editors found support in the British Parliament. Mahomedans in Ludhiana were petitioning the Lieutenant-Governor for Europeans to replace the Hindoo personnel of the administration, and at one of the towns they erected a triumphal arch for His Honour, on which was inscribed: "For God's sake save us from the rule of our fellow-countrymen."

The editor of the *Hind Swarajya* of Bombay was bound over to be of good behaviour, over-lenient treatment, surely, for publishing an article headed, "Do that which has to be done." In this precious production it was stated that the English led the Indians along the path of sin, and took away their arms in order artificially to keep up British rule. By their teaching, adultery had begun to spread in Indian homes, and women, becoming independent and pressing men down, had begun to be led along the wrong path. The Indians should engage in battle against the enemy.

But though a Bombay paper is not by any means incapable of disaffection, the *Bengali* press leads the riot of disloyalty and no one more richly deserved the punishment he received than Bepin Chandra Pal, who last autumn got six months' imprisonment—a sentence which the High Court of Bengal considered upon appeal not too severe, in view of the deliberate attempts this Babu made to frustrate the administration of justice. He had refused to be sworn and to answer questions in the prosecution of the conductors of *Bande Mataram*, and ostentatiously demanded the martyr's crown at open-air meetings of students. He announced that he had ceased to edit, and though he was believed to be still closely connected with the conduct of the paper, this was so managed that

responsibility could not be brought home. A barrister, Mr A. N. Bannerji, who subsequently apologised and was released, was also arrested for making seditious speeches, and a youth who had been birched for participation in a riot was presented with a gold medal by Mr S. N. Bannerji, whose relations with the *Bengali* were similar to those of Babu Bepin Chandra with *Bande Mataram.*

Bannerji had been a member of the Bengal Civil Service, which he left in 1874, in circumstances into which it is unnecessary here to enter, at a time when Lord Northbrook was Viceroy, Sir George Campbell, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, and Lord Hobhouse, legal member of the Council.

About the time the Indian Budget was discussed in the House of Commons in the Session of 1907, the Government of India warned the *Bande Mataram* newspaper that it would be prosecuted for sedition, unless it mended its ways. Babu Bepin Chandra Pal was believed to be the writer or inspirer, and he was, at any rate, the editor, of articles designed to create prejudice and dislike against the English Government, and the English people; and assailing Mr Morley's declaration that British rule will continue, ought to continue, and must continue, with bitter criticism as being fatal to the great issue of Indian self-government, though elsewhere the Hand of God is traced in Mr Morley's blindness, and the text is then *Quem Deus vult perdere.* The reception of that speech in the House of Commons, said the *Bande Mataram*, saved the Indian nationalists the trouble of further argument, and proved the delusiveness of the prevalent faith in the ultimate sense of justice of the British people. Babu

Chandra Pal urged Mahomedans and Hindoos to join in finding a leader and suggested the Amir of Afghanistan. He said India was destined to be a republic with an Upper Chamber of feudatory chiefs, and a Lower Chamber of the common people; than which no greater nonsense, even from the Congress point of view, could well have been conceived.

The *Yugantar* of Calcutta cried: "Revolution is the only salvation for an enslaved society. With a firm resolve you can bring English rule to an end in a single day, dedicate your lives as an offering at the temple of Liberty, without bloodshed the conquest of the goddess (the mother of *Bande Mataram*), will not be accomplished, let the heads of their intruders be given as an offering, let 70,000,000 hands take up the sword, beggars, and fakirs (religious mendicants) have distributed pamphlets among the native army in Rawal Pindi, the cup of the English is full." At the same time a personal canvass of the troops was attempted, and the prevalence of the plague in the Punjaub was a valuable makeweight, indeed, it was actually alleged that the British introduced this scourge, and the tone in which questions on this point were put in the House of Commons almost suggests that there are in England those who believe this extragavance. It was only an additional charge that the Government were also accused by secret slanders of poisoning the wells.

In the pamphlet supplied to the troops, Sikhs, Punjaubis, Mahomedans, and Rajputs are asked why they fight for the English, and why they accept lower wages than the British soldier, when the negroes in the American army are paid at the same rate as their white comrades. The writer also states

that the Russians in Central Asia treat their Mahomedan subjects as equals, and sepoys are adjured to understand that they are eating their own salt, not the salt of the English. The leaflet was published in a journal called *India*, and purported to be a letter from a frontier soldier in America to a native soldier in India. It was arranged that 100,000 copies should be printed for private and free distribution to the troops, in languages which included that of the Ghurkha regiments, and the organisation of the Arya Samaj, of which Lajpat Rai is alleged to be the leader, was believed to be actively engaged in this transaction. At any rate there is doubt that bar libraries have been particularly active in the propagation of seditious sheets, and there is nothing surprising in this in view of the fact that lawyers are at the bottom of the agitation and unrest, and are the most influential element of the Babu class.

While seditious utterances in the Bengal press were unfortunately by no means without precedent, a new and more serious aspect of the unrest was the appearance of the like discourses in the newspapers of the Punjaub.

Were it not that the press of that province is under the control of Bengalis, it would be extraordinary that the latter should exercise so much influence over races who regard them with ill-concealed dislike and contempt. The leaders of the Bengali clique had set before them the necessity for constituting themselves leaders in the Punjaub, and the Arya Samaj and the native press were the weapons to hand. The Arya Samaj is at present chiefly a political society, the ethics of which have been widely adopted in the educational establishments of the

Punjaub. It aims at the amalgamation of reformed Hindooism with the new forces developed by the spread of education. No law is binding in their eyes unless its source be the Vedas. They have the legal element wholly on their side, and it is this class, here as elsewhere in India, which has provided the leaders of the agitation, and has established vernacular journals to aid its propaganda. The forbearance of the Government was mistaken for weakness, and the students as usual were brought up to do the shouting, and to persuade the peasants that the Government was not treating them fairly in the matter of water rates and assessments. The deportation of Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh scotched the agitation, but the Arya Samaj is still there.

The arrest and deportation of Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh put an end to open agitation, and plainly showed that the political propaganda of the Arya Samaj inspired the whole movement, the Arya Samaj being itself a society which had its origin in Bengal, from which province agents had been despatched to the Punjaub in order to sow sedition and foster ill-feeling against the Government. The object there, as in Bengal and Poona, and wherever the Congress agents are active, was to obtain control of the administration for the English educated classes, to secure an India preserved from the attacks of other nations by the British army, but from which the British themselves should be excluded. The warlike character of the people of the Punjaub, our partial dependence upon it for the raw material of our best soldiers, the chance of exciting disaffection in the army where it would be most dangerous—these were considerations present in the minds of those who selected the Pun-

jaub as the scene of active agitation. They reckoned without the firmness and absence of panic which distinguished the treatment of the case at home and in India, but the germs of disaffection proved disappointingly easy to plant, and the situation needs, and at the hands of Sir Denzil Ibbetson's successor will receive, the utmost care and attention.

The Regulation III. of 1818, under which the agitators were deported, provides that reasons of State embracing the security of the British dominions from foreign hostility and internal commotion, occasionally render it necessary to place individuals under personal restraint, and in 1897 the Natu brothers were arrested under these powers at Poona, besides which they have been used in order to incarcerate certain dangerous Moplah fanatics in Malabar. In native states such powers are, as has been already said, freely exercised, and last year the Nizam of Hyderabad expelled the head of one of the great families of the state, Nawab Syed Jung Syed-ud-Doula, for writing to him or of him in an impertinent and offensive manner, to the prejudice of good government, and proper respect for the ruler of the state.

It is urged by the Congress critics that these powers were given before legislative councils were created, but that does not in any way prove that they are not as necessary at the present day as they were when no one would have thought of questioning the right of the state to act in this manner.

