INDIAN BUDGET SPEECH FOR 1907.

[*The following speech was delivered by Mr. Morley in the House of Commons in July* 1907 *in introducing the Indian Budget for the year.*]

I am afraid I shall have to ask the House for rather a large draft upon its indulgence. The Indian Secretary is like the aloe, which, I think, blooms once in a hundred years, for he only troubles the House with speeches of his own once in twelve months.

The British Democracy and India.

There are several topics which the House will expect me to say something about, and there are two or three topics of supreme interest and importance for which I will plead for the patient and comprehensive consideration of the House. We are too apt to find that gentlemen here and outside fix upon an incident of which they read in the newspaper; they put it under a microscope, and then indulge in reflections upon it, and they regard that as taking an intelligent interest in the affairs of India. If we could suppose that on some occasion within the last three or four weeks a wrong turn had been taken in judgment in Simla, or in the Cabinet, or in the India

Office, or that to-day in this House some wrong turn might be taken, what disasters would follow, what titanic efforts to repair these disasters, what devouring waste of national and Indian treasure lost, and what a wreckage would follow in the train! I submit that these are quite certain or possible consequences which misjudgment either here or in India, or among His Majesty's Government, might bring with it. I believe I am not going too far when I say that this is almost, if not quite, the first occasion upon which what is called the British democracy in its full strength has been brought directly face to face with the difficulties of Indian Government, with all their intricacies, all their complexities, and, above all, all their subtleties, and their enormous magnitude. Last year, when I had the honour of addressing the House on the Indian Budget, I observed, as others have done before me, that it was one of the most difficult experiments that had ever been tried in human history, whether you can carry on—what I think for myself you will have to carry on in India—personal government along with free speech and free right of public meeting. That which last year was partially a speculative question has this year become more or less actual. I want to set out

the case as frankly as I possibly can. I want, if I may say so without presumption, to take the House into full confidence, so far—and let nobody quarrel with this provision—as public interests will allow. I will ask the House to remember that we do not only hear one another; we are ourselves this afternoon overheard. Words that may be spoken here are overheard in the whole kingdom. They are overheard thousands of miles away by a great and complex community—by those who are doing the service and work of the Crown in India, by those who take part in the great work of commercial and non-official life in India, by the great Indian Princes who are outside British India, by the great dim masses of Indians whom, in spite of all, we persist in regarding as our friends, and by those whom, I am afraid, we must reluctantly call our enemies. This is the reason why everybody who speaks to-day, including myself, must use language which is well advised, of reserve, and, as I say again, of comprehensive consideration.

A Word on Finance.

The subject of discussion being the Indian Budget I must turn for a moment to finance. I assume that

all the members of the House have entirely mastered the statement of the details of the accounts and estimates for the three years 1905—6, 1906—7, and 1907—8. I assume that these are in the mind of every member of this House. Last year I told the House that I could not regard with patience the salt tax—a tax upon a necessary of life. I am glad to be able to say that the salt tax, which was reduced by half a rupee in 1903, and by half a rupee in 1905, has now been reduced in 1907—8. I greatly rejoice, because, after all, the rise in the consumption of salt in consequence of this reduction of duty proved that it weighed upon the people. The cost of this reduction is £3,000,000. These reductions amount to 60 per cent. of the tax as it stood before March 1903. After allowing for the effects of the reduction on salt, and the diminution, to be computed, of the revenue from opium of £600,000, we anticipate a surplus of three quarters of a million pounds. All surpluses are satisfactory. This surplus is due to two causes. The first is the agricultural prosperity, and the second is that we have decided, in consultation with the Government of India, to reduce the military expenditure for the year by £500,000. I am glad that meets with approval. The end of all

is that our financial position is sound and we have a splendid security to offer for all loans that are raised in this country for Indian purposes and on Indian securities.

Military Expenditure.

One other particular, which it is hard to mention without a good deal of controversy, is the great cost of the training of the British troops in India. Payments by India to the War Office in respect of the training of British troops for service in India is half a million pounds per annum. The method of calculating this charge has not, I think, been changed for twenty years, and for some time it has been admitted that it should be submitted to investigation. All I can say is that my right hon'ble friend here (Mr. Haldane) will find a dragon in his path towards the Indian gold mine. Meantime, the controversy between us being unsettled, a Committee has been appointed with my right hon'ble friend's consent, which will begin work in the autumn, to ascertain the proportion of these charges that should be borne respectively by this country and by India. Lord Justice Romer will, I am glad to say be the Chairman of that Committee, Lord Welby will be a member of it, and we shall agree upon a

third member. There will also be three representatives of the India Office and two representatives of the War Office; and I hope the result of their deliberations will be that some scheme or schedule of the respective charges will be arrived at which will do justice to the British tax payer and justice also to the Indian tax payer.

Extension of Railways.

There is one very important subject which I wish also to press upon the attention of the House—namely, the extension of the railway system. There, again, I am well aware of the enormous interest taken by traders in this country, and the interest taken, or not taken, but which ought to be taken, by people living in India, in the extension of the railway enterprise in India. Here, again, I have been fortunate enough to get a Committee of experts to go to India for the purpose of examining carefully into the details of railway administration and how far the complaints are well-founded and justified. So much for railways.

The Shadow of Plague.

The Budget is a prosperity Budget, but I am free to admit that a black shadow falls across the pros-

pect. The plague figures are appalling. But do not let us get unreasonably excited, even about these appalling figures. If we had reviewed the plague figures last September, we might have hoped that this horrible scourge was on the wane. From 920,000 deaths in the year 1900, the figures went up to 1,100,000 in 1904, and they exceeded 1,000,000 in 1905. In 1906 a gleam of hope arose, and the mortality sank to something under 500,000. The combined efforts of the Government and of the people produced that reduction; but, alas, since January, 1907, the plague has again flared up in districts that had been filled with its terror for a decade. For the first four months of this year the deaths were 642,000, and exceeded the record for the same period in any past year. You must remember that we have to cover a very vast area, and I do not know if these figures would appeal to us if we took the area of the whole of Europe. It was in 1896 that the plague first appeared in India, and up to April, 1907, the total figure of those human beings who have died is 5,250,000. But, dealing with a population of 300 millions, this great mortality, although enormous, is not at all comparable with the black death and other scourges which spread over Europe in earlier times, in proportion to the popula-

tion. The plague mortality, which was higher this year than in 1904, only represents a death-rate of about three per 1,000. It is local and particularly centres in the Punjab, the United Provinces, and Bombay. No one, I do not care to what school of Indian thought he belongs, can deny that measures for the extermination and mitigation of this disease have occupied the most serious, constant, unflagging, zealous, and energetic attention of the Government of India. But the difficulties we encounter are enormous. It is possible that men may arise this afternoon and say that we are not enforcing with sufficient zeal proper sanitary rules, but I am certain other hon'ble members will get up to show that the great difficulty in the way of sanitary rules being observed arises from the reluctance of the population to practise them. They are naturally suspicious, and when all these new rules are forced upon them they naturally resent and resist them. I will not detain the House with the details of all the proceedings we are taking. We have instituted long scientific inquiries with the aid of the Royal Society of India. There are very intelligent officers, who are doing all they can to trace the roots of this disease, and to discover, if they can, any means to prevent it. It is a curious

thing that, while there appears to be no immunity from this frightful scourge for the natives, there is an almost entire immunity for Europeans. It is difficult to understand this immunity.

Righteousness and Opium Revenue.

I have reason to believe that an enormous number of gentlemen in this House are greatly interested in opium. *Judging* by the amount of correspondence I receive on the subject of opium, the interest of all the Churches and of both political parties, and of all the groups, is very sincere and very deep. I notice that the resolutions with which they favour me often use the expression, "Righteousness before revenue." Yes, but you must not satisfy your own righteousness at the expense of other people's revenue.

Mr. Lupton:—We are quite ready to bear the expense of our righteousness.

