

1836, long before the Universities were thought of. What did he say? What a warning it is, gentlemen. He wrote, in the year 1836 :—"At the single town of Hooghly 1,400 boys are learning English. The effect of this education on the Hindus is prodigious..... It is my firm belief that if our plans of education are followed up, there will not be a single idolater among the respectable classes in Bengal thirty years hence. And this will be effected merely by the natural operation of knowledge and reflection." Ah, gentlemen, the natural operation of knowledge and reflection carries men of a different structure of mind, different beliefs, different habits and customs of life—it carries them into strange and unexpected paths. I am not going to embark you to-night upon these great controversies, but I for my own part, speaking without arrogance, without arrogant presumption, feel when we talk about education that we are getting very near the root of the case. Now to-night we are not in the humour—I am sure you are not, I certainly am not—for philosophising. Somebody is glad of it. I will tell you what I think of—as I have for a good many days past—I think of the burden of responsibility weighing on the governing man at Calcutta and at Siml

ATTITUDE OF EUROPEANS IN INDIA.

We think—you do too—of the anxieties of those in India, and in England as well, who have relatives in remote places and under conditions that are very familiar to you all. I have a great admiration for the self-command, for the freedom from anything like panic, which has hitherto marked the attitude of the European population of Calcutta and some other places, and I confess I have said to myself that if they had found here, in London, bombs in the railway carriages, bombs under the Prime Minister's House, and so forth, we should have had tremendous scare headlines and all the other phenomena of excitement and panic. So far as I am informed, though very serious in Calcutta—the feeling is serious, how could it be anything else?—they have exercised that great and noble virtue in all ranks and classes of self-command. Now the Government—if you will allow me for a very few moments to say a word on behalf of the Government, not here alone but at Simla—we and they, for after all we are one—have been assailed for a certain want of courage and what is called, often grossly miscalled, vigour.

THE COURAGE OF THE GOVERNMENT.

We were told the other day—and this brings us to the root of policy—that there had been a momentary flash of courage in the Government, a momentary flash of courage when the Government of India and we here assented to the deportation of two men, and it is made a matter of complaint that they were released immediately. Well, they were not released immediately, but after six or eight months—I forget exactly how many months—of detention. They were there with no charge. You are in England now, gentlemen. There was no charge, no trial, nor intention of bringing them to trial. How long were we to keep them there? I will tell you—and I say it in the presence of all concerned in this business or in this accusation (I will not say accusation, but hint) that we have been wanting in courage—how long were we to keep those men there? Not a day, I answer, nor one hour after this specific and particular mischief, with a view to which this drastic proceeding was adopted, had abated. Specific mischief, mind you. I will not go into that argument to-night: another day I will. I will only say one thing. To strain the meaning and the spirit of an exceptional law like our old regulation of the year 1818 in such a fashion as this, what would it do? I will tell you with my full responsibility, with my most careful

reading of the history of our own day 'and of some other days. Such a strain of the law as this is, in the perverse imagination of headstrong men, a suggestion for provoking lawless and criminal reprisals. ("No.") You may not agree with me. You are kindly allowing me as your guest to say things with which perhaps you do not agree. (Cries of "Go on.") Though you are the Indian Civil Service and I am Secretary of State, we understand one another—we speak the same language, and I tell you that a proceeding of that kind, indefinite detention, is a thing which would not be endured in this country. (A voice of "Disorder.") Yes, if there were great and clear connection between the detention and the outbreak of disorder, certainly; but as the disorder had abated it would have been intolerable for us to continue that incarceration.

THE PRESS LAW.

Last Monday, what is called a Press Act, was passed by the Government of India in connection with and simultaneously with an Explosives Act which ought to have been passed, I should think, twenty years ago. What is the purport of the Press Act? That is what I ask your kind attention to, and the kind attention of a few people outside this room. I do not attempt to give it in technical language. Where the Local Government finds a newspaper article

inciting to murder and violence, or resort to explosives for the purposes of murder or violence, that Local Government may apply to a Magistrate of a certain status to issue an order for the seizure of the Press by which that incitement has been printed; and if the owner of the Press feels himself aggrieved, he may within fifteen days ask the High Court to reverse the order and direct the restoration of the Press. (Cries of "Oh.") That is a statement of the law which has been passed in India, and to which I do not doubt we shall give our assent. There has been the usual outcry raised—usual in all these cases; I am not unfamiliar with it in another connection—between "too early" on the one hand and "too late" on the other. Certain people say: "Oh, you are too late." Others say: "You are too early." I will say to you first of all, and to any other audience afterwards, that I have no apology to make for being a party to the passing of this law now; and I have no apology to make for not passing it before. • I do not believe in short cuts, and I believe that the Government in these difficult circumstances is wise not to be in too great a hurry. I have no apology to make for introducing executive action into what would normally be a judicial process. Neither, on the other hand, have I any apology to make for tempering executive action with judicial elements; and

I am very glad to say that an evening newspaper last night, which is not of the politics to which I belong, entirely approves of that. It says: "You must show that you are not afraid of referring your semi-executive, semi-judicial action to the High Court." You will all argue about that. But I want to say—thinking more of others than of you—that this Act meddles with no criticism, however strong, of Government measures. It discourages the advocacy of no policy, social, moral, political, or economic. Yet I see, to my great regret and astonishment, that this Act is described—and, I am sorry to say in an organ of my own party—as an Act for judging cases of seditious libel without a Jury. It is contended by some—and I respect the contention—that the Imperial Parliament ought to have been consulted before this Act was passed, and ought to be consulted now. (Cries of "No, no.") My veteran friends lived before the days of household suffrage. But it is said, and I think quite rightly,—that the voice of Parliament ought to be heard in so grave a matter as this. But the principles of the proposals were fully considered, as was quite right, not only by the Secretary of State in Council, but by the Cabinet. It was a matter of Police urgency. That is my view of it. Do not think I am trying to find pleas to excuse this Act. Not a bit of it. I stand by

it. But it is perfectly natural to say: Should the Imperial Parliament have no voice? I have directed the Government of India to report to the Secretary of State all the proceedings taken under this Act; and I undertake, as long as I hold the office of Secretary of State, to present to Parliament from time to time the reports of the proceedings taken under this somewhat drastic Act. I do not believe that any of you will feel that this is at all a weakening of our determination to carry out this Act.

THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS.

When I am told that an Act of this kind is a restriction on the freedom of the Press, I do not accept it for a moment. I do not believe that there is a man in England who is more jealous of the freedom of the Press than I am. But let us see what we mean. It is said: "Oh, these incendiary articles"—for they are incendiary and murderous—"are mere froth." Yes, they are froth; but they are froth stained with bloodshed. When you have men admitting that they deliberately write these articles and promote these newspapers with a view of furthering murderous action, to talk of the freedom of the Press in connection with that is wicked moonshine. We have now got a very Radical House of Commons. So much the better for you. If I were still a member of the House of Com-

mons, I should not mind for a moment going down to the House—and I am sure that my colleagues will not mind—to say that when you find these articles on the avowal of those concerned, expressly designed to promote murderous action and when you find as a fact that murderous action has come about, it is moonshine to talk of the freedom of the Press. There is no good in indulging in heroics. They are not wanted. But an incendiary article is part and parcel of the murderous act. You may put picric acid in the ink and pen just as much as in any steel bomb. I have one or two extracts here with which I will not trouble you. But when I am told that we may recognise it as one of the chief aims of good Government that there may be as much public discussion as possible, I read that sentence with great edification; and then I turn to what I had telegraphed for from India—extracts from *Yugantar*. To talk of public discussion in connection with things of that kind is really pushing things too far.

PUBLIC OPINION.

I will not be in a hurry to believe that there is not a great body in India of reasonable people not only among the quiet, humble, law-abiding people, but among the educated classes. I will not believe that there is not a great body of reasonable people of that kind. I do not care what they call themselves, or

what organisation they may form themselves into. But I will not be in a hurry to believe that there are no such people and that we cannot depend on them. When we believe that—that we have no body of organised, reasonable people on our side in India—when you gentlemen who know the country say that—and, mind you, you must have that body of opinion among the educated classes as well as among the great masses, because it is the educated classes in all countries and in all times who make all the difference—I say that, on the day that we believe that, we shall be confronted with as awkward, as embarrassing, and as hazardous a situation as has ever confronted the rulers of the most complex and gigantic state in human history. I am confident that if the crisis comes it will find us ready, but let us keep our minds clear now. There have been many dark and ugly moments—I see gentlemen around me who have gone through dark and ugly moments—in our relations with India before now. We have such a dark and ugly moment before us and we shall get through it—but only with self-command and without any quackery or cant, whether it be the quackery and cant of order or the quackery and cant of sentiment. I beg to propose the health of the Indian Civil Service.

THE REFORM PROPOSALS.

[The following is the full text of the speech delivered by Lord Morley in the House of Lords on the 17th December, 1908, in introducing the Reform Proposals :—]

I feel that some apology is due to the House for the delay of which I have been the innocent cause. It has been said that my delay in bringing forward this subject is due to my anxiety to hurke discussion. That is not in the least true. The reasons which seemed to me to make it desirable that discussion upon this most important and far-reaching range of topics should be postponed are reasons of common sense. In the first place, discussion without any one having seen the papers to be discussed would be ineffective ; second, it would be impossible to discuss these papers without knowing, at all events to some degree, the nature of their reception in the country immediately concerned : and, third, I cannot but apprehend that discussion in Parliament would be calculated to prejudice the reception in India of the proposals which the Government of India and the Government at Home have agreed to make. This afternoon your Lordships will be presented with a modest volume of one hundred pages, but to-morrow morning

there will be ready a series of papers so numerous that the most voracious appetite for Blue-Books will have ample food for the Christmas holidays. (*Laughter.*)

AN IMPORTANT EPOCH.

This is the opening of a very important chapter in the history of the relations between Great Britain and India. I suppose, like other Secretaries of State for India, I found my first idea was to have what they used to have in the old days—a permanent Committee to inquire into Indian Government. On the whole, I think there is a great deal in the present day to be said against that idea. Therefore, what I have done at the instigation of the Government of India is to open a chapter of constitutional reform of which I will speak in a moment; and, in the next place, I appointed a Royal Commission to enquire into the internal relations between the Government of India and its subordinate and co-ordinate departments. That Commission will, I hope, report in February or March of next year, and that again will involve both the Government of India and the India Office in laborious and careful inquiries. Unfortunately the delay which has taken place has not made the skies any brighter. But do not let us make the sky cloudier than it really is; do not let us consider the clouds darker than they really are. Let us look at the formid-

able difficulties which confront us without any undue sense of apprehension, and I can give no better example of what I mean than what I may call the intrepid coolness of Lord Minto. (*Cheers.*)

What is the state of things as they appear to persons of authority and ample knowledge in India ? Well, the anarchists are few, but, on the other hand, they are apparently prepared to go any length and run any risk. An Indian friend of mine informs me that there is no fear of anything in the nature of a rising, but that if murders continue a general panic may arise and greatly increase the danger of the situation. We cannot hope that any machinery will completely stop the outrages at once, but there is a growing indication that the native population itself is alarmed, and that the Government of India will have strong support from native public opinion. In substance, the view of the Government in India is that the position of our Government in India is as sound and well founded as it has ever been. (*Cheers.*)

THE ANTI-ANARCHIST LEGISLATION.

