



FITNESS FOR SELF-RULE

PRACTICAL UNANIMITY AS REGARDS THE GOAL AND THE IDEAL.

That India should one day become self-ruling, either within or outside the British Empire, is a political ideal which was not absent from the minds of all British statesmen. Some of them have left it on record that that was in their opinion India's destiny. For instance, the Marquess of Hastings wrote in his *Private Journal* (May 17th, 1818) :

"A time not very remote will arrive when England will, on sound principles of policy, wish to relinquish the domination which she has gradually and unintentionally assumed over this country, and from which she cannot at present recede. In that hour it would be the proudest boast and most delightful reflection that she had used her sovereignty towards enlightening her temporary subjects, so as to enable the native communities to walk alone in the paths of justice, and to maintain with probity towards their benefactors that commercial intercourse in which we should then find a solid interest." (P. 361-362, Panini Office Edition)

That self-government is our goal is admitted by all. Even British officials in India have in some recent utterances admitted that self-rule is the ideal towards which India should move. Among the latest is that of His Excellency Lord Chelmsford, Viceroy of India, who, in the course of his reply to the address of the Indian Association of Calcutta, said (December, 1916) : "I hope some day to see India hold a position of equality among the sister nations of which the British Empire is composed." Self-government has found place among the subjects discussed approvingly by members of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League parties. Both these representative bodies have in their latest

sessions demanded self-government. It is the declared object of the Home Rule League.

While all agree that self-rule is our goal and ideal, there are widely divergent opinions as to the time needed for the realization of this ideal. Lord Morley, the *radical* statesman, could not imagine a time when India would cease to be under personal rule. Others, gifted with a little more political imagination, place the time of the fulfilment of our hopes in the very remote future. Others, again, say that though the time is distant, it is not very distant. Some are of opinion that Indians ought at once to have some powers of control over the administration given them; while some others think that a complete scheme of self-rule should be immediately prepared, and power should at once begin to be given to the representatives of the people in accordance with that scheme, full control over the administration, civil and military, being vested in them in the course of the next 10, or at the most, 20 years, thus taking an effective step towards the perfect nationalisation of the government within a decade or so following. Under the circumstances it may be of some use to try to understand what is implied in fitness for self-rule.

WHAT SELF-RULE IMPLIES.

What is the work that a self-ruling nation does or is expected to do? Or, in other words, what is meant by managing the affairs of a country? The principal duties of a government are to defend the country from foreign aggression, to maintain peace and order within its borders by preventing or suppressing rebellion, revolution and robberies, to raise a sufficient revenue by means of taxation of various kinds, to spend this revenue in the most economical and beneficial way, to make and enforce laws, to administer justice, and to make arrangements for education and sanitation, to maintain communications throughout the country by means of waterways, roads and railways for facilitating travelling and commerce, to make the country rich by helping

and encouraging the people to develop its agriculture, industries and commerce, to help the growth and expansion of a mercantile marine for the purposes of international commerce and intercourse, to encourage the growth of its literature and fine arts, &c.

GOVERNMENT WITH FOREIGN AND NATIONAL PERSONNEL.

These duties can never be performed satisfactorily by any foreign government. They can be so performed only where the government is national. For the foreigners, constituting a foreign government, having a duty to perform both to their own country and the subject country they govern, cannot pay undivided and single-minded attention to the welfare of the latter, and, in case of a conflict of interests between the two countries, cannot prefer those of the subject country, as it is natural for men to be more anxious for the welfare of their own country than for that of other countries.

WHAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS AND HAS NOT DONE.

In India, during the last century and a half, the British Government has been doing almost all the duties of a government, some energetically, some in a lukewarm manner, and some with indifference. To some duties it has not yet set its hands. For instance, there is no Indian navy, and Government has not helped or encouraged the building up of a fleet of mercantile vessels. On the contrary, it is during the British period of Indian history that the indigenous shipping and ship-building industry have declined and almost entirely disappeared. The Indian army is not manned in all its arms by Indians, there is no aerial fleet, and the commissioned officers are all non-Indians. But this is a digression.

OUR FITNESS IN BRITISH AND PRE-BRITISH PERIODS.

Those State duties which the British Government in India performs, are performed more or less

with the help of the people of India. They were performed by Hindus and Musalmans in the age immediately preceding the British period, and in still more ancient times by Hindus and Buddhists alone. But whether Hindus, Buddhists, or Musalmans, those who managed the affairs of the country in the pre-British period were Indians. Englishmen did not come to a country of savages, but to one where the art of Government had in previous ages made great progress.

In the British period, too, Indians have, on the whole, proved their fitness for any kind of work, civil or military, which they have been allowed to do. So it cannot be said that they are totally unfit for the performance of all kinds of civil and military work.

SUBORDINATE AND INDEPENDENT DUTIES.

It may be objected, that it is in subordinate capacities that Indians have done their work and proved their capacity. That is true in the main. But in those cases also in which Indians have held independent charges, they have proved their capacity. Moreover, as they have not been given opportunities to prove their power of initiative and their fitness for independent work in most departments logically, it can only be said that in these departments neither the fitness nor the unfitness of Indians has been demonstrated. It should be borne in mind that this applies only to the British period. In the pre-British period Indians could and did do all kinds of work. Should it be said that there had been a deterioration since then, Indians alone could not be logically held responsible for such a result.

PROOF OF WORTH AND ITS RECOGNITION.

Government may say, "We would have given you high posts if you had proved your worth." But that is begging the question. How can fitness for a particular kind of work be proved unless one gets an opportunity to do that sort of work? It is like saying, prove that you can swim and then you will

be allowed to plunge into water. Moreover, it is not true that Indians get those appointments to which their qualifications entitle them. Take the educational department. Here the rule is to appoint even raw British and Colonial graduates to the higher service to the exclusion of Indians of superior, and often tried merit.

In executive and administrative work, too, we find that men like Romesh Chunder Dutt and Krishna Govinda Gupta could not get a lieutenant-governorship or even a chief-commissionership, though it cannot be said that they were inferior in ability to the general run of those British officers who have filled these posts. There are many Deputy Collectors who can teach many Magistrates their duties. But the former always occupy a subordinate position. In the army even Indian winners of the Victoria Cross cannot hope even to be lieutenants.

There is, no doubt, a natural reluctance on the part of Englishmen to acknowledge our fitness. For if our fitness were admitted, there would be only two courses open. One would be to give us all the posts for which we were declared fit ; but that would mean the exclusion of Englishmen from many lucrative careers. The other would be to declare practically that, though Indians might be fit, Englishmen, for selfish reasons, were resolved by the exercise of political power to pervert them from getting their due. But the rulers of India could not naturally make such a brutal declaration.

The following observations of the *Philippine Review* (May, 1916) may be quoted in this connection :—

Dependent peoples are always looked upon by westerners as short of qualifications ; and, whatever their actual merits may be, they (their merits) are lost sight of under cover of such *advisably* prevailing belief that *they* (said people) *are short of qualifications*.

Their failures are magnified, and their successes minimized. Their failures are theirs, and their successes not theirs, and the latter are necessarily the work of their masters.

The mistakes of independent peoples are not mistakes to them ; but the same mistakes, if made by dependent peoples even

in the *minimum* degree, are considered *mistakes in the maximum degree* deserving the most spiteful condemnation,—the result of their alleged lack of qualifications, character or what not.

Besides, dependent peoples are not in a position to act for themselves; for others act for them—those who, for one reason or another, in one way or another, have assumed responsibility for their tutelage—and are always discriminated against, and subject to the pleasure of their masters, whose convenience must obtain.

On the other hand, an independent people are free from outside prejudices, none cares to waste time searching for their virtues and vices, and they are *per se* considered as fully qualified people, particularly if before and behind them big modern guns can deafeningly roar defensively and offensively.

PRESENT-DAY INDIAN ACHIEVEMENT : CORRELATION OF CAPACITIES.

The successful management of the affairs of a country is neither so mysterious nor so intricate and complicated a matter as to be beyond the powers of Indians to tackle and master. The historian Lecky says :—

"Statesmanship is not like poetry, or some of the other forms of higher literature, which can only be brought to perfection by men endowed with extraordinary natural gifts. The art of management, whether applied to public business or to assemblies, lies strictly within the limits of education, and what is required is much less transcendental abilities than early practice, tact, courage, good temper, courtesy, and industry.

"In the immense majority of cases the function of statesmen is not creative, and its excellence lies much more in execution than in conception. In politics possible combinations are usually few, and the course that should be pursued is sufficiently obvious. It is the management of details, the necessity of surmounting difficulties, that chiefly taxes the abilities of statesmen, and those things can to a very large degree be acquired by practice."

Different kinds of genius, talent and capacity are not separate and independent entities; they are organically connected and correlated. If a nation gives evidence of genius, talent and ability in some spheres of human activity, it is safe to presume that it possesses the power to shine in other spheres of activity, too, if only it be allowed the opportunity to do so. We shall not speak of ancient times. Even in these so-called degenerate days, the Indian is found among the world's great spiritual teachers and

thinkers, the world's great litterateurs, the world's great artists, the world's great statesmen, and the world's great captains of industry. Even under the depressing circumstances of subjection, the Indian has fought his way to the British Parliament, to the highest Councils of the Indian Empire in London and Delhi-Simla, and won the Victoria Cross by conspicuous valour in the field of battle. It will not do to say that the small number of men to whom we refer are exceptions. The biggest trees are found, not in the midst of treeless deserts, but in tracts where there are other trees only less big than themselves. Take any age in any country and you will find that the most famous poet, scientist, statesman, general, &c., were not solitary individuals, but only the greatest among great men. Shakespeare, Darwin, Gladstone, Wellington, Nelson, were not freaks of nature, but had contemporaries who were almost their equals. What is true of England or of any other country, is true of India, too. We have many men almost as gifted as those who have made a name, many probably equally gifted, and some possibly more gifted. Given the opportunity, and there is bound to be a greater manifestation of ability of a high order in all spheres of human life.

THE GETTING AND MAKING OF OPPORTUNITY.