In November, Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh were released, after being detained for about six months, whereupon *The Bengali* expressed a fear lest the policy of conciliation should do harm to the new spirit of national consciousness, the comments of other

journals of the like character being less ingenuously disaffected. Efforts were also freely made to represent the order for release as the personal act of the King-Emperor, who desired to right the wrong done by his agents. The action of Government met with general approval as it was taken at a time when the extremists had fallen into disrepute and the agitation was subsiding, and only those from whose sails a certain amount of wind was taken, adversely criticised the course taken by the administration.

Other than domestic causes contributed to the success of the agents of the Bengali agitators in the Punjaub, among the warlike races of which province the Russo-Japanese War has no doubt quickened the ever-present martial spirit. The defeat of Russia has inspired the Babu classes with the idea of a United India, wherewith to replace the previously existing Congress programme, while the establishment of the Duma in Russia, and of a Parliament in Persia have also somewhat stimulated vague aspirations of an aristocratic oligarchy for independence. Meanwhile the Bengali anti-English policy, which was transplanted to the Punjaub not two years since, first fastened on the Land Alienation Act, which traders dislike, but agriculturists rather favour, and next attacked the Punjaub Colonisation Bill. In the last twenty years, rainless tracts in the desert have been irrigated and populated by means of magnificent canals, upon the banks of which colonies have been planted, which extend to over 3,000,000 acres of irrigated land, and have a population of upwards of 2,000,000. These were controlled by colonisation officers, who endeavoured to perform practically all the functions of Government in their own persons,

till this Bill was introduced to legalise existing conditions and the powers they exercised. Unfortunately, however, some of its provisions gave colour to the charge that the conditions of land tenure were being somewhat altered. The most was made of this, but the Bill was altered and passed by the Punjaub Government, which was falsely accused, by the newspapers edited by the Bengali Babus or their agents, of having broken faith with the occupiers of the colony lands. Though the Viceroy subsequently disallowed the Bill, the mischief had been done. In like manner, the riots which occurred at Rawal Pindi were due to discontent promoted against the new land settlement. As was stated in the chapter dealing with the land system, settlement in the Punjaub is effected for twenty years, at the expiration of which period the assessment is generally raised, because prices usually rise and the revenues of villages automatically increase near great towns like Rawal Pindi. Most of the land belongs, however, not to agriculturists, but to traders and Babus, who at once seized the opportunity of persuading the peasants, who hitherto had had profound faith in the district officer, that rents were to be doubled all round. As a fact the increased assessment in the Rawal Pindi district was due to the greater area under cultivation, not to excessive enhancements. The revision of the water rates upon the Baridoab Canal, which was also attacked, was carried out in the interests of the general tax-payer, who was getting insufficient return from irrigation works constructed out of taxes collected from his pocket, and similar revisions had been made in respect of other Punjaub canals, without any objection before the Bengali agitators came upon the scene.

Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that the seditious propaganda of the Bengal agitators has worked great mischief, amongst the martial races of the Punjaub, where the Government can only last as long as the people believe it to be strong, and the same may be said in a greater or less degree of every part of India.

No doubt the revenue system of the province is somewhat inelastic, and the Punjaub Alienation Act, intended to relieve the peasants from the yoke of usurers, has not been much welcomed by the Sikhs. On the other hand, Punjaub Canal Colonies have been a marvellous success, and it is the irony of fate that the enemy should have found in them an occasion to blaspheme.

In Madras the agitators met with scant encouragement, though the visit of Bepin Chandra Pal was followed by insubordination in the Rajamundry College, which however speedily subsided, without being elsewhere imitated, when the Government supported the Principal in the disciplinary measures he thought it advisable to take.

It is without surprise, however, I see that Sir H. Cotton has stated "that Madras is disturbed and unsettled in sympathy with the feelings of other parts of India." The fact, of course, is that this sober and well-doing province has exhibited no particle of such sympathy, but has been a sad disappointment to Babu Bepin Chandra Pal and his friends. An article recently published in a Bengali paper sadly acknowledged the fact, and ended by exclaiming, more in sorrow than in anger, "Alas! for Madras." Neither has the southern province, or satrapy, as Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff used to call it, contributed to any

great extent to the war chest of the Congress, though among the local lawyers are some who speak and write on its behalf, and, being as rich, and capable as any men in India, could give pecuniary assistance if they chose.

The press, then, of Bengal and Poona, and in a less degree of the Punjaub, has contributed in no small degree to the present situation, and the partition of Bengal was invaluable as a magnet to which all the disaffected were drawn, though the charge brought against the Government of India of having rushed the matter through without inquiry, and without any regard to the feelings of those concerned, is wholly untenable.

The question was thoroughly and publicly discussed, but no division would have satisfied the Congress party, who see in a divided Bengal a weakening of the influence which that overgrown province was in a position to exercise. The Mahomedans, two-thirds of the population, are notoriously in favour of the change, and the anti-partition movement is, in point of fact, nothing but an anti-British agitation. It is quite untrue that the majority of the Bengal Civil Service was opposed to the measure, and the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Andrew Fraser, strongly supported it, saying that amongst the senior offices of the province, with the exception of one, there was complete unanimity in accepting the proposal. The suggestion that Behar and Chota Nagpur should have been, and wanted to be, made into a separate province, is negatived by their memorial protesting against separation, and the obvious line to follow was that previously taken when the Assam Chief Commissionership was formed out of Eastern Bengal in 1874 by making a separate administration of Assam and certain Bengali

districts. It followed, almost as a matter of course, that any further subdivision of the overgrown and unwieldy Government would be accomplished by the addition of more Bengali districts to the little province previously carved out of the big Presidency. The Bengalis are not in the English sense of the word a nation, and such solidity or nationality as they now possess is mainly the result of British education and British government. That nationality, however, such as it is, is in no sense impaired by the levelling up of Assam with the districts previously transferred in 1874, and with the districts since transferred in 1905, into a Lieutenant-Governorship, that is to say an administration of exactly the same grade and character as that of the Lieutenant-Governorship, which once included the whole area. The two divisions of Bengal are administered by the same civil service, and subject to the same rules, laws, and regulations, and Eastern Bengal is in no way altered except in so far as it receives the undivided, instead of the divided, attention of a Lieutenant-Governor. The scheme, be it good or bad, was not, as is often asserted, the invention of Lord Curzon, nor is it true that the creation of a Lieutenant-Governorship of Behar and Chota Nagpur would have been acceptable to those concerned. On the contrary, the press of Behar protested against any such proposal, and the press of Behar is as good as the press of Bengal, and better in that it is loyal and moderate in tone. The people of Behar no more favour this proposal than the people of Eastern Bengal object to partition. Indeed, the *Amrita Bazaar Patrika* ungratefully threw overboard the Congress representative, Sir H. Cotton, who advocated the creation of a Behar province in Parliament, saying,

"We trust he and his friends made it quite clear the movement was initiated without the knowledge of the leaders in Bengal. As a matter of fact there is a vast number of people in Bengal and Behar who are very much opposed to separation from Bengal."

No individual can speak to the opinions of many millions of illiterate peasants, but it is possible for them by mass meetings to give expression, to some extent, to their opinions, and the Mahomedans, two-thirds of the population, have expressed their strong approval of the creation of the new province. In like manner the Hindoo tenants of the landlords of Eastern Bengal have met and protested, not against partition, but against the agitation against partition, and against the boycott, which was enforced for a time, to the extreme inconvenience of the population, and to the prejudice of British trade and British goods.

Whether or not it was wise to subdivide Bengal is an open question, and had the results been foreseen the measure probably would never have been carried through. However that may be, the objections raised have been purely factious and artificial. But the English-educated and English-hating Babus were far too shrewd not to see how this change affected the unduly privileged position they had gained as a result of excessive administrative concentration at Calcutta. They hoped to bring pressure to bear on the authorities by injuring the commerce of the capital by their *Svadeshi* and boycott policy, and at the same time, by the same measures, to coerce the Mahomedans into opposing partition, or to force the Government into opposition to the Mahomedans by involving them in riots and disturbances which they themselves, not without success, set to work to provoke.

