the ear."²

Lord Lytton's resignation was hailed with relief in India. The coming of Gladstone to power was a guarantee of liberal reforms to the educated classes, who took a real interest in British politics.

Lord Ripon's announcement of his reform policy revealed to the Indian mind that the realization of Indian aspirations would advance *pari passu* with the progress of public opinion in England. As the Romans of old were proud to say, "*Civis Romanus sum*," so the Indian Nationalist of those days was proud to boast that he belonged to an Empire which held aloft the banner of freedom, an Empire whose citizens might justly boast, "*Civis Britannicus sum*." If one reads the speeches of Sir Surendranath Bannerjee, Dadabhai Naoroji, and other early nation-builders one finds this

¹ *India*, by Sir Valentine Chirol, p. 85.

² *Ibid.*

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enthusiasm for the Empire and Britain and the mother of Parliaments.

Lord Ripon's reforming zeal met with angry opposition from the British community, who especially succeeded in thwarting the plans and purpose of the Ilbert Bill. This organized opposition of the European non-official community in India, who had the implicit and sometimes explicit support of the officials, revealed to the Indian mind that, however progressive and liberal, however well-intentioned and noble, the British Government or the particular party in power might be, India could not expect anything satisfactory until and unless her educated middle classes were organized and united and had an organ of their own.

The failure of Lord Ripon gave India the Indian National Congress. The strength of the Congress increased with the spread of education—especially secondary and higher education—among the middle classes. This progress of thought in India coincided with the rapid increase of the power of Parliament in England. Educated India, which had watched the vast progress of Parliamentary reforms in England, aspired for the same for herself.

A study of the State Papers relating to the discussion which preceded the Indian Council Act of 1892 would reveal how Parliament decided to extend to India the principle of election, guarded though it was with restrictions and limitations. The application of the elective principle could not be denied for long to a people who, in Lord Curzon's words, were "feeding their minds on a Western diet," which had raised "entire sections of the community from torpor to life, and lifted India on to a higher moral plane."¹

The reaction of British political progress on India became more pronounced and irresistible with the eating up of space and time by scientific inventions and the opening of the Suez Canal.

The return of the Liberals to power in 1905 and the grant

¹ *The Place of India in the Empire*, by Lord Curzon, p. 38.

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of Dominion status in 1907 to the Transvaal paved the road for the Morley-Minto reforms. In this connexion it may be noted that the manner in which the Transvaal secured admission to Dominion status brought into existence the Extremist Party in India, the leaders of which said that freedom could not be secured by eloquence, but only by violence. Propaganda on these lines created the revolutionary movement in India.

However that may be, the Morley-Minto reforms resemble in many essential respects the constitution of the self-governing colonies before they were endowed with Dominion status. The representatives of the people were associated in the work of legislation so far as possible without impairing the power of the Executive, who were to be in control of the administration. The Morley-Minto reforms made the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms inevitable.

There are some who even at this date say that the Montagu reforms were conceived in ignorance and carried out in haste through an indifferent Parliament. Even a well-informed critic of the reputation of Sir Leslie Scott gave expression to the view that "the late Mr Montagu forced on a suspicious House of Commons the Montagu-Chelmsford constitutional reforms in British India."

Lord Ronaldshay, who had a hand in working the reforms as the Governor of Bengal and unique opportunities of studying the inception of the reforms, has placed it on record that it was not Mr Montagu who forced the reforms, but the forces which had been let loose, the ideals which found vent, and the aspirations which had been formulated during the War which had dragged India, with the rest of the world, through the track of centuries. In fairness to the House of Commons it must be said that it supported Mr Montagu, who, in his concluding speech on the Bill, said :

It is a great thing for the history of India that the House of Commons has given this Bill, up to this stage, a spirit of almost complete, if not complete, unanimity, neither snatching a little

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more here nor saving a little, more there, but giving it generously and with a set purpose that this shall be a transitional constitution on a road which the House of Commons will to-day determine to follow.

Mr Montagu's statement was endorsed by an eyewitness, the reporter of *The Times*, who noted that when the Bill passed the third reading the cheers in the House were charged with real emotion. "It was a Bill," wrote this observer, "worthy both of Britain and of India, and the debates were informed with a high seriousness, and a sense that history was in the making."

If the spirit which animated Parliament was one of real enthusiasm, which was noticed by all observers, when the Reforms Bill was passed, right from the beginning every care was taken that extravagant promises too difficult to fulfil were not held out to India. The formula which pledged the progressive development of responsible government was as carefully examined by the Cabinet as the Montagu-Chelmsford Report was by the Joint Parliamentary Committee, and the Reforms Bill itself by the House of Commons. In fact, from first to last the best brains in both Houses of Parliament had given anxious attention to it.

The origin of the announcement of August 1917 was Simla-Delhi and not Whitehall. Much credit is due in this respect to Lord Chelmsford and his Cabinet, and to that veteran statesman, Sir Chettur Sankaran Nair, who was said to have inspired the "Nineteeners' Memorandum"—so christened after the nineteen signatories who were members of the Indian Legislative Council, the leading spirits of which were Bhupendranath Basu and Surendranath Bannerjee—which subsequently became the basis for the Joint Scheme of the Indian National Congress and the All India Muslim League. *The Madras Mail*, an organ of the European community, denounced Sir Chettur Sankaran Nair as the "emasculator-in-chief" of the Government of India, but subsequent events have conclusively proved that the Radical

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statesman of Malabar was a tower of strength to the Government in troublous times, even as he was its beacon when it was naturally doubting the wisdom of a strong line of action.

The Viceroy and his Council unanimously pressed on the Secretary of State for India, Mr (now Sir) Austen Chamberlain, the need for an announcement containing the views and intentions of his Majesty's Government in regard to India.

In May 1917 Mr Chamberlain, the Secretary of State for India, invited the attention of his colleagues to the Indian problem, in a letter in which he wrote that "upon a right decision at that critical time depended the peace and contentment of India for years and perhaps for generations to come."¹

Mr Chamberlain left the Government in July as a result of the Mesopotamia Commission Report. Mr Montagu, who succeeded him, worked upon Mr Chamberlain's plans.

Views have been expressed by certain writers on India that the reforms were given as a reward for India's part in the War. Those who say that the reforms were a reward for India's part in the War do England little justice. This criticism has been answered by as high an authority as Lord Curzon himself. India did not serve in the War in the expectation of rewards to come. As well might one who pretends that India was blessed with far-reaching reforms as reward speak of a midwife having presented the lady on whom she attended with an adult child, for it must be noted that the Montagu scheme marked the half-way house between responsible government and government carried on with the advice of the Legislature. It was not the beginning of legislative reforms in India, but a fair stage in their growth.

Lord Ronaldshay says in his *Life of Lord Curzon* that the need for a further step forward arose neither because the War justified it nor because experience demanded it, but

¹ *Life of Lord Curzon*, by Lord Ronaldshay, vol. iii, p. 162.

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because, as Lord Curzon wrote to the War Cabinet in June 1917, "we are expected to translate into practice in our own domestic household the sentiments which we have so enthusiastically preached."

The outlook of Parliament was widened by the War, and this widening of the outlook extended to the Conservatives and Liberals. Even Lord Curzon recognized the necessity of making a promise to India in keeping with the spirit of the day.

Mr Montagu submitted to the Cabinet the following formula :

His Majesty's Government and the Government of India have in view the gradual development of free institutions in India with a view to ultimate self-government within the Empire.

Mr Montagu was cautious. He had to carry the Conservatives with him. He did not specify the type of self-governing institutions to be set up in India. Whether the Executive should be responsible to and therefore removable by the Legislature were matters which he left open. But Lord Curzon made the goal of India and the type of free institutions specific when he redrafted the pronouncement on the eve of its publication as follows :

The policy of his Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire.

"When we came to the constitutional question," Lord Curzon wrote in a letter to Mr Chamberlain, whose formula Mr Montagu had adopted, "I suggested a new formula which seemed to me rather safer and certainly nearer to my own point of view than the words you had originally

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favoured—namely, self-government.”¹ In a subsequent letter to the Viceroy, Lord Curzon admitted “indeed, the actual words were mine.”