We have used the word opportunity more than once. It may be said that nations like men *make* their own opportunity and that nobody *gives* them opportunity. This is but partially true. The Negroes of America have got some opportunity and are consequently showing what stuff they are made of. In their native countries they never got the opportunity. But the objection has been raised, "Why could they not make their opportunity in their own country? The fact that the white European ancestors of the white Americans became civilised earlier than the Negroes shows the superiority of the white men; for the white men *made* their

opportunity, the Negro had to be *given* the opportunity." It may similarly be said to us: "Why ask for opportunity? Make your own opportunity. If obstacles are put in your way, overcome them." So we will, so far as it lies in man to mould his destiny. But may we here remind all so-called "superior" races of one fact? Human history is not limited by the few centuries of occidental ascendancy. The Hindus, the Egyptians, the Chinese were civilised, they got and made their opportunity, before all or at least the majority of European races. Why could not the Europeans make their opportunity when the Egyptians made theirs? Does that fact show the inferiority of the European races? The Japanese got and made their opportunity only half a century ago. There have been ups and downs in the history of all countries. Let none arrogantly assume that they have been wholly the makers of their own destiny. Let none, also, weakly assume that they are entirely powerless to mould their present and their future. Let all who have the power give the requisite opportunity to those who need it;—the time may come for the givers of opportunity to be its seekers. Let all who seek opportunity *make* it as far as in them lies, and it *does* lie in them to a very great extent. Fate or destiny is not a fixed but an indefinitely elastic boundary which nations can push further and further outwards by their strength and perseverance.

PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE FORMS OF GOVERNMENT OF A COUNTRY.

Some people seem to think that the present and future forms of government of a country cannot be different from the forms of government which prevailed in it in former days. This belief or fancy has no foundation in historical fact; for in every one of the countries where at present there are either constitutional monarchies or republics, there was at some period of their history absolute monarchy. But should it be taken for granted that the past forms

of government of a country qualify or disqualify its people for representative government at present or in the future, Indians would not stand utterly disqualified.

DEMOCRACY IN PRE-BRITISH INDIA.

The earliest republics known to Europeans were those of ancient Greece and Italy. In India there were republics in ancient times in regions wider in extent than Greece and Italy combined, and for a longer period of time than the entire period of duration of those old European republics. College students who read Prof. Rhys Davids' "Buddhist India" and Mr. Vincent A. Smith's "Early History of India" know this fact. In the ancient Indian monarchies there were checks upon the powers of kings, though these were not exactly of the kind known to Europeans as constitutional. The Sanskrit word "raja," Rhys Davids says, originally signified something like the Greek *archon* or the Roman *consul*. In his article on "Constitutional Aspects of Rituals at Hindu Coronation," published in the *Modern Review* for January, 1912, Mr. K. P. Jayaswal has shown that Hindu Kings used to be elected, or in any case their ascension to the throne required popular ratification. This view finds support from the Hindu epics, the Ramayan and the Mahabharat. In the Ramayan we know what King Dasarath did to ascertain the desire of the people as to who should be his heir-apparent, and also how the discontent of the people found expression when their favourite Ramchandra was exiled. In the Mahabharat similar evidence is found in what happened when the blind king Dhritarashtra tried to make his own son Duryodhan king instead of the Pandavas, the rightful heirs. In the history of the Pal dynasty of Bengal we find the people electing a king after a revolution. In Southern India, there were the "five great assemblies which checked the autocracy of Tamil kings, and which consisted of the people, priests, astrologers,

physicians, and ministers." That village communities in India were so many little republics is well known. This is true both of Northern and Southern India. Mr. Vincent Smith says :—

"Certain long inscriptions of Parantaka are of especial interest to the students of village institutions by reason of the full details which they give of the manner in which local affairs were administered by well-organized local committees, or panchayats, exercising their extensive administrative and judicial powers under royal sanction. It is a pity that this apparently excellent system of local self-government, really popular in origin, should have died out ages ago. Modern governments would be happier if they could command equally effective local agency." (Early History of India, 2nd Ed., p. 418.)

THE ART OF GOVERNMENT IN INDIA OF THE PAST.

To what a pitch of efficiency the art of imperial and local government was carried in ancient India is clear from such works as Chanakya's *Arthasastra*, *Sukraniti*, &c., the epics *Ramayan* and *Mahabharat* (particularly the *Santiparva* of the latter), the *Samhita* of Manu and other *Samhitās* (codes), many epigraphic records such as those on which Sir Sankaran Nair wrote his article on "Village Government in Southern India" in *The Modern Review* for March, 1914, the Greek accounts of Chandra Gupta's administration, and the achievements of Emperors Asoka, Samudra Gupta, Dharmapala, &c. In the Musalman and Maratha periods there were great statesmen and administrators like Sher Shah, Akbar, Aurangzib, Shivaji and others. The statesmanship and administrative capacity of the Peshwas deserve to be better known than they are. An excellent idea of Akbar's administrative system can be had from Abul-Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari*. The revenue system of his minister Todar Mal has been followed by the British Government. Islam is democratic, and Musalman traditions favour the representative system. Before Ranjit Singh became the autocrat of the Panjab, the affairs of the Sikhs were managed according to democratic methods. The remains of ancient monuments of various descriptions, old land communications,

water-ways, irrigation works, &c., bear witness to the high civilization and civic capacity of the people and rulers of India in pre-British days.

Our history, therefore, does not disqualify us for self-rule;

CONQUEST, AND LOSS OF CAPACITY FOR AND RIGHT OF SELF-RULE.

Englishmen generally think and many Indians also seem to hold that our unfitness for self-rule has been demonstrated once for all by British conquest of India. They seem to ask: "If Indians are fit to manage the affairs of their own country, why were they conquered at all?" Conquest would seem, therefore, to be a justification for deprivation of self-rule. We need not here discuss historically whether British India as a whole, or its major portion was conquered by the English. Let it be granted that we are a conquered people and let us examine this doctrine in the light of history.

EXAMPLES FROM BRITISH EMPIRE HISTORY.

The French Canadians were conquered by the English in 1763, but the whole colony became self-governing in 1791. After that date the French Canadians revolted more than once and were defeated and conquered as often. But they continue to be self-ruling. Some seventeen years ago the Boers of South Africa were conquered, but were granted self-government almost immediately afterwards. Ireland was conquered centuries ago. But before the Union with Great Britain in 1801, Ireland had its own Parliament, and since the Union the Irish have enjoyed representation in the British Parliament in a larger proportion than their numerical strength would entitle them to. They have rebelled, attempted to rebel and used methods of violence again and again, and have been baffled in every instance. But they have not been deprived of their right of representation. And they are sure to have Home Rule at an early date. Wales

is a conquered country, but enjoys parliamentary representation and has local self-government. England was conquered by the Romans, the Angles and Saxons, the Danes and the Normans. But it is now among the freest countries in the world. Every country, in fact, which is now free and independent, was conquered at some period or other of its history. The British Colony of New Zealand has its own parliament. The aboriginal inhabitants of this colony, the Maori, now number only 50,000. But they return four members to the New Zealand parliament. This right was granted to them in 1871, immediately after their conquest by the white colonists. *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* tells us :

"They were poor marksmen, and had but little skill in laying ambushes. During ten years of intermittent marching and fighting between 1861 and 1871 the Maori did no more than prove that they had in them the stuff to stand up against fearful odds and not always to be worsted Even as it was, the resistance of the Maori was utterly worn out at last. After 1871 they fought no more."

Other savage people in the British Empire who enjoy self-rule are the Gilbert and Ellice Islanders. True, the Maori and these savages are small in number ; but the enjoyment by them of self-rule disproves the doctrine that conquest must involve the forfeiture of civic rights.

EXAMPLES FROM FOREIGN HISTORY.

Numerous examples may also be given from the history of countries lying outside the British Empire. America conquered the Filipinos some eighteen years ago. These half-civilized and uncivilized men have had home rule for the last decade or so, and have been promised independence or complete autonomy at an early date. *The Philippine Review* for November, 1916, writes :

A government directly responsible to the people has just been created in accordance with the powers vested in the Philippine Legislature by the new organic act of the Philippines. Hereafter, the people will receive full account of the administration of its affairs, and no further antagonism between themselves and the officials of the government will be possible. The party in power

will rule and the departmental policies of the administration will be determined by it. The departmental secretaries will be appointed after the prevailing party has been installed in office—selected from men of that party—and their term of office will be for three years only,—the legislative term of office. Public opinion will be given due recognition hereafter. This new form of government, in the language of Speaker Osmena, will be a constant spur to their sense of duty and to their consciences as patriots.

Serbia had been autocratically governed by Turkey for centuries. With the assistance of the Christian powers of Europe and according to some provisions of the Treaty of Berlin it obtained independence in 1878, and its king and people have been managing their affairs well ever since. Such also is the history of Bulgaria. It was under Turkish rule for centuries, and became independent in 1908 with the help of some European powers. Its king and people have not displayed any incapacity to conduct their own affairs.

CONQUEST DOES NOT INVOLVE LOSS OF SELF-RULE.

We need not multiply examples. Those which we have already cited are sufficient to show that conquest and dependence do not lead to utter loss of administrative capacity, nor do they mean or necessarily involve or justify forfeiture of civic rights. It is only right that it should be so. If some man, good or bad, armed or unarmed, defeats another man in single combat, that does not in any country mean that the former and his descendants and successors are entitled to deprive the latter and his heirs and successors of the natural right to possess, use and manage their estate, nor that they have lost the power to do so.

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY.

Let us briefly refer to contemporary history. Belgium has been a free country for some 80 years. It has been self-governing, and has made great progress in education, industry and commerce. Germany has conquered Belgium. But England, France and Russia are not convinced that that fact would justify the extinction of Belgian independence

and liberty, nor that that fact proves unfitness of the Belgians to govern themselves. On the contrary, the Allied Powers are rightly trying to restore liberty to Belgium. Serbia has similarly been conquered by Bulgaria and Germany. But the Allies are trying to make her free again. Poland had long been partitioned among and ruled by Germany, Russia and Austria. But during the present European war, both Russia and Germany have promised autonomy to Poland. If conquest and long subjection meant utter unfitness for self-rule, how have the Poles all at once become fit for autonomy?

In an article in the *Commonweal*, Mr. George Bernard Shaw has observed :—

The truth is, all nations have been conquered; and all peoples have submitted to tyrannies which would provoke sheep or spaniels to insurrection. I know nothing in the history of India that cannot be paralleled from the histories of Europe. The Pole, whitest, handsomest, most operationally heroic of Europeans, has eaten dirt in the East as the equally romantic Irishman has in the West. Germany has given such exhibitions of helpless political disintegration accompanied by every atrocity of internecine warfare as India at her worst can never hope to surpass. If India is incapable of self-government, all nations are incapable of it; for the evidence of history is the same everywhere.

.....there is something to be said for the stranger as a judge. In the Middle Ages, when the Italian cities had a dispute, they called in a stranger to settle it, because the stranger, as such, was impartial. And when an Indian has a dispute with another Indian and feels surer of justice with an English magistrate than with a native one, he may be just as shrewd in his preference as the mediæval Italian, knowing that indifference, even when it is contemptuous, is not a bad working substitute for conscientious impartiality.....But the days are past when the judge was also the lawgiver and ruler. Nations may have as many foreign judges as they like for the sake of the foreigner's impartiality; but they must govern themselves; and the fact that they do it so badly that no nation is at present either free or healthy or prosperous only makes it additionally absurd for any of them to pretend to do for others what it cannot do decently for itself.