Then why, it may be asked, have the Government of India found it necessary to pass measures introducing drastic machinery ? I share full responsibility for those measures. Quite early after coming to the India Office I had pressure put upon me to repeal the regulations of

1818, under which natives are now being deported without trial, without charge, or without intention to try or charge. That, of course, is a tremendous power to place in the hands of an Executive Government, but I declined to take out of the hands of the Government of India any weapon they possessed in circumstances so obscure, so formidable, and so impenetrable as the circumstances surrounding British Government in India. There are two paths of folly. One is to regard Indian matters as if they had to do with Great Britain or Ireland, and to insist that all powers must necessarily suit India; and the other is that all we have to do is, as to my amazement I have seen suggested in print, to blow a certain number of men from guns.

I do not ignore the frightful risks involved in transferring what ought to be power under the law into the power of arbitrary personal discretion. I do not forget the tremendous price we pay for all operations of this sort in the reaction and excitement which they provoke. But there are situations in which a responsible Government is bound to run these risks and pay this possible price. It is like war—a hateful thing. The only question for us is whether there is such a situation in India to-day as to justify the passing of this Act of the other day, and to justify a resort to 1818. I cannot imagine that any one reading the list

of crimes given the other day, and 'remembering all that they stand for, can have any doubt that summary procedure is justified and called for.

After all, it is not our fault that India is like what it is. We must protect the peaceful inhabitants, both Indian and European, from bloodshed. Believe me, it is no matter of form when I say—and I believe everybody in this House would say the same thing—that I deplore this necessity; but we are bound to face the fact, and I, myself, recognise the necessity with infinite regret, and something much deeper than regret. But it is not the Government here or in India who are the authors of this necessity, and I would not at all mind, if it were not impertinent or unbecoming on my part, to stand up in another place and say there what I say here—that I will do my best to support the Government. (*Cheers.*)

Now, the first important question that arises is that of reform, and I would ask your Lordships to give close attention to it for a moment, because I am sure that here and elsewhere it will be argued that the necessity and the facts that cause strong repressive measures should arrest our policy of reforms. That has already been stated, and many people agree. But the Government of India and myself have, from the beginning, never varied in our deter-

mination to persevere in our policy of reform. (*Cheers.*) Perseverance in our plan of reform is not a concession to violence. Reforms we have publicly adopted and worked out for more than two years. It is no concession now too to violence to proceed with those reforms. It is simply standing to our guns, and is no weakness.

A gentleman to whom I would refer with the greatest respect recently addressed me in the public Press exhorting me to remember that Oriental countries invariably interpret kindness into fear. When I am told that Orientals always mistake kindness for fear, I can only say I do not believe a word of it, any more than I believe the strong saying of Carlyle that, after all, the fundamental question between two human beings is "Can I kill thee, or canst thou kill me?" (*Laughter.*) I do not believe that either Oriental or Western society ever existed on either of these terms or that brutality is a true test of the relations between men. There are two alternative courses open to us. We must either withdraw our reforms or persevere with them. The first would be a most flagrant sign of weakness. The second alternative is to hold steadily on in spite of bombs. That is the point. Are we to let ourselves be openly forced by bombs or murder clubs to drop our policy? Who are those who would be best pleased if I were to allow your Lord-

ships to-night to sanction that the Government should drop these reforms? It is notorious that the men best pleased would be the extremists, the irreconcilables (*cheers*), because they know that if we do anything to soften the estrangement or appease the European or native population it would be the best way of driving them from their sinister and mischievous designs.

THE NEED FOR REFORMS.

Therefore, I hope you will agree that we are not wrong in proceeding with these reforms. Sir Norman Baker, the new Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, declared that, if these powers were not enough, he would apply for more, but he also said that these measures did not represent even a major part of the policy of dealing with the situation, and he believed that, when the constitutional reforms were finally announced, the task of restoring order in India would be on the road to accomplishment. For a man in Sir Norman's position to make a statement like that is sufficient, and all that Lord Minto needs, is to ask His Majesty's Government to proceed with the reforms. Experienced men, officials and others to whom I have put the question have replied that to withdraw is impossible. We cannot stand still. Supposing we did, I would not be surprised if there are not gentlemen here who would say that we ought to take some strong measures for putting down

the free Press. A long time ago Sir Thomas Munro used the language which I will quote in order that all who hear me, and all who read, may feel what tremendous difficulties arise—difficulties which our successors, as our predecessors, will encounter. Sir Thomas Munro said:—

“What we are trying to do is an experience never yet tried in the world—that of maintaining a foreign dominion by means of a native army, and teaching that army, through a native Press that they ought to expel us and deliver their country.”

And he went on to say that a tremendous revolution might take place in consequence of a free Press. I recognise to the full the enormous force in a declaration of that kind; but let us look at it as practical men who govern the country. Supposing you abolish freedom of the Press, that will not do your business. You will then have to shut up the schools and colleges, because it would be no use abolishing the papers if you did not close these. But that will not do it. You will have to stop the printing of unlicensed books, and you will have to have repressive book legislation, as you have repressive regulations for bombs. But supposing you had done all this. When you had made India blind and gagged her, would you be able to call India, as now, the brightest jewel in the

Imperial Crown? No, you could not! The last man to minimise such a policy is the present Governor-General of India, the despatches between whom and the Government will be in your Lordship's hands to-morrow.

THE PLAN OF REFORMS.