It will be asked, then, Is there nothing in the objection raised to the so-called partition? There is. The landlords of Bengal are the successors in title of those farmers of the revenue whom Lord Cornwallis created landlords after the English pattern. They are high-caste Hindoos, and their tenants are either Mahomedans or high-caste Hindoos, and the British Government has been occupied ever since Lord Cornwallis's time in protecting these tenants against these British-created landlords, who occupy in some respects much the same position as landlords do in Ireland. Indeed, the tenants have numbered among their most able champions Sir Antony MacDonnell, no oppressor of subject peoples. To this body of landlords it is no doubt a blow that they should cease to have as their local capital Calcutta, which is also the capital of India, and the seat during the cold weather of the Viceroy, and of the great officers of State. Journalists, students, and lawyers also, for obvious reasons, bitterly resent losing Calcutta, and it is true that the solidarity of these classes, as distinguished from the masses, is somewhat impaired. On the other hand, the Mahomedans, the Hindoo tenants, and the native Christians have protested at mass meetings against the reconsideration of an Act of State which has endowed them with a Lieutenant-Governor of their own and has created their districts, which with Assam have a population of upwards of 30,000,000, into a separate Lieutenant-Governorship. The landlord class, of whom the Bengali Babus are the typical representatives, have money. They can and do agitate. They have a violent and vituperative press at their disposal, a press which does not hesitate to say that the object of the agitators is to turn the English

out of India. Those who adopt this attitude ask us to believe that the late Viceroy acted for the purpose of destroying the political solidarity of the Bengalis —for it must be remembered that the rest of India takes no kind of interest in the question and, indeed, is not favourable to Bengali pretensions—they ask us to believe that a further extension of administrative changes effected without comment in 1874, and approved by three Secretaries of State, with their Councils of experienced officers, and approved by two Governments of India, consisting of many officers representing all parts of that empire, a measure expressly and enthusiastically approved by the masses immediately affected, is an insult to Bengal, a blunder, and an odious and oppressive act. The peculiar irony of the situation is that the Bengali press, and a few travelled and English-educated Bengalis, who no longer represent the feelings of the Indian people, succeed in persuading the electorate in England and their representatives in a democratic Parliament to take the side of the classes against the masses, of the high castes against the low castes, of a small denationalised group against the uneducated and unsympathising multitudes. I would fain enlarge on this subject in the interests of inarticulate masses, who are grievously misrepresented by men, who may be, and often, but not always are, disinterested and impartial, who may be, and generally are, able and eloquent, but who, if they were angels from above, could not fairly represent people whose manners, customs, feelings, religions, social prejudices, and prepossessions they have abandoned.

The Indian masses care as little for these orators and agitators as they do for representative govern-

ment, of which they have never heard, but for which, by monumental misrepresentations on the part of the Congress, they are said to be raising vain cries to unanswering heaven.

Again it is untrue, though often asserted, that the judges of the High Court opposed the measure; indeed the change in no way affected them, for they continue to have jurisdiciton over Eastern Bengal. The Chamber of Commerce, too, indignantly protested, by telegraph, against the statement of Mr O'Donnell to the effect that they were opposed to partition; nor was the measure even nominally that of Lord Curzon, for it was actually settled while he was in England in 1904.

That it will, however, in the end increase the expense of administration I believe, for in time the new province will want a Chief Court, or High Court of its own and the new constitution actually has led, as a matter of course, to the entertainment of a larger staff of civil officers. The management of affairs will no doubt be more efficient than before, but whether India wants administration more efficient than Eastern Bengal previously had, I doubt. It is our fault, as I think, that we are for ever pursuing progress after our own pattern, without duly considering whether those we seek to benefit want it, or indeed regard it as progress in a direction in which they wish to proceed.

If, however, British administration of the standard type be good for India, and it is, though something less scientific would be more suitable, then the more efficient that administration is the better, and therefore the so-called partition of Bengal was a desirable measure. Many, however, will think, as I do, that when the people are contented, and ask for no more

management, it is well as a general rule to let them alone.

But if proof of sedition, disloyalty, and disaffection has unfortunately been forthcoming in the press of Bengal, the Punjaub, and Poona, gratifying expressions of loyalty have been by no means wanting.

The nobility and gentry, to use their own phrase, of Bengal deprecated the wild and mischievous anti-British agitation, and the Talukdars of Oudh took occasion to issue a similar loyal manifesto. Those who signed the latter pronouncement rejoiced that they were free from the evils of a press which seemed to stir up race against race, class against class, and creed against creed. They deplored the existence of agitation which sought to embitter the people against their rulers, held that the interests of all men of experience and moderate views were identical with the interests of a Government which earnestly sought the welfare of its subjects, and realised that improvements to be effectual must be of natural growth, and that all classes must participate in them.

Maharaj Kumar Sir Prodyot Tagore sent Mr Keir Hardie a copy of an appeal to the loyalty of noblemen and zemindars of Bengal, and referring to Mr Hardie's statement that there was only one people in India, pointed out to him that "India is a great conservative land, and was even more so under Eastern monarchs, with a mass of different races with different religions, opposing constitutions, and separate manners and customs, which go to make it extremely difficult to bring harmoniously together the different elements constituting the people. . . . The British Government and the British race of commercial men have developed the country in such

a way as no other nation or Government ever did in the past, not for their own interests only, but also for the benefit of the people."

That is a very fair statement of the case, and is equally remote from the false and odious creed of the anti-British group, and the cant of those who pretend that the British differ from all other people in desiring nothing but the good of other people.

The Behar Landholders Association in turn passed a resolution expressing gratification that efforts to create disaffection had failed in that part of India, and an appeal promoted by the British India Association, and signed by large numbers of responsible inhabitants of all parts of Bengal called on the people to discontinue to give the slightest countenance to wild and mischievous propaganda which tend to create disloyalty to British rule, and feelings of animosity between different classes of the communities of India. The manifesto contains the following passage :—

"We venture to assert that the bulk of the people of the country are loyal and law-abiding. We now appeal to our countrymen for the display of the practical good sense, which some of our critics deny us. We must not forget that, whatever its shortcomings, it is to British rule that we owe the present security of life and property, the spread of education, and the progress, that India is now making according to modern civilised ideals. This is emphatically the worst time to encourage unworthy sentiments and rancorous ill-feeling. No true patriot will hesitate to range himself with us on the side of law and order at the present juncture."

Nawab Mosheen ul Mulk, who has succeeded Sir

Syed Ahmad as the leader of Moslem thought in Upper India, very plainly informed Mr G. K. Gokhale, who was endeavouring to obtain the co-operation of the Mahomedans in the agitation with which he is so intimately connected, that he would not be able to express his opinions as freely as he now could, under any Government, indigenous or alien, by which that of Great Britain could conceivably be replaced, and, he said that the gulf between Hindoos and Mahomedans was being widened by the present political agitation. Mr Gokhale in return urged that the interests of the Mahomedans and Hindoos were identical, but in fact he and his cause suffered a serious rebuff at Lucknow.

While the agitators were actively engaged at Lahore and Rawal Pindi, the Maharaja of the neighbouring state of Kashmir issued a proclamation prohibiting all forms of agitation against the British Government, an agent of the agitators was promptly ejected from his well-governed state by the Maharaja of Travancore, and the Government of Mysore publicly rebuked a journal which had made unsustainable charges against the British Government.

The Maharaja of Bikanir wrote to *The Times*, in July of last year, to answer for the loyalty of his order, which indeed the rise of British rule saved from extinction by the Mahrattas. Maharaja Sindhia, the Maharajas of Idar, Patiala, Cooch Behar, Dholpore, Jodhpur, and Ulwar, who have given, and others who had no opportunity of giving, practical proof of their devotion, are well aware of this fact, and the ruler of Bikanir pointed out that acts of Bengali agitators were in no sense those of the Indian peoples, and that the ruling chiefs were truly

loyal, though self-interest might be a factor in their attitude—which surely is matter for satisfaction, not regret.