INDIA'S SIZE AND HER MANY LANGUAGES, CREEDS,
RACES, AND CASTES.

Home Rule has been thought unsuitable for India, because of its being like a large continent,

where there exist many languages, creeds, races, and castes. But the Russian commonwealth is very extensive and is inhabited by a variety of races and religious sects, and by peoples speaking many different languages. Yet it is now a republic. The Austro-Hungarian Empire, too, is characterized by diversity of races, sects and languages. It is a constitutional monarchy and the form of government is largely representative. The United States of America is a republic populated by various races, speaking different tongues and having different creeds. The number of languages, as distinguished from dialects or local patois, spoken in India, has been exaggerated. In the census of 1901 they were stated to number 147; by 1911 they had increased to 220! In real fact one or other of a dozen principal languages would be found to be understood, whatever the province that might be chosen to test this statement. Besides, whatever force the multiplicity of Indian languages might be supposed to have against the exercise of self-rule by India as a whole in pan-Indian affairs, it can have none whatever against our enjoyment of provincial autonomy. In the United Provinces, Maharastra, Behar, Orissa, Bengal, Andhra, Gujarat, Sindh, &c., the people of the province all understand one main language. As for our many sects and creeds, the people of India professing them are, to say the least, really not more intolerant of one another's beliefs and practices than the Christian sects inhabiting any Western country.

DESPOTISM AND THE ORIENT.

It is sometimes observed that as orientals have always been used to despotic government, they appreciate only autocracy; they can neither appreciate nor are fit for self-rule. In the first place, it is not a fact that despotism has been the prevailing form of government in oriental countries in all ages. We have already given some idea of different kinds of government which prevailed in India of the past,—

which were more or less democratic in character. It would not, however, have mattered much, if we had been accustomed only to absolutism in the past. Western peoples who now have republics or limited monarchies in their country had been at some time or other of their history governed despotically. As for oriental countries, Japan has had representative government for the last fifty years, growing very powerful and prosperous in consequence. China, though not out of the woods yet, is a republic. The insurrections caused by the attempt to convert it into a monarchy show how deep-rooted and widespread the republican feeling is in China. Even under Manchu rule and earlier still, the Chinese had always enjoyed a large measure of local autonomy. A constitutional monarchy, with a parliament, has been established in Persia also : but the conflicting interests and intrigues of some European powers have prevented the Persians from showing their capacity for self-rule. Self-rule in Afghanistan will be dealt with in another article in this booklet. The success of Japan alone, however, demonstrates that oriental peoples may be capable of self-government.

SELF-RULE IN THE INDIAN STATES.

In the Indian States, known as the Native States, the Rulers, the principal officers and the subordinate officials are Indians. Mysore, Baroda, Gwalior, Travancore, and several small states are on the whole as efficiently governed as British India. Some of them are superior to British India in material prosperity, in education, in the encouragement of industrial development, and in respect of the separation of the judicial from the executive functions. No doubt, the British Government has helped the Indian States by guaranteeing protection from external aggression and prevention of internal revolts, and occasional advice given by political residents. But the people of British India, too, do not demand the immediate severance of the Indo-British connection ; Home Rule under the protection and guidance of the

British Empire is the demand of Congress and Moslem League alike.

Geographically and ethnologically Nepal is a part of India. Nepal manages its own affairs without British protection and guidance. It is true that neither the Feudatory States of India nor Nepal can hold their own against a leading European power. But Belgium, Serbia, Rumania and Montenegro have not been able to defend themselves against the Teutonic powers. The Teutonic powers could conquer Denmark and Holland also, if they liked. Do the British, the French and their allies for that reason call in question the capacity and the right of the Belgians, the Rumanians, the Serbians and the Montenegrins or of Holland and Denmark, to govern themselves? Or would it be right to do so?

The objection may be urged that the power to manage the affairs of the *small* Indian states is not a proof of the capacity to administer the affairs of a *large* Empire like India. Our reply is threefold:

(1) If our capacity to govern the small Native States be admitted, why cannot we in British India, leaving imperial politics alone, have self-rule in the provinces, or in the Divisions or in the Districts, or even in all the municipalities? The peoples' hands are tied even in village unions.

(2) In the second place, the Colonials in some of the self-governing British Colonies have to deal with small areas or small populations. Their success in managing their affairs has been considered a sufficient proof of their capacity to lead some British Cabinet Ministers in recent months to promise that when the war is over, they should share in the government of the Empire. Lord Chelmsford, a former governor of New South Wales and Queensland, and a London County Councillor, has been thought fit to be appointed Viceroy of India. Why cannot then the successful work of the great ministers of the Native States, like Salar Jung, Seshadri Iyer, Dinkar Rao, Romesh Dutt, &c., be taken as a proof of Indian capacity to deal with imperial politics?

Some of the independent European countries, too, are small, yet nobody questions their right and capacity to govern themselves. The following tables will afford a basis for comparison between some of our states, some British colonies and some European countries.

<i>Indian states</i>	Area in sq. miles	Population
Gwalior	25,107	30,33,082
Travancore	7,129	34,28,975
Baroda	8,182	20,32,798
Mysore	29,459	58,06,193
Hyderabad	82,698	1,33,74,676
<i>British Colonies</i>		
Newfoundland	40,000	2,40,000
New Zealand	1,05,000	10,90,000
New South Wales	3,10,400	16,50,000
Victoria	88,000	13,15,551
Queensland	6,70,500	6,06,000
<i>European Countries</i>		
Belgium	11,373	75,71,387
Denmark	15,582	27,75,076
Holland	12,582	62,12,701
Switzerland	15,976	38,31,220
Montenegro	5,603	5,16,000
Serbia	18,650	29,11,001

We could have given the figures for the South American republics like Chile, Argentine Republic, &c., also, but it is unnecessary.

(3) The ability to manage the affairs of a small state is really as great a test of statesmanship as the ability to run a bigger one. In support of our assertion we subjoin what Max Muller wrote in the *Fortnightly Review* about Gaurisankar Udaysankar Oza, the Prime Minister of Bhavnagar.

"These words contain a rapid survey of the work of a whole life, and if we were to enter here into the details of what was actually achieved by this native statesman, we shall find that few Prime Ministers even of the greatest states in Europe had so many tasks on their hands, and performed them so boldly and so well. The clock on the tower of the Houses of Parliament strikes louder than the repeater in our waistcoat pocket, but the

machinery, the wheels within wheels, and particularly the spring, have all the same tasks to perform as in Big Ben himself. Even men like Disraeli or Gladstone, if placed in the position of these native statesmen, could hardly have been more successful in grappling with the difficulties of a new State, with rebellious subjects, envious neighbours, a weak sovereign, and an all-powerful suzerain, to say nothing of court intrigues, religious squabbles, and corrupt officials. We are too much given to measure the capacity of ministers and statesmen by the magnitude of the results which they achieve with the immense forces placed at their disposal. But most of them are very ordinary mortals, and it is not too much to say that for making a successful marriage-settlement an ordinary solicitor stands often in need of the same vigilance, the same knowledge of men and women, the same tact, and the same determination or bluff which Bismarck displayed in making the treaty of Prague or of Frankfurt. Nay, there are mistakes made by the greatest statesmen in history which, if made by our solicitor, would lead to instant dismissal. If Bismarck made Germany, Gaurisankar made Bhavnagar. The two achievements are so different that even to compare them seems absurd, but the methods to be followed in either case are, after all, the same; nay, it is well known that the making or regulating of a small watch may require more nimble and careful fingers than the large clock of a Cathedral. We are so apt to imagine that the man who performs a great work is a great man, though from revelations lately made, we ought to have learnt how small—nay, how mean—some of these so-called great men have really been."

POWER OF SELF-DEFENCE.

Anglo-Indian papers like the *Englishman* say :—

"A country which is *unable to stand by itself* in all things, to finance itself, to defend itself, is obviously not ready to govern itself."

Is there any British colony which can stand by itself in all things? Can any of them defend itself? But for British Imperial protection Japan could annex Australasia, and the United States could annex Canada. On the outbreak of the Boer war, it was Indian troops who landed first in the British South African Colonies to defend them. But, though the British colonies cannot defend themselves, they are not considered unworthy of self-government.

Is France able to defend herself, standing alone by herself? Obviously not. For, then British soldiers and Indian sepoys would not have been on French soil to defend France. Is England able to stand all

alone in self-defence? Obviously not. For she has requisitioned the aid of her allies and her colonies. The help of even poor despised India could not be dispensed with; for her sons have been sent to fight for the British Empire in Europe, Asia and Africa. Germany could not stand by itself. It depends on the help of its allies. It does not then seem to be axiomatic that a country which cannot defend itself with its own resources alone is "not ready to govern itself."

FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE.

As for financial independence, we do not know whether there is any civilized country in which foreign capital is not invested. Not to speak of Asiatic countries like Japan, China, Persia, &c., which are self-ruling, European countries like Russia are being developed with foreign capital. Even in England there were millions of German money invested, and, similarly there was British capital invested in Germany. It is true millions upon millions of British capital has been invested in India. But that fact ought not to stand in the way of our obtaining self-government. British capital had been sunk in Mysore before the Rendition, but that province was nevertheless restored to the former ruling family. British investments in India are much smaller than in foreign countries. According to the *Statist*, up to the end of December, 1915, British capital in India and the Colonies, exclusive of the advances made by Government to the colonies, amounted to £1,935,740,000, out of which no more than a sum of £389,980,000 found its way to India and Ceylon together. British investments in Canada and Newfoundland amount to £570,497,000, and those in Australasia amount to a further sum of £443,438,000, while those in South Africa alone amount to £372,017,000. If these investments of British capital in the colonies have not stood in the way of their obtaining self-government, why should similar investments prevent India receiving

her birthright? British investments in foreign countries amount to £1,900,364,000, of which £650,000,000 are in the United States of America and £342,000,000 in the Argentine Republic. During the present war England has been obliged partly to finance her allies. As for herself she has had to go to the American market for money. It would seem then that financial independence could not be taken as an essential qualification for self-government.

It may not be irrelevant here to point out that England owes her present opulent condition to capital taken from India,—how, we need not say. Readers of Mill's *History of India* and Brooks Adams's *Law of Civilization and Decay* know that British industrial development would not have been possible without transferring to Great Britain much of India's hoarded wealth, amounting to hundreds of millions, from after the battle of Plassey.