Lord Ronaldshay tells us that Lord Curzon’s introduction of the words “responsible government” instead of “self-government” can only have meant that it was a Parliamentary system which Britain aimed at setting up in India. It would appear that the wording was suggested to Lord Curzon by a lecture on the “Problems of Indian Government,” delivered by Lord Islington at the request of the Oxford Delegacy for the Extension of University Teaching, in which the importance of the expression “responsible self-government” was fully interpreted. The lecture was delivered on August 8, 1917, and a copy of it presented by the author to Lord Curzon a day or two before the latter changed Mr Montagu’s formula. It is significant that Lord Curzon, who had been reading the lecture, underlined in pencil two passages which may be quoted :

I would say at once that, if the ideals of the British Empire stand for anything, India’s future must be in accord with those ideals, and her ultimate ambition, which she must one day realize, after successfully surmounting the difficulties before her, is the attainment of responsible government within the Empire.

. . . It is to be remembered that if, in deference to the Legislative Council, the Government modify their policy, the Council would have to shoulder the responsibility for the results. This is the essence of responsible government as we understand it. To secure its introduction into Indian Local Government a suitable system of elections is important, so that the elected

¹ Sir Malcolm Hailey, as Home Member of the Government of India, emphasized the distinction between “self-government” and “responsible government” in his speech in the Legislative Assembly on February 8, 1924. The report of the so-called Indian All Parties Conference published in 1928 challenged the accuracy of Sir Malcolm’s interpretation. This report naively says : “The speech may be taken to be the beginning of a new current of thought in official circles in India.” Sir Malcolm Hailey, however, had obviously based his observations on his inner knowledge of differences in the British Cabinet in regard to the formula, since disclosed in Lord Ronaldshay’s *Life of Lord Curzon*, vol. iii, pp. 162–176, published in 1928.

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members may be properly representative of the various classes of Indian society. Only if this is done will it be possible, consistently with the interests of the people, to make them realize that for whatever they say or do they will be held accountable to constituents free to displace them if they fail to give satisfaction.¹

We need not further labour the point that the British Government aimed in India at the establishment of Parliamentary constitutions such as existed in England. That even the Congress politicians did not ask for responsible government, but self-government, was known to those who had read the Congress League Scheme, which was submitted to Mr Montagu and Lord Chelmsford. Even as the Cabinet had carefully scrutinized the language of England's pledge to India, Parliament devoted considerable time to the examination of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report.

That there were prophets of pessimism could not have surprised the student of Imperial history who knew that much apprehension and feelings of disgust found expression in high quarters when responsible government was granted to Canada in the forties of the last century. Disraeli spoke of "those wretched colonies," hanging "like a millstone round our neck." When Parliament's pronouncement was published in August 1917, both in India and England wise men hailed it as a noble achievement of statesmanship.

The same spirit which produced the Canada Bill of 1840 and the South African settlement of 1907 was also responsible for England's decision to grant India Dominion status. That Mr Montagu's scheme was superior to the Congress League draft is conclusively established by the fact that those who were responsible for the latter enthusiastically settled down to work the former.

The reforms of 1919 were the logical outcome of the growth of the Legislature, and of the spirit of progressive realization of responsible government which had been at

¹ *Life of Lord Curzon*, vol. iii, pp. 168-169.

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work in Indian politics, however dim and feeble at the beginning, from 1833.

The question with which the British Parliament was face to face in 1919 was this: Was the discontent of the educated classes to be increased an hundredfold by the refusal to grant timely concessions, or was Indian friendship to be cultivated and improved by resorting to the same methods which gave England democracy and the Colonies responsible government?

India, it must be remembered, was no longer isolated from the world, which had considerably shrunk. The Western monopoly in ideas had become a thing of the past. Time and world forces had been shaping India's destiny since 1858. A large number of Indian students had gone to the universities of Europe and America. American and European literature was pouring into India. There could be no better proof that large reforms could no longer be delayed than that a cautious statesman like Lord Curzon should have defended in the House of Lords, where the reforms had more opponents than in the Commons, the forward policy of the Coalition Government when the Indian Reforms Bill came up for second reading on December 12, 1919. Though Lord Curzon did not think that India would be better governed under the new dispensation than it had been in the past, though he feared that the standard would tend to fall, at the same time he realized that with

the modern ideal of Nationalism and self-determination making in the circumstances of the times so strong an appeal, the peoples of countries such as India attached much more importance to being governed, even though not so well-governed, by themselves, than they did to being even superbly governed by another race.¹

The surging tide of national feeling which was the principal feature of the nineteenth century in Europe became Asia's

¹ *Life of Lord Curzon*, vol. iii, p. 176.

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in the twentieth. Japan's triumph against Russia heralded the dawn of a new age in the East. And the dispatch of Indian troops to the battlefields of Europe revealed as with a flash that India's claim to a place in the comity of nations as an equal member was irresistible.

CHAPTER II

THE ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINE

BRITISH INDIA, which comprises that part of the great Indian Empire which is directly under British rule, is governed according to various Parliamentary statutes which are now consolidated in the Government of India Act, 1915, as amended by the Government of India (Amendment) Act, 1916, the Government of India Act, 1919, and the Government of India (Leave of Absence) Act, 1924. The British Crown is the repository of all power. All powers are exercised in its name. All revenues, tributes, and other payments are received in his Majesty's name and disposed of for purposes of the Government of India.

Thanks to Disraeli, the great Jewish Prime Minister, and his loyal devotion to Queen Victoria, the Queen of England came to be known as the Empress of India. Under the Royal Titles Act of 1876 England's King is also India's Emperor.

The Government of India is vested in the Governor-General in Council. They are jointly responsible for the superintendence, direction, and control of the civil and military administration of the country. The first Governor-General was Warren Hastings (1774), immortalized by his impeachment by the great Irish statesman Edmund Burke. The last Governor-General, so far as this book is concerned, is Baron Irwin of Kirby Underdale, P.C., who took office in April 1926.

Warren Hastings was really the Governor-General of Fort William in Bengal. Until 1834 there were no Governor-Generals of India. Since 1858, when the Government of India was transferred from the East India Company to the Crown, the Governor-General also became the Viceroy.

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The Governor-General and Viceroy is appointed by the Crown. He holds his office for five years. He draws an annual salary of Rs. 256,000. Directly under the Governor-General is the Foreign and Political Department, which deals with foreign affairs and the Indian States.

Above the Governor-General in Council is the Secretary of State for India, whose salary and the cost of the India Office for other than agency services are borne not by the Indian Exchequer, as before the reforms of 1919, but by the British Exchequer. This was one of the achievements of the late Edwin Montagu's statesmanship. The Secretary of State for India is assisted by a Council. This Council generally consists of not less than eight members, and not more than twelve. The Secretary of State himself appoints them for a term of five years. One-half of the members of the India Council must be persons who have served or resided ten years in India, and who have not left that country more than five years prior to their appointment.

A Member of the India Council may be removed by his Majesty upon an address from both the House of Commons and the House of Lords. On the removal of the Member the Secretary of State may, for special reasons recorded in a minute signed by him and placed before both Houses of Parliament, reappoint a Member of the Council for a further term of five years. Unlike the Members of the Viceroy's Executive Council, those of the India Council cannot sit in Parliament. The latter differs from the former in another fundamental respect. The India Council in London has no power of initiative or administrative authority.¹ It is only an advisory body. The Nationalists have repeatedly demanded the abolition of the India Council, which they denounce as an "asylum of fossilized bureaucrats."

Be that as it may, the duties of the Council of the Secretary

¹ In a letter to the present writer a high English official—indisputably the clearest legal brain to-day of the Government of India—describes the India Council as "that effete and moribund body"!

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of State for India are to assist in the conducting of the business transacted in the United Kingdom in relation to the Government of India.

The power of the Secretary of State is enormous. A strong Secretary of State can ignore his Council. He seldom consults it before initiating big schemes fraught with serious results. He can also turn down the suggestions of the Viceroy and his Executive Council. For instance, we have the example of a dominating Secretary of State like Lord Morley, who imposed his will on Lord Minto in regard to his reform policy.¹ We have again the instance of another dominating Secretary of State, Lord Birkenhead, who forced Lord Irwin to abandon his original idea of a mixed Commission of Indians and Europeans to investigate the working of the reforms. It was the opinion in well-informed circles that if only Lord Irwin could have had his way the blunder of excluding Indians from the Statutory Commission, presided over by Sir John Simon, would not have occurred. This blunder was recognized by all right-thinking Englishmen. It has been repaired by the decision to summon an Indian Conference in Whitehall.²

However that may be, subject to the Government of India Act and Rules made thereunder, the Secretary of State in Council controls the expenditure of the revenues of India both in India and elsewhere, and no appropriation can be made without the concurrence of the majority votes in the Council. The Secretary of State regulates the transactions of business.