Mr. Morley:—I present that observation hopefully to the Chancellor of the Exchequer—no, not very hopefully. This question touches the conscience of the people of this country very deeply. My hon'ble friend sometimes goes a little far; still, he represents a considerable body of feeling. Last May,

when the opium question was raised in this House, something fell from me which reached the Chinese Government, and the Chinese Government, on the strength of that utterance of mine, made in the name of his Majesty's Government, have persistently done their best to come to some sort of arrangement and understanding with His Majesty's Government upon the subject of opium. In September an Imperial decree was issued in China ordering the strict prohibition of the consumption and cultivation of opium, with a view to the ultimate eradication of all the evils of that evil habit in the space of ten years. A correspondence took place with my right hon'ble friend Sir Edward Grey, and since then there has been a considerable correspondence, some of which the House is, by question and answer, acquainted with. The Chinese Government have been always assured, not only by my words spoken in May, but by the foreign Secretary, that the sympathy of his country was with the objects set forth in their decree of September. Then a very important incident, as I regard it, and one I think likely to prove very fruitful, was the application by the United States Government to our Government for a joint inquiry into the opium traffic by the United States and

the other Powers concerned. The House knows, by question and answer, that His Majesty's Government think that procedure by way of commission rather than by way of conference is the right way to approach the question. But no one can doubt for a moment considering the enormous interest the United States have shown on previous occasions, that some good result will come from this.

Earl Percy :—Will other powers participate in this inquiry besides ourselves ?

Mr. Morley :—Oh yes, certainly. I think that has already been stated to the House by the Foreign Secretary. The point was that the United States Government wished to be informed whether His Majesty's Government were willing to take part in a joint international commission of investigation, and whether certain other powers were likewise willing. I think the noble lord will find that all the greater powers have been consulted. I will not detain the House with the details, but certainly it is a great satisfaction to know that a great deal of talk as to the Chinese interest in the suppression of opium being fictitious is unreal. I was much struck by a sentence written by the correspondent of

the *Times* at Peking recently. Everybody who knows him is aware that he is not a sentimentalist, yet he used remarkable language. He said that he viewed the development in China of the anti-opium movement as encouraging; that the movement was certainly popular, and was supported by the entire Native Press, while a hopeful sign was that the use of opium was fast becoming unfashionable, and would become more so. A correspondence, so far as the Government of India is concerned, is in progress. Those of my hon'ble friends who think we are lacking, perhaps, in energy and zeal, I would refer to the language used by Mr. Baker, a very able Finance Member of the Viceroy's Council, because these words really define the position of the Government of India:—"What the eventual outcome will be it is impossible to foresee. The practical difficulties which China has imposed on herself are enormous, and may prove insuperable, but it is evident that the gradual reduction and eventual extinction of the revenue that India has derived from the trade has been brought a stage nearer, and it is necessary for us to be prepared for whatever may happen." He added that twenty years ago, or even less, the prospect of losing a revenue of 5½ crores a year would

have caused great anxiety, and even now the loss to Indian finances would be serious and might necessitate recourse to increased taxation; but if as they had a clear right to expect, the transition was effected with due regard to finance, and was spread over a term of years, the consequence need not be regarded with apprehension.

The Amir's Visit.

When I approach military expenditure, and war and the dangers of war, I think I ought to say a word about the visit of the Amir of Afghanistan, which excited so much attention, and kindled so lively an interest in great parts, not only of our own dominions, but in Asia. I am persuaded that we have reason to look back on that visit with the most entire and complete satisfaction. His Majesty's Government previously to the visit of the Amir, instructed the Governor-General in Council on no account to open any political questions with the Amir. That was really part of the conditions of the Amir's visit; and the result of that policy, which, we looking back on it regarded as we did before, has been to place our relations with the Amir—a very important person—on an eminently satisfactory footing, a far

better footing than would have been arrived at by any formal premeditated convention. The Amir himself made a speech when he arrived at Cabul on his return, and I am aware that in that speech I come to a question of what may seem a party or personal character, which it is not in the least my intention to deal with. This is what the Amir said on April 10:—"The officers of the Government of India never said a word on political matters; they kept their promise. But as to myself, whenever and wherever I found an opportunity I spoke indirectly on several matters which concerned the interest of my country and nation. The other side never took undue advantage of it and never discussed with me on those points which I mentioned. His Excellency's invitation (Lord Minto's) to me was in such a proper form that I had no objection to accept it. The invitation which he sent worded in quite a different form from that on the occasion of the Delhi Durbar. In the circumstances, I had determined to undergo all risks (at the time of the Delhi Durbar), and, if necessary, to sacrifice all my possessions and my own life, but not to accept such an invitation as was sent to me for coming to join the Delhi Durbar." These things are far too serious for me or anybody to indulge

in controversy upon, but it is a satisfaction to be able to point out to the House that the policy we instructed the Governor-General of India in Council to follow has so far worked extremely well.

Lord Kitchener's Schemes.

I will go back to the army. Last year, when I referred to this subject, I told the House that it would be my object to remove any defects that I and those who advise me might discover in the army system, and more especially, of course, in the schemes of Lord Kitchener. Since then, with the assistance of two very important Committees, well qualified by expert military knowledge, I came to the conclusion that an improved equipment was required. Hon'ble gentlemen may think that my opinion alone would not be worth much; but, after all, civilians have got to decide these questions —and, provided that they arm themselves with the full expert knowledge of military authorities, it is their voice which settles the matter. Certain changes were necessary in the allocation of units in order to enable the troops to be better trained, and therefore our final conclusion was that the special military expenditure shown in the financial pages of the Blue-

Book must go on for some years more. But the House will see that we have arranged to cut down the rate of the annual grant, and we have taken care —and this, I think, ought to be set down to our credit—that every estimate for every item included in the programme shall be submitted to vigilant scrutiny here as well as in India. I have no prepossession in favour of military expenditure, but the pressure of facts, the pressure of the situation, the possibilities of contingencies that may arise, seem to me to make it impossible for any Government or any Minister to acquiesce in the risks on the Indian frontier. We have to consider not only our position with respect to foreign Powers on the Indian frontier, but the turbulent border tribes. All these things make it impossible—I say nothing about internal conditions—for any Government or any Minister with a sense of responsibility to wipe out, or in a high-handed or cavalier way to deal with this military programme.

Inherited Internal Troubles.

Now I come to what I am sure is in the minds of most members of the House—the political and social condition of India. Lord Minto became Viceroy, I

think, in November, 1905, and the present Government succeeded to power in the first week of December. Some of the criticisms which I have seen on the attitude of Lord Minto and His Majesty's Government leaves out of account the fact that Lord Minto did not come quite into a haven of serenity and peace. (MR. CHURCHILL: The monsoon had burst). Yes, very fierce monsoons had broken out on the Olympian heights at Simla, in the camps, and in the Councils at Downing Street. This was the inheritance into which Lord Minto came. It was rather a formidable inheritance, for which I do not, this afternoon, for one moment attempt to distribute the responsibility. It is no affair of mine. Still, when Lord Minto and myself came into power our policy was necessarily, by the conditions under which the case had been left, to compose an unexampled condition of controversy and confusion. In one famous case we happily succeeded, but in Eastern Bengal, for a time, we did not succeed. When I see it declared in articles which always begin with the preamble that the problem of India is altogether outside party questions, I well know from experience that is the forerunner of a regular Party attack. They say: "Oh, there has been supineness on the

part of Lord Minto and other persons—supineness, vacillation and hesitation." Sir, there has been no vacillation, no hesitation from December, 1905, up to the present day.

The Fuller Episode.

I must say a single word about one episode, and it is with sincere regret that I refer to it. It is called the Fuller Episode. I have had the pleasure of many conversations with Sir Bampfylde Fuller since his return, and I recognise to the full his abilities, his good faith, and the dignity and self-control with which he, during all this period of controversy, has never for one moment attempted to defend himself or to plunge into any sort of contest with the Viceroy or His Majesty's Government. I think conduct of that kind deserves our fullest recognition. I recognise to the full his gifts and his experience, but I am sure that if he were in this House he would not quarrel with me in saying that those gifts were not well-adopted to the situation which he had to face. Gentlemen opposite may be inclined to take a view hostile to Lord Minto, but I would just remind them that Lord Minto, happily for me, was appointed by their own Government.