“ROME WAS NOT BUILT IN A DAY.”

We are often reminded by both Indians and Anglo-Indians that “Rome was not built in a day.” It is meant thereby to tell us that as England and other free and self-governing countries took centuries to evolve and learn to work their present advanced political institutions, India ought not to expect to become self-governing in the course of a few years. From the historical primers which we read at school, we did indeed learn that it took Rome centuries to grow from the collection of huts, which Romulus and Remus probably built, into a city of palaces and cathedrals with magnificent suburban villas. But in later times, it did not take quite as much time to build Washington, Melbourne, Sydney, San Francisco, Chicago, or new Dacca; nor is it expected that new Delhi or new Bankipur would take centuries or even decades to build. The present up-to-date steam engines of various sorts can trace their descent to Hero's apparatus, constructed B. C. 130. If a student of mechanical engineering now wants to learn to make a steam-engine, he does not begin

with making Hero's machine, nor does he learn the art in $130+1916=2046$ years. He becomes a finished mechanic in a few years. The marvels of modern chemistry have grown from the days of the alchemists in the course of centuries. But the modern student of chemistry learns the science not by toiling for centuries through a hundred births and re-incarnations, but in less than a decade. The youth apprenticed to the ship-building trade does not begin with dug-outs or canoes, but with the most up-to-date vessels, mastering the art of building the latest merchant vessels and dreadnoughts in a few years. The modern mechanic who wants to manufacture all sorts of weapons for the army and the navy, does not go to a museum to see how the palæolithic and the neolithic men made their stone hatchets or flint spearheads and arrow-heads in order to imitate them. He learns in the course of a few years to make machine guns, 15 inch cannon, shells and torpedoes. The modern Japanese did so learn from the West, and are now teaching and helping the West in some cases. When 50 years ago the Japanese youths, who subsequently came to be known as the elder statesmen, went to all the most civilized countries of the world to learn the art of government, they did not bother their heads with the witenagemot and the eorls and the ceorls and the cnihts, but at once set about to learn and did learn in a few years all that there was to learn about the latest representative institutions and their working; and the school of experience afterwards made them what they became.

The art of statesmanship, like all other arts, is and can be learnt in a single life-time. The British baby who afterwards grows up into a statesman is born just as ignorant as the Indian baby. British infants are no more born with the general's baton or the statesman's portfolio than are Indian babies born with the coolie's spade or stone-breaking hammer. Given the same opportunity and facilities, the Indian baby is sure to equal any other baby in

development. If statecraft were entirely or mainly inherited, all or most of the descendants of all or most statesmen would have become statesmen, and few boys whose fathers were not statesmen could have become statesmen. Abraham Lincoln would then have been impossible. Mr. Asquith or Mr. Lloyd George has learnt what he has in his own lifetime; Count Okuma has learnt in the same space of time, so has Dadabhai Naoroji; so did Asoka, Chandragupta, Samudragupta, Sher Shah, Akbar, Aurangzib, Shivaji and others. Their ancestors did not pile up knowledge and experience of statecraft for them and physiologically transmit it to them. There may or may not be some truth in hereditary talent or racial characteristics; but it has always been a conscious or unconscious trick on the part of the few in possession of power and privilege to try to persuade the many outside the pale to believe that birth is the sole or most dominant determining factor in the making of the destiny of individuals and nation. In India the trick succeeded to so great an extent that for generations Sudras have continued to our own day to believe that it was only by acquiring merit after numerous births that they could become Brahmans or "twice-born." But now the spell seems to have broken even in India. Many persons hitherto known as Sudras now claim to be twice-born.

The evolution of a thing or the discovery of a truth or a method takes a long time, involves great labour and may require much genius; but to acquire a knowledge of them is a very much shorter and easier process.

The reader should bear in mind in this connection what Lecky has said about statecraft in the passage quoted before (p. 6). It does not require generations or centuries to *learn* statecraft, though it may have taken centuries to *evolve and perfect* the art, just as it does not take generation or centuries to learn any other art, science or craft, though the latter may have arrived at their present state of

perfection or maturity after centuries. In the case of all the other arts this fact has been tacitly admitted; in the case of statesmanship or statecraft, however, it seems to be denied. But facts with their incontrovertible logic have come to the rescue of all struggling and aspiring nations. It is within living memory that the Serbians, Bulgarians and Rumanians have become free after long centuries of subjection to Turkey. They did not take centuries or generations to learn statecraft, but began to manage their affairs efficiently as soon as they got the chance to do so. It cannot be urged that they are more intelligent or braver than the Indians, or that their civilisation is of older date than that of India. If it be urged that they are Europeans, and what is true of Europeans cannot be true of Asiatics, we can cite the case of the Japanese, who, from the commencement of the Meiji or new era, began to govern their country in most approved fashion. The Japanese possess an ancient civilization, which, it may be urged, fitted them for their new career of political progress. But the Filipinos have not started with any such real or supposed qualification; and yet they are satisfactorily exercising the right of self-rule after an apprenticeship of less than a decade under American administrators. Should it be urged explicitly or by implication that our only disqualification are that we are Indians and that we have been under British rule for more than a century and a half, we must throw up the sponge and confess to being thoroughly beaten.

CAPACITY FOR SELF-RULE RELATIVE: NO
ABSOLUTE STANDARD OF FITNESS FOR
SELF-RULE.

In these notes we have used the term self-rule in the sense of the administration of the affair of a country by indigenous agency, under any one of different kinds of constitution. There is no absolute standard of fitness for self-rule in this sense. Like every other kind of capacity, the capacity for

self-rule is relative. There is no nation on earth which is absolutely, perfectly fit for self-rule. From the very fact that they are all self-ruling it must be acknowledged that the English are fit, the Irish are fit, the Germans are fit, the Belgians are fit, the Montenegrins are fit, the Japanese and the Chinese are fit, the Ethiopians are fit, the Negroes of Liberia are fit, the Negroes of Haiti are fit, the uncivilised Maori and Gilbert Islanders are fit, the Serbs, the Boers, the Bulgars, the Filipinos and the Afghans are fit, the Nepalese are fit. But have they all made equal progress, or are they all equally powerful? God has not fixed the exact degree, kind or measure of capacity which would entitle a nation to self-rule, nor is it possible for any man or nation to fix the standard. The British people in general think that they are perfectly fit for self-rule. But have they always been able to show sufficient ability and tact in the administration of the affairs of their own country? If they had, there would not have been so many revolutions, rebellions and riots and so much bloodshed in their history. Like all other peoples they have occasionally committed great blunders. They have blundered even in the course of the present war. But even the most serious mistakes are not held, and justly so, to disqualify free and independent nations for self-rule. What then is the validity of the objection that Indians being inexperienced would often go wrong if allowed to govern themselves, and they ought not, therefore, to have self-rule? The man who never made a mistake never did anything of any value. The infant who never fell or stumbled, never learnt to walk. Nations learn and become strong and progressive both by their failures and their successes.

BRITISH CAPACITY FOR GOVERNMENT.

In their own country the British have shown great administrative ability. But they have not shown equal ability in India. They have, indeed, prevented foreign aggression and established and

maintained peace and order in the country, they have very regularly and strictly collected and spent the revenue, they have on the whole dealt out even-handed justice between Indian and Indian and, in civil cases, between Indians and Europeans, but during their nearly two centuries of rule they have not been able to make India equal to the peoples of the least advanced European countries, and of Japan, in education, in material prosperity, in health, in power of self-defence against external and internal aggressors and in the enjoyment of immunity from the depredations of robbers and wild animals. Among the civilised countries of the world there is no country which is so subject to famines, and pestilences and other epidemics. In 18 years the Americans have made the Filipinos more literate and their country more free from malaria than we have become in 150 years. Japan has attained greater success in fighting malaria in Formosa than our government in India. The good that has resulted from the work of the bureaucracy in India we admit; but judged by the standards we have spoken of, particularly by the two main and essential tests of intellectual and material advancement, the success of the bureaucracy has not been such as to justify them in arrogantly declaiming against the incapacity of the Indians. The relatively poor success of the British Government in India is all the more noteworthy, as the natural resources of India are vast and varied and her inhabitants are not wanting in intelligence, courage, industry, thrift, sobriety and other good qualities of character.

CHARACTER.

Character is one of the chief factors which determine capacity for self-rule. The crime statistics of India compared with those of some of the most civilised countries show that we are not inferior in character to other civilised peoples. Corruption and misappropriation of public money are certainly not more rife in India than in the United States of

America. During the centuries during which England has had parliamentary government, prime ministers and men in both higher and lower political positions have been known to be corrupt and wanting in personal integrity. Redlich and Hirst's book on *Local Government in England* contains extracts from the report of a parliamentary commission, dated 1835, regarding the municipalities and boroughs of that period, from which a few sentences may be quoted :

"In general the corporate funds are but partially applied to municipal purposes, such as the preservation of the peace by an efficient police, or in watching or lighting the town, &c. ; but they are frequently expended in feasting, and in paying salaries of unimportant officers. In some cases, in which the funds are expended on public purposes, such as building public works, or other objects of local improvement, an expense has been incurred much beyond what would be necessary if due care had been taken."

The authors observe :

These symptoms, as the Commissioners clearly show, were not natural, but were the artificial product of a system of political corruption erected and kept up by the ruling oligarchy."

Recent enquiries relating to the Civil Service in England have brought to light glaring instances of nepotism. The assumption that Indians are unfit for self-rule, because there occasionally come to light cases of nepotism, municipal or other jobbery, embezzlement and corruption, is preposterous. When made by Indians it shows both the very high standard by which they judge themselves as well as their ignorance of the history of public morality in other countries ; when made by Westerners, it is either pharisaical and pecksniffian or is due to their ignorance of the history of public morality in many Western self-ruling countries.

See also the paper on "Is Parliamentary Government suited to India ?"

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

Local self-government in India has been, on the whole, as successful as one could reasonably expect from the little freedom enjoyed by the local bodies. Our roads, drains, &c., are not now in a worse con-

dition than when the officials alone were entirely responsible for their upkeep. The Bombay Government has recently granted to several municipalities the right to elect their presidents. The Bengal Government has given the municipalities a free hand in the preparing of their budgets, saying :

"The Governor in Council is satisfied that the experiment has on the whole justified itself, while at the same time he notices in the affairs of municipalities a growing sense of responsibility and capacity for self-management, which encourages him to believe that further confidence in their powers of financial administration would not be misplaced."

These are indications that local self-government in India has not been a failure.