Upon the return of the Maharaja to his capital his people expressed their warm approval of his loyal letter to *The Times*, while he in turn congratulated them on having abstained from taking any part in anti-British agitation and urged them to maintain the like prudent course in future.

The Nizam of Hyderabad, one of the three premier princes of India, and the ruler of the largest state, assured Lord Minto last November "that the traditional friendship of his house to the British Raj was fully reflected by his people. They were loyal to him and, like himself, faithful to the British Throne. He did not believe a single man could be found among his subjects whose disposition towards the British Government was unsatisfactory. Every Indian endowed with the least sense knew thoroughly well that the peace and prosperity which his country had enjoyed under the benign protection of his Majesty and his august mother would disappear the moment that protection was withdrawn or weakened. From his experience of twenty-three years as ruler of that state, he could say that the form of government was far less important than the spirit of its administration. The essential thing was sympathy, on which the Prince of Wales, with the truly Royal instinct of his race, laid stress on the conclusion of his Indian tour. Sympathy for the people had been a marked characteristic of the Government of India, and the steps now being taken to associate the people more closely with the administration could not fail to bring that sympathy home to the Princes and people alike."

Peculiar significance attaches to his Highness's repudiation of the charge that the Government of India and its servants are unsympathetic, and those who are acquainted with the Nizam know that he is no princely sycophant, but a man who speaks outright that which is in his mind.

As a set off to the cheap denunciations of Mr Bryan, who published as his own opinion the articles of the Bengali Babu's faith, may be taken the evidence of Mr Niels Groïs, a graduate of Harvard University, and a student of international affairs. He was struck by the fact that the Congress at Calcutta was a collection of office-seekers, not of patriots, and in a speech delivered at Boston last year he explained the special opportunities of studying Indian problems he had enjoyed, and compared the disloyalty of the educated classes with the devotion of the masses, who realised that their safety, and in fact their entire well-being, depended on the continuance of British rule. In spite of this obvious, undisputed fact it is the disloyal who are accepted as witnesses, and it is the most satisfactory feature of the projected reforms that another and a far different class will be enabled to give evidence in future.

I have now given some account of the causes which led up to the prevailing unrest, and these have been well summarised by Sir Edward Law, late Finance Member of the Government of India. He attributes it to a faulty system of education, to the liberty accorded to a licentious press, to the lowering of British prestige, and to the want of touch between Government officers and the people. His criticisms as regards the administrative failings of our education system are those which led Lord Curzon's Govern-

ment to make the reforms he introduced, which, however, will need strong backing, if they are to be maintained. Sir Edward thought the press should not be allowed to publish vituperative or seditious articles, and he deemed it necessary to bring it completely under control. He further held that assaults on European British subjects and British soldiers should never go unpunished, a view which I have urged in the House of Commons on many occasions. Sir Edward was also of opinion that the prestige of the British local administrator should be increased by wholesale decentralisation. In fact, the British Empire was made by men, and not by mere routine administrators, and report writers at the end of a telegraph are not men after the pattern of aforetime.

It is easier, however, to locate the causes of the unrest than to prescribe the remedies, some of which, however, are sufficiently obvious, whether or not they are likely to be applied. And the first of all is to give up the pretence that democratic government is good for, or possible for, India, and to admit and act on the admission that the agitators are, as the masses know, unfit to govern Bengal, or any other part of India; the second is to acknowledge, and act upon the acknowledgment, that an aristocratic basis of Government is natural to the Indian continent, and that the people only really revere their own hereditary leaders, who should be confirmed and increased in power and place. They would develop indigenous constitutions, like the village arbitration courts, so infinitely superior to our own tribunals, which act solely as promoters of litigation, sedition, propagators of disloyal lawyers, and as irritants and solvents of the solidarity of Indian society. Mercifully, reforms are now under

consideration which give to the leaders of the people the place from which they have been well-nigh ousted by the lawyers and other products of our educational system, who bite the hand that feeds them. Technical education, village and co-operative banks have already been mentioned, and in decentralisation lies a remedy than which none is more potent. It has often been pointed out that there is too much secretarial government in India, and a good secretary may know, and often does know, nothing of the languages or of the people of the country. All the Congress influence tends towards centralisation, and that influence itself is very much the creature of this dread bacillus of Indian administration, which but for the spread of the English language, had never been born.

One of the chief planks of the Congress platform is the separation of administrative and judicial functions, which means further centralisation and another blow to the influence of the district officer. True, this change would provide a great many more appointments for graduates of the agitator class, and more particularly for lawyers, who are the soul of the agitation, and its most able exponents. These men are, of course, capable of fulfilling most offices as far as intellect and education go, but the masses do not want them, do not like them, and do not trust them. They appreciate village arbitration, or failing that, adjudication by the impartial English officer, be the matter one for revenue or magisterial court.

The power of the district officer should be increased, not, as the Congress wishes, further impaired; the right of appeal should be largely reduced, not, as they wish, extended, but after all the evil can never be fairly righted till Western literature ceases to be general

food for the vulgar, and is taught only in quarters wherein it is likely to be understood in its relation to countries and peoples to which its lessons in different degrees apply. India is a country of caste and class, and education should be suited to those educated, and not thrown headlong at the hungry. The local governments, too, should be free from interference on the part of the Government of India, and, except in respect of matters of Imperial concern, they should be masters in their own house.

The Indian Congress should be brought under regulation, and the danger of alienating the Mahomedans, of all classes, and the Hindoo masses, who are loyal, by yielding to the Babus and Brahmins, should be more thoroughly appreciated. Frequent prosecutions for sedition have of late been instituted, and sentences of some severity have been passed; but the licence of the press should be curbed by binding over editors under heavy penalties to good conduct at the first appearance of sedition in their papers, and of enforcing their recognisances whenever they next offend. The Indian Press is not as that of England, and may enjoy the same liberty when it shows the same sense of responsibility. The Government must regain the confidence of the masses for the local officer, and inspire a feeling that its strength is equal to its justice. Not that the Government has been unmindful, of the responsibility which rests upon it, at this juncture.

In November (1907) it passed an Act for "the prevention of seditious meetings," which enabled provincial administrations to declare any part of their territories proclaimed areas in which no public meetings are allowed without permission under

penalty of fine and imprisonment. Mr Gokhale opposed the Bill in the Viceroy's Council, and urged that the agitators were few in number, which indeed is true, and is a useful admission. Would that they possessed powers for evil only in proportion to their numbers! Lord Minto freely allowed that there was no disloyalty among the Indian masses, but he could not minimise the significance of the Lahore and Rawal Pindi riots, the insults to Europeans, the assaults, looting, and boycotting in Eastern Bengal, nor forget the seditious addresses, newspapers, and leaflets, designed to inflame social feeling, and—fortunately, all in vain—to seduce the Indian army from its loyalty. At the same time he disclaimed any intention of checking the growth of political thought, which the Government only desired to direct into beneficial channels. The new Act was at once put into force in one district of Eastern Bengal, but up till now in no other locality. It had previously been found necessary to promulgate an ordinance for regulating public meetings in Eastern Bengal and the Punjaub, and as the necessity for such regulation continued, it was considered desirable to pass this permanent Act.

The position of the Mahomedans, and the necessity which exists for giving them representation having some proportion, not to their numbers, but to their weight, character, strength, and influence, can never be overlooked when the remedies for unrest are under consideration.

While the Congress and Babu factions perpetually importune the Government with various demands, the Mahomedans stand aside, having confidence in the impartial justice of their rulers, an attitude which is almost inconceivable to those accustomed to English

party government. There is no doubt, however, that the opinion is widespread that agitation pays, and the writer has frequently heard the honours list discussed by Indian gentlemen with the remark, "only the natives who worry and oppose the Government are remembered by it on these occasions. Loyalty does not pay." The Mahomedans have always refused to have anything to do with the Hindoo Congress, and have invariably given the Government silent but effectual support, and in view of the occurrences of 1905, and the manner in which their approval of the partition of Bengal, of the population of which they form two-thirds, was concealed and denied, they thought it necessary to consider their position. They had organised a great demonstration in favour of partition, which they abandoned at the express desire of the British officials, lest it might result in a breach of the peace, and they never concealed their regret at the resignation of Sir Bampfylde Fuller, or their resentment at the manner in which certain members of Parliament of the Congress group "unwarrantably took upon themselves to speak on behalf of the millions of India." They accordingly sent a deputation to the Viceroy urging the Government to take more efficient measures for finding out the opinions of their community, and for giving it due representation in any scheme of reform, which might then, or at any later date, be under consideration.