Mr. Balfour :—Why should we be hostile?

Mr. Morley :—I do not for a moment suggest that the Right Hon'ble gentleman is hostile, but I have seen expressions of hostility from his friends. I would not dream of criticising the Right Hon'ble gentleman nor any of his more serious friends. But that position has been taken up. What was the case? The Lieutenant-Governor suggested a certain course. The Government of India thought it was a mistake, and told him so. The Lieutenant-Governor thereupon said, "Very well, then I am afraid I must resign." There was nothing in all that except what was perfectly honourable to Sir Bampfylde Fuller. But does anybody take up this position, that if a Lieutenant-Governor says, "If I cannot have my own way, I will resign," then the Supreme Government of India is bound to refuse to accept that resignation? All I can say is I do not care who the man may be, but if any gentleman in the Indian service says he will resign unless he can have his own way, then, so far as I am concerned in the matter, his resignation will be accepted. It is said now that Sir Bampfylde Fuller recommended certain measures about education, and that the Government have now adopted them. That is not so. Well, wait. I should like to say that the

circumstances are completely changed. What was thought by Lord Minto and the Government of India to be a rash and inexpedient course in those days—the circumstances have changed. I will only mention to the House one point. There was a statement the other day in a very important newspaper that the condition of anti-British feeling in Eastern Bengal had gained in virulence since Sir Bampfylde Fuller's resignation. This, the Viceroy assures me, is an absolute perversion of the facts. The whole atmosphere has changed for the better. When I say that Lord Minto was justified in the course he took, I say it without any prejudice to Sir Bampfylde Fuller, or any prejudice to his future prospects.

The Troubles in the Punjab.

Now I come to the subject of the disorders. (Several Liberal Members: "Speak up; we cannot hear you.") I am sincerely sorry—because at this point I should like to be heard, if possible, by my Hon'ble friends who sit on this side of the House. Disorder has broken out in the Punjab, and I think I may assume that the House is aware of the general circumstances from answers to questions. Under the Regulation of 1818 violent coercive measures were

adopted. And I would tell the House frankly, so far as I can—making the reservation that the public interest needs—that it would be quite wrong, in dealing with the unrest in the Punjab, not to mention two circumstances which provided the fuel for the agitation. There were ravages by the plague, and these ravages have been cruel. Again, the seasons have not been favourable. A second cause was that an Act was on the anvil which was believed to be injurious to the condition of a large body of men. Those conditions affecting the Colonisation Act were greatly misrepresented. An Indian member of the Punjab Council pointed out how impolitic he thought it was; but, as I told the House about a week ago, the Viceroy, declining to be frightened by the foolish charge of pandering to agitation, and so forth, refused his assent to that proposal. But in the meantime the proposal of the Colonisation Law had become a weapon in the hands of the preachers of sedition.

Not due to Agrarian Cause.

I suspect that my hon'ble friend, Sir Henry Cotton, is of opinion that this mischief connected with the Colonisation Act accounted for the disturbance. But I call his attention to this fact, and in order that the House may understand whether or not

the Co'onisation Act was the main cause of the disturbance. We submit that it was not. There were twenty-eight meetings held by the leading agitators in the Punjab. Of these five only related, even ostensibly, to agricultural grievances ; the remaining twenty-three were all purely political. Lala Lajpat Rai took part in two of these meetings, of which one related to the Colonisation Bill and the other was political; and Ajit Singh took part in thirteen, of which only two related to agrarian grievances, and the remaining eleven were politic.l. I hope those who take up the position that this was an agrarian movement and not a political movement in the Punjab will see that the facts are against any such contention. The figures seem to dispose of the contention that agrarian questions are at the root of the present unrest in the Punjab. On the contrary, it rather looks as if there was a deliberate heating of the political atmosphere preparatory to the agrarian meeting at Rawal Pindi on April 21, which gave rise to the troubles.

The Case for Deportation.

Now what did the Lieutenant-Governor do, and what has he stated ? He visited twenty-seven out of twenty-nine districts.

Sir Henry Cotton :—When was that?

Mr. Morley :—I have not got the date by me. It was in March or April. The Lieutenant-Governor said the situation was different in different parts of the country, that it was serious, and was growing worse, and that the speeches that were being made were directly fomenting sedition. The speeches of Lala Lajpat Rai were very greatly dominated by sedition, and by a good deal of intolerable rhodomontade—and they were published broadcast, even on the floor of this House. The speeches of this agitator, as well as the language used by Ajit Singh, were scattered all over India. These malicious incitements to revolt I will not be an instrument in further disseminating. The Lieutenant-Governor then declared that the situation was urgent and ought not to go on. Sir Denzil Ibbetson described Lajpat Rai as—"A revolutionary and a political enthusiast, who had been carried away by his theories into the most intense hatred of the British Government, but that his private character appeared to be above reproach. He has been careful," Sir Denzil adds, "throughout the agitation to keep himself as far as possible in the background, while engineering the systematic

propagandism of the last few months." This is a point to which, I think, the House will attach full importance. The Lieutenant-Governor was satisfied on information obtained practically from all over the Punjab from many diverse sources, of which I am satisfied myself, that Lala Lajpat Rai has been the organiser-in-chief of the agitation and of the systematic propagandism of the last few months in the Province, and that he is "the individual chiefly responsible for the present situation." In this agitation "special attention," it is stated, "has been paid to the Sikhs, and, in the case of Lyallpur, to the military pensioners. Special efforts have been made to secure their attendance at meetings, to enlist their sympathies, and to inflame their passions. So far the active agitation has been virtually confined to the district in which the Sikh element is predominant." The Sikhs, as the House is aware, are the best soldiers in India. "Printed invitations and leaflets," it is added, "have been principally addressed to villages held by Sikhs; and at a public meeting at Ferozepur, at which disaffection was openly preached, the men of the Sikh Regiments stationed there were specially invited to attend," and several hundreds of them, to my amazement, acted upon the invitation.

They were told that it was by their aid, and owing to their willingness, in the days of the Mutiny, to shoot down their fellow-countrymen, that the Englishmen retained their hold upon India. And then a particularly vile line of argument was taken. It was asked, "How is it that the plague attacks the Indians and not the Europeans?" "The Government," said these men, "have mysterious means of spreading the plague; the Government spreads the plague by poisoning the streams and wells." In some villages, in consequence of this representation, the inhabitants actually ceased to use the wells. I was informed only the other day by an officer who is in the Punjab at this moment that when visiting the settlements he found the villagers disturbed in mind on this point. He said to his men, "Open up the kits, and see whether these horrible things are in them." The men did as they were ordered, but the suspicion was so great that they insisted upon the glass of the telescope with whose aid the kits were examined being unscrewed in order to be quite sure that there was no pill behind the glass.

Reasons against a Prosecution.

But it may be asked, "Why do you not prosecute them?" I think Sir Denzil Ibbetson gave a good

reason, and for my part I entirely approve of it. It has been found by experience that a prosecution spreads far and wide the matter to which objection is taken. It brings it to the ears of thousands who would never have heard of it otherwise, and it attracts public attention to the prosecution of men who pose as martyrs for the good of their country and people. The speeches of Counsel are often almost as harmful as the original matter. Then when the sentences are pronounced, there are pathetic scenes in Court; there are accounts published of how they are attended on the road to prison. Sometimes the offenders receive the benediction of their leaders, and on release are carried triumphantly through the streets.

No Apology.