As regards Canada on the eve of her obtaining self-government, we learn from Lord Durham's report that

"In the rural districts habits of self-government were almost unknown and education is so scantily diffused as to render it difficult to procure a sufficient number of persons competent to administer the functions that would be created by a general scheme of popular local control."

In England the parliamentary commission referred to above reported in 1835 regarding local bodies that "revenues that ought to be applied for the public advantage are diverted from their legitimate use and are sometimes wastefully bestowed for the benefit of individuals, sometimes squandered for purposes injurious to the character and morals of the people." (Quoted in Redlich and Hirst's *Local Government in England*.)

The Filipinos have received fully responsible self-government after some 17 or 18 years of American occupation. Much is said now-a-days about the stages of political progress, about the fearful character of catastrophic changes, &c. The following extract from General Frank McIntyre's report to the Secretary of War, U. S. A., dated March 1, 1913, will show how fit the Filipinos were for even municipal self-government sixteen, ten, and seven years ago :

"The principal difficulties encountered in the in-

ception of self-government in the municipalities were summarized, in the Philippine Commission's report for 1901, as follows :

The educated people themselves, though full of phrases concerning liberty, have but a faint conception of what real civil liberty is and the mutual self-restraint which is involved in its maintenance. They find it hard to understand the division of powers in a government and the limitations that are operative upon all officers, no matter how high. In the municipalities, in the Spanish days, what the friar did not control, the president did, and the people knew and expected no limit to his authority. This is the difficulty we now encounter in the organization of the municipality. The president fails to observe the limitations upon his power and the people are too submissive to press them.

"Manifestly this condition called for the education of the inhabitants of the municipalities and their officials in the duties of local self-government. In addition to the official supervision every effort possible was utilized to this end, so that each American, whether employed as school-teacher, engineer, or otherwise, should give that element of personal help, which would be the more valuable because it was free from the shadow of official authority. The Americans were few in number, the natives many, and these educative efforts were slow in producing enough results to make much showing.

"A more careful administration of municipal affairs became necessary. Governor General Smith in his message of October 16, 1907, to the inaugural session of the Philippine Legislature summed up conditions as follows :

In many of the municipalities the expenditures of public money have been unwise, not to say wasteful. In 88 municipalities out of 685 the entire revenue was expended for salaries and not a single cent was devoted to public betterments or improvements.....

"Two hundred and twenty six municipalities spent on public works less than 10 per cent. Such a condition of affairs is to be deplored, and the Commission was obliged to pass a law within the last few months prohibiting municipalities from spending for salaries more than a fixed percentage of their revenues.

"Fifteen months later Governor General Smith, in his message to the Legislature, February 1, 1909, reviewed municipal conditions as follows :

Nearly all the municipalities made great sacrifices in the interests of education, and especially to secure school buildings and adequate school accommodations, but there the interest in making expenditures for purposes other than salaries and wages ended, at least in most of the municipalities. It must be admitted that the law putting a limit on the gross amount which might be expended for municipal salaries and wages was to a certain extent a restriction of the autonomic powers originally conceded to municipal governments, but it was an interference with municipal autonomy completely justified by hard experience and more than five years of wanton waste of the public moneys

Prior to the passage of Act No. 1733, * 99 per cent, of the municipalities, excluding the city of Manila, had no fire departments of any kind ...Every year...great loss was caused by conflagrations.

During the year 1908 the Governor General personally visited some 200 municipalities, and in not more than half a dozen did he encounter a police force that was worthy of the name.....The municipal policeman of these Islands, as a rule, does not rise to the dignity of the ordinary house servant, and in a great majority of cases performs no higher duties.....With five or six exceptions, the entire municipal police force, as it is organized and disciplined to-day, might be abolished without any evil results whatever * * * He is appointed, as a rule, not because of his intelligence, his uprightness of character, and his physical fitness, but because of his relationship to the appointing power or by reason of the political services which either he or his powerful friends have rendered to that official."

Evidently the Americans were bent on making the Filipinos free. They did not, therefore, make any of the latter's failures or shortcomings an excuse for indefinitely lengthening any of the preparatory "stages" of training in the profoundly abstruse and highly mysterious art of self-government.

LITERACY.

It has been sometimes asserted that India cannot be self-ruling because of the prevailing illiteracy. In the mouth of the bureaucracy it is a very curious argument. They have not cared to make India more

* "To reduce this preventable loss the Commission passed this act, requiring each municipality to provide at least buckets and ladders and to drill its police force, with any volunteers, as a fire department.

literate than she is. Education is progressing at a snail's pace. In Japan 28 per cent of the children of school age were at school in 1873 ; by 1902-1903 the percentage had risen to 90. In India the percentage is 19.6. When the shears of retrenchment have to be applied, education is the first to suffer, though at the same time the emoluments of the Indian Civil Service may be increased. It was owing to the opposition of the bureaucracy that Mr. Gokhale's Elementary Education Bill was rejected. Our boys are willing to learn and to pay for their tuition, but there are not schools and colleges enough for them. The people cannot open schools and colleges in sufficient numbers because of the standard of requirements set up by the Education Department.

However, when nearly 50 years ago representative government was established in Japan it was mainly the Samurai who were literate ; among the rest of the population education was not widespread. In India, too, the higher classes, particularly the males, who alone at present take part in public life, are educated to a considerable extent. And as in all countries representative institutions have been worked in the earlier stages by the higher classes, it would be enough for the purpose of Indian Home Rule if a sufficient number of educated and capable men could be had to represent the people in the local, provincial and Imperial councils. And it is well known that this number can be had.

England has enjoyed representative institutions for centuries, but, education has been widely diffused there only during the last century or so. In the age of King John, when the barons wrested the Great Charter from him, many of the nobility could draw spear-heads more skilfully than the letters of the alphabet ; book-learning was despised by them. In later ages of parliamentary history, too, literacy was not the prevailing feature of English society.

It was Lord Durham's report which led to the granting of parliamentary government to Canada. We find it stated there :

"It is impossible to exaggerate the want of education among the habitants. No means of instruction have ever been provided for them, and they are almost and universally destitute of the qualifications even of reading and writing."

We are also told that in Canada "a great proportion of the teachers could neither read nor write." It was to such a people that representative institutions were granted. In other free countries, also, free institutions and a high percentage of literacy have not always gone together. However, if literacy be considered an essential qualification for self-rule, it is in the power of the rulers to attain the requisite standard within a decade. A century ago India and China were about the most literate countries in the world. It may be possible for us to overtake those who have since then left us behind. Our rulers do not, in actual practice, however, seem always to care much for education. For Government have often nominated men to sit in the provincial and imperial councils who do not know English, though the proceedings of these bodies are conducted in that language. And do even our graduates, as *Graduates*, possess even the municipal franchise?

Robert Lowe (familiarily known as Bobby Lowe), Viscount Sherbrooke, went to the Education office as vice-president of the Council in Lord Palmerston's ministry. He felt then, and still more after the Reform Act of 1866, that "we must educate our masters." This phrase is always ascribed to Lowe, and has become history in association with him. But what he really said in his address to the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution in 1867 was that it was necessary "to induce our future masters to learn their letters." This shows that in Great Britain even so recently as the sixties of the last century the extension of political rights did not follow but was followed by the spread of education.

"IF THE BRITISH WITHDREW FROM INDIA?"

There is one argument which the opponents of Indian self-rule consider a clincher. They say: "If

the British went away from India, leaving her to her fate, she would fall a prey to some other powerful nation, as her sons would not be able to defend her against foreign aggression; and these new conquerors would undoubtedly be worse than the English." In the first place, the present Indian demand is for Home Rule, *not Independence*; so why should the British withdraw? No doubt, a self-ruling India would not keep so many highly paid English officials, nor would it be so good a field for practically *exclusive* commercial and industrial exploitation as it is at present; though that is a somewhat distant contingency. But still some Englishmen would find employment here as they do in the self-governing colonies, and there would still be a sufficiently, and perhaps for sometime, an increasingly large and remunerative field for the investment and employment of capital, as there is in the British colonies and in the independent countries of Russia, Turkey, China, Persia, &c. Where the honey is, there will the bee, too, be. It is not in human nature to leave a place where there is hope of gain.

Standing by itself no British colony can defend itself against foreign aggression. It is the might of the British Empire which shields the colonies. Why should not the Empire extend the same help to India on the same terms? Why should England demand from India as the price of defence the monopoly of power, of high appointments and of opportunities for exploitation?

We know the colonials are white and we are not. We are not the kinsmen of the British people. Therefore perhaps the underlying idea in the minds of many Englishmen may be: "Why should we care to defend your country if the bargain be that we are to receive the blows and you are to receive the blessings, we are to do the hard work, and you are to roll in wealth and luxury?" But as we have been often told by many English notables that England's work in India is philanthropic, it would be highly noble of Englishmen and extremely credit-

able to them if, from altruistic considerations, they remained in India to defend it even after the grant of Home Rule to India, until we were able to do so ourselves. Should it, however, be considered a very unconscionable bargain, we would respectfully suggest that in future Englishmen would do well not to lay exclusive stress on England's philanthropic mission in India. We may also be permitted to remind Englishmen that we also defend India and receive the blows and are eager to be allowed to do so in the future in ever-increasing measure.

It is not exclusively our fault that we are unable entirely to defend ourselves. As both Sir S. P. Sinha and Mr. Haque said and showed in their presidential addresses, in 1915, Government have not helped us to be strong, have even kept us weak.

There is a way out of the difficulty. Indian soldiers have given unquestionable proofs of soldierly qualities. In the pre-British period and in the early days of British rule, people of every province of British India could and did enter the army. That practice should be revived, and Indians should be trained both as privates and commissioned officers in all sections of the army, including artillery. An Indian aerial fleet and an Indian navy should be built, manned by Indians. In this way England could yet make India self-dependent as regards her defence. It might still be England's proud boast that she made India stronger than she had found it; —it is not so now, perhaps the reverse. If England did her duty in this respect in the way suggested, it would be to *her* advantage also. For the present European war is certainly not the last great world war. In the next, and perhaps still more terrible and destructive war, England would require the help of a strong India. If India were not strengthened England might have to regret it. As for ourselves, we are accustomed to adversity, and ought to be able to face the hardest decrees of providence with unblinking eyes. For who knows whether it would not be necessary for India to pass through the fire of

still greater tribulations than in the past before she could reach the goal of her high destiny by getting rid of her fatal weakness? It is for England, prosperous, happy England, to consider whether she would be able to meet adversity in the same way. For, under present circumstances, *so far as human eyes can see*, England and India require each other's help. We know it; whether the proud prosperity of England has blinded her to it or not, we do not know. Perhaps England thinks that she alone is indispensable to India, but not India also to her. All this humanly speaking. The real fact may be that each may be able to do without the other, that each may even be better for parting company with the other in a friendly way. But we do not know what lies hidden in the womb of futurity. Time will show.