That this desire has not been overlooked will be apparent from the account of the reforms now proposed, which is given immediately after a short notice of the Congress, which, because of the part it has played in the recent history of India, is deserving of a separate chapter.

CHAPTER X

THE CONGRESS

Sir W. Hunter's Opinions—Lord Cross's Act—Mr Gokhale—Babu S. N. Bannerji—Mr Naoroji—Mr Tilak—Parties in Congress—Babu B. C. Pal—Mr Subramania Iyer—Sir H. Cotton and the End of British Rule

SIXTEEN years have passed since Sir William Hunter wrote that the India of that day was the India of the national political Congress. He said one of the chief results of the reorganisation of Indian education, and the throwing open of the Government schools and colleges to all Indian subjects, irrespective of their race, creed, or caste, was to convert what was formerly a hostile, into a loyal, India. We now know, however, that the result has been to create an English-educated class, which can hardly be described as conspicuously loyal. But if Sir William Hunter was wrong in his forecast, in so far as it related to the Congress, it is well to remember that he was right as regards the masses, and in reminding his readers that India had, nearly up to the time at which he wrote, been more or less hostile, and that the Company's servants failed in a policy of conciliation. Hunter confidently answered in the affirmative the question, Can we conciliate India? He said that the desire of the classes, we sometimes hear spoken of as the troublesome classes, is no longer, as in Lord Metcalfe's time, to get rid of our government, but to be admitted within it to a larger share.

It would be hard to say this of the Babu agitators and their dupes at the present moment. If words mean anything, they do wish to get rid of us, merely retaining our army to keep them in the seats of the mighty, from which, without it, they know they must inevitably, and amidst universal rejoicing, be ejected. Yet it is true that in 1885, and during the Afghan War and the war in the Transvaal, satisfactory proofs of loyal friendliness were forthcoming from most quarters except Bengal and Poona. Even from Bengal came reassuring notes, for perhaps the Babus dreaded the shadow of the realisation of their dream. The feudatory princes have most nobly vindicated their claims to be friends and allies of the Empire, and the masses of the people are quite loyal and contented.

Sir William Hunter describes the Congress, called by its members the Indian National Congress, as a most conspicious outcome of the new sense on the part of the people of interest in the Government. It might be objected that the Congress is not Indian, and is not national, inasmuch as it is not by any means supported by all the nations in India; but, however that may be, it consists of delegates whether or not elected, from the various provinces, who have annually met together for twenty-two years in order to discuss what in their opinion are the political interests of the country, and every year they pass practically identical resolutions. They complain of the administration of the Excise, and of the Arms Act; they ask for a reduction in the salt-duty, so largely decreased in the last few years; for further employment in the public service; that the House of Commons should exercise more control over Indian revenues and ex-

penditure, and that the natives of the country should have a more effective voice in making their own laws. At present, the chief legislative authority is the Viceroy's Legislative Council, which makes laws for the whole empire. It consists of the Executive Council, with additional members who are selected from the influential classes, and from the British mercantile community, and also other additional members nominated by the governments concerned to represent the great provincial governments, of which latter class the writer of these pages was a member. The natives of the country were well represented among the additional members, and a great many of the Congress guns been have been spiked, since the administration of the Excise has been improved, the salt-tax has been largely reduced, the employment of natives of India increased, and the legislative Council reformed in the direction, if not to the extent, desired, for Lord Cross's Act provided for the annual discussion of the Indian expenditure in the Viceroy's Council, for giving members the right to ask questions, and for the increase in the number of the members of the Legislative Council.

The moderate wing of the Congress is understood to favour a gradual development which in the end will make India an autonomous member of the British Empire, and Mr Gokhale is regarded as a member of this branch. Certainly in England his utterances have been such as are well within the purview of such a programme. But there are others who desire to separate from Britain at the earliest possible opportunity, and to this end pursue a persistent campaign of misrepresentation. Of this school

is Mr Tilak, the extremist nominee for the Presidentship in 1906, who was convicted some years ago of attempting to excite disaffection, but it is only recently that politicians of this type have had a preponderating influence in what was formerly, upon the whole, regarded as a moderate and well-affected association. The Mahomedans, however, who have good reasons for, and good opportunities of, being well posted as to its objects and intentions, have always regarded it with distrust and suspicion. The partition of Bengal was a godsend to the extremist section, which, encouraged by the attitude of certain politicians at home, in and out of Parliament, made the most of the not unnatural objections raised by the Babu class to this administrative measure. Day by day the virulent abuse of Government gathered volume.

Soon even Babu S. N. Bannerji, whose hatred and resentment have been sufficiently pronounced, was surpassed by Babu Bepin Chandra Pal, the editor, till a prosecution was launched, or part editor, or proprietor, or part proprietor of *New India* and *Bande Mataram*. The latter paper plainly states that "our British friends should be distinctly told that their point of view is not ours, they desire to make the government of India popular without ceasing in any sense to be essentially British. We desire to make it autonomous and absolutely free of British control. We must go to the hamlets." And they have gone to the hamlets, to debauch the loyalty of the peasants, and they are endeavouring, with as small prospect of success, to capture the Congress caucus, the chief obstacle being the opposition of the moderate men of means, who supply the sinews of war, and have

no idea of generally running amok, and losing all that they have in the resulting disorder. Then the peasants, and the masses generally, have no sympathy and no concern with the movement, nor the old-fashioned Hindoos, nor of course the Mahomedans, who have publicly recorded their disagreement whenever opportunity has offered. They have indeed recently started a Congress of their own, called the All India Moslem League, as a protest against the assumption by the Hindoo Congress of the epithets Indian and National. Among the objects of this league are the promotion of loyalty to England and of an attitude of readiness to fight for the British Government.

In the end Mr Naoroji and not Mr Tilak was nominated President for 1906, but the victory really lay with the extremist party, whose views he expressed in a speech, asking for self-government like that of the United Kingdom or the Colonies, and denouncing the present government of India as a barbarous despotism unworthy of British instincts, principles, and civilisation. He further advocated the raising of a corps of missionaries to go to the hamlets and preach this creed under the supervision of the Congress caucus, which, as has been already remarked, maintains a branch in England.

The two parties in the Congress are now known as the Moderates and the Nationalists, the latter having taken their title from the Irish party, whose organ, *The Freeman's Journal* of Dublin, has published various articles in favour of an autonomous India. A nice dispute arose between these two parties as regards the place at which the meeting for 1907 should be held, and as to the President who should preside,

and finally Surat, and Dr Rash Behary Ghose, were declared the winners. Dr Ghose is accounted a Moderate, and no doubt he may well be so described in comparison with some of his competitors for the post of President, but it should be distinctly understood that though there may be two factions in the Congress, both of them are now associated with disloyal propaganda.

Nevertheless the Congress is not sufficiently extreme to satisfy these extremists, for *The Amrita Bazaar Patrika* has published a series of articles entitled, "How to make the Congress useful." In one of these it is admitted that the association consists merely of English educated middle-class men, and that to make it really national, zemindars, merchants, and representatives of the cultivators of the soil should be included within its ranks. The reason why they keep aloof is well known, for the Congress only interests itself in political matters, and it is an open secret that zemindars and men of higher rank, though they may not join it, provide it with the sinews of war. *The Amrita Bazaar Patrika*, however, in an unwonted burst of candour, asks its readers to remember "that many of our wants and grievances are of our own making, and that it is within our power to remove them without any official or outside help. No nation has ever been able to regenerate itself by relying on others. It is impossible for the Indian National Congress to bring about the salvation of India so long as it does not teach the people self-reliance. The Congress to be of any use should teach the people to arrange for their own education, to cease quarrelling amongst themselves, to develop their industries and agricultural resources, and to learn the art of self-government."