Think of the emergency and the risk! Suppose a single native Regiment had by chance sided with the rioters. A blaze might have been kindled, because accidents in India may lead to dire results. I say it would have been absurd for us, having got a weapon in our hands by law—not an exceptional law, but a standing law—in the face of the risk of a conflagration, it would have been absurd for us

not to use that weapon and I for one have no apology whatever to offer for using it. It will be said that it is a dangerous power. I know it. Nobody appreciates more than I do the danger and mischiefs and iniquities in our older history, and, perhaps, it may be in present history of what is called "Reason of State." I know all about that. 'Reason of State" is full of mischief and full of danger; but so is sedition, and I should have incurred criminal responsibility if I had opposed the resort to this law. A right honourable gentleman opposite (Mr. Balfour) is in an ironical mood. I will deal with that directly.

The Situation in Eastern Bengal.

I do not wish to detain the House with the story of events in Eastern Bengal and Assam. They are of a different character from those in the Punjab, and in consequence of these disturbances the Government of India, with our approval, have issued an Ordinance which I am sure the House is familiar with, under the authority and in the terms of an Act of Parliament. The course of events in Eastern Bengal appears to have been mainly this—first, attempts to impose the boycott on Mahomedans by force; secondly, complaints by Hindus that the local officials stop them

and by Mahomedans that they do not try to stop them; thirdly, retaliation by Mahomedans; fourthly, complaints by Hindus that the local officials do not protect them from this retaliation; fifthly, general lawlessness of the lower classes on both sides, encouraged by the spectacle of fighting among the higher classes; sixthly, more complaints against the officials as the result of that disorder in certain districts having been complained of. The result of the Ordinance has been that down to May 29 it had not been necessary to take action in any one of these districts.

Coercion in Ireland and India.

I noticed the ironical cheer on the part of the right hon'ble gentleman, the leader of the Opposition, when I referred with perfect freedom to my assent to the resort to weapon we had in the law against sedition, and I have had communications from friends of mine that in this assent I am outraging the principles of a lifetime. I should be ashamed if I detained the House more than two minutes on anything so small as my life. That can very well take care of itself. But I began this afternoon by saying that this is the first time that British democracy in the full strength, as represented in this House, is face to face

with the enormous difficulties of Indian Government. Some of my hon'ble friends, perhaps my right hon'ble friend, look even more in sorrow than in anger upon this alleged backsliding of mine. Last year I told the House that, in my view, India for a long time to come, as far as my imagination could reach, would be the theatre of absolute and personal Government. That, I know, aroused some doubts. Reference has been made to my having resisted the Crimes Act of the right hon'ble gentleman in Ireland. I quite agree that there is apparently a scandalous inconsistency between opposing that policy—it was not a measure so much as a policy—and supporting the deportation of these two men and other men who may follow, if it should prove to be necessary. But that inconsistency can only be established by taking the position that Ireland is exactly on the same footing as these 300 millions of people—composite, heterogeneous, with different races, and with different faiths. Does anybody contend that any political principle is capable of application in any sort of circumstances and without reference to the conditions? I, at all events, have never taken that view.

JUSTIFICATION BY MILL.

I would like to assure my hon'ble friends that in such cas as I have about political principles the leader of

my generation was Mr. Mill. There he was, a great and benignant lamp of wisdom and humanity, and I and others kindled our modest rushlights at that lamp. What did Mill say about the Government of India? Remember, he was not only that abject being,—a philosopher. He spent a large part of his life in active, responsible, and experienced concern in the government of India. If there is anybody who can be quoted as having been the champion of representative government it is Mr. Mill, and his book, I take it, is still the classic book on that subject. And what does he say in the last chapter of that book? "Government by the dominant country is as legitimate as any other if it is the one which in the existing state of civilisation of the subject people most facilitates their transition to our state of civilization." Then he says this:—"The ruling country ought to be able to do for its subjects all that could be done by a succession of absolute monarchs guaranteed by irresistible force against the precariousness of tenure attendant on barbarous despotisms and qualified by their genius to anticipate all that experience has taught to the more advanced nations. If we do not attempt to realise this ideal, we are guilty of a dereliction of the highest moral trust that can devolve upon a nation."

THE BUREAUCRACY SELF CONDEMNED.

I will now ask the attention of the House for a moment while I examine a group of communications from officers of the Indian Government, and if the House will allow me, I will tell them what to my mind is the result of all these communications as to the feeling in India. I mean the general feeling, because that, after all, is what really concerns us. All this unrest in Eastern Bengal and the Punjab will sooner or later—sooner, I hope—pass away. But what is the condition of the mind of India, what is the situation in India in the view of experienced officers at this moment? I ask the House to bear with me when I say that even now when we are passing through all our stress and anxiety it is a mistake not to look at the thing rather largely. They all admit that there is a fall in the influence of European officers over the population. They all, or nearly all, admit that there is estrangement—or I ought to say, perhaps, refrigeration—between officers and people. For the last few years—this is a very important point—the doctrine of administrative efficiency has been pressed too hard. The wheels of the huge machine have been driven too fast. Our administration—so shrewd observers and very experienced observers

assure me—would be a great deal more popular if it was a trifle less efficient, and a trifle more elastic generally. We ought not to put mechanical efficiency at the head of our ideas. But I am leading up to a particular point. The district officer who represents British rule to the majority of the population is overworked. He is forced into mere official relations, which are apt to be more disagreeable than agreeable. Experienced judges say that the loose, irregular system of earlier days was better fitted than the regular system of latter days to win and to keep personal influence. Our danger is the creation in the centre of Indian government of a pure bureaucracy. Competent, honourable, faithful, and industrious the servants of the State in India are and will be, but if the present system is persisted in they are likely to become rather mechanical, rather lifeless, perhaps I might even say, rather soul-less. An urgent demand for perfectly efficient administration, I need not tell the House, has a tendency to lead to over-centralisation; it is inevitable. The tendency in India is to override local authority, to force administration to run in official grooves, and so on. The House can imagine the consequences. I would spare no pains to improve our relations with the Native Governments. I would

recognise more and more their potential value as a safety valve. I would use my best endeavours to make these States independent in matters of administration. All the evidence tends to show we are rather making administration less personal, and everything also tends to show that the Indian is peculiarly responsive to sympathy. Let us try to draw to our side those men who now influence the people. I believe for my part that most of the people of India are on our side. I do not say for a moment that they like us; but no matter; they know that their whole interest is bound up with the law and order we preserve, and which they know would be shattered to pieces if we disappeared.

A Royal Commission as Remedy.

But I will come to my point. There is a motion on the paper for an inquiry by means of Parliamentary Committee or Royal Commission into the causes at the root of the dissatisfaction. Now, I have often thought, while at the India Office, whether it would be a good thing to have what they used to have in old days whenever the East India Company's Charter was renewed—a Parliamentary Joint Committee or Commission. I have considered the matter with the

greatest attention, and have discussed it with Lord Minto, and I have come to the conclusion that such inquiry would not produce any of the advantages such as were gained in the old days of old Committees, while it would produce a good many drawbacks and would lead to all kinds of difficulties. But I have determined, after consulting with the Viceroy, that considerable advantage might be gained by a Royal Commission to examine, with the experience we have gained over many years, into this great mischief—for everybody knows, all the people in India who have any responsibility know, that it is a great mischief, this over-centralisation. So acute a man of genius as Sir Henry Maine, before he departed, left it as an open question whether Mr. Bright had not been right all along when he said, just before or just after the Mutiny, that the centralised Government of India, such as we have now, was *too much for the power of* any man to work. Now, when two men, quite unlike in temperament and training, agreed, as to the evil of centralisation on this large scale, it makes one reflect. I will not undertake at the present time to refer to a large Commission, such as was contemplated by Sir H. Maine and Mr. Bright, the large questions of which I have spoken, but I do think much might be gained

by an inquiry on the spot into the working of centralisation of Government in India, how in the opinions of trained men here and in India, this mischief might be alleviated. But that is not a question before us now.

Educated India.