Some Anglo-Indian journals remind us from time to time that if the British were to withdraw from India, many of the various races and sects inhabiting India would fly at one another's throats. We shall have something to say on racial and other strife in another part of the book. Here we content ourselves with saying that though the Marquess of Hastings saw *actual* inter-racial and inter-provincial warfare in India in his day, that did not prevent him from dipping boldly and prophetically into the future and finding there a *perfectly self-ruling* India, *friendly* to Great Britain. He wrote as follows in his private journal, under date the 17th of May, 1818 :—

"A time *not very remote* will arrive when England will, on sound principles of policy, wish to relinquish the domination which she has gradually and unintentionally assumed over this country, and from which she cannot at present recede. In that hour it would be the proudest boast and most delightful reflection that she had used her sovereignty towards enlightening her temporary subjects, so as to enable the native communities to walk alone in the paths of justice, and to maintain with probity towards their benefactress that commercial intercourse in which we should then find a solid interest"—*The Private Journal of the Marquess of Hastings*, Second Edition, Vol. II, p. 326.

INTERNAL TROUBLES.

Another serious consequence which is apprehended to follow from the imaginary threatened with-

drawal of the English from India in case we insisted upon having self-rule is that there would be no end of sectarian, racial, and caste fights in India. But, we again ask, why should they withdraw? And particularly, why should they withdraw before making India strong and united? But supposing they obstinately insisted upon withdrawing and carried out their threat, what would be the result? We have briefly dealt above with the contingency of aggression from without. As for internal troubles, the history of all countries, including European, shows that no country has been entirely free from them in any age. Internecine wars and civil wars and riots have occurred in all countries. After a time either the conflicting parties have composed their differences or some have gained the upper hand and thus somehow or other order has been re-established. What has happened in other countries would happen in India also. We are not a particularly quarrelsome people. In addition to racial or sectarian or class fights, which we sometimes have in India, Westerners have their labour and capital riots, their suffragette fights, and their election riots, too, which we have not got in India. Should the English leave India, we might have the good sense not to indulge in mutual fighting at all. If we fought, the state of disorder would not be everlasting; peace and order would return exactly in the same way or ways as in other countries. It is true that when the different European nations were fighting for supremacy in India, there was great anarchy and disorder, and the English gradually evolved order out of chaos. But such periods of disorder are to be found in the history of every country and continent. They are not peculiar to India. Had India been particularly and always a land of disorder, it could not have become a prosperous civilised country. One single proof of its former prosperity should be conclusive. It is that from remote antiquity various nations of the West have sought to monopolize the trade of India. As for its civilization, Sir Thomas Munro wrote even so

late as the first quarter of the last century that if there were at that time an exchange of that commodity between England and India, England would gain by the import cargo. A country does not grow civilized in the midst of chronic disorder. That India of the future might possibly remain free from racial or sectarian riots even though the English were not to be here as policemen and peace-makers, would seem to be indicated by the fact that in the Native States there are not so many "religious" riots as in British India.

But we do not really see any reason why the English should withdraw from India, nor believe that they will.

CASTE.

It is said that India ought not to have self-government because it is a caste-ridden country. We are not apologists of caste. We belong to a community one of whose objects is to break down the barriers of caste,—an object which has been attained to a great extent. We may be permitted to ask whether the ancient Greek republics were not self-governing in spite of the existence of the helots, whether before the Civil War there were not Negro slaves in America who were in many respects worse treated than our parias, whether Negroes are not still lynched there, whether many of the worst features of caste do not exist today in America, and, lastly, whether there are not class distinctions in Great Britain somewhat similar to caste. In an article in the *North American Review* Mr. Sydney Brookes says :

Time and again have I been assured by Americans, Canadians and Australians that what most impressed them in that England which has been killed by the war was the prevalence of the caste system. They were quite right. The caste system was beyond doubt the outstanding feature of the British structure. It was the caste system that made the West End of London the governing centre of the Empire. It was the caste system that in every British Ministry reserved an excessive number of places for the aristocracy, whose title to them was based mainly on the non-essentials of birth, manners, and social position.

Mr. Brookes continues :—

What was it at bottom that made the English atmosphere before the war so difficult for an American to breathe in freely? It was, I believe, that he felt himself in a country where the dignity of life was lower than in his own; a country where a man born in ordinary circumstances expected, and was expected, to die in ordinary circumstances; where the scope of his efforts was traced beforehand by the accident of position; where he was handicapped in all cases and crushed in most by the superincumbent weight of convention, "good form," and the deadening artificialities and conventions of an old society. * * There were some trades and professions and occupations that were "respectable" and others which were not . . . There was not a single Englishman who had not the social privilege of despising some other Englishman, and the lower one penetrated in the social scale the more complex and mysterious and the more rigidly drawn did these lines of demarcation become.

Lately the *Jewish World* brought to light an incident which proved the existence of caste-prejudice in England. While on the recruiting campaign, Sergeant Issy Smith, V. C., was invited to a restaurant, and its owner refused to serve the Jewish hero. *The Jewish World* continues :

The insult to Sergeant Smith as a Jew could be placed comfortably with the huge pile of such insults Jews have from time to time received from the more ignorant and petty-minded of the population among whom they live. But we think it is unique to find a man holding a licence daring to insult not alone the King's uniform, but the Victoria Cross which His Majesty with his own hands only a few weeks ago pinned upon the breast of one of the brave defenders of the country.

Regarding caste in America, two extracts from two well-known American journals will suffice for our present purposes. *The Literary Digest* says :—

For several days before the people of St. Louis voted to segregate the negroes of the city, negro girls and women handed out circulars on the streets bearing a cartoon depicting a white man driving a negro before him and lashing his bare back, with the inscription "Back to slavery." And now that the two ordinances embodying segregating have been carried by a three-to-one vote in a centrally located city of 700,000 inhabitants, the *New York Evening Post* alludes ironically to "the two watch-words of democracy—emancipation and segregation," and the *New York World* deplores the attempt "to deprive black men of property, liberty, and hope." But the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* observes that "the separation or segregation of the

“races” which “prevails generally through the South” on cars, boats, and in public places “has caused no special injury to any one,” and “has unquestionably tended to prevent friction between the races when travelling, which of old frequently developed into serious disturbances and what were called ‘race-riots’.”.....

It forbids negroes to move into blocks in which as many as 75 per cent. of the occupants are white, and prohibits “the use by negroes in ‘white’ or ‘mixed’ blocks of any building or part of a building for a church, dance-hall, school, theater, or place of assemblage for negroes.”

The American Journal of Sociology says :

“The constitution of six of the American States prohibit negro-white intermarriages. Twenty-eight of the states have statute laws forbidding the intermarriage of negro and white persons. Twenty of the states have no such laws : in ten of those latter states bills aimed at the prevention of negro white intermarriages were introduced and defeated in 1913.”

“The Alabama constitution prohibits the legislature from passing a law legalizing the intermarriage of white persons and any descendant of a negro. This means that a person whose ancestry may be traced to a negro—even though that person has no detectable physical mark of negro ancestry—may not marry a white person.

“The Florida constitution prohibits intermarriage between white persons and others possessing even one-sixteenth or more negro blood. Many such persons do not physically show their affinity with the negro race.

“The other four states, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee, by their constitutions prohibit the intermarriage of white persons and others having one-eighth or more negro blood.”

“Four states appear from their statutes to acknowledge that the existing laws against negro-white intermarriage do not reach all causes of negro-white amalgamation. Three of those states have, in addition to laws against intermarriage, laws against cohabitation and against concubinage.”

“Alabama is the only state which would seem to have attempted to reach all the causes of negro-white amalgamation. Her laws include this phrase : ‘if any white person or any negrolive in adultery or fornication with each other, each of them must, on conviction, be imprisoned.....’”

Those who wish to understand more fully that the U. S. A. is the greatest republic in the world in spite of the presence there of all the retrograde, inhumanly unjust and unrighteous features of caste, should read Mr. Lajpat Rai's book on “The United States of America.” *

* See Appendix.

We shall have something to say later on on the effect which a strong feeling of nationality produces on caste prejudices.

MORAL, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS.

Some persons advise us to set our own house in order, before demanding political rights ; they tell us to make greater progress morally, socially, economically and educationally in order that we may be fit for the enjoyment and exercise of political power. Of course, we must advance in all these directions. But can our advisers tell us definitely at what points or stages of our progress along these lines, we shall be fit to demand political rights ? Can they prove that all the nations who are or were self-ruling, were better than ourselves morally, socially, economically and educationally when they began to exercise the rights and power of self-rule ? Are we inferior in *all* these respects to *all* existing self-ruling nations ? Are there no great moral, social and economic evils in free countries ?

All reforms are really interdependent. Moral, social and economic improvement depend to a great extent on education, and universal education depends on the possession and exercise of political power (including the power to control the public purse) by the people.

RACE.

It is rather late in the day to speak of the people of India as racially disqualified. We will, however, quote in reply a few brief passages from the report of the *First Universal Races Congress*. Mr. G. Spiller, honorary organiser of the Congress, says in his paper on "The Problem of Race Equality,"

"We need not include in our problem every tribe and race whatsoever, but only the vast aggregate of mankind, say China, Japan, Turkey, Persia, India, Egypt, Siam, the Negro, the American Indian, the Philippino, the Malay, the Maori, and the fair-white and dark-white races. These constitute, perhaps nine-tenths of the human race."

and comes to the conclusion :—

"We are then, under the necessity of concluding that *an impartial investigator would be inclined to look up the various important peoples of the world as to all intents and purposes, essentially equals in intellect, enterprise, morality, and physique.*"

In the paper on "The Rationale of Autonomy" contributed to the same Congress by Mr. John M. Robertson, M. P., we read :—

"It would seem that a first step towards a scientific or even a quasi-rational view of the problem must be to put aside the instinctive hypothesis that faculty for self-government is a matter of 'race.'

Again :—

"If the problem be reduced to its elements, in short, it will be found that none of the *a priori* arguments against autonomy for any race have any scientific validity. As a matter of fact, practical autonomy exists at this moment amongst the lowest and most retrograde races of the earth ; and probably no experienced European administrator who has ever carried his thinking above the levels of that of a frontier trader will confidently say that any one of these races would be improved by setting up over them any system of white man's rule which has yet been tried "

THE EDUCATED A MINORITY.