But what of the plan of reforms? I think you will find that we have been guided in our policy by an expansion of the principles that were recognised so far back as 1861, and by the noble Marquess opposite in 1892. In 1892, the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Landsdowne) said he hoped we—meaning the Government of the day—had succeeded in giving to our proposals of Legislative Council reform sufficient to secure a satisfactory advance in the representation of the people on the Council and to give effect to the principle of selection, as far as possible, to such sections of the community as might be capable of assisting us in that manner. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Ripon)—whom I am pleased to see here to-night—in 1882 said that the measure then put forward was chiefly designed as an instrument of political principle and popular education. Those are the doctrines announced by the noble Marquess opposite and by my noble friend behind, and that is the point of view from which we approached the position.

I believe that the House will be satisfied—as I confess I am—with the amount of patience which has been bestowed upon the preparation of the scheme in India, and I hope I may add that it has been treated with equal patience and candour here with us. The result is that although some points of difficulty arose, and though the Government of India decided to drop certain parts of the scheme, on the whole there has been complete and remarkable agreement between the Government of India and myself as to the best way of dealing with these proceedings in the Legislative Council.

What you are to consider to-day will open up a great chapter in the history of India. This is the list of powers we shall have to take from Parliament when we bring in this Bill, which I propose to do next year:—

1. At present the maximum and minimum number of the Legislative Council is fixed by Statute, and we shall come to Parliament to authorise an increase in the number both of the Viceregal and the Provincial Councils.

2. Members are now nominated by the Viceroy or the Governor or the Lieutenant-Governor. No election takes place in the strict sense of the word. The nearest approach is nomination by the Viceroy on recommendation by a majority of voters on certain

public bodies. We do not propose to ask Parliament to abolish nomination but we ask them to sanction election alongside of nomination, with a view to having due representation of the different classes of the country.

3. The Indian Councils Act of 1892 forbids either Resolution or division in Council in financial discussions, and we shall ask Parliament to repeal this prohibition.

4. We shall propose to invest Legislative Councils with power to discuss matters of public and general importance, and to pass recommendations to the Government.

5. We propose to extend the power that at present exists to appoint a Member on the Council to preside.

6. Bombay and Madras have Executive Councils, and I propose to ask Parliament for power to double the number.

7. The Lieutenant-Governor has no Executive Council, and we shall ask Parliamentary sanction for the creation of such a Council, not exceeding two, and to define the Lieutenant-Governor's power to over-rule his Council.

THE OFFICIAL MAJORITY.

I now come to a very important point on which there may be differences of opinion, and which will, no doubt, create some controversy; I mean the official

majority on the Provincial Legislative Councils. It may be said that these Councils, if you take away the safeguard of an official majority, will pass all manner of wild-cat Bills. The answer to that is that the Governor-General can withhold his assent. That is not a defunct authority, but a living power, and has been used with the happiest results by the Governor-General in the case of a legislative mistake in a local Legislative Council since I have been in office. It should be remembered, when thinking of wild-cat Bills, that the range of subjects within the sphere of Provincial Legislature is rigorously limited by Statutory exclusions, though more than one subject of first importance still remains. There is one proviso in the matter of the provincial majority which may, perhaps, be regarded as a surprise. I do not propose to dispense with the official majority in the Viceroy's Legislative Council. We lag behind a stage in this respect, for you will find the Government of India saying :—

“ On all ordinary occasions we are ready to dispense with an official majority in the Imperial Legislative Council, and to rely on the public spirit of non-official members to enable us to carry on the ordinary work of legislation.”

If I were endeavouring to set up a Parliamentary system in India, it would be the easiest thing in the

world to convict me of bad logic for not dropping the necessity of an official majority in the central as in the Provincial Councils. If it could be said that what I propose would lead directly up to the establishment of Parliamentary system in India, I, for one, would have nothing at all to do with it. I do not believe it will, in spite of the attempts in Oriental countries at this moment—attempts which we all wish well—to set up Parliamentary Government. It is no ambition of mine to have any share in the beginning of that operation. (*Cheers.*) If I know that my days, either official or corporeal, were twenty times longer than they are likely to be, I should be sorry to set out for the goal of a Parliamentary system in India. The Parliament system in India is not the goal to which I for one moment aspire.

THE VICEROY'S EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

I now turn to the question of a native Member on the Viceroy's Executive Council. The absence of a native Member from that Council can no longer be defended. There is nothing to prevent the Secretary of State recommending His Majesty to appoint an Indian member to fill any vacancy, and I want to say that, if, during my retention of office, there should be a vacancy in the Viceroy's Executive Council, I should feel it my duty to tender to the King my advice that an Indian

member should be appointed. I would not do it on my own authority only. I am not fond of treading on dark and obscure ground, and here I have the absolute and full concurrence of Lord Minto himself. It was at Lord Minto's special instigation that I began to think seriously of it, and so this is how it stands: You have at this moment a Viceroy and a Secretary of State who both concur in a recommendation of this kind.

If I may be allowed to give a personal turn to these matters, I may say that I suppose Lord Minto and I have had very different experiences of life and the world, and we belong to different schools of national politics. It is rather a remarkable thing that two men differing in this way—in antecedents and so forth—should concur in this proposal. The object of it is to show that the merits of individuals are to be considered irrespective of race and colour. We need not now discuss what particular portfolio should be assigned. That will be settled by the Viceroy on the merits of the individual. A year ago I appointed two Indian gentlemen to be Members of the Secretary of State's Council, and many apprehensions reached me as to what might happen. So far those apprehensions have all been dissipated. The concord between the two Indian Members of the Council and their colleagues has been perfect; their work has been good; and the

advantage to me to be able to talk with one or other of these two gentlemen, and so realise the Indian point of view, has been enormous. I actually feel sometimes as though I have been transported to the streets of Calcutta. Is it not common sense? Everybody in India recognises the advantages derived from the admission of Indians to the Bench of the High Court with their intimate knowledge of the country and the conditions of the lives of the people. I propose at once, if Parliament agrees, to acquire powers to double the Executive Councils in Bombay and Madras, and to appoint at least one Indian member in each case. Nor shall I be backward in advancing towards similar steps as occasion may require in respect to at least four of the major provinces.