You often hear men talk of the educated section of India as mere handful, an infinitesimal fraction. So they are in numbers. But it is idle—fatally idle to say—that this infinitesimal fraction does not count. This educated section makes all the difference, is making and will make all the difference. That the educated section should attack the present system of Government has been long foreseen, has long been known to be inevitable. There need be no surprise in the fact that they want a share of political influence, that they want the emoluments of administration. The means of many of them are scanty, and they think they have little to lose and something to gain by a revolutionary change. But they cannot but know that all their hopes depend on order. They see that the British hand works the State machine surely and smoothly, and they think, having no fear of race animosities, that their hands could work the

machine as surely and as smoothly as the British hand. From my observations I should say they could not do it for a week. It is one of the most elaborate systems that ever existed in the history of human Government, and it would break down.

The Promises of last Year.

I come now to the last topic—not at all an unimportant one—with which I will trouble the House. Last autumn the Governor-General appointed a Committee of the Executive Council to consider the development of the administrative machinery, and at the end of March last he publicly informed his Executive Council that he had sent home a Despatch to the Secretary of State proposing suggestions for a move in advance. This was not in accordance with instructions from us; it emanated entirely from the Government of India. Now let us consider this. The Viceroy with a liberal—I do not use the word in a party sense—with a liberal, courageous mind entered deliberately upon the path of improvement. The public in India were aware of it. They waited, and are now waiting the result with the liveliest interest and curiosity. Meanwhile, the riots happened in Rawalpindi, in Lahore. After these riots

broke out, what was the course we ought to take? Some in this country lean to the opinion—and it is excusable—that the riots ought to suspend all suggestions and talk of reform. Sir, His Majesty's Government considered this view, and in the end they took, very determinedly, the opposite view. They held that such a withdrawal from a line of policy suggested by the Governor-General would, of course, have been construed as a triumph for the party of sedition and of the enemies of the Viceroy. They held that, to draw back on account of local and sporadic disturbances, however serious, anxious, and troublesome they might be, would have been a very grave humiliation. To hesitate to make a beginning with our own policy of improving the administrative machinery of the Indian Government would have been taken as a sign of nervousness, trepidation, and fear; and fear, which is always unworthy in any Government, is, in the Indian Government, not only unworthy, but dangerous. I hope the House concurs with His Majesty's Government. In answer to a question the other day, I warned one or two of my hon'ble friends that, in resisting the employment of powers to suppress disturbances under the Act of 1818 or by any other lawful weapon we could find,

they were promoting the success of that disorder, which would be entirely fatal to all the projects with which they sympathised. The Despatch reached us in due course. It was considered by the Council of India and by His Majesty's Government, and our reply was sent about a fortnight ago. Some one will ask—Are you going to lay these Despatches on the table to-day? I hope the House will not take it amiss if I say that at this stage—perhaps at all stages—it would be wholly disadvantageous to lay these two Despatches on the table. We are in the middle of details and discussion of details to-day, and it would break up the continuity if we had a premature discussion *coram populo*. Every one will understand that discussions of this kind must be very delicate, and it is of the utmost importance that these discussions should be conducted with perfect and entire freedom. But, to use a word that I do not often use, I might adumbrate the proposal.

A "Council of Notables."

This is how the case stands. The Despatch reached His Majesty's Government, who considered it; and we then set out our views upon the points raised in the Despatch. We have left it to the Indian

Government to frame a Resolution, a kind of bill, embodying the submissions or instructions addressed to them by His Majesty's Government. That draft Resolution will in due course be sent here. We shall consider that draft, and then it will be my duty to present proposals to this House if legislation is necessary, as probably will be; and they will then be returned to India to be discussed there by all those concerned. The proposals I would adumbrate are these. We have given approval to the establishment of an Advisory Council of Notables. Those who are acquainted with Indian affairs will recollect that Lord Lytton in 1877 set up a Council of this kind. It was a complete failure.

Earl Percy:—Was it actually brought into existence?

Mr. Morley:—I think so, but it never did any good. Lord Curzon had the idea of a Council, but I think the scope was limited to business connected with the Imperial Service Troops. The Council of Notables would have a much wider scope. It would be purely advisory, and would be called together from time to time for the double purpose of eliciting independent opinion and diffusing, what is

really the most important thing of all—correct information as to the actions and intentions of the Government. It is remarkable how the Government, on the one hand, knows so little of the mind of the people—and it is just as deplorable, on the other hand, that the people know so very little about the mind of the Government. It is a tremendous chasm that we have to bridge; and whether political machinery can ever bridge it I know not.

Legislative Constitution and Procedure.

The second proposal is the acceptance of the general principle of a substantial enlargement of the Legislative Councils—both the Governor-General's Legislative Council and the Provincial Legislative Councils. Details of this reform have to be further discussed in consultation with the local Governments in India, and an official majority must be maintained. Thirdly, in the discussion of the Budget in the Viceroy's Council the subjects are to be grouped and explained severally by the members of the Council in charge, and a longer time—this is a thing often demanded—is to be allowed for detailed discussion and general debate.

Indians in the Council of India.

I should like to add one more conclusion that I have not arrived at without deliberation and consideration. The Secretary of State has the privilege of nominating members of the Council of India. I think the time has now come when the Secretary of State may safely, wisely, and justly nominate one, or it may be two, Indian members. I will not discuss the question now. I may have to come to Parliament for legislation at a later stage; but I think it right to say that this is my intention. It oppresses me to think how few opportunities, either in India or here, the governing bodies have of hearing the views of the Indian people.

The True Secret of Government.

I think I have defended myself from ignoring the principle that there is a difference between the Western European and the Indian Asiatic. That is a vital difference, and it is infatuation to ignore it. But there is another vital fact—namely, that the Indian Asiatic is a man with very vivid susceptibilities of all kinds, and with great traditions, with long traditions of a civilisation of his own. We are bound to treat him with the same kind of respect and kind-

ness and sympathy that we should expect to be treated with ourselves. Only the other day I saw by chance a letter from General Gordon to a friend of mine. He wrote "To govern men, there is but one way, and it is an eternal truth—get into their skins. Try to realise their feelings. That is true of Government." That is not only a great ethical, but a great political law, and I hope that in all we do, in all this House does, it will not be forgotten.

British Rule Must Continue.

It would be folly to pretend to any dogmatic assurances—and I certainly do not—as to the secrets of the future in India. But anybody who takes part in the rule of India, whether as a Minister or as a member of the House of Commons participating in discussion on the affairs of India—anybody who wants to take a fruitful part in such discussion will, if he does his duty, find himself in the position that British rule will continue, and ought to continue, and must continue. There is, I know, a school—I do not think it has any representative in this House—which says we might wisely walk out of India, and that the Indians would manage their own affairs better than we could manage them for them. I think anyone

who pictures to himself the anarchy, the bloody chaos that would follow from any such withdrawal would shrink from any such position. We, at all events—the Ministry and the members of this House—are bound to take a completely different view. I believe that certainly the Government, and certainly this House, in all its parties and groups, are determined that we ought to face, that we do face, all these mischiefs, difficulties, and dangers of which I have been speaking with a clear conscience. We know we are not doing it for our own interest, but for the interest of the millions committed to us. We ought to face it with a clear conscience, with sympathy, kindness, firmness, and love of justice, and, whether the weather be fair or foul, in a valiant and hopeful spirit.

SPEECH AT ARBROATH.