It has been mentioned that a schism arose regarding the appointment of a President last year, and that the extremists wanted Mr Tilak, whom they described as a hero and a martyr, because he was sent to prison ten years ago for good and sufficient reasons. There are degrees amongst the agitators, Babu Surendra Nath Bannerji being regarded as more moderate than Babu Bepin Chandra Pal. Bannerji is, however, sufficiently hostile, and, though he is believed to have renounced Hindoo orthodoxy and prejudices, in his speeches he generally appeals to them in order to arouse enmity against the Government. It is far too readily assumed that the railway strike which has lately taken place has not been fomented by these agitators, for it is well known that their emissaries have been exceedingly active amongst the employees of the East Indian Railway, and most disgraceful speeches have been made at important stations on the line.

Mr Skrine, who compiled a very interesting life of Sir William Hunter, probably altogether overestimated his hero's influence when he wrote that whatever result the Congress achieved was due to the interest of the latter with the British public. However that may be, Hunter's support was of that discerning and moderate character, which the Congress, now become a society dominated by the anti-British damned-Barebones school of controversialists never appreciates. It is more accurate to regard the Congress as one of many results, not as one of the chief causes, of the unrest in India, to which, however, it has of late most actively contributed, while, since it has declared the boycott to be a legitimate weapon, it has committed itself to open defiance of the law. At its meeting in 1906 resolutions were sprung and passed

without any real discussion, and votes were not taken, so that it is impossible to say how far those present concurred in what are put forward as its deliberate opinions. In 1907 the meeting broke up after a free fight, and there was not even a pretence of any resolutions. It is, however, highly improbable that the majority really believe that representation after the English pattern could or should be introduced into India, or that compulsory education could or should be forced upon a country so utterly unprepared for so advanced a measure.

As it is of much importance that the facts regarding the Congress should be known, it may be permissible to take two exponents of its policy, one in India and one in England, whereby a fair idea will be gathered of what this movement really means.

Mr Subramania Iyer, a capable Brahmin, lectured at Tanjore not long since, and he is as good an example of a moderate Congressman, as Congressmen go, as could well be quoted, having been for many years editor of one of the best native papers in India, *The Hindu*. He spoke of the short bright interval of Mahratta rule, when the superiority of the Hindoo nation was asserted. Now the main facts regarding this miserable period in the history of India, when the Mahrattas robbed and plundered at will, and attempted nothing like peaceable or orderly administration, will be found in the first chapter of this little book. His review of the religion of the country is so little accurate that he describes temple worship and perpetual widowhood as practices of Buddhism, and the influence of Buddhism on Hindooism as bad, which is entirely contrary to the fact. But "Shadwell sometimes deviates into sense," and Mr Subramania Iyer

does point out that prior to British rule there was no political unity and no political consciousness. He regards the Queen's proclamation as extorted by fear, and says the moment the cause for fear was gone the promised reforms were abandoned. Chapters II., III., IV., and V. of this work, which are wholly unargumentative, should supply a sufficient answer to this change.

He then declares that not complete severance from England, but self-government on the Colonial model, is the object set before himself and his friends, and he quotes a judgment which, not without reason, occasioned great surprise, by Mitter and Fletcher, J.J. of the High Court of Bengal, which he describes as a golden declaration, and which certainly gave to *Svaraj* a meaning contrary to that which the word obviously owns. "*Svaraj* then," says the ex-editor, "is our political ambition, and *svadeshi* and boycott are our weapons. India will not be a subject nation for ever, now we have the support of the High Court Judges."

Now, *svaraj* simply means self-government *sans phrase*, and does not connote dependence. On another occasion, these discourses being suited to the audiences, the same speaker said: "What is the result of a century's rule in India? Destitution, disease, physical and moral emasculation." Of course Lord Curzon, who endeavoured to deal with the difficulty at the root, and to amend the deplorable educational system, comes in for unmitigated condemnation for "his reactionary designs and his autocratic manners."

Then take a representative of the Congress in England, preferably a Member of Parliament, either Mr O'Donnell or Sir Henry Cotton, whichever be the

leader of the little company of captains which represents in the House of Commons views which are abhorred by all the Europeans in India, civil, military, and commercial, and receives no support from any quarter, other than the Congress, the Babus of Bengal, and the Brahmins of Poona. It may be convenient to take Sir Henry Cotton in preference to Mr O'Donnell for the moment, because, like myself, regardless of the warning of Job, he has written a book, in which he says that "the existence of a Liberal administration compels the adoption of liberal and sympathetic principles in dealing with Indian questions on the spot." Now if there is one thing upon which all sane men are agreed it is that party politics should not be introduced into our Indian Empire, the inhabitants of which regard them in the same light as the Shah, of whom I heard in Persia, who when an effort was made to explain to him what Whig and Tory meant in England, summed up the subject by saying: "Why does not the King knock these madmen's heads together till they do agree." At any rate it is needless to say that the slightest suspicion of party advocacy is forbidden to civil servants, and any infraction of this rule would very properly involve their dismissal from the public service. Indeed continuity of policy has been followed with rare exceptions, and these relate solely to external relations. Again, a complete ignorance of what is common knowledge in India, or an evident desire to obscure the facts, is exhibited by assertions like this: "The Babus rule public opinion from Peshawar to Chittagong." Now the Babus are the most unpopular class in India, and no traveller returns and writes a book without anecdotes which illustrate this perfectly notorious fact. It might fairly

be said that the Babus of Bengal and the Brahmins of Poona are the leaders of the English educated anti-British class, but public opinion, thank heaven! is not yet confined to these classes. What is to become of the English, who have made such a mess of the great Indian problem, whose chief success in the opinion of Sir H. Cotton has been the permanent settlement of Bengal, to protect the cultivating tenant against the landlord, under which settlement the British Government has been actively legislating at frequent intervals ever since the days of Lord Cornwallis; whose Indian railways have ruined the carrying trade, just as English railways ruined the stage coaches; whose education is only partially successful because it is not compulsory; whose tea and indigo industries are bolstered up in some manner, of which no one else is aware, by public money, while the estates themselves are watered with the blood and tears of unwilling slaves, who nevertheless cannot be got, at the expiry of their indentures, to leave their prison, in which they settle for life; whose census commissioners are such lunatics that they see in these settlers the salvation of at least one little province?' Surely, it would be better that these bunglers and oppressors, the English, should as soon as possible leave the country to be governed by the Babus, and that, it appears, actually is the solution. Sir Henry Cotton positively writes "It is the purest folly for us to continue to rule on worn-out lines only suited to a slave population, and the principal object of the Indian Government should be to apply itself to the peaceful reconstruction of a native administration in its place. The withdrawal of the military support would not be injurious to Anglo-Indians, but would constrain them to adopt a more

conciliatory demeanour towards the people of the country. England could withdraw her own standing army, and secure treaty rights for India from the European powers." This she would no doubt do after the abolition of the army and the navy, and with this climax of preposterous politics, quotation from "New India" may end. It will indeed be a new India when these principles are adopted, and yet it is curious to see how, even in a work like this, a residuum of common-sense clings to a man, who has gone through what in most cases proves to be a highly educative experience. It is doubtful whether the Labour benches will altogether agree with Sir Henry Cotton when he writes that "the basis of internal order in India is a patrician aristocracy of indigenous growth trained to control and lead the lower orders." Now such aristocracy would of course govern India, if they had the chance, according to Indian ideas, as the Congress party says, and what are Indian ideas? The rule of caste, wealth, birth, and strength, and of forced labour, which is not exactly the theory which finds favour with those who have been induced to support this propaganda in England. Again, what will the allies of the little Congress party in Parliament say to this: "The maintenance of an hereditary landholding class is the corner-stone of internal political reconstruction. The lower orders stand in urgent need of an aristocracy above them. The prosperity of every country requires that there should exist within it, not only a proletariat, the great body of the people who devote themselves to labour, but also a class of capitalists who provide funds which enable labour to become productive. It is only under the fertilising influence of capital that labour is productive"? This is not quite