Another objection is that in India the educated men are a minority, and they do not understand the wants and feelings of the mass of the people and cannot, therefore, be considered their representatives. Even if this were taken to be true, the reply would be : "The foreign bureaucracy are a far smaller minority ; they understand the wants and feelings of the mass still less, differing from them as they do in race, language, religion, customs, habits, &c., and being also birds of passage ; and therefore their right to speak for the mass of the people is non-existent." But in reality the educated minority are sprung from the uneducated majority in the villages and towns, they are bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh, they come from the same homes in which dwell the majority, they speak the same language and profess the same religions and follow the same customs as the majority, they can feel for them and

know their wants and can voice their grievances, and many educated persons are in increasing numbers devoting their time, money and energies to the *unpaid* service of the unlettered poor. The bureaucracy may know the statistics of India better than ourselves, but we know India from the inside; for we have been inside hovels, huts, cottages and palaces and have dwelt therein, and have shared with our sisters and brethren their joys, sorrows and anxieties. How many hours during the whole course of their official careers do the officials, big and small, spend in the houses of the people? The white officials have knowledge of criminals, suppliants and flatterers. But what intercourse is there between them and the people, as between man and man? How many minutes in the year do they or can they spend in conversation with those who cannot speak English?

In all countries, particularly in the early stages of self-government, it is the better educated and more intelligent persons, forming a minority, who manage public affairs. Why should, then, such a state of things be considered a disqualification in the case of India? In South Africa the Europeans are a very small minority, and they differ from the indigenous population in race, complexion, language, religion, dress, manners and customs. But still the whites are considered competent to manage the affairs of the whole population, black and white. Why, then, should the educated minority be considered unfit to be the representatives and trustees of their kinsfolk, the unlettered majority? Sir H. S. Maine says in his "Popular Government": "All that has made England famous and all that has made England wealthy, has been the work of minorities, sometimes very small ones."

**"THE MINORITY CANNOT MAKE THE
MAJORITY OBEY."**

It has been objected that the minority in India, though competent to make laws, would not be able to secure the obedience of the majority. We reply,

How do you know ? Our countrymen are certainly more law-abiding than Westerners, and more deferential to the educated classes. As for securing obedience, were the governing class in England able to secure the obedience of the vast numbers of labourers who occasionally struck, and paralysed industry, were they able to secure the obedience of the suffragettes, and, lastly, could they secure the obedience of the Ulster party led by Sir Edward Carson, or could they secure the obedience of the Sinn-Feiners who rebelled ? We refer to the period before the war. In South Africa, did not a section of the Boers rebel against Botha's government ? Regarding the previous centuries of British history, Mr. John M. Robertson, M. P., writes in his paper on "The Rationale of Autonomy" contributed to the first Universal Races Congress :—

"Now, within the English-speaking world, the mother country had civil wars in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries ; there was civil war between mother country and colonies towards the end of the eighteenth ; and again within the Independent United States and within Canada in the nineteenth—all this in a "race" that makes specially high claims to self-governing faculty. On the imperialist principle a Planetary Angel with plenary powers would have intervened to stop the "premature experiment" of Anglo-Saxon self-government at any one of the stages specified—if indeed he had ever allowed it to begin."

LAWYERS AND "FIGHTING RACES."

It is said again that in a self-governing India, the lawyers would rule the roast, not the "manlier fighting races."

The distinction between the military and non-military classes is an artificial one ; and it does not at present obtain in any civilised country, anybody belonging to any class being entitled to become a soldier provided he is of the prescribed age and satisfies the physical requirements. In India itself more than half a century ago General Jacob wrote :—

"The attending to, acknowledging at all, in any way, any distinction of race, tribe, caste, etc., as giving any rights or implying any merits, appear to me to be a very great error.

"Men should be enlisted with reference to individual qualifica-

tions only. Any race, tribe or caste, the individuals of which possessed high personal qualifications, would necessarily predominate over the others, but simply on account of their personal and individual qualifications." *Papers connected with the Reorganization of the Army in India*, presented to both houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty, 1859.

And now after the lapse of some 57 years soldiers are being recruited from many so-called "non-military" races, including Bengalis. The distinction between the fighting and non-military races, therefore, is not absolute, and promises to disappear ere long. And the "fighting races," too, have produced and are producing lawyers. So that the fighting races and the races producing lawyers are not mutually exclusive.

To be a lawyer is no disqualification for the higher and highest offices of State. Does not the British Cabinet usually contain many lawyers? Is not the present Premier even in these critical times of war a lawyer? Was not his predecessor a lawyer? Has Mr. Lloyd George the lawyer been a failure as a War Minister? There is "Vakil Raj" in all countries to a greater or less extent. It is in India alone that a "Vakil Raj" is an object of ridicule,—probably because law stands in the way of the autocratic ways of the bureaucracy.

A great part of the most essential and fundamental work of governments is concerned with the making of laws, rules and regulations and their proper administration and enforcement. It is difficult to discover why, under the circumstances, lawyers should be considered particularly unfit for this kind of work.

It is an unwritten principle of the British constitution that the army and the navy should be subordinate to the civilian element. Accordingly the ministers are mostly taken from the civil population, and so are members of Parliament. Why in India alone the sepoys are to be regarded as better statesmen than the lawyers and other members of the learned professions, is both a mystery and not a mystery.

The predominant influence of the lawyers in the American colonies before their separation from Great Britain and the causes and consequences thereof will be found described in another part of this booklet.

CAN INDIA PRODUCE AN ELECTORATE ?

Mr. Lionel Curtis writes in *The Problem of the Commonwealth* :

"In India the rule of law is firmly established. Its maintenance is a trust which rests on the government of the commonwealth, until such time as there are Indians enough, able to discharge it. India may contain leaders qualified not only to make but also to administer the laws ; but she will not be ripe for self-government until she contains an electorate qualified to recognize those leaders and place them in office. From its nature, national self-government depends, not upon the handful of public men needed to supply cabinets and parliaments, but on the electorate, on the fitness of a sufficient proportion of the people themselves to choose rulers able to rule. Such men there are already, but not in sufficient numbers, to assume the control of Indian affairs " (P. 207).

Mr. Curtis is not unwilling to admit that India may contain "rulers able to rule," though "not in sufficient numbers" ; the difficulty which he raises is the absence of a sufficiently large and qualified electorate "to recognise those leaders and place them in office." Let us see whether we are not yet fit immediately to take the first step towards really representative and responsible self-government. Mr. Curtis needs reminding that countries which are now self-governing, like England, Canada, or Germany, did not, when they started on the career of self-rule, have an electorate sufficiently large and qualified to choose the leaders, such as he requires India to show. But it may be considered impertinent on our part to suggest a comparison with the earlier stages of self-rule in independent or self-ruling countries. So, let us take the case of a country which is dependent like India.

After a century and a half of British rule in India we may be thought qualified to have what political rights the Filipinos possessed before the passage of

the Jones Bill in a modified form in 1916 :—and they have been under American rule for only 18 years. These rights, *obtained within nine years of the American occupation*, will be understood from the summary of the Philippine constitution as described in the *Statesman's Year Book* for 1916.* The Philippine electorate consisted of about 200,000 persons, before the passage of the new law a few months ago. The civic rights of the Filipinos have now been further expanded and the new law will grant the voting rights to about 800,000 men. But may we have, as a beginning, even the rights enjoyed by the 200,000 men before the passage of the new law? The Filipinos are not a more intelligent and civilized people than the Indians nor were their ancestors more intelligent and civilized than ours. Nor can it be said that before the American occupation, they were more accustomed to civilized methods of self-government than ourselves. The right to elect their legislators and rulers which they have hitherto exercised under American suzerainty can, therefore, be exercised by us.

The population of the Philippine Islands is nine millions in round numbers. We may take the male

The Central Government in the Philippines is composed of the Governor-General, who is the chief executive and president of the Philippine Commission, and eight Commissioners, three Americans and five Filipinos. The Philippine Commission constitutes the Upper House and the elective Philippine Assembly the Lower House of the Legislative body. The members of the Assembly, hold office for four years, and the Legislature elects two Resident Commissioners to the United States, who hold office for the same term. These are members of the United States' House of Representatives with a voice, but not a vote. The islands are divided into 36 provinces of which 31 are regular and the rest special. The Government of each of the regular provinces is vested in a provincial board composed of a Governor and two 'vocals'. The Governor is the chief executive of the province and presiding officer of the board. He and the 'vocals' of the board are all elected by popular vote. The Government of towns is practically autonomous, the officials being elected by the qualified voters of the municipalities and serving for four years.

population to number four and a half millions. Thus the 200,000 voters form a little more than 4.4 per cent of the total male population. Can not the British provinces of India show at least 4.4 per cent of adult males who are qualified to elect their rulers and legislators ? That is the question.

Mr. Curtis says :

"The exercise of political power by a citizen must obviously depend on his fitness to exercise it. The degree of fitness differs in individuals ; but in practice there must be some rough-and-ready tests, such as that of domicile, age, property or education, by which it is determined."

There would be no difficulty about the qualification of domicile ; as for age, that of legal majority will do ; regarding property and educational qualifications, there are free countries which insist on both, there are others which insist on neither, and there are some which insist on only one of the two.

Some countries, e.g., Austria, Germany, France, have adopted the principle of what is often termed "manhood or universal suffrage," i.e., every male adult, not a criminal or a lunatic, being entitled to a vote, but in all cases some further qualifications than mere manhood are required, as in Austria a year's residence in the place of election, or in France a six months' residence. A common qualification is that the elector should be able to read and write. This is required in Italy and Portugal and some of the smaller European states, in some states of the United States and in many of the South American republics—*The Encyclopedia Britannica*.

A property qualification is required in many countries. As it is not possible to say offhand how many men in India possess a certain fixed property qualification, we shall judge of the number of possible electors according to the qualifications of domicile, age, and education. Indian males become adult at eighteen for many legal purposes. But for the right to vote, we shall take the age of majority to be 20, as, e. g., in Hungary, or 21, as in many other countries. Let us now see how many *literate* males of the age of 20 and over each British province contains, and what proportion of the total male population they constitute, according to the census of 1911.