[*Mr. Morley, Secretary of State for India, addressed a crowded meeting of his constituents on the 21st October* 1907 *in the Public Hall, Arbroath, when Provost Alexander presided. Mr. Morley, who on rising met with a most enthusiastic reception, the audience rising and cordially singing "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow," said*]—

Mr. Provost, Ladies and Gentlemen,—It is an enormous satisfaction to me to find myself once more here, I am afraid the first time since the polling, and since the majority—was it 2,500 ?—(laughter)—that splendid majority that these burghs were good enough to give me. I value very much what the Provost has said, when he told you that I have never, though I have had pretty heavy burdens, neglected the local business of Arbroath and the other burghs. (Cheers.) The Provost truly said that I hold an important and responsible office under the Crown; and I hope that fact will be the excuse, if excuse be needed, for my confining myself to-night to a single topic. When I spoke to a friend of mine in London

the other day he said, "What are you going to speak about?" and I told him. He said—and he is a very experienced man—"It is a most unattractive subject, India." (Laughter and cheers). This is the last place, Arbroath, and the rest of my constituency, where any apology is needed for speaking about India, because it is you who are responsible for my being Minister for India. If I have been—in many ways I am certain I have been—a deficient Minister, it is your fault. (Laughter.) If your 2,500 majority had been 2,500 the other way—a very inconceivable thing I admit—but if it had, I should have been no longer Minister for India. Do you know there is something that strikes the imagination, something that awakens a feeling of the bonds of mankind in the thought that you here and in the other burghs—(shipmen, artificers, craftsmen, and shopkeepers living here)—that you are brought through me, and through your responsibility in electing me, into contact with all these patient millions, hundreds of millions, 300 millions, across the seas. I say that is a fact that strikes the imagination; and therefore it is that I will not make any apology to you to night for talking to you about India, the responsibility for which you are yourselves involved in. Let me say this, not only to you gentlemen here, but

to all British constituencies—that it is well you should have patience enough to listen to a speech about India; because it is no secret to anybody who understands these things that if the Government were to make a certain kind of bad blunder in India—which I do not expect them to make—there would be short work for a long time to come with many of these schemes, financial schemes, which you have set your heart upon. Do not believe, do not think, if any mishap were to come to pass in India that you can go on with that admirable programme of social reforms, all costing money, in the spirit in which you are now about to pursue it.

His Consistency.

It is not a fantastical or academic theme I present to you; it is a theme in which your own deepest political interests are closely involved. (Cheers.) Now, I am not very fond of talking of myself, but there is one single personal word that I would like to say, and this is really the only place—this or one of the other burghs in my constituency—these are the only places in which I should not be ashamed to say that word. But you, after all, are concerned in the consistency of your representative. Now I

think a public man who spends much time in vindicating his consistency makes a mistake. I will confess to you in friendly, but strict confidence, that I have winced when I read of lifelong friends of mine saying that I have shelved in certain Indian transactions the principles of a lifetime. One of your countryman said that, like the Python—that fabulous creature who had the largest swallow that any creature ever had—I have swallowed all my principles. I am a little disappointed in some ways. When a man has laboured for more years than I care to count for Liberal principles and for Liberal causes and thinks he may possibly have accumulated a little credit in the bank of public opinion (cheers),—and in the opinion of his party and his friends—(cheers)—it is a most extraordinary surprise to him to find when he draws a very small cheque upon that capital to find the cheque returned with the uncomfortable and ill-omened words, "No effects." (Laughter.) I am not going to argue that I am not going to defend myself. A long time ago a journalistic colleague, who was a little uneasy at some line I took upon this question or that, comforted himself by saying, "Well, well, this (speaking of me) swings on the tide, but the anchor

holds." (Cheers.) Yes, gentlemen, I am not a Pharisee, but I do believe that my anchor holds. (Cheers.)

Our First Duty in India.

Now to India. I observed the other day that a certain Bishop—the Bishop of Lahore—*in* India said —and his words put in a very convenient form what is in the minds of those who think about Indian questions at all—"It is my deep conviction that we have reached a point of the utmost gravity and of far reaching effect in our continued relations with this land, and I most heartily wish there were more signs that this fact was clearly recognised by the bulk of Englishmen out here in India, or even by our rulers themselves." Now you and the democratic constituencies of this kingdom are the rulers of India. You are among them, and it is to you, therefore, that I come to render my account. Just let us see where we are. *Let us put this case. When critics assail Indian* policy in this question or that, I want to know where we start from? Some of you in Arbroath wrote to me, perhaps a year ago, and called upon me to defend the system of Indian Government and the policy for which I am responsible. I declined, for reasons which

I stated at the moment ; and I am here to-night to render an account of my stewardship and to answer in anticipation all those difficulties which many people, with whom in many ways I sympathise, feel. Let us see where we start from. Does anybody want me to go to London to-morrow morning and to send a telegram to Lord Kitchener, who is Commander-in-Chief in India, and tell him that he is to disband the Indian Army and send home as fast as we can despatch transports the British contingent of the Army and bring away the whole of the Civil servants ? Suppose it to be true, as some people in Arbroath seemed to have thought—I am not arguing the question—that Great Britain loses more than she gains ; supposing it to be true that India would have worked out her own salvation without us ; supposing it to be that the present Government of India has many defects—and I do not know any Government in the world, except the present Cabinet—(laughter),—which has not defects—supposing all that to be true, do you want me to send that telegram to Lord Kitchener to-morrow morning to clear out bag and baggage ? How should we look in the face of the civilised world if we had turned our back upon our duty and upon our task ? How should we bear the

savage stings of our own consciences when as assuredly we should, we heard through the dark distances the roar and scream of confusion and carnage in India? How should we look in the face of the civilised world, how should we bear the stings of our own consciences? Then people of this way of thinking say "That is not what we meant." What is meant, gentlemen? The outcome, the final outcome, of British rule in India may be a profitable topic for the musings of meditative minds; but we are not here to muse; we have the duty of the day to perform, we have the tasks of to-morrow laid out before us. Now, where do they start from? In the interests of India, to say nothing of our own national honour, in the name of duty and of common sense, our first and commanding task is to keep order and to quell violences among race and creed, and sternly to insist on the impartial application of rules of justice, independent of European or of Indian. We start from that. We have got somehow or other wisely or unwisely, by a right policy or erroneous policy, we have got to maintain order.

Difficulties of the Task.

Now there are some difficulties in this great task in England, and I am not sure that I will ex-

clude Scotland, but I said England in order to save your feelings. (Laughter.) Now, one great difficulty is the difficulty of finding out, of knowing what actually happens. Scare head lines in the bills of important journals are misleading. I am sure some of you must know the kind of mirror which distorts features, elongates lines, makes round what is lineal, and so forth; and I assure you that a mirror of that kind does not give you a more grotesque reproduction of the human physiognomy than some of these tremendous telegrams give you as to what is happening in India. That is one difficulty, and I could illustrate that if I liked and if you had patience. Another point is that the Press is very often flooded with letters from Indians or *ex*-Indians, letters too often coloured with personal partisanship leaning this way and that. There is a great deal of writing on the Indian Government by men who have acquired the habit while they were in the Government, unluckily retaining the habit after they come home and live, or ought to live, in peace and quietness among their friends here. That is another of our difficulties. But, still, when all these difficulties are measured and taken account of, it is impossible to overrate the courage, the patience and fidelity, with which the

present House of Commons has faced a not at all easy moment in Indian Government. You talk of democracy; people say, "Oh! Democracy cannot govern remote dependencies." I do not know; that is a very grave question; but, so far, after one Session of the most Liberal Parliament that has ever sat in Great Britain, this most democratic Parliament so far, at all events, has safely rounded that very difficult angle. (Cheers.) It is quite true that in reference to a certain Indian a Conservative member rashly called "Why don't you shoot him?" The whole House, Tories, Radicals, and Labour men, they all revolted against any such doctrine as that; and I augur from the proceedings of the last Session—and next Session may entirely shake me down to the ground, I do not know—but I do augur from the proceedings of the last Session that democracy, in this case at all events, has shown, and I think is going to show, its capacity for facing these enormously difficult and complicated problems. (Cheers.)

"THE GROSSEST FALLACY IN ALL POLITICS."