the note of the speeches which are delivered on this subject by socialists. Nor do they recognise that birth as well as election and nomination is a principle of selection. Mr Ramsay Macdonald, the Whip of the Labour Party, commits himself to the plain statement that capital is the enemy. In short, Sir Henry Cotton can no more than other people run with the hare and hunt with the hounds, and it is impossible to condemn your fellow-countrymen, root and branch, and throw in your lot with hostile and unreasonable critics of your class and calling, and at the same time to obtain credit for retaining some saving sense of sanity upon side issues of the alphabet of economical and political questions. It is of course very difficult to satisfy democrats and socialists in England and an aristocratic oligarchy of Brahmins and landlords in India, and although the latter seems able to persuade the former that all will be right, if they can oust us, as the Peshwas ousted their masters, and ruled in their stead, yet an ex-official turned anti-official writing on this subject obviously occupies so difficult a position as to be entitled to commiseration.

Another ex-Indian civilian and ex-member of Parliament, Sir William Wedderburn, lately publicly stated that the Indian people complained that the masses are in extreme destitution, and that it is owing to the effects of a disastrous administration that the country is scourged by disease and famine. It is a sufficient answer to this that, upon the agitators' own showing, the people of India have no means of making known their feelings; that no such opinions as these are expressed by their hereditary leaders, and that the people repudiate as their representatives the English-educated Babu class, which is practically de-

nationalised, and merely joined for the present with the members of the Brahmin caste because they can, when thus reinforced, more easily harry and harass the administration.

It is of course extremely mischievous that ex-officials should become anti-officials, and lecture about the country that independent opinion is unanimous, that the people think this and think that, and it is worse than mischievous that they should asperse an active and able administration by attributing to its action calamities which it does all that humanity can do to alleviate. Nor is it easy to refrain from noticing that ex-officials who have spent their lives as concurring, and presumably willing, instruments of Government, and who no sooner leave its service than they state that contact between Europeans and Asiatics is prejudicial to the latter race, have to explain why in their own careers they failed so conspicuously to practise what so incessantly and insistently they preach. Hostile though it is to Government, the Congress at first welcomed Lord Curzon, and flattered him profusely, but they roundly denounced him when he declined to be led, and refused to receive the President of one year who wished to lay the resolution of the Congress officially before him. It might, however, lead to the grossest misunderstanding in India if the head of the Government received officially a member of a body which claims to represent 300,000,000 of people, of whom probably 99½ per cent. have never even heard of its existence. Nor would the Viceroy be carrying out his elementary duty if he encouraged anything which admitted the false and fatal principle of party politics into Indian administration.

Partition gave an opportunity to the Congress party of exhibiting their strength, and, successful as they have been in making demonstrations, their success would have been even greater had they not combined with this agitation the policy of *Svadeshi*, which their sympathisers outside Bengal have shown little inclination to accept, and of *boycott*, which has altogether failed from the commencement.

The meeting of 1907, proved altogether abortive, and broke up in confusion, but even then some craft and subtlety was displayed by the leaders in claiming that the Moderates were overwhelmed by the Extremists, the fact being that both wings are hostile to British rule in India.

CHAPTER XI

PROPOSED REFORMS

Advisory Councils—The Representation of the Landed and of other Interests — Past Preponderance of the Legal Element — Official Majority assured—Legislative Councils—Enlargement proposed—Supreme and Provincial Councils — Mahomedans — Electorate—Special Representation—Denunciations of the Scheme—Admissions of its Merits—Sir A. Lyall's Opinion—Judicial Appointments—Civilisation in Bengal—Council of India Act, 1907—The Indian Members of the Secretary of State's Council—Decentralisation Commission

MR MORLEY in his Budget Speech of 1907 announced that, notwithstanding the occurrences to which reference has been made in a previous chapter, the Government proposed to introduce into Indian administration certain changes which had been recommended by the Governor-General in Council, and explained that, in his opinion, to postpone or withdraw reforms which had previously been contemplated, because of the unrest and agitation which had supervened, would have been construed as a triumph for the party of sedition. They had resolved, therefore, to approve the establishment of advisory councils of notables to serve the double purpose of eliciting independent opinions, and diffusing correct information as to the acts and intentions of Government.

The second proposal was the extension of the general principle of substantial enlargement of the legislative councils, both of the Governor-General,

and of the heads of provincial administrations. The details, Mr Morley said, had not been considered, but the maintenance of an official majority was a necessary condition. A longer time was also to be allowed in the Viceroy's Council for the discussion of the Budget, and two Indian gentlemen were to be appointed to sit on the Secretary of State's own council, a new and welcome departure from previously existing practice in filling up these appointments.

A circular by the Government of India to provincial administrations was subsequently published as a Parliamentary Paper, and from this despatch it appears that, since the Councils' Act of 1892 was passed, by which the legislative councils were enlarged, and the elective principle was recognised, the number of scholars studying English had risen from 298,000 to 505,000; the number of matriculates annually turned out from 4286 to 8211, and the yearly tale of B.A.'s, from 708 to 1570. The Government of India observed that the ruling chiefs, and landholding and commercial classes, representing the most powerful and stable elements of Indian society, had now become qualified to take a larger part in public life, and it was all important that they should be properly represented in any scheme of reform, the more particularly since the needs and sentiments of the masses must find expression through those who are acquainted with their daily life, and are qualified to speak on their behalf, and the essential condition of all reform was stated to be the maintenance in undiminished strength of the executive authority of the Government.

The members of the Imperial Advisory Council

would be appointed by the Viceroy, and the Council would consist of sixty members, including twenty ruling chiefs, and a suitable number of territorial magnates from each province. Office would be held for five years, and the Council would have no legislative or formal powers, but would deal only with such matters as might be specially referred to its consideration.

The provincial governments also were each to be provided with an Advisory Council, the members of which, as a rule, would represent the great landholders of the province, in which it would perform similar functions to those which the Imperial Advisory Council would discharge in respect of the Government of India. Smaller landholders, industry, commerce, capital, and the professional classes would also be represented, besides non-official Europeans. These bodies would be entirely distinct from the legislative councils, whose powers, of course, are formal, and defined by statute, but they would be consulted on matters in respect of which legislation was contemplated, as well as on other occasions. When the legislative councils were enlarged, under the Act of 1892, it was recognised that territorial representation was unsuited to India, and the electorate was so constituted that all the more important interests were represented. It is, however, hardly disputed that, in the case of the provincial councils, the elective system has proved a failure. Out of 54 members elected by district boards, no less than 36 have been barristers and pleaders, while out of 43 members elected by district municipalities 40 have belonged to the same profession. Out of the 338 non-official members, who have been

appointed to provincial councils since the system came into force 36 per cent. have been lawyers, and only 22 per cent. landowners, though between 70 and 80 per cent. of the population are, in some sense, agriculturists. In fact, the lawyers have practically monopolised the representation.

The principle of a standing majority is accepted by the Government of India as legitimate and necessary to the ends and aims of the paramount power in India, and they remark in their circular that this position has never been disputed by any section of public opinion in India which does not dispute the legitimacy of the paramount power itself. They might have said much more than this, for the admission of any other principle would, in the eyes of the natives, make the Government ridiculous and impossible.