GLOOMY VIEWS UNNECESSARY.

I wish it had fallen that this chapter had been opened at a more fortunate moment, but I repeat what I said when I rose—do not let us for a moment take a gloomy view of the situation. There is not the slightest occasion for it, and none of those who are responsible take a gloomy view. We know the difficulties, and are prepared to grapple with them and keep down mutinous opposition; and we hope to attract the good-will which must, after all, be the real foundation of the prosperity and strength in India. We believe

that this is so far unsapped, and we believe that the admission of Indians to a more responsible share in the Government of their country, without for a moment taking from the central power its authority, will strengthen the foundations of our position. It will require great steadiness and constant pursuit of the same objects, with the assistance, under responsible circumstances, of Indians themselves. Military strength and material strength we have in abundance. What we still want to acquire is moral strength in guiding and controlling the people of India in the course on which time has launched them. I should like to read a few words from a speech delivered by Mr. Bright in 1858, when the Government of India Bill was in another place. What he said was this :—

“ We do not know how to leave it, and therefore let us see if we know how to govern it. Let us abandon all that system of calumny against the natives of India which has lately prevailed. Had that people not been docile, the most governable race in the world, how could you have maintained your power for 100 years? Are they not industrious, are they not intelligent, are they not, upon the evidence of the most distinguished men the Indian Service ever produced, endowed with many qualities which make them respected by all Englishmen who mix with them? I should not permit

any man in my presence without rebuke to indulge in the calumnies and expressions of contempt which I have recently heard poured forth without measure upon the whole population of India. The people of India do not like us, but they would scarcely know where to turn if we left them. They are all sheep, literally without a shepherd."

However that may be, the Government have no choice and no option. As an illustrious member of this House, Lord Macaulay, wrote:—"We found a society in a state of decomposition, and we have undertaken the serious and stupendous process of reconstructing it." Lord Macaulay said: "India now is like Europe in the fifth century." A stupendous process indeed, but one which has gone on with marvellous success! And if we are all, according to our various lights, true to our colours, that process will go on. I am not what is commonly called an Imperialist, but so far from denying it, I most emphatically affirm that it is for us to preside over this transition from the fifth European century, in some parts, in slow stages up to the twentieth. It is for us to be the guides of people in that condition, and this duty, if conducted with humanity and sympathy and wisdom and political courage, is not only a human duty and a great national honour, but what it was called the other day—one of the most glorious tasks ever confided to any country.

Second Reading of Indian Councils Bill.

[The following is the full text of Lord Morley's speech in the House of Lords on February 23, 1909:—]

My Lords, I invite the House to take to-day the first definite and operative step in carrying out the policy that I had the honour of describing to your Lordships just before Christmas, and that has occupied the active consideration both of the Home Government and of the Government of India for very nearly three years. The statement was awaited in India with an expectancy that with time became impatience, and it was received in India—and that, after all, is the point to which I looked with the most anxiety—with intense interest and attention and various degrees of approval, from warm enthusiasm to cool assent and acquiescence.

A few days after the arrival of my despatch, a deputation waited upon the Viceroy unique in its comprehensive character. Both Hindus and Mahomedans were represented; and they waited upon the Viceroy to offer warm expressions of gratitude for the scheme that was unfolded before them. A few days later at Madras the Congress met; they, too, expressed their thanks to the Home Government and to the Government of India. The Moslem League met at

Amritsar ; they were warm in their approval of the policy which they took to be foreshadowed in the despatch, though they found fault with the defects they thought they had discovered in the scheme, and implored the Government, both in India and here, to remedy those defects. So far as I know—and I do beg your Lordships to note these details of the reception of our policy in India—there has been no sign in any quarter, save in the irreconcilable camp, of anything like organised hostile opinion among either Indians or Anglo-Indians.

The Indian Civil Service I will speak of very shortly. I will pass them by for the moment. Lord Lansdowne said truly the other night that when I spoke at the end of December, I used the words “formidable and obscure” as describing the situation, and he desired to know whether I thought the situation was still obscure and formidable. I will not abandon the words, but I think the situation is less formidable and less obscure. Neither repression on the one hand, nor reform on the other, could possibly be expected to cut the roots of anarchical crime in a few weeks. But with unfaltering repression on the one hand, and vigour and good faith in reform on the other, we see solid reason to hope that we shall weaken, even if we cannot destroy, those baneful forces.

There are, I take it, three classes of people that we have to consider in dealing with a scheme of this kind. There are the extremists, who nurse fantastic dreams that some day they will drive us out of India. In this group there are academic extremists and physical force extremists, and I have seen it stated on a certain authority—it cannot be more than a guess—that they do not number, whether academic or physical force extremists, more than one-tenth, or even three per cent., of what are called the educated class in India. The second group nourish no hopes of this sort; they hope for autonomy or self-government of the colonial species and pattern. The third section in this classification ask for no more than to be admitted to co-operation in our administration, and to find a free and effective voice in expressing the interests and needs of their people. I believe the effect of the reforms has been, is being, and will be, to draw the second class, who hope for colonial autonomy, into the ranks of the third class, who will be content with admission to a fair and workable co-operation. A correspondent wrote to me the other day and said:—

“We seem to have caught many discontented people on the rebound, and to have given them an excuse for a loyalty which they have badly wanted.”

In spite of all this, it is a difficult and critical

situation. Still, by almost universal admission it has lost the tension that strained India two or three months ago, and public feeling is tranquillised, certainly beyond any expectation that either I or the Viceroy ventured to entertain.