Now, I sometimes say to friends of mine in the House, and I venture respectfully to say it to you

—there is one tremendous fallacy which it is indispensable for you to banish from your minds when you are thinking from the point of view of a British Liberal, to banish from your minds when you think of India. It was said the other day—no, I beg your pardon, it was alleged to have been said—by a British Member of Parliament now travelling in India, and a gentleman I think the more of for having an open mind, willing to hear both sides, anxious to learn before he comes home to teach—he will learn a good deal, and I hope he will communicate the fruits of his teaching to the House of Commons, where I shall be able to examine them. (Cheers.) Now I am not at all sure that he said this; but it does not matter, because many other people have said it—That whatever is good in the way of self-government for Canada must be good for India. In my view that is the most concise statement that I can imagine, and the grossest fallacy in all politics (Cheers.) I think it is a most dangerous, I think it is the hollowest and, I am sorry to say, the commonest of all the fallacies in the history of the world in all stages of civilisation. (Cheers.) Because a particular policy or principle is true and expedient and vital in certain definite circumstances, therefore it is equally true and vital in

a completely different set of circumstances. A very dangerous and gross fallacy. You might just as well say that, because a fur coat in Canada at certain times of the year is a most comfortable garment, therefore a fur coat in the Deccan of India is a sort of handy garment which you might be very happy to wear. (Laughter.) You might say, "Oh! but a form of Government is one thing and a coat is another." I only throw it out to you as an example and an illustration. Where the historical traditions, the religious beliefs, the racial conditions are all different—I do not want to be arrogant or insolent—but I say that to transfer by mere logic all the conclusions that you apply to one case to the other is the highest of political folly (cheers), and I for one, will never lend myself to that doctrine.

The Analogy of Ireland.

You may say, now you are laying down a different law, different rules of policy in India from those which for the best part of your life you laid down for Ireland. Yes, that reproach will have sting in it if you persuade me that Ireland with its history, the history of the Union and so forth, is exactly analogous to the 300 millions of people in India. I am not

at all afraid of facing that test. (Cheers.) I cannot but remember that in speaking to you I may be speaking to people many thousands of miles away, but all the same I shall speak to you and to them perfectly frankly. (Cheers.) I don't myself believe in artful diplomacy; I have no gift for it, to my great misfortune. (Laughter.) There are two sets of people you have got to consider. First of all, I hope that the Government of India, so long as I am connected with it and responsible for it to Parliament and to the country, will not be hurried by the anger of the impatient idealist. The impatient idealist—you know him. I know him. (Hear, hear.) I like him; I have been one myself. (Laughter.) He says, "You admit that so and so is right; why don't you do it—why don't you do it now?" I sympathise with him whether he is an Indian idealist or a British idealist. Ah! gentlemen, how many of the most tragic miscarriages in human history have been due to the impatience of the idealist! (Loud cheers.) I should like to ask, to come to detail, the Indian idealist, for example, whether it is a good way of procuring what everybody desires, a reduction of Military expenditure, whether it is a good way of doing that to foment a spirit of strife in India which makes reduction of

Military forces difficult, which makes the maintenance of Military force indispensable ? It is a good way to help reformers like Lord Minto and myself, to help us to carry through reform, to inflame the minds of those who listen to these teachers, to inflame their minds with the idea that our proposals and projects are shams ? I don't think it is. (Hear, hear.)

Disorder and the Repression.

And I will say this, gentlemen. Do not think there is a single responsible leader of the reform party in India who does not deplore the outbreak of disorder which we have had to do our best to put down, who does not agree that disorder whatever your ultimate policy may be—at any rate, violent disorder must be put down, and that with a firm hand. (Cheers.) If India to-morrow became a self-governing Colony—which is the language used by some—disorder would still have to be put down with a firm hand, with an iron hand ; and I do not know to whom these gentlemen propose to hand over the charge of governing India But whoever they might be, depend upon it that the maintenance of order is the foundation of anything like future progress. (Cheers.) If any of you hear unfavourable language applied to me as your

representative, just remember considerations of that kind. To nobody in this world, by habit, by education, by experience, by views expressed in political affairs for a great many years past, to nobody is repression, exceptional repression, more distasteful. There is the policeman, of course, who, you will all agree, is a form of repression we cannot dispense with; but exceptional repression is no more distasteful to any one than it is to your representative ("Hear, hear," and cheers.) After all, gentlemen, you would not have me see men try to set the prairie on fire without arresting the hand. You would not blame me when I saw men smoking their pipes—political pipes, or ordinary pipes—smoking pipes near powder magazines, you would not blame me, you would not call me an arch coercionist, if I said, "Away with the men and away with the powder" ("Hear, hear," and cheers.) We have not allowed ourselves—I speak of the Indian Government—to be hurried into the policy of repression. I say this to what I would call the idealist party, and in spite of nonsense that I read in some quarters that ought to know better, about apathy and supineness. We will not be hurried into repression any more than we will be hurried

into the other direction. Then the other party, which finds a very good voice, which is very vocal in this country, say :—"But, oh ! we are astonished, and India is astonished, and it is time that India is astonished and amazed at the licence that you extend to newspapers and to speakers ; why don't you stop it?" Orientals, they say, do not understand it. Yes, but just let us look at that. We are *not* Orientals ; that is the root of the matter. We are in India. We English, Scotch and Irish are in India because we are not Orientals ; and if I am told that the Oriental view is that they cannot understand that the Press are allowed to write what they like—well, experiments may fail, but, anyhow, that is a Western experiment which we are going to try, not only through this Government, but through other Governments. We are representatives, not of Oriental civilisation, but of Western civilisation, of its methods, its principles, its practices ; and I for one will not be hurried into an excessive haste for repression by the argument that Orientals do not understand this toleration.

The Indian Government View.

You will want to know how the situation is viewed at this moment in India itself by those who

are responsible for the Government of India. I think it is best to be quite straightforward, and the view is not a new view at all. The view is that the situation is not at all dangerous, but that it requires serious and urgent attention. (Cheers.) That seems to be the verdict, for the moment it is the verdict. Those who are called Extremists are few, but they are active, their field is wide, and their nets are far spread. Anybody who has read history knows that the Extremist beats the Moderate by his fire, his fiery energy, his very narrowness and concentration. So be it; we remember it; and we watch it all, with that lesson of historic experience full in our minds. But still we hold that it would be the height of political folly for us at this moment to refuse to do all we can do to rally the Moderates to the cause of the Government, simply because the policy will not satisfy the Extremists. Let us, if we can, rally the Moderates, and if we are told that the policy will not satisfy the Extremists, so be it; our line will remain the same. This is a great lesson, a great principle, a great maxim. It is the height of folly to refuse to rally Moderates, and what we shall call sensible people, because we will not satisfy Extremists. (Cheers.) Now I am detaining you rather unmercifully, but I

doubt whether—and do not think I say it because it happens to be my department—of all the questions that are to be discussed now, perhaps for some years to come, any question can be more important than the question of India. There are many aspects of it which it is not possible for me to go into, as, for example, some of its Military aspects ; but I certainly doubt whether there is any question more important, more commanding at this moment, and for some time to come, than the one which I am impressing upon you to-night. Is all this what is called unrest in India froth ? Is it deep rolling ? I urge that if it is froth we shall get the better of it. Is this unrest the result of natural order and wholesome growth in this vast community with its 300 millions of population ? Is it natural effervescence, or is it deadly fermentation ? Is India with all its heterogeneous populations—is it moved really to new and undreamt of unity ? It is the vagueness of the discontent, which is not universal, but of the discontent so far as we can perceive it—it is the vagueness that makes it harder to understand, harder to deal with. Some of them are angry with me. Why ? Because I have not been able to give them the moon. (Laughter.) I have got no moon, and if I had I would not give them

the moon. I would not give anybody the moon because I do not know who lives there. I do not know what kind of conditions prevail. But, seriously, I read pretty carefully—not very pleasing reading—I read much of the Press in which their aspirations are put forth. I think it is my duty to do that. (Cheers) But I declare to you I cannot find what it is precisely they want us to do which we are not anxious slowly and gradually to make a way for eventually doing. But there must be patience and there must be, whatever else there is, firmness.

A Literary Divergence.