The interference of the Secretary of State with the Government of India, however, is less frequent than in the past on matters of daily routine and administration, though not essential policy.

The introduction of a Legislative Assembly in India with a large elected majority has rendered it desirable that the

¹ *Recollections*, by Lord Morley, vol. ii.

² The Viceroy's Proclamation of November 1929.

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Secretary of State for India should interfere only in exceptional circumstances in matters of purely Indian interest where the Government of India and the Legislature in India are in agreement.

The Indian Legislature consists of the Governor-General and two Chambers—the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly—which were inaugurated in 1921 by his Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught. The Council of State has 60 members; of them 33 are elected and 27 nominated. Twenty of these nominated members may be officials, but not more than 17 officials are nominated at present. The Assembly consists of 145 members, of whom 104 are elected and 41 nominated, of whom 26 are to be officials. The Council of State is dissolved on the expiry of five years, whereas the life of the Assembly is only three years. The Governor-General has, for special reasons, the power of extending their period or dissolving them earlier.

Under the Government of India Act joint sittings of the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly may be held for settlement of differences between them. Such a joint session has never been held, though differences between them have constantly arisen.

The Legislative Assembly was presided over for the first four years by a President nominated by the Governor-General. After the nominated President came the era of an elected President.

The Central Legislature—namely, the Council of State and the Assembly—has the power, subject, of course, to restrictions, to make laws for all persons within British India and for Indian subjects of his Majesty.

From this it should not be imagined that the Central Legislature is endowed with the power of Parliament. It is no more and no less than an advisory body. It has no power of initiative. It has only the power of speech.

The real power is in the Governor-General, who, with the assent of his Majesty signified, after copies of the proposed

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enactment are laid before both Houses of the British Parliament, may pass measures essential for the safety, tranquillity, or interest of British India or any part thereof in the teeth of opposition alike from the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State.

The power of Parliament is therefore supreme. Thus the Government of India—notwithstanding the fact that the Legislative Assembly is drawn from a large electorate and has a large majority—is responsible under the constitution to his Majesty's Government, who are responsible to the British electorate.

This state of affairs has been galling to the democratic spirit of the politically minded classes in India, who demand that responsibility should be transferred from the British to the Indian electorate. The Government of India themselves have experienced, during the period of the reforms, the inconvenience and embarrassment of carrying on the administration with a Legislature in which they are only a small minority.

The Members of the Governor-General's Executive Council, who are appointed by the Crown for a term of five years, are six in number, with a salary of Rs. 80,000 a year each. They have charge of the following portfolios: Home; Finance; Education, Health and Lands; Law; Railways, Commerce and Ecclesiastical; Industries and Labour.

The Commander-in-Chief is also the Army Member of the Executive Council of the Viceroy. There is a growing feeling among the non-official Indian Members that a separate Army Member should be appointed who will be in charge of the Military Portfolio and represent the Government of India in the Legislature.

The Government of India Act, 1919, effected important rearrangements in the provincial sphere, the government of which had hitherto been carried on as a united whole, but was henceforward divided between the Governor acting with the Executive Council and the Governor acting with his

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Ministers. The Devolution Rules under the 1919 Act classify the various functions of Government as Central and Provincial. The Central subjects are military and foreign affairs, tariffs and customs, railways, posts and telegraphs, income-tax, currency and the public duty, commerce and shipping, and legislation relating to civil and criminal law. These subjects are by their very nature those which cannot be administered by a Provincial Government. For purposes of convenience certain subjects, such as the collection of income-tax, are dealt with by the Provincial Governments as the agents of the Central Government.

The Provincial Administration is divided into Reserved and Transferred Departments, and is responsible to two authorities. The Crown nominates the 'Reserved' half, as it is called, which consists of the Governor and his Executive Councillors. The Transferred half is selected from among the Members of the Provincial Legislature by the Governor. The Reserved subjects are administered by the Provincial Governments, subject to the unimpaired powers of control of the Governor-General in Council. The interference of the Governor-General in Council in the administration of the Transferred Department is restricted only where it is necessary to safeguard Central subjects, or to settle matters of dispute between two or more provinces, or to safeguard the due exercise and performance of any powers and duties possessed by or imposed on the Governor-General in Council in regard to the High Commissioner, to the raising of loans by the local Governments, or to under-rules made by the Secretary of State in Council. The Transferred subjects, which are under the control of Indian Ministers, with certain reservations, include local self-government, medical administration, public health and sanitation, education, public works, except irrigation, agriculture, fisheries, co-operative societies, excise, registration, development of industries, adulteration, weights and measures, and religious and charitable endowments.

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The Transferred subjects are not the same in all the provinces ; for instance, in one or two provinces forests are transferred to the control of the Indian Ministers, whereas in other provinces they are not.

The most important of the Reserved subjects are police, law and order, land revenue, and irrigation and forests in the majority of the provinces.

The Indian public demand the abolition of dyarchy in the provinces. They want complete control of the provincial administration by the Provincial Legislature. This demand has the entire support of Moderates, Conservatives, and Radicals.

The first charge on the revenues of the provinces is the contribution to the Central Government of certain annual sums.

The Governor's Executive Council consists usually of four members appointed by the Crown, one having a qualification of twelve years' public service in India.

The Provincial Legislature consists only of a single Chamber at present, though the introduction of a double Chamber system in the spacious days of the future seems likely. The Provincial Legislature has an elected non-official majority—70 per cent. in British India and 60 per cent. in Burma. It contains not more than 20 per cent. of official members ; the remaining percentage is made up of nominations and special representations. The Provincial Legislature has the power to vote all expenditure which is subject to certain specified exceptions.

The local Government is omnipotent so far as the incurring of expenditure relating to Reserved subjects is concerned. Without the assent of the Council the Governor has the power to certify a certain expenditure to be necessary.

The Provincial Legislature's life, like that of the Legislative Assembly, is only three years ; but the Governor has the power of dissolving it earlier or extending its period for one year.

Under the system of dyarchy the Ministers cannot be members of the permanent Services, unless they happen to

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be retired members elected to the Legislature. The Governor is not a Member of the Legislative Council, but addresses the same. The provinces in which dyarchy has been introduced are Madras, Bombay, Bengal, the Punjab, Assam, the United Provinces, Burma, the Central Provinces, and Bihar and Orissa. In the first seven provinces the franchise has been extended also to women. Women are also eligible for the membership of Councils in the Madras and Bombay Presidencies and, through constituencies therein, for the Legislative Assembly. There is as yet no woman Member of the Legislative Assembly.

The number of members of the Provincial Legislatures varies in each province, as shown in the statement below :

NAMES OF PROVINCES	AREA IN SQUARE MILES IN 1921	POPULATION IN 1921	NUMBER OF MEMBERS IN THE LEGISLATURES
Madras Presidency	142,260	42,318,985	118
Bombay Presidency	123,621	19,348,219	111
Bengal	76,843	46,695,536	125
United Provinces	106,295	45,375,787	118
Punjab	99,846	20,685,024	83
Bihar and Orissa	83,161	34,002,189	98
Central Provinces and Berar	99,876	13,912,760	70
Assam	53,015	7,606,230	53
Burma	233,707	13,212,192	92

A Legislative Council has also been formed for Coorg, which is a small province with an area of 1582 square miles and a population of 163,838.

Principal among the smaller provinces, which do not possess Legislative Councils, is the North-West Frontier Province, which has an area of 13,419 square miles and a population of 2,251,340. The Muslims of India have almost with one voice demanded the extension to the North-West Frontier Province of the benefit of the 1919 reforms.

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The Government, however, have so far delayed the taking of that measure, because they have presumably been swayed by frontier considerations which are peculiar to India.

A word must be said of the small administrative units. The Province of Delhi, the smallest in India, has a population of 488,188 and an area of 593 square miles. The Province of Baluchistan has an area of 54,228 square miles and a population of 420,648. The Andamans and Nicobars have an area of 3143 square miles and a population of 27,086. Ajmere-Merwara is an Agency Tract which the British resumed after the Pindari War in 1818. It is administered by a Chief Commissioner, who is also the Agent to the Governor-General in Rajputana. The local administration is under a Commissioner. It has a population of 495,271 and an area of 2711 square miles.