The atmosphere has changed from dark and sullen to hopeful, and I am sure your Lordships will allow me to be equally confident that nothing will be done at Westminster to overcloud that promising sky. The noble Marquess the other day said—and I was delighted to hear it—that he, at all events, would give us, with all the reservations that examination of the scheme might demand from him, a whole-hearted support here, and his best encouragement to the men in India. I accept that, and I lean upon it, because if anything were done at Westminster, either by delay or otherwise, to show a breach in what ought to be the substantial unity of Parliamentary opinion in face of the Indian situation, it would be a marked disaster. I would venture on the point of delay to say this. Your Lordships will not suspect me of having any desire to hurry the Bill, but I remember that when Lord Cross brought in the Bill of 1892, Lord Kimberley, so well known and so popular in this House, used language which I venture to borrow from him, and to press upon your Lordships to-day :—

"I think it almost dangerous to leave a subject of this kind hung up to be perpetually discussed by all manner of persons, and, having once allowed that, at all events, some amendment is necessary in regard to the mode of constituting the Legislative Councils, it is incumbent upon the Government and Parliament to pass the Bill which they may think expedient as speedily as possible into law."

Considerations of social order and social urgency in India make that just as useful to be remembered to-day, as it was useful then.

The noble Marquess the other day, in a very courteous manner, administered to me an exhortation and an admonition—I had almost said a lecture—as to the propriety of deferring to the man on the spot, and the danger of quarrelling with the man on the spot. I listened with becoming meekness and humility, but then it occurred to me that the language of the noble Marquess was not original. Those noble Lords who share the Bench with him, gave deep murmurs of approval to the homily that was administered to me. They forgot that they once had a man on the spot, the man then being that eminent and distinguished personage whom I may be allowed to congratulate upon his restoration to health and to his place in this Assembly. He said this, which the noble Marquess will see is a

fair original for his own little discourse; it was said after the noble Lord had thrown up the reins :—

“What I wish to say to high officers of State and members of Government is this, as far as you can, trust the man on the spot. Do not weary or fret or nag him with your superior wisdom. They claim no immunity from errors of opinion or judgment, but their errors are nothing compared with yours.”

The remonstrance, therefore, of Lord Curzon addressed to the noble Lords sitting near him, is identical with the warning which I have laid to heart from the noble Marquess.

The House will pardon me if for a moment I dwell upon what by application is an innuendo conveyed in the admonition of the noble Marquess. I have a suspicion that he considered his advice was needed; he expressed the hope that all who were responsible for administration in India would have all the power for which they had a right to ask. Upon that I can—though I am half reluctant to do it—completely clear my character. In December last, shortly before I addressed your Lordships, Lord Minto, having observed there was some talk of my interference with him and his Council, telegraphed these words, and desired that I should make use of them whenever I thought fit :—

“I hope you will say from me in as strong

language as you may choose to use, that in all our dealings with sedition I could not be more strongly supported than I have been by you. The question of the control of Indian administration by the Secretary of State, mixed up as it is with the old difficulties of centralisation, we may very possibly look at from different points of view. But that has nothing to do with the support the Secretary of State gives to the Viceroy, and which you have given to me in a time of great difficulty, and for which I shall always be warmly grateful."

The Marquess of Lansdowne:—I think the noble Viscount will see from the report of my speech, that the part he has quoted had reference to measures of repression, and that what I said was that justice should be prompt, that it was undesirable that there should be appeals from one Court to another, or from Provincial Governments to the Government in Calcutta, or from the Government at Calcutta to the Secretary of State for India. I did not mean to imply merely the Viceroy, but the men responsible for local Government.

Viscount Morley:—I do not think that when the noble Marquess refers to the report of his speech he will find I have misrepresented him. At all events, he will, I do believe, gladly agree that, in dealing with sedition, I have on the whole given all the support the Govern-

ment of India or anybody else concerned had a right to ask for.

I will now say a word about the Indian Civil Service. Three years ago, when we began these operations, I felt that a vital condition of success was that we should carry the Indian Civil Service with us, and that if we did not do this, we should fail. But human nature being what it is, and temperaments varying as they do, it is natural to expect a certain amount of criticism, minute criticism, and observation, I have had that, but will content myself with one quotation from the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, well known to the noble Lord opposite. What did he say, addressing the Legislative Council a few weeks ago? :—

“ I hold that a solemn duty rests upon the officers of Government in all branches, and more particularly upon the officers of the Civil Service, so to comport themselves in the inception and working of the new measures as to make the task of the people and their leaders easy. It is incumbent upon them loyally to accept the principle that these measures involve the surrender of some portion of the authority and control which they now exercise, and some modifications of the methods of administration. If that task is approached in a grudging or reluctant spirit, we shall be sowing the seeds of failure, and shall forfeit our claim

to receive the friendly co-operation of the representatives of the people. We must be prepared to support, defend, and carry through the administrative policy, and in a certain degree even the executive acts of the Government in the Council, in much the same way as is now prescribed in regard to measures of legislation ; and we must further be prepared to discharge this task without the aid of a standing majority behind us. We will have to resort to the more difficult arts of persuasion and conciliation, in the place of the easier methods of autocracy. This is no small demand to make on the resources of a service whose training and traditions have hitherto led its members rather to work for the people, than through the people or their representatives. But I am nevertheless confident that the demand will not be made in vain. For more than a hundred years, in the time of the Company and under the rule of the Crown, the Indian Civil Service has never failed to respond to whatever call has been made upon it or to adapt itself to the changing environment of the time. I feel no doubt that officers will be found who possess the natural gifts, the loyalty, the imagination, and the force of character which will be requisite for the conduct of the administration under the more advanced form of government to which we are about to succeed."

These words I commend to your Lordships. They breathe a fine and high spirit ; they admirably express the feeling of a sincere man ; and I do not believe anybody who is acquainted with the Service doubts that this spirit, so admirably expressed, will pervade the Service in the admittedly difficult task that now confronts them.