I want, if I may, to make here a little literary divergence. Much of this movement arises from the fact that there is now a considerable, a large, body of educated Indians who have been fed at our instigation, by our means, upon the great teachers and masters of this country—Milton, and Burke, and Macaulay, and John Stuart Mill. I think it is a mistake that we should not feel that these masters should have a great force and influence. They may; but still I am not surprised at all, or you, that these educated Indians who read these great masters and teachers of ours are intoxicated

with the ideas of freedom and nationality and self-government which those great writers promulgate? (Cheers.) I entirely agree. Who of us can wonder who had the privilege in the days of our youth, at college or at home, of turning over those golden pages and seeing that lustrous firmament dome over our youthful imaginations—who of us can forget, shall I call it the intoxication and rapture, with which we made friends with these truths? (Cheers.) Then why should we be surprised that young Indians feel the same movement of mind when they make free of those great teachers that we put into their hands? (Cheers.) I would only say this. I know some of these teachers pretty well. I only say this to my idealist friends, whether Indian or European, that for every passage that they can find in Mill or Burke, or Macaulay, or that splendid man, Bright—(cheers)—for every passage they can find in the speeches or writings of these great teachers of wisdom, for every such passage I will find them a dozen passages in which, in the language of Burke, one of those teachers on which these men rely, gives the warning—"How weary a step do those take who endeavour to make out of a great mass a true political personality!" I believe those are the words

of Burke, and they are words that are much to be commended to those zealous men in India—how many a weary step has to be taken before they can form themselves into a mass which has a true political personality! I say all this. It may be wasted, but I do believe anybody who has a chance ought to appeal to the better mind of India, to the better mind of educated India. Time has gone on, experience has widened. I have never lost my invincible faith that there is a better mind in all great communities in the human race—(cheers)—and that that better mind, if you can reach it, if statesmen in times to come can reach that better mind and awaken it and evoke it, can induce it to apply itself to practical purposes for the betterment of the conditions of that community, they will indeed have a beneficent fame. There are—nothing strikes me much more than this when I talk of the better mind of India, and there is no use discussing it—there are subtle elements, religious, spiritual, mystical, traditional, historical in what we may call for the moment the Indian mind, which are very hard for the most candid and patient to grasp or to realise the force of; but we have got to try. (Hear, hear.) I always remember a little passage in the life of a great Anglo-

Indian, Sir Henry Lawrence, a very simple passage, and it is this. "No one ever ate at Sir Henry Lawrence's table without learning to think more kindly of the natives." I wish that at every Anglo-Indian table—I wish I could think that at every Anglo-Indian table to-day nobody has sat down without leaving it having learned to think a little more kindly of the natives. (Cheers) I will only say one more thing at this point. India is perhaps the one country—bad manners, overbearing manners are very disagreeable in all countries—India is the only country where bad and overbearing manners are a political crime. (Cheers.) The Government have been obliged to take measures of repression; they may be obliged to take more. But we have not contented ourselves with measures of repression. I have said, we have never declined to rally the Moderates because the Extremists would not be contented.

The Reform Scheme.

Those of you who have followed Indian matters at all during the last few weeks or months—two or three months—are aware there is a reform scheme, a scheme to bring the Indians closely—giving them a chance, at all events of coming more closely—into

contact with the Government of their country. Though the Government of India issued certain proposals expressly marked—I should like this to be observed—as provisional and tentative, there was no secret hatching of a new Constitution. Their circular was sent about to obtain an expression of Indian opinion, official and non-official. Plenty of time has been given and is to be given for an examination and discussion of the information. We shall not be called upon to give an official decision until spring next year, and shall not personally be called upon for a decision before the middle of next Session. If you will let me, I will say that we look with satisfaction on the new policy of leaving the Indian protected States and the Indian Princes who rule over them—and they amount to over 60 millions of population outside the area of what is called the British area—to leave these Princes much more to themselves. This is a step we have taken to which I attach the greatest importance. Two Indians have for the first time been appointed to be members of the Council of India sitting at Whitehall. (Cheers.) I appointed these two gentlemen, not only to advise the Secretary of State in Council, not only to help to keep him in touch with Indian opinion

and Indian interests, but as a marked and conspicuous proof on the highest scale, by placing them on this important advisory and, in some respects, rulingbody, that we no longer mean to keep Indians at arms' length or shut the door of the Council Chamber of the paramount power against them. (Cheers.) Let me press this little point upon you. The root of the unrest, discontent, and sedition, so far as I can make out after constant communication with those who have better chances of knowing the problem at first hand than I could have had—the root of the matter is racial and not political. (Cheers.) Now, that being so, it is of a kind that is the very hardest to reach. You can reach political sentiment. Racial dislike, perhaps some would call it in some cases hatred—it is a dislike not of political domination, but of our racial domination; and my object in making that great and conspicuous change in the constitution of the Council of India which advises the Secretary of State of India, my object was to do something—you might say not much—but to do something, and if rightly understood and interpreted to do a great deal, to teach all in India, from the youngest Competitionwallah who arrives there that in the eyes of the Government of India the Indian is perfectly worthy—we do not say

it is so in words alone, we have now shown it in act—by giving a share in the Council of the paramount power.

Famine and Plague.

There is one more difficulty—two difficulties—and I must ask you for a couple of minutes. I only need name them—famine and plague. At this moment, when you have thought and argued on all these political things, the Government of India is a grim business. Now, if there are no rains this month, the spectre of famine seems to be approaching, and nobody can blame us for that. Nobody expects the Viceroy and the Secretary of State to play the part of Elijah on Mount Carmel who prayed for and saw a little cloud like a man's hand until the heavens became black with winds and cloud and there was a great rain. That is beyond the reach of Government. All we can say is that never before was the Government found more ready than it is now to do the very best to face the prospect. Large suspensions of revenue and rent will be granted, allowances will be made to distressed cultivators, and no stone will be left unturned. The plague figures are terrible. At

this season plague mortality is generally quiescent; but this year, even if the last three months of it show no rise, the plague mortality will still be the worst that has ever been known, I think, in India's recorded annals. Pestilence during the last nine months has stalked through the land wasting her cities and villages, slaying its millions, uncontrolled and uncontrollable, so far as we can tell, by human forethought or care. When I read some of these figures in the House of Commons, there were considerable loudish cries of "Shame." I felt that these cries came from the natural sympathy, horror, amazement, and commiseration with which we all listen to such ghastly stories. But of course no shame to the Government of India. If you see anything in your newspapers about these plague figures, remember that this is not like an epidemic here. In trying to remedy plague, you have to encounter tremendous habits and prejudices. Suppose you find plague is conveyed (some think it is) by a flea upon a rat, and suppose you are dealing with a population who object to the taking away of life. You see at once the difficulty that has to be encountered. The Government of India have applied themselves with great energy, with fresh activity, and they believe they have got

the secret of this fell disaster. They have laid down a large policy of medical, sanitary, and financial aid. (Cheers.) I am a tremendous niggard of public money. (Cheers.) I watch the expenditure of Indian revenue as the ferocious dragon of the old mythology watched the golden apples. (Laughter.) I do not forget that I come from a country which, so far as I have known it, is most generous, if it is also most prudent. Nevertheless, though I have—both of my own temperament and, I am sure, of the prejudices of my constituents—to be most thrifty, almost parsimonious, upon this matter, the Council of India and myself will, I am sure, not stint or grudge. (Cheers.) I can only say, in conclusion, that I think I have said enough to convince you that I am doing what I believe you would desire me to do—approaching, along with admirable colleagues in India and admirable colleagues at home; conducting administration in the spirit which I believe you will approve with impartiality; listening to all I can learn; desirous to support all those who are toiling to do good work in India—(Cheers);—and that I shall not, for my part, be deterred from pursuing to the end, as I have persevered in up to this moment, a policy of firmness, of slow reform. We shall not see many fruits of it

in our day. Never mind; we shall have made a beginning, and in more than one thing we have made a beginning in firmness, reform, and resolute patience. (Loud cheers.)