The Andaman Islands, which had been used since 1858 by the Government of India as a penal settlement for life and long-term convicts, are in charge of a Chief Commissioner under the Government of India. The Nicobar Islands, situated to the south of the Andamans, where the occupation of the people is the coconut trade, which they have been carrying on for the last 1500 years, and whose coconut production is estimated at 15,000,000 nuts per annum, are administered by a permanent Assistant Commissioner and a *tahsildar*, and attached to the Chief Commissionership of the Andamans and Nicobars.

In Baluchistan the head of the Civil Administration is the Agent to the Governor-General and Chief Commissioner.

The Delhi Province, formerly a part of the Punjab, was constituted in 1912 as a separate province under a Chief Commissioner. There is an idea, which the Government have not acknowledged in replies to numerous interpellations from Members of the Central Legislature, of expanding the Delhi Province at the expense of the western districts of the United Provinces and south-eastern districts of the Punjab in the neighbourhood of Delhi. The idea is an excellent one.

CHAPTER III

THE TRIUMPH OF CONSTITUTIONALISM

THE Legislative Assembly began its career at a time when the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms had more enemies than friends in India. But the manner in which the reforms were worked induced the detractors thereof to abandon their policy of boycott and non-co-operation. The most vociferous and violent of the boycotters at the time—but since the first elected President of the Assembly, trying to work the reforms as best as he could—made a remarkable confession to the effect that the working of the Assembly under the guidance of Sir Frederick Whyte had induced him to abandon the wild-goose chase of non-co-operation.¹

A study of the first session of the Assembly, terminating on March 29, 1921, and consisting entirely of politicians who believed in the reforms, would show how a new spirit had come to dwell in India—a spirit which grew stronger in subsequent sessions, until it began to exercise a powerful influence on those who three years later came to wreck the constitution, but remained to work it—a spirit which showed itself in the Assembly's willingness to render every assistance to carry on the King's Government, while resolutely determined to wrest from the hands of the Executive whatever powers it could and add them to its own armoury. Already it was noticeable how the Assembly began to display that factiousness which politics invariably develop; yet its general attitude so far as the Government was concerned was indeed moderate and its tone courteous.

The Assembly tried to fulfil the principal function of a critical Parliament, which is the grand inquest of the nation

¹ *Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly*, August 1925.

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into all that affects the vital well-being of the masses and individuals alike, scrupulously and courageously demanding that the Government should explain and justify their acts. On the constructive side its endeavours might have been feebler, but it was inevitable so long as it remained only an advisory body, and so long as the Opposition was not invited to shoulder the burdens of administration.

The discussion on the Budget, both railway and general, and the proceedings connected with the appointment of the Standing Finance Committee and the Committee on Public Accounts, apart from the outstanding debates on resolutions moved in the first, second, and third Assembly, were primarily political. In the first Assembly the debates related to such sensational questions as the administration of martial law in the Punjab, the Esher proposals regarding the Army in India, the Press Act, the Nankana tragedy, which showed as by a searchlight the growing discontent among the Sikhs regarding their religious institutions, and the non-co-operation movement, on the last of which the Legislature gave absolute support to the Government, thus fulfilling the essential function of upholding the law and maintaining order. The Punjab resolution asked the Government :

1. To declare its adhesion to the principle of equal partnership for Indian and European in the British Empire.
2. To express regret that martial law in the Punjab violated this fundamental Imperial principle.
3. To administer deterrent punishment to officers guilty of an improper exercise of their powers, including the withdrawal of their pensions.
4. To assure itself that adequate compensation is awarded to those who lost their relatives at Jallianwala Bagh and elsewhere.

One striking feature of the debate was the solicitude of the Government and the Opposition alike to observe moderation in language and criticism. By the Government's accepting the third clause, which demanded the deterrent punishment

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of offenders, it was possible to adopt a unanimous resolution, thanks to the sense of statesmanship of the new Parliamentarians. The moderation and statesmanship and sweet reasonableness of the loyal Members of the first Legislative Assembly could not have achieved a greater triumph or a more brilliant conquest than the seduction of the erstwhile non-co-operators to the Legislatures and their subsequent alliance with the very Moderates whom they had cursed with bell, book, and candle as having sold their soul for a mess of pottage.

The Assembly by its compromise on the Punjab problem—on which the non-co-operation movement out in the country was founded—justified its uncompromising plea for co-operation. In the words of the mover of that resolution, the Assembly accepted it in a spirit which agreed to throw the past behind them, and to go forward together to “fulfil his Royal Highness’s desire ‘to forgive where we have to forgive, and to join hands and to work together to realize the hopes that arise from to-day.’ ”¹

The debate on the Press Act, which followed a week later, disclosed that the new Members of the Legislative Assembly did not want to repeal it, but only to modify it. They were for imposing certain restrictions on the Press! The Government, who were naturally willing to meet the non-officials half-way, moved for the appointment of a committee to examine the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867, and the Indian Press Act, 1910, and report what modifications were required in the existing law. The discussion resulted in a compromise, which was embodied in an agreed proposition, which may be quoted:

This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council that a committee, of whom not less than two-thirds shall be non-officials, be appointed to examine the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867, the Newspaper Incitement Act (VII) of 1908, and the Indian Press Act, 1910, and to

¹ *Legislative Assembly Proceedings*, February 1921.

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report which of these should be repealed or modified, and, in the latter case, what modifications are required.

The importance of this compromise will be clear only to those who understand that the Government have clearly felt that the Press Act was a necessary instrument for the combating of seditious propaganda. The Government have always maintained that scandalous libel, barely concealed incitements to violence, malevolent perversion of Government activity, and appeals to the basest human passions are the stock-in-trade of the reptile organs whose influence over an unlearned community is as vast as it is mischievous. The people's representative, on the other hand, has invariably urged that the ordinary law of the land was strong enough to prevent the spread of sedition and to suppress dangerous newspapers. The opposition of these newspapers to the continuance of the Press Act on the Statute Book is based on its abuse by an executive which owes no responsibility to the people, and which cannot bear harsh and persistent nationalist propaganda. The Government's reasonableness led at a later stage to the repeal of the Press Act, which revealed to the non-co-operators the virtue and value of fruitful co-operation.

The Esher Report debate resulted in the appointment of a committee, with Lord Esher at its head, to inquire into the Indian military system. Its terms of reference included an examination of the Indian Army's relations with the War Office and the India Office; and its report, published in October 1920, contained some matter which was calculated to arouse suspicion in India that the Indian Army might be used for Imperial purposes against the wishes of the Indian people. A non-official Member of the Assembly therefore moved a resolution on February 17 to the effect that

the Army in India should be entirely under the control, real as well as nominal, of the Government of India, and should be free from any domination or interference by the War

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Office on matters of military policy—and that such co-ordination as may be desirable between the military policies or organizations of different parts of the Empire should be secured by discussion and agreement at conferences at which India is adequately represented.

Though the original resolution was modified as a result of the debate thereon, the amendment which was adopted recommended to the Governor-General in Council that the Army in India should be entirely under the control of the Government of India, and a Committee of the House was subsequently formed to consider the Esher Committee's Report and to make recommendations. Its conclusions were forwarded to his Majesty's Government in Great Britain for examination by a sub-committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence. When the Swarajists were allured into the Councils by this constructive endeavour three years later they profusely quoted from the Esher Committee's proposals, and eventually succeeded in securing the appointment of the Skeen Committee, whose purpose, among others, was to inquire into the question of the establishment of a military college in India. It is interesting to note that the leader of the Swaraj Party himself happily agreed to serve on that committee, though the intransigents of the Congress, much to his regret, caused him to withdraw from it in the middle of his labours.

During the first Budget discussion under the new reforms our representatives showed a real sense of responsibility. The Budget showed a deficit of over one hundred and eighty millions of rupees. The non-official members concentrated their attention on the actual taxes by which the deficit would be wiped out; they did not resort to the tactics of refusing all proposed taxation, as well as many grants for ordinary administrative charges. The Assembly had the power to do so. The Swarajists soon after their Council entry attempted this, but, realizing the futility of non-co-operation, their leader himself openly defied the mandate

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of the Gauhati Congress to throw out the grants and reject the Finance Bill, thus driving the last nail into the coffin of obstruction. Like the Moderates of the first Assembly, the Swarajists rose to their responsibilities, consented to the grants, and passed the taxation proposals with only unimportant alterations. What the then President, Sir Frederick Whyte, described as a new note of persuasion and genuine advocacy in the argument of the Government Members which prevailed in the first Assembly was also discernible in the second and third Assembly on the Opposition benches. It is better to draw a veil over the intervening period of obstruction led by Mr Patel, which the Swarajists managed to survive by banishing him into the loneliness and silence of the Speaker's chair.