The Bill is a short one, and will speak for itself. I shall be brief in referring to it, for in December last I made what was practically a Second-Reading speech. I may point out that there are two rival schools, and that the noble Lord opposite (Lord Curzon) may be said to represent one of them. There are two rival schools, one of which believes that better government of India depends on efficiency, and that efficiency is, in fact, the main end of our rule in India. The other school, while not *neglecting efficiency*, looks also to what is called political concessions. I think I am doing the noble Lord no injustice in saying that, during his remarkable Viceroyalty, he did not accept the necessity for political concession, but trusted to efficiency. I hope it will not be bad taste to say in the noble Lord's presence, that you will never send to India, and you have never sent to India, a Viceroy his superior, if, indeed, his equal, in force of mind, in unsparing and remorseless industry, in passionate and devoted interest

in all that concerns the well-being of India, with an imagination fired by the grandeur of the political problem that India presents—you never sent a man with more of all these attributes than when you sent Lord Curzon. But splendidly designed as was his work from the point of view of efficiency, he still left in India a state of things, when we look back upon it, that could not be held a satisfactory crowning of a brilliant and ambitious career.

I am as much for efficiency as the noble Lord, but I do not believe—and this is the difference between him and myself—that you can now have true, solid, endurable efficiency without what are called political concessions. I know the risks. The late Lord Salisbury, speaking on the last Indian Councils Bill, spoke of the risk of applying occidental machinery in India. Well, we ought to have thought of that before we applied occidental education; we applied that, and a measure of occidental machinery must follow. Legislative Councils once called into existence, then it was inevitable that you would have gradually, in Lord Salisbury's own phrase, to popularise them, so as to bring them into harmony with the dominant sentiments of the people in India. The Bill of 1892 admittedly contained the elective principle, and our Bill to-day extends that principle. The noble Lord

(Viscount Cross) will remember the Bill of 1892, of which he had charge in the House of Commons. I want the House to be good enough to follow the line taken by Mr. Gladstone, because I base myself on that. There was an amendment moved and it was going to a division, but Mr. Gladstone begged his friends not to divide, because, he said, it was very important that we should present a substantial unity to India. This is upon the question of either House considering a Bill like the Bill that is now on the Table—a mere skeleton of a Bill if you like. I see it has been called vague and sketchy. It cannot be anything else, on the broad principle set out by Mr. Gladstone:—

“It is the intention of the Government [that is, the Conservative Government] that a serious effort shall be made to *consider carefully those elements which* India in its present condition may furnish, for the introduction into the Councils of India of the elective principle. If that effort is seriously to be made, by whom is it to be made? I do not think it can be made by this House, *except through the medium of empowering* provisions. The best course we could take would be to commend to the authorities of India what is a clear indication of the principles on which we desire them to proceed. It is not our business to devise

machinery for the purpose of Indian Government. It is our business to give to those who represent Her Majesty in India ample information as to what we believe to be sound principles of Government: and it is, of course, the function of this House to comment upon any case in which we may think they have failed to give due effect to those principles."

I only allude to Mr. Gladstone's words, in order to let the House know that I am taking no unusual course in leaving the bulk of the work, the details of the work, to the Government of India. Discussion, therefore, in Parliament will necessarily not, and cannot, turn substantially upon details. But no doubt it is desirable that the main heads of the regulations, rules, and proclamations to be made by the Government of India under sanction of the India Office, should be more or less placed within the reach and knowledge of the House so far as they are complete. The principles of the Bill are in the Bill, and will be affirmed, if your Lordships are pleased to read it a second time. The Committee points, important as they are, can well be dealt with in Committee. The view of Mr. Gladstone was cheerfully accepted by the House of Commons then, and I hope it will be accepted by your Lordships to-day.

There is one very important chapter in these

regulations, which I think now on the Second Reading of the Bill, without waiting for Committee, I ought to say a few words to your Lordships about—I mean the Mahomedans. That is a part of the Bill and scheme that has no doubt attracted a great deal of criticism, and excited a great deal of feeling in that important community. We suggested to the Government of India a certain plan. We did not prescribe it, we did not order it, but we suggested and recommended this plan for their consideration—no more than that. It was the plan of a mixed or composite electoral college, in which Mahomedans and Hindus should pool their votes, so to say. The wording of the recommendation in my despatch was, as I soon discovered, ambiguous—a grievous defect, of which I make bold to hope I am not very often in public business guilty. But, to the best of my belief, under any construction the plan of Hindus and Mahomedans voting together, in a mixed and composite electorate, would have secured to the Mahomedan electors, wherever they were so minded, the chance of returning their own representatives in their due proportion. The political idea at the bottom of this recommendation, which has found so little favour, was that such composite action would bring the two great communities more closely together,

and this hope of promoting harmony was held by men of high Indian authority and experience who were among my advisers at the India Office. But the Mahomedans protested that the Hindus would elect a pro-Hindu upon it, just as I suppose in a mixed college of say seventy-five Catholics and twenty-five Protestants voting together, the Protestants might suspect that the Catholics voting for the Protestant would choose what is called a Romanising Protestant, and as a little of a Protestant as they could find. Suppose the other way. In Ireland, there is an expression, a "shoneen" Catholic—that is to say, a Catholic who, though a Catholic, is too friendly with English Conservatism and other influences which the Nationalists dislike. And it might be said, if there were seventy-five Protestants against twenty-five Catholics, that the Protestants when giving a vote in the way of Catholic representation, would return "shoneens." I am not going to take your Lordships' time up by arguing this to-day. With regard to schemes of proportional representation, as Calvin said of another study: "Excessive study of the Apocalypse either finds a man mad, or makes him so." At any rate, the Government of India doubted whether our plan would work, and we have abandoned it. I do not think it was a bad plan, but it is no use, if you are making an earnest attempt in

good faith at a general pacification, to let parental fondness for a clause interrupt that good process by sitting obstinately tight.