Province.	Total males.	Literate Males of 20 and over,	Percentage of adult literate Males to total.
Assam	3,467,621	220,652	Over 6.0
Bengal	23,365,225	2,363,250	" 10.0
Bihar and Orissa	16,859,929	1,008,137	" 5.0
Bombay	10,245,847	921,301	" 9.0
Burma	6,145,471	1,802,573	" 29.0
C. P. Berar	6,930,892	356,257	" 5.0
Madras	20,382,955	2,112,038	" 10.0
N. W. F. P.	1,182,102	53,244	" 4.5
Punjab	10,992,067	565,719	" 5.0
U. P.	24,641,831	1,097,097	" 4.4
India	124,213,440	10,500,268	" 8.6

It has been stated before that the 200,000 Filipino voters form a little more than 4.4 per cent. of the total male population of the Philippine Islands. The table given above shows that the most backward provinces of India contain that and more than that proportion of adult males who can read and write, and British India taken as a whole possesses adult literate males who are 8.6 per cent. of the total number of males; and they would certainly be able to exercise the right of voting at elections as intelligently as voters of average intelligence in all free countries and certainly in the Philippines. It cannot be truthfully contended that our average of intelligence is lower than that in the least advanced of free countries which possess some sort of representative self-government. If the Maoris of New Zealand and the Kaffirs and Hottentots can exercise the right of voting, why cannot Indians? There are in India many illiterate men who have shops of moderate dimensions and farms of moderate size, which they manage successfully. They also should be entitled to the franchise. There is not the least doubt that according to either property or educational qualifications (as for example in Portugal, where, if a man can read and write, he need not have the property qualification), in addition to the qualifications of age and domicile, there can be a sufficiently large electorate in every

province of India. Our people have been accustomed to representative methods in caste and rural organisations from time immemorial. From social affairs to civic, the transition is not difficult of achievement; and elections in connection with village panchayats, unions, municipalities, local boards, district boards, provincial councils and the imperial council have been accustoming people to elections. We prefer not to refer here to the civic and political achievements of our forefathers.

The objection is sometimes raised that what is possible in a small country, is not practicable in a large one. But when our political critics have to deny that Indians are a nation, they assert that Bengal, the Punjab, Maharashtra, &c., are distinct and separate countries. Why not, then, give us the benefit of this assertion, and treat Bengal, &c., as distinct entities? These comparatively small tracts may then be made at least as autonomous as the Philippines were before the passing of the new law.

The proportion of adult literates given above has been calculated on the basis of the census of 1911. That proportion is now somewhat larger, and will go on increasing.

Our "path to freedom" is, as Mr. Curtis says, "primarily a problem of education." But sufficient education also can be had only through freedom. Unless we have self-rule and can control the purse, we can never have sufficient education. It is a perfect vicious circle. Bureaucrats of the Indian Civil Service do not include an entirely literate India in their scheme of things; for they know that an educated India will not tolerate the possession by them of exclusive privileges.

The electors in self-governing countries should possess character and intelligence, in order that they may be able to choose the right men as their representatives. In these two respects our countrymen do not lag behind each and every self-governing nation. In Great Britain itself the elector has been

described as follows by Mr. Harold Cox in the *Edinburgh Review* :—

"The present elector is what Providence and the party system have made him. The labour of earning a precarious income, and the pleasure of spending on a few modest luxuries any small balance that remains after the bare necessities of life have been provided, occupy most of the time and most of the thought of the larger majority of Parliamentary electors. Periodically they are invited by political touts to give their votes to this or that candidate whose name they have never heard before. By way of inducement they are offered all sorts of personal bribes. One candidate will provide them with regular work at good pay ; another will give pensions to their aged kinsfolk. Other appeals are made to the passion of hate. An attack on landlords is always popular, because in the mind of the workman the landlord is the man who calls for the weekly rent—a necessarily large fraction of a small wage. An attack on capital is also politically profitable wherever employers have been acting harshly. By such devices electors who neither know the candidates nor understand the principles they profess are dragged in thousands to the poll and the result is proclaimed as the verdict of the people.

"It is not surprising that men who wish to keep their hands clean shrink from intimate contact with the practical work of winning elections. In all constituencies a very large proportion of the most respected men hold themselves aloof from the business of electioneering, with the result that most of the work is done by little men with small axes of their own to grind.

Lord Bryce gives an equally damaging description of electors everywhere. Says he :—

"Though it is usually assumed in platform speeches that the audience addressed are citizens of this attractive type, everybody knows that in all communities, not only in Chicago but even in Liverpool, let us say, or in Lyons, or in Leipzig, a large proportion of the voters are so indifferent or so ignorant that it is necessary to rouse them, to drill them, to bring them up to vote."

ALLEGED INSUFFICIENCY OF ABLE RULERS.

Mr. Curtis has admitted in the *Problem of the Commonwealth* that already there are in India "rulers able to rule," but not in sufficient numbers. But where is the proof of this insufficiency ? In what kinds of duties, civil or military, have Indians been given a fair chance to prove their capacity, to which they have not proved equal ? It is the misfortune of dependent peoples that the proof of their fitness is

made to depend upon the certificate of their foreign rulers, whose occupation would be gone at any rate to a great extent, if they gave that certificate.

FITNESS TO WIN SELF-RULE.

There are two kinds of fitness : the fitness to have and exercise a right, and the fitness to win it. The first kind of fitness can be proved by facts and arguments. This we have done. The second kind can be proved only by the logic of achievement, that is, by winning Home Rule. Let us prepare ourselves to prove our fitness in this way, too ; let us win self-rule by constitutional means. But we should bear in mind that constitutional agitation is not all plain sailing. It involves sacrifice and suffering.

In an article on "Indian Nationality" contributed to *The Modern Review* for March, 1908, by the late Rev. John Page Hopps, editor of *The Coming Day* (London), he wrote :—

"They say India has learnt from English history something of its longing to possess itself, to find her soul. Well, then, let her also learn from England something of our ability and our willingness to pay the price for freedom. She must oppose a brave and stubborn front to the browbeating of the strong. She must rise above mere personal advantages, and throw everything into the common stock for the good of all. She must call nothing 'common and unclean' She must by courage and capacity earn her right to rule in her own house. She must, on the side of affairs, put science and education and work in the forefront of her struggle, and, on the side of religion, she must make communion with God mean the Brotherhood of Man."

These words all Indians should lay to heart.

CONCLUSION.

We are not unfriendly to the English, nor anxious that they should leave our shores. There is no race which has a fully developed and all-sided manhood. International contact and intercourse are advantageous to all. What we want is room, opportunity, freedom, to grow in all directions. We do not want to be repressed, suppressed, or exploited. Our aim is self-development, self-realization, self-expression, and the giving to the world what we are peculiarly fitted to give. We know our aspirations

are just, legitimate, and righteous, and therefore we should not be afraid of consequences. We know it is to the interest of Englishmen not to withdraw from India. But if they do, we should not be anxious. For it is not Englishmen, it is not Europeans, it is not Westerners, who made us or who guide our destiny. A Power superior to all made us and is moulding our lives. Our destiny is in His hands, and next to His, in ours, and then in those of other races.

We are not perfectly fit for self-rule ;—no nation is. We are not entirely unfit for self-rule ;—no nation is. Fitness grows by practice and exercise. We want to grow more and more fit in that way, which is the only way.

INDIA AND DEMOCRACY

BY THE SISTER NIVEDITA AND THE EDITOR

To an interviewer of the *Madras Mail* a certain distinguished person of Western descent is reported, among other things, to have said : "English democracy cannot be planted in India. India is not fitted for it." This pronouncement chiefly shows that foreigners do not usually take the trouble to grasp the Indian national point of view. Just as the Japanese did not plant the "English" or any other exactly Western type of democracy in Japan, but a national democracy of their own with such personal loyalty to the sovereign as certainly does not exist in England at any rate ; so we are trying to have our own national *Swaraj*. *Swaraj* does not mean an attempt to plant 'English democracy' in India, it means the human right of Indian democracy to find self-expression in its own country and amongst its own people in its own way. Speaking of democracy, however, English people may be startled to hear that in the Indian opinion India has been from ancient times immensely more skilled in the mode and

habit of democratic self-government than England has ever cared to know or believe. Were not our wonderful self-contained village-communities democratic? Are not our caste *panchayets* and *biradaris*, which still maintain a vigorous existence in most provinces, run on democratic lines? Is not each caste in its internal economy a democracy, in which the richest, most powerful and most learned member is but equal in social position and rights to the humblest? Is not the undivided Indian family a democracy? In a joint family, when a point of family conduct or policy is to be settled, it is not unoften seen that all the sons are gathered and the matter in question decided after due consideration of the opinions of all. It is because democracy existed and exists in our villages, castes, and families, that it is easy to explain at once why the Congress and Western political methods generally have been such a success in India. In one sense, the causes of dissension and the difficulty of preserving unity are greater in the home than in the city, greater in the city than in the nation; for with enlarging area, impersonal consideration become increasingly determinative. To a people, therefore, who are accustomed to this democratic self-government in the most difficult of all spheres, viz., the home or the family, the work of running the country, as our friends the Americans would put it, would not be a very difficult affair. The only difficulty in India has been that the people have not realised the all-of-the-country, so to speak, as the proper function of the all-of-the-people. Consequently they have not yet gained experience as to the things that are the function of Home or Family, or social class on the one hand, and of village, city, province, and nation on the other. But the people are now in increasing measure and rapidly grasping the idea that all the affairs of their country are the concern of all of them, —and the gaining of experience is only a question of time. It is because India has been so profoundly democratic in her *separate* or individual social units,

that she has in the past manifested so little power of resistance and so little political acumen. This is a fault which at present, however, bids fair to be corrected, and, once really corrected, under such conditions, will remain so for all time.

But it may be argued that granting that socially India has been used to the democratic mode and habit, where is the proof that politically she has been so accustomed, or is likely to appreciate and effectively use democratic methods? We shall now give such a proof. Ancient India has no history in the usually accepted sense of the word: but she has a history clearly legible in her ancient literature. In her epics and dramas we find abundant proofs of the fact that her rulers respected and acted according to the opinions of the people and the people in their turn freely expressed their opinion and demanded its recognition;—which we may say is the essence of democracy, the monarchical or republican *forms* of government being mere separable accidents. In the Ramayana it is related in the *Uttarakanda* (Chap. XLXIII), that on his return to Ayodhya from Lanka after rescuing Sita, Rama asked the spy Bhadra to communicate to him both good and evil reports; “hearing [which] I shall do what is good and eschew what is evil.” Here is a distinct promise made by Rama to respect public opinion, and he kept his promise, too. For when he heard that his subjects entertained suspicions regarding the character of Sita, who had dwelt so long in Ravana’s capital separated from her husband, he exiled her, though his heart almost broke to do so.

In the Mahabharata it is related that when Sakuntala, whom Dushyanta had married according to the *Gandharva* or mutual-choice form, went to his capital with her son, that king at first would not recognise or accept her, being evidently afraid of the opinion of his subjects. But when a celestial voice declared her in the hearing of all his court to be his lawfully wedded wife and the son to be his, he agreed to accept both mother and son. *

* “114. Having heard these words of the dwellers]of heaven,