No one can lightly dispute the triumph of the reforms. Had the non-co-operators persisted in their boycott of the Legislatures, perhaps the atmosphere for constitutionalism would have been destroyed. The faith of the Moderates in the reforms and the determination of the Government to work the reforms notwithstanding all attempts to wreck them vanquished the extremists. The change of the storm-centre from the country outside to the Legislatures of the land sounded the death-knell of the Gandhi movement, and proclaimed the triumph of Montagu after his death.

The late Mr Montagu had many unkind critics, both among Europeans and Indians, in his lifetime, but his memory will be embalmed—as the great Brahmin of Bengal, Sir Surendranath, prophesied—in the affectionate recollections of unborn generations. Though the Liberals and Moderates as a party were defeated at the elections of 1923, Liberalism was accepted—after the customary explanations of hair-splitting politicians—as the Swarajist creed.

The triumph of the Liberals, however, was not easily achieved. They had to fight the scorn of public opinion, which steadily increased as the Ali brothers and Mr Gandhi

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urged the masses nearer to the brink of revolution. Month by month the position of the Members of the Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Councils became more and more difficult, for the wave of non-co-operation which was sweeping over India broke against those who co-operated in any way with the Government in public insult and social boycott and wild threats. The pages of Police Administration Reports for 1921 and 1922 bear testimony to the terrible situation against which the Liberals and their organs in the Press, the Government, and non-official Europeans fought. The fearful disaster of the Moplah rebellion, the revolutionary movement among the fighting Sikhs in the Punjab, the strenuous attempt to start mass civil disobedience in certain parts of Gujrat, the boycott of the Prince of Wales and the filling of the prisons by Nationalists and non-co-operators, were dread portents to the Moderates and Liberals, who honestly believed that they were supporting the Government against what the *Leader* newspaper of Allahabad described as "the criminal madness of non-co-operation."

So grim was the determination of the Liberals, Moderates, and Independents to break up the non-co-operation movement and support the Government in its resistance to it that a resolution which was moved by a Mohammedan Member at the beginning of 1922, to release from gaol the Ali brothers, the powerful leaders of the Khalifat movement, who were undergoing imprisonment, was not even seconded! When the resolution was put to the vote, after the Assembly had listened to the trenchant philippic from the Home Member, the mover himself retracted his support to it! The resolution was lost without one vote in its favour.

The great C. R. Das punished the Liberals for their co-operation with a foreign Government to crush the National movement. He drove them into the wilderness by capturing every Liberal seat in the elections of 1923. His less gifted successor quarrelled with his own colleagues,

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made the Liberal methods his own in 1926, and sought the Liberal support for lowering the Congress flag of independence in 1928.

To go back to 1921 and 1922, in every part of the province *jathas* of Sikhs armed with *kirpans* marched in military fashion to some shrine which they tried to take possession of. There were strikes of a political kind in different parts of India. The frontier was uneasy. The burden on the Indian Government was felt by their Liberal allies to be growing unbearable. The Assembly treated the non-co-operators as any Government would treat revolutionary agitators, no matter what their station in life. The moral backing of the classes which the Assembly represented, the most loyal and sober in the country, was wholly with the Government. Throughout the life of the first Assembly this relentless attitude was maintained toward political prisoners.

"I take the full share of my responsibility for the condemnation of Mr Gandhi," said Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru a year later to a representative of the *Review of Reviews*. The Moderates were giving proof of their fitness for responsible government by supporting the maintenance of law and order.

While thus prepared to support 'repression,' as their critics in the Congress described the Liberal policy, as early as the second session of the first Assembly, which began in September 1921, a resolution was moved relating to the grant of full autonomy in the provinces, the introduction of responsibility in the Central Government in 1923, and the grant of full Dominion status at the end of nine years. Nine years have since passed, and the Moderate demands have been embodied in a joint report of the Congress and the Liberal League under the flattering title "the Nehru Report," named after the discredited leader of the Congress Party!

Though no indication was given of the grant of full

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Dominion status, the leader of the Congress Party declared from a score of platforms that he would be satisfied with Dominion status, even though it were not full. The Moderates did not really mean that they wanted full Dominion status in nine years, but only followed the Oriental way of bargaining which any Western tourist in an Indian bazaar must have noted as a peculiar Eastern characteristic. The European critic was amused in 1921 by the academic demand to pass an Act granting Dominion status at the end of nine years. He called it a child's sand-castle on the seashore.

If words were soldiers the Assembly might have won Dominion status in nine weeks. Its first speakers profusely quoted from tributes paid by high authorities to the ability and capacity of the Indian Legislature, not being sure of those qualities themselves. When the Swarajists entered the Legislatures they dispensed with the necessity of quoting alien authorities, but made the bold assertion of their unquestionable competence. Successive Home Members, Sir William Vincent, Sir Malcolm Hailey, the late Sir Alexander Muddiman, and Sir James Crerar, maintained, each in his own way, that there could be no long leaps to responsible government.

The Assembly of September 1921 abandoned its resolution for Dominion status in favour of a compromise between the Government and the Opposition, which recommended to "the Governor-General in Council that he should convey to the Secretary of State the view of this Assembly that the progress made by India on the path of responsible government warrants re-examination and revision of the present constitution at an earlier date than 1929." This view was accepted by Lord Birkenhead some years after, and a Reforms Commission was appointed before the expiry of the statutory period.

Among other things, an important resolution which was moved in the Delhi session of 1922 was for the association

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of standing committees with the various departments of the Government of India. The resolution was accepted by the Assembly, and the committees were accordingly brought into existence. Other resolutions of the same kind dealt with important matters, such as the modification of electoral rules, the functions of the Council of State, the Imperial Services, the appointment of Indians to secretariat appointments.

Resolutions adopted by the non-officials in the Legislature are not binding on the Government. The resolutions are only a means of bringing popular needs to the notice of the Government and influencing its policy in regard to them. How far the first Assembly succeeded by patient co-operation in influencing decisions and shaping the policy of the Government may be briefly surveyed.

On February 16, 1923, a Member of the Legislative Assembly moved the following resolution :

This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council that a policy of Protection be adopted as the one best suited to the interests of India, its application being regulated from time to time by such discrimination as may be considered necessary by the Government of India with the consent and approval of the Indian Legislature.

On behalf of the Government an amendment to this resolution was moved which suggested certain safeguards, but left the principle unchanged. This amendment was passed by the Assembly. Henceforth India's tariff policy became one of discriminating Protection.

In the same session another debate which took place showed something of the Legislature's influence in matters vitally affecting India's economic and industrial progress. The non-official demand was that the Governor-General in Council

may be pleased to accept and give effect to the recommendation of the Chairman and four other members of the Indian

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Railway Committee, 1920-21, that the undertakings of guaranteed Railway Companies, as and when the contracts fall in, should be entrusted to the direct management of the State.

The Government objected strongly to the extreme nature of the amendment, and pleaded that the door should not be closed against any well-considered scheme for company management.

The Assembly, however, carried an amendment in the following form :

This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council that he may be pleased, on expiry of their leases, to take over both the East Indian Railway and the Great Indian Peninsular Railway for management by the State.¹

The Government have since given effect to the Assembly's decision. The East Indian Railway passed under State management in 1924, the Great Indian Peninsular Railway in 1925, and the Burma Railways in 1929.

Incidentally, the fact that the Government themselves have accepted the lead of the Assembly in the matter of State management shows that there was no justification for the observation that this essentially commercial undertaking was approached by the Indian representatives with "a certain political bias."²

Another way in which the Assembly influenced the decision of the Government is through the standing and other committees of the Central Legislature. Signs are not wanting that the committee system in India may develop on the lines of the American or the Continental rather than of the English system. The functions of the House of Commons committees are essentially different from those performed by the committees of the American

¹ *Proceedings* of the Delhi session of the Indian Legislative Assembly, 1923.

² *India in 1922-23*, by the Publicity Officer of the Government of India, p. 183.

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Congress and the Continental Parliaments. Both Houses of the British Parliament consider the subjects which are brought before each of them when it sits as a 'House' and also 'in committee,' and thus the thorough discussion of the details of legislature and financial proposals is done by the whole House, instead of by committees chosen from among its members. Some in India may desire to adopt the English system, but it has led to so much congestion of business that Englishmen themselves are considering how best to revise it. A system of committees is now being experimented on, but the American system, whereby the committee can shape a Bill, and ask Ministers to appear before it to give their views, which may be ignored, is not likely to be copied in England. In India, however, something of the sort may be expected to develop.

A propos the committees, mention may be made of the Standing Finance Committee elected by the Assembly, and the Public Accounts Committee, on both of which the present writer has served. The former consists of not more than ten members, together with a member of the Assembly as Chairman, who is nominated by the Governor-General in Council, and the latter consists of not more than twelve members. They are elected at the beginning of each financial year. The Public Accounts Committee is formed in pursuance of a rule made under Section 67 of the 1919 Act. The Standing Finance Committee has no such statutory authority. Its formation was proposed by the Government and approved by the Assembly. It deals with proposals for expenditure before they come on to the Budget, with supplementary votes to meet unforeseen expenditure, and with large schemes for fresh expenditure which are put forward by the departments. Though technically the functions of the Committee are only advisory, the committee has already made its influence felt, as the following instance will show.

During the Delhi session of 1922, when the Finance

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Member proposed the election of members of the Committee on Public Accounts, a private member moved that the functions of the Finance Committee should be so defined as to include the scrutiny of all proposals for new votable expenditure, the sanction of allotments out of lump-sum grants, and suggestions for retrenchments and economy in expenditure. The Finance Member accepted this suggestion.

The Standing Finance Committee is a departure from the English model. The Committee on Public Accounts corresponds to the Public Accounts Committee in England. Besides scrutinizing the accounts and calling the attention of the Assembly to any case in which there has been a waste of public money or an offence against financial rules, the Public Accounts Committee has certain constructive powers, and can compare the expenditure of one department with that of another, and point out the possibilities of exercising economies in various ways. The influence exercised by the Public Accounts Committee is evidenced by the fact that some of its suggestions have led to certain changes in the form of demands for grants. Territorial grants have been arranged on a more logical basis, and large items, such as the expenditure on Currency Stores, have been removed from the grant of the High Commissioner for India.

Testimony to the non-official members' appreciation of the utility of the committees was furnished when a private member moved a resolution in the Delhi session of 1922 proposing the association of the Standing Committees with the various departments of the Government of India, which was adopted and subsequently given effect to. Panels were elected by the Assembly, from which the members of the committees were chosen. The Railway Advisory Committee, which, it is the general complaint, does not meet often enough, paved the way for a change of vast administrative importance made by the second Assembly

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in September 1924 by separating railway finance from general finance. Though the present power of control of the Central and Local Advisory Committee of the railways is not sufficient, it is certain that as years roll by the administration of the railways will be more closely examined by these committees, whose influence is bound to grow.

Another aspect under which the subject may be dealt with is the appointment of the Joint Committees of the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State from time to time for certain purposes. In England Joint Committees of Parliament are not unknown. The Government of India Bill, for instance, was referred to a Parliamentary Joint Committee. Such first-class matters apart, the Joint Committees of the British Parliament generally deal with private Bills, which have no counterpart in India, or with the rules regulating the communications between the Lords and the Commons. The Joint Committee of the Central Legislature, however, besides dealing with important matters, such as the examination of the possibilities of financial retrenchment, also report on a Bill relating to intestate and testamentary succession. They were also, until lately, associated with the British Parliamentary Commission in a task of momentous importance, like the examination of the question of constitutional reforms.

The growth of the committee system is not regulated by any provisions of the Act. It shows how the constitution has in it certain inherent powers which must grow as they have grown in England, with the very working of the constitution itself.

One of the important battles of the Assembly has been fought on the question of financial control. It is natural that Indian representatives should devote considerable attention to this. Students of English and American history are aware of the great part played by the people in their fight for financial control.

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The provisions of the 1919 Act are not generous in regard to the question of popular control of the finances of the country. Important items of expenditure have, in fact, been removed from the control of the Assembly. But the non-officials have missed no opportunity of voicing their protest against this and several other similar restrictions. Particularly, the lack of control over the Military Budget, the larger part of which is non-votable, has been the subject of constant criticism during the Budget discussions. Thus has public opinion been brought powerfully to bear on these sacrosanct items.

One important fact must be set down in passing. The Standing Finance Committee is serving the purpose of establishing intimate contact between the Government and the Opposition. It is worthy of note that the Swarajists who entered the Councils with the cry of 'boycott' are clamouring for places to-day in these committees. Scenes have taken place at their party meetings in the general scramble for support of the individual Swarajists aspiring for places in the Standing Committees. This is a significant omen. Constitutionalism has vanquished obstruction!

As a further proof of the triumph of constitutionalism may be mentioned the interesting fact that even the Swarajist members of the Standing Finance Committee have realized their responsibility and spoken on the floor of the House in defence of the Government on items over which controversies have arisen. This is indeed a link in the golden chain that binds the powers that be and the Opposition—a chain not forged so much by the Reforms Act as by the new spirit of developing its growth by creating helpful precedents in an atmosphere of harmony.

Well might those who respect Mr Montagu's memory claim that the reforms have grown and expanded beyond the actual framework as desired by him, showing thereby that his constitution has not only survived the violent assaults made on it, but is living and growing. The

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superficial observer sees this not. Young men in a hurry miss the roots that are striking deep into the soil. Old men are impatient to gather the fruits within their lifetime.

The interest taken in the Legislature by its members was intense. In the first Assembly a hundred Bills were introduced, sixty-three by private members. Of the Government Bills sixty were passed, one was 'certified,' one was rejected by the Assembly, and one was withdrawn by the Government after introduction. Two were circulated for public consideration, and one was referred to a Select Committee. Of the private members' Bills, nine were passed, eight rejected, and one disallowed. The others were circulated for public consideration or referred to select committees. One was passed by the Assembly, but rejected by the Council of State. These measures were of wide and varied interest, embracing as they did industrial, agricultural, commercial, social, political, legal, educational, and other subjects.

There was no dearth of industrial legislation aiming at improvements in the conditions of factory life. For instance, the Workmen's Compensation Act, providing for compensation in case of accidents involving death or total or partial disablement; the Indian Electricity Amendment Act, securing uniformity of rules in regard to hydro-electric schemes in the different provinces; the Labour Disputes Bill, aiming at the cessation of the exploitation of labour for political purposes and the settlement of purely industrial disputes between labour and capital; social legislation, raising the age of consent; the North-West Provinces Inquiry; the inquiry into the necessity for the establishment of a military college by a mixed committee of officials and non-officials, known as the Skeen Committee, named after the President, Sir Andrew Skeen; the Repeal of the Press Act; and, last but not least, the appointment of a Labour Commission to inquire into and report on the condition of labour and make recommendations for its

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amelioration are some of the achievements of the Legislative Assembly.

Among other achievements of the Assembly must be mentioned the Racial Distinctions Bill. It did not arouse the angry passions of an earlier day in which the Ilbert Bill, notwithstanding the Viceroy's enthusiasm, floundered. The passage of the Racial Distinctions Bill through the Assembly met with the natural opposition of the European Members, which, however, ceased with the Assembly's assent to it. This shows that a new spirit of democracy has come to stay in the land—a spirit which is respected by Europeans and Indians alike. An official report says :

The passage of the Racial Distinctions Bill, introduced as a result of the appointment of a committee to investigate the differences in the criminal trials of Indian and European subjects of the King, marked an important stage in the attainment of equality between the two races in India.¹

The work of the Assembly and the vast amount of non-official interpellations, resolutions, and Bills disclose the hunger for constructive legislation in our erstwhile destructive critics.

A study of the resolutions and activities of the second and third Assemblies will show how the Legislatures have exercised a sobering influence on the ardent spirits. The Congress had boycotted, as we have seen, the first Assembly and the other Legislatures of the land. The Congress did not formally sanction that its organizations should take active part in supporting the Swarajists against the non-Congress parties in the elections of 1923. In 1926 we find the Congress becoming an election caucus. The successful campaign of the Madras leader, Mr S. Srinivasa Iyengar, was recognized by his election as the President of the Congress for the year 1926-27. We find, further, that the leader of the Swaraj Party in the Assembly was elected as

¹ *India in 1922-23*, p. 99.

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the President of the National Congress for the year 1928-29. The name of the Swaraj Party itself was changed into the "Congress Party." Its programme of obstruction and non-co-operation was altogether abandoned. What was once the "National" Congress became an electioneering organization for purposes of party. One of its stormy petrels has been working the reforms for all they are worth with the sanction of his party in his capacity as the President of the Legislative Assembly.

CHAPTER IV

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IN one of his fascinating utterances Lord Birkenhead compared the educated Indians to Englishmen, and expressed the conviction that they aspired with the rest of the English-speaking world for democratic institutions which had developed in England through successive centuries. According to Tacitus, the Germanic forest tribes who were the ancestors of the Englishmen of to-day had instinct in them the principles of democracy. The British constitution is an embodiment of those principles. England attained democracy by the manifestation of its Anglo-Saxon soul. The national character of England is writ large on the English constitution. Common sympathies, willing union of different peoples, a readiness to co-operate among themselves, says John Stuart Mill, go to constitute a nationality. These virtues have moulded into one nation the Scotsmen, the Welshmen, and the Englishmen who make modern Britain and bring glory to her name. Unless those virtues are assimilated by the peoples of India the development of a homogeneous national will to action—which is the only guarantee of stable nationalism—is inconceivable.

The problem of national unity has not yet been solved in India, though repeated attempts have been made to solve it. All honour to those who have made them; but their repeated failure reveals how the Queen-mother India cannot yet wear the crown and symbol of her nationhood. The disruptive forces are still there, and until they are brought under control nationalism must abdicate. It is this fear that stipulated that the development of the Indian democracy shall be by stages. Judging from the

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omens, the cautious formula of autonomy in dribblets will be abandoned in the provinces, but adhered to more rigidly than ever in the sphere of the Central Government.

It is stated that the problem of every province in India repeats in miniature the problem of India herself. When the provinces in their own limited sphere are endowed with provincial Dominion status that will make the attainment of National Home Rule easy.

Under the present constitution the Government of India and the Provincial Governments are responsible to the Secretary of State for India. Technically, therefore, Whitehall is omnipotent.

According to a section of the 1919 Act, the Secretary of State may "superintend, direct, and control all acts, operations, and concerns which relate to the Government or revenues of India, etc." But a subsection which follows shows that some change has come over the position of the Secretary of State, that it is not the same *vis-à-vis* the Government of India. Under this subsection the old practice has been stopped of paying the salary of the Secretary of State from the revenues of India.

In their report on the Government of India Bill, 1919, the Joint Select Committee of Parliament laid down that in the relations of the Secretary of State with the Governor-General in Council the Committee were of opinion that no statutory change could be made so long as the Governor-General remained responsible to Parliament; but in practice the conventions which governed the relations might wisely be modified to meet fresh circumstances caused by the creation of a Legislative Assembly with a large elected majority. It was further laid down that in the exercise of his responsibility to Parliament the Secretary of State might reasonably consider that only in exceptional circumstances should he be called upon to intervene in matters of purely Indian interest, where the Government and the Legislature of India were in agreement.

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The rules made under the Act restrict the intervention of the Secretary of State in regard to "Transferred subjects," which are under the control of the Ministers, who are responsible to the Legislatures, save in regard to inter-provincial matters affecting Imperial interests, such as provincial loans, to which the Secretary of State or the High Commissioner for India is a party. The restriction of the intervention of the Secretary of State was not relished by some prominent Conservatives. The following episode in Parliament is *à propos* :

VISCOUNT CURZON. I desire to ask you, sir, a question with regard to the ruling given yesterday on a question in reference to India. I asked a question with reference to a certain man in India. . . .

You replied that it did not seem to be a matter for Parliament, but one for the Legislative Council. The Honourable Member for South Kensington then asked, "Is it not a matter for this House to know whether a man who has been appointed to high office under the Crown is a convicted rebel?"

MR SPEAKER. The House, having practically given Home Rule, or something in the nature of Home Rule, to these Councils, the less it interferes with these Councils the better.

VISCOUNT CURZON. When a country has been given Home Rule, are we to understand that no further questions may be asked about the details of administration in that country?

MR SPEAKER. We are now commencing a new era in India, and it appears to me that it would be extremely undesirable if this House were to attempt to undertake the function of controlling or criticizing the Ministers who are responsible to the newly created legislative bodies. After all, the Ministers, however chosen, are the Ministers of those legislative bodies, they presumably have their confidence, their salaries are voted by them. I think that we had far better begin by abstaining from asking questions and criticizing the Ministers who have been duly selected by the Governor, under the statutory powers which this House has given him for that purpose.¹

¹ Hansard for February 24, 1921, p. 1148.

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The Speaker's ruling reveals that the spirit of the recommendations of the Joint Committee of Parliament in regard to the Indian reforms has found general acceptance in the British Parliament.

Another instance is the weakening of the Secretary of State's control over Indian Legislation. Under the Morley-Minto reforms the Secretary of State required prior report of all the principal Bills of the Government of India, not those of a formal nature. The Secretary of State virtually dictated to the Government of India the abandonment or modification of such Bills. The prior report practice still continues, but only of Bills affecting the discipline or maintenance of his Majesty's military, naval, or air forces, and the public debt or customs duties. Even in regard to these Bills his intervention is practically restricted to making suggestions.

With the appointment of a High Commissioner for India in London (1920) all the agency functions which the Secretary of State used to perform have been transferred to the High Commissioner. With the advance of India to Dominion status the power of the High Commissioner will increase, and that of the Secretary of State correspondingly decrease.

Though the provisions of the 1919 Act seem drastic—they certainly are drastic in some respects, and Indian opinion will not be wholly satisfied until the Secretary of State for India is reduced to the position of the Colonial Secretary—nevertheless the relations of the Secretary of State with the Government of India have become less rigid and more plastic. Viceroys like Lord Curzon and Lord Minto have placed on record the nature of the interference of the Secretary of State, who could not have such a real grasp of the situation as the man on the spot. Contrasting the powers that used to be exercised by the Secretary of State with the relaxed control which he has at present, official opinion is apt to think that the change

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is so vast and so considerable that it almost amounts to a revolution. Indian opinion, however, considers the change too tardy and unsatisfactory.

The policy underlying the reforms is naturally cautious. It was agreed among all conservative statesmen in England that in the first place India must make an immediate start on her road to responsible government, and, secondly, full self-government, or Dominion status, was the ultimate goal which only an India united in the fullest sense of the term could attain. The reformed constitution, where it deals with the provincial government, is a bold compromise between autocracy and democracy. Where it deals with the Central Government, however, it is a curious admixture of the forms of democracy with the reality of autocracy. The democratic form is in the non-official majority. The autocracy is naked in the fact that the Government of India's power is undiminished for dealing with external invasion and internal commotion. The Simon Commission may say that the reforms do not contemplate the immediate diminution of the Central Government's power in regard, especially, to its responsibility for the safety of India's people. This position was never accepted by the Indian public as a whole; those with a liberal outlook co-operated and hoped for better things through co-operation. The larger section of non-co-operators resorted to resistance.

The position of the Governor-General has not been impaired by the reforms. With his Executive Council he is the supreme monarch of all he surveys. In certain respects he is more powerful than his Council.

In the Morley-Minto times there were six members, one of whom was an Indian, in the Governor-General's Executive Council. Under the Montagu dispensation this racial restriction was done away with. 'Three of the members must be public servants of at least ten years' standing is the only stipulation. This is deliberate and of

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far-reaching consequence, because there is no limit now to the number of Indians who may be members of the Council. A convention has been established that at least three of the members of the Council should be Indians out of the six ordinary members.

The Law Members of the Viceroy's Executive Council need not now have English or Scottish qualifications, but may be pleaders of ten years' standing of an Indian High Court. For instance, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, a former Law Member of the Government of India, had no English or Scottish qualifications. He was an advocate of the Allahabad High Court.

This broadening of the foundation, as it were, of the Governor-General's Executive Council has introduced a process which, as recorded in the Parliamentary Joint Select Committee's report, has large possibilities: "The members of the Council drawn from the ranks of the public servants will, as time goes on, be more and more likely to be of Indian rather than of European extraction."

The Governor-General and not India's Parliament is wholly responsible for the safety, tranquillity, or interest of British India. If a prophecy may be risked, the Simon Commission do not contemplate an early transference of this responsibility. The members of the Opposition in India's Parliament have adversely commented on the power of "certification," according to which, if the Governor-General believes that some particular measure is essential to the safety and interests of British India, he can pass it into law in the teeth of the Legislature's opposition and rejection.

On the financial side the Legislature has no statutory power over supplies for the Army, the public debt, etc. Its power is restricted either to vote or to refuse a large range of supplies. Even this restricted power is nullified by the power of appropriation with which the Governor-General is invested. If any particular item is refused the

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Governor-General or the Governor-General in Council can appropriate it if he thinks it sufficiently important to warrant his doing so.

Powers similar to these, says the official apologist, have been exercised by the President of the United States. The President is an elected autocrat, but the Viceroy is the symbol of alien supremacy, retorts the Indian Nationalist.

When the Indian States (Protection against Disaffection) Bill was introduced during the Simla Session of the Assembly in 1922 it was opposed by a majority. The repeal of the Press Laws in British India resulted in a demand for protection from the Princes. Their administration is more vigorously criticized by newspapers printed in British India, which have more liberty, than by newspapers in the States, if there are newspapers at all there. The Princes do not believe in a free Press in their own territories. It must also be admitted that some of the vernacular newspapers who specially devote themselves to this anti-Princes propaganda are venomous blackmailers with no democratic aspirations. Be that as it may, the Legislative Assembly would not give permission to introduce the Bill. Some of its members were carried away by ideas of a free Press and liberty of criticism. Others felt that constant exposure of the maladministration and cruelty in Indian States was the only check on the autocracy of the Princes.

The Government, however, following the terms of ambiguous treaties, and in accordance with equivocal pronouncements in the past regarding the status of Princes and Chiefs, stood by the Princes. The Governor-General decided to "certify" the Princes Protection Bill, which accordingly became law.

Again, in face of non-official opposition, the Governor-General certified the restoration of the salt tax in the Delhi Session of 1923. The salt tax is the most unpopular form of taxation. The maintenance of an increased tax on salt was imprudent. Bureaucratic statesmanship, which was

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bankrupt in Simla-Delhi, instead of resorting to other avenues, insisted on defying public opinion. In justification of their action the Government pointed to the importance of a balanced Budget, and pretended that they knew no other way of balancing the Budget. There could be no two opinions that a balanced Budget was of the utmost consequence in a country like India, but the non-official object was directed against the method adopted. The official view was that the incidence of the salt tax itself of a few annas per head per annum would be hardly perceptible. This view was endorsed by the Council of State. Thus fortified, the Governor-General certified the tax after its reasoned rejection by the Legislative Assembly. If the Government had a General Election to face, as in England, they would not have increased the salt tax to balance the Budget. or, having increased it, would have been swept into the wilderness.

It is customary for official writers to compare this power of the Viceroy of certification to the Imperial veto on colonial legislation. Say the politicians, India too will not object to a similar Imperial veto, which is seldom exercised, when endowed with colonial autonomy. The official reply to this is, when a section of the extremists have as their party-cry obstruction with a view to make rule by certification normal, the politician has himself to blame. The power to veto, we are told, in the United States' President is real and frequently used. Mr Cleveland, during his eight years as President of the United States, employed it on more than three hundred occasions. But America has self-government. More correctly, the Indian constitution is like that of the Philippines. The Reforms Act of 1919 is like the Jones Law of 1916, which was "an Act to declare the purpose of the people of the United States as to the future political status of the people of the Philippine Islands, and to provide a more autonomous Government for those islands."

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The Jones Law was in one respect different from the Indian Act—it did not give the Governor-General of the Philippines statutory powers of certification in case of a disagreement with the Legislature. The British Government obviously profited by the American omission, to repair which the Woods-Forbes Commission went out to the Philippines in 1921. It is always disastrous to go back on reforms. What is given cannot be taken away. An excess of caution in the beginning, followed by a gradual progress in recklessness, is the way of statesmanship!

The Governor-General's powers of veto and certification were not pleasing to the Nationalists in the Legislatures. The Congress Party in the Assembly made a point of forcing the Governor-General to use his extraordinary powers as often as possible. They played this trick especially by moving the omission of some Budget demands, which, with the help of other parties, they carried. Their endeavour, however, to throw out the Finance Bill was repeatedly frustrated by the other parties refusing to go the whole hog in obstruction. Consequently, the Congress Party vented its childish wrath upon the Governor-General personally by peevishly boycotting the Viceregal functions in the Viceroy's house, even though its crazy leader never missed a single opportunity to establish contact with the Governor-General at social functions given in the house of the Speaker. This stupid inconsistency only shows that the Swarajist leadership under Nehru is as mad as a March hare.

CHAPTER V

THE CONGRESS MOVEMENT

THE Congress of to-day has undergone fundamental changes in programme, policy, and outlook far beyond the dream of its originators. The present leaders of the Congress and its rank and file have not that remarkable faith in British justice and fair play which inspired its early founders. Incredible is the change that has come over the Congress within the last forty years. The Congress has moved ahead of the times. To-day it performs not its old function of mirroring the minds of the majority of the sober people of India, but of leading the combustible masses to aggressive political action.

The first impetus to Indian nationalism came from Edmund Burke's impeachment of Warren Hastings, Macaulay's attack on British rule in India, and Bright's downright speeches in Parliament. "Thirty millions of human beings," wrote Macaulay,

were reduced to an extremity of wretchedness. They had been accustomed to live under tyranny, but never under tyranny like this. That Government, oppressive as the most oppressive form of barbarian despotism, was strong with all the strength of civilization.

Such fierce criticisms by frank Englishmen who were dissatisfied with the imperfections of early British administration—imperfections inevitable at the outset of any foreign rule—hastened the rapid evolution of some ordinary and ordered government. The Indian Civil Service, European in character and constitution, was established ; a judicial

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system was adopted ; and the administration of the Land Revenue was taken up.

Queen Victoria issued her famous proclamation of 1858, promising equal opportunities for all, irrespective of race and creed, declaring that "in their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our reward."

Bright said :

All over those vast regions there are countless millions helpless and defenceless, deprived of their natural leaders and their ancient chiefs, looking with only some small ray of hope to that omnipresent and irresistible power by which they have been subjected. . . .

Is it possible to touch a chord in the heart of Englishmen to raise them to a sense of the miseries inflicted on that unhappy country by crimes and blunders of our rulers here ? If you have steeled your hearts against the natives, if nothing can stir you to sympathy with their miseries, at least have pity upon your own countrymen.

If the general administration was far from satisfactory, the financial mismanagement was even worse. Henry Fawcett characterized it as "magnificent meanness." The British Government concluded that matters had reached the stage when an inquiry should be undertaken. A Parliamentary Committee was appointed with Fawcett himself as its Chairman to inquire into the financial administration of India. Fawcett's inquiry brought him into close touch with Indians, for whose welfare he always strove hard in Parliament, but it could not stop that financial extravagance inevitably associated with every foreign rule. Fawcett was defeated in one of the General Elections. English-educated Indians, who were the only politically minded people at the time, raised a subscription of £750 to enable him to get into Parliament at the next earliest possible opportunity, which he did, to serve India with redoubled earnestness.

Neither the "Indian member," as Fawcett came to be

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called, nor other friends of India were satisfied with the impression they could produce on Parliament. Fawcett felt that what Macaulay had said of Parliamentary indifference to India in the Company days was no less true under the Crown :

A broken head on Cold-Bath fields produces a greater sensation amongst us than three pitched battles in India. A few weeks ago we had to decide on a claim brought by an individual against the revenues of India. If it had been an English question the walls would scarcely have held the members who would have flocked to the division. It was an Indian question ; and we could scarcely, by dint of application, make a house. Even when my right honourable friend, the President of the Board of Control, gave his able and interesting explanation of the plan which he intended to propose for the Government of a hundred million human beings, the attendance was not so large as I have often seen it on a turnpike Bill or railroad Bill.

Disraeli's Government appointed Lord Lytton as the Viceroy, and he, instead of taking up the work of popular welfare, addressed himself to the costly task of raising "a scientific frontier," besides conducting expensive expeditions against Afghanistan to the detriment of the taxpayer. Lord Lytton's policy was called into question by the public, especially in the vernacular Press, which was freely expressing the considered opinion of the country, unsavoury to the autocracy. Lord Lytton would neither face his critics nor look into their grievances. He ventured on a new law, whereby he could gag the expression of uncomfortable opinion—a method which his successors have from time to time faithfully copied when placed in similar predicaments.

In spite of the Vernacular Press Act, the heroic band of early workers continued undaunted. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of Bengal was dramatically converted in one night into an English newspaper. Other papers in the English