The Mahomedans demand three things. I had the pleasure of receiving a deputation from them, and I know very well what is in their minds. They demand the election of their own representatives to these Councils in all the stages, just as in Cyprus, where I think, the Mahomedans vote by themselves. They have nine votes and the non-Mahomedans have three, or the other way about. So in Bohemia, where the Germans vote alone and have their own register. Therefore, we are not without a precedent and a parallel, for the idea of a separate register. Secondly, they want a number of seats somewhat in excess of their numerical strength. Those two demands we are quite ready and intend to meet in full. There is a third demand that, if there is a Hindu on the Viceroy's Executive Council—a subject on which I will venture to say something to your Lordships before I sit down—there should be two Indian members on the Viceroy's Council and one should be a Mahomedan. Well, as I told them and as I now tell your Lordships, I see no chance whatever of meeting their views in that way.

To go back to the point of the registers, some may

be shocked at the idea of a religious register at all, a register framed on the principle of religious belief. We may wish—we do wish—that it were otherwise. We hope that time, with careful and impartial statesmanship, will make things otherwise. Only let us not forget that the difference between Mahomedanism and Hinduism is not a mere difference of articles of religious faith or dogma. It is a difference in life, in tradition, in history, in all the social things as well as articles of belief, that constitute a community. Do not let us forget what makes it interesting and even exciting. Do not let us forget that, in talking of Hindus and Mahomedans, we are dealing with, and are brought face to face with, vast historic issues. We are dealing with the very mightiest forces that through all the centuries and ages have moulded the fortunes of great States and the destinies of countless millions of mankind. Thoughts of that kind, my Lords, are what give to Indian politics and to Indian work extraordinary fascination, though at the same time they impose the weight of an extraordinary burden.

I come to the question which, I think, has excited, certainly in this country, more interest than anything else in the scheme before you—I mean the question of an Indian member on the Viceroy's Executive Council. The noble Marquess said here the other

day that he hoped an opportunity would be given for discussing it. Whether it is in order or not—I am too little versed in your Lordships' procedure to be quite sure—but I am told that the rules of order in this House are of an elastic description and that I shall not be trespassing beyond what is right, if I introduce the point to-night. I thoroughly understand Lord Lansdowne's anxiety for a chance of discussion. It is quite true, and the House should not forget it, that this question is in no way whatever touched by the Bill. If this Bill were rejected by Parliament, it would be a grievous disaster to peace and contentment in India, but it would not prevent the Secretary of State the very next morning from advising His Majesty to appoint an Indian member of the Viceroy's Executive Council.

The noble Marquess the other day fell into a slight error, if he will forgive me for saying so. He said that the Government of India had used cautious and tentative words, indicating that it would be premature to decide at once this question of the Indian member until after further experience had been gained. I think the noble Marquess must have lost his way in the mazes of that enormous Blue-Book which, as he told us, caused him so much inconvenience, and added so much to his excess luggage during the Christmas

holidays. The despatch, as far as I can discover, is silent altogether on the topic of the Indian member of the Viceroy's Council, and deals only with the Councils of Bombay and Madras and the proposed Councils for the Lieutenant-Governorships.

Perhaps, I might be allowed to remind your Lordships of the Act of 1833—certainly the most extensive and important measure of Indian government between Mr. Pitt's famous Act of 1784, and Queen Victoria's assumption of the government of India in 1858. There is nothing more important than that Act. It lays down in the broadest way possible the desire of Parliament that there should be no difference in appointing to offices in India between one race and another, and the covering despatch written by that memorable man, James Mill, wound up by saying that:—

“For the future, fitness is to be the criterion of eligibility.”

I need not quote the famous paragraph in the Queen's Proclamation of 1858. Every Member of the House who takes an interest in India, knows that by heart. Now, the noble Marquess says that his anxiety is that nothing shall be done to impair the efficiency of the Viceroy's Council. I share that anxiety with all my heart. I hope the noble Marquess will do

me the justice to remember that in these plans I have gone beyond the Government of India, in resolving that a permanent official majority shall remain in the Viceroy's Council. Lord MacDonnell said the other day :—

“ I believe you cannot find any individual native gentleman who is enjoying general confidence, who would be able to give advice and assistance to the Governor-General in Council.”

Well, for that matter, it has been my lot twice to fill the not very exhilarating post of Chief Secretary for Ireland, and I do not believe I can truly say I ever met in Ireland a single individual native gentleman who “ enjoyed general confidence.” And yet I received at Dublin Castle most excellent and competent advice. Therefore, I am not much impressed by that argument. The question is whether there is no one of the 300 millions of the population of India, who is competent to be the officially-constituted adviser of the Governor-General in Council in the administration of Indian affairs. You make an Indian a Judge of the High Court, and Indians have even been acting Chief Justices. As to capacity, who can deny that they have distinguished themselves as administrators of Native States, where a very full demand is made on their resources, intellectual and moral ? It is said that

the presence of an Indian member would cause restraint in the language of discussion. For a year and a half we have had two Indians on the Council of India, and we have none of us ever found the slightest restraint.

Then there is the question : What are you going to do about the Hindu and the Mahomedan ? When Indians were first admitted to the High Courts, for a long time the Hindus were more fit and competent than the Mahomedans ; but now I am told the Mahomedans have their full share. The same sort of operation would go on in quinquennial periods in respect of the Viceroy's Council. Opinion amongst the great Anglo-Indian officers now at home is divided, but I know at least one, not at all behind Lord MacDonnell in