It is now proposed that the Imperial Legislative Council should have a maximum strength of 54, including the Viceroy. Of this number, the members of the Executive Council, and the Lieutenant-Governor of the province in which the Council for the time being sits, account for 8, and the intention is to nominate additional officials, not exceeding 20 in number: one ruling chief, and 4 non-officials nominated by the Viceroy to represent universities, or special interests, of whom 2 must necessarily be Mahomedans, 2 experts also nominated by the Viceroy from time to time for special reasons, and 18 elected members. Of the elected members 2 will be chosen by the Chambers of Commerce of Calcutta and Bombay; 7 by the non-official members of the provincial councils of the great provinces of Madras, Bombay, Bengal, Eastern Bengal, the United Provinces, the Punjaub and Burma, and 7

by the nobles and great landholders of the same provinces, excluding Burma, and adding the Central Provinces. The remaining 2 members will be elected by Mahomedans.

Under this scheme the former non-official members now elected for Madras, Bombay, Bengal, and the United Provinces will be raised to seven in number, the privilege of election being extended to Eastern Bengal, Punjaub, and Burma. The Government of India states in its circular to local governments and administrations that it is impressed with the necessity for giving substantial representation to the great landholders, who not only constitute the aristocratic and stable elements in Indian society, but also represent the interest of the landlords, great and small—in short, the landed interest, in a continent in which that interest is paramount among all classes. For it should be remembered that no small proportion of the landlords are holders of quite small estates, whose interests are nevertheless identical with those of the great landlords, the latter not being by any means a class apart from the people, of whom indeed, in this pre-eminently agricultural country, they are the best and, under existing conditions, the only representatives.

It is suggested that the provincial electorate for choosing the seven representatives of the landholders on the Imperial Legislative Council should vary from about 100 to 150 members, and that the amount of land revenue payable to Government, which should confer the right to vote, should be not less than 10,000 rupees, or £666 a year. It is probable that an electorate of this character would be difficult to manipulate, and better calculated than a larger and

more heterogeneous body to defy the wire-pulling which has resulted in the almost complete monopoly of representation by the legal classes.

The question of the electorate, however, is left, as indeed are all others, to the local governments, who are desired to inquire, deliberate, and report fully their opinions upon the proposals referred for their consideration. Great importance is attached to the representation of the Mahomedans, who are a factor in India far greater than would necessarily follow from their numbers in comparison with those of the Hindoos. Lord Minto observed last year, in answering a deputation, that any electoral representation would be doomed to failure which aimed at granting personal enfranchisement regardless of the beliefs and traditions of the communities composing the population of the continent, and it is notorious that the Mahomedans have never received representation commensurate with the weight of their community. It is suggested that the provincial electorate for Mahomedans should be differently constituted in view of the fact that not many of their co-religionists are included amongst the great landlords. Of the four seats reserved for them in the Viceroy's Council, two will be filled by nomination by the Viceroy, and two by election in rotation from Bengal, Eastern Bengal, the United Provinces, the Punjaub, Bombay, and Madras. The electorate in this behalf would be constituted partly on the collegiate, and partly on the tax-paying, basis. As regards the provincial legislative councils, conditions vary so much in different parts of India that greater latitude must be allowed to the provincial administrations as regards recourse to the principle of election. At present the

larger number of the elected members of such councils, who also constitute the majority of the electorate for the Imperial Council, are chosen by municipalities and district boards, the franchises of which bodies are unduly, indeed extraordinarily, low.

It may be taken for granted that some provincial governments, for instance that of the Punjaub, will consider their territories insufficiently advanced for the application of the elective principle in any form, and that in others a landowning electorate of the class suggested can hardly be obtained, few large estates being in existence. In the former case some kind of collegiate representation could probably be evolved and in the latter the creation of an electorate of smaller landholders would not appear to present insuperable difficulties. Special provision would probably have to be made for the Sikhs in the Punjaub, while the Parsees of Bombay, not without reason, think they should enjoy special representation, to which their loyalty, wealth, and enterprise justly entitle them. They are, however, but 94,190 out of 294,361,056, and it is obvious that the principle of special representation must have its limits, unless something like an Indian parliament upon British lines is to be created. Nor are the Parsees overlooked upon the Legislative Council of Bombay. Indeed the attitude of the Parsee Association in claiming special representation is not universally approved by Parsees, *The Oriental Review* holding that they should throw their lot in with the other Indian communities, though it is pretty clear that what is meant is that the Parsees, who include among their number so many able men, should be persuaded to join the malcontent Congress party, and not accept the pro-

posed reforms. Of that there is, however, no fear; so loyal, intelligent, and sober a community being unlikely under any circumstances to join Bengalis who love agitation for its own sake, or Poona Brahmins whose *métier* it is to hate the English.

As regards native Christians, they are already sufficiently represented by the European official members, who invariably look after their interests in the Provincial and the Imperial Legislative Councils. Nice questions in which they are interested sometimes arise, with some of which, as Additional Member from Madras, I myself was concerned. With one such relating to the law of succession I was able to deal, but another still awaits satisfactory solution—the amendment of the Christian Converts Dissolution of Marriage Act, under which converts to Christianity, who like the early Christians are generally poor, suffer considerable hardships, and particularly the Roman Catholic Christians, because they are, under the combined operation of the above-mentioned Act and the Penal Code, deprived of the benefit of the Pauline dispensation. This privilege of the faith, by the common law and the immemorial usage of the Church, permitted the dissolution of a marriage subsisting between a convert and a spouse who refused to live with him or her, because of his or her conversion, by a simple process, outside the courts, lasting thirty days and costing nothing, whereas the present procedure is, to a poor fisherman for example, only less prohibitive than the private Act of Parliament for divorce procedure, which formerly obtained in England. If, however, this solitary grievance were remedied, little would remain for a representative of native Christians to accomplish. Why this has never been put right I

cannot understand, nor could my colleague, Sir Griffith Evans, who said: "The Catholic Christians can get no redress as to the hardship of the marriage laws. Their converts are branded as bigamists, their children bastardised, and their priests turned into criminals."

The Mahomedans lost no time in expressing their gratitude to Lord Minto for his speedy fulfilment of his pledges to the great deputation and their approval of "a sincere and timely attempt to respond to the practical ideals of liberty and progress, which are stirring the natural leaders of all classes and sects in the country, provision being made for due and adequate protection of the great Mahomedan minority in India." They understood that Lord Minto's Government "of its own initiative put forward a scheme which would in the main command the approval of all moderate and sober leaders of public opinion in India." The Secretary of State, too, has taken great pains to explain that the scheme was in part that of the Government of India, which he had approved, but did not originate.

Nevertheless, nearly all the critics affect to consider the contemplated reforms as the personal proposals of Mr Morley. Condemnations therefore of a personal character fall to the ground, and objectors are left to explain why all the members of the Executive Government of India are perverted Liberals or anti-democratic Tories.

No sooner had Mr Morley's speech announcing the proposed reforms been telegraphed to India than open-air meetings of denunciation, chiefly attended by students, were held in Calcutta. Babu Bepin Chandra Pal congratulated his hearers that, though the Congress movement had been unable to awaken

enthusiasm, the *Svadeshi* agitation had been more successful. "The English at last were afraid, and were resorting to conciliation. But the people would be satisfied with nothing less than *Svaraj*—self-government. The Feringhees"—a contemptuous name for Europeans—"were fools to think they could check popular forces at the point of the bayonet. Realising the seriousness of the situation, they now took to extending popular powers. They shook in their shoes at the remembrance of the Mutiny, and were mightily afraid of another rising." The speaker was very bold regarding the attitude of his own newspaper, which, however, distinctly moderated its tone after he himself had been warned to amend his ways. The admission that the reforms extend popular powers is useful, and no doubt inadvertent.

The objections taken to reforms of the Imperial Council centre around the provision of seven seats for nobles and great landowners, who, without the slightest justification, are described as well-born sycophants. That there are some of this class may be true, but that this description fits them all is wholly untrue, and Lord Curzon, who was as masterful as a man may be in the Viceroy's chair, did not find the native princes and chiefs very amenable to his endeavour to prevent them from leaving their states or revisiting Europe without permission. Nor do the records of the Government of India show that the upper classes are by any means "master please" gentlemen. It is a very simple matter for the few agitators to describe the many who agree with the Government as interested time-servers, but something more than vituperation is needed when one small class stands against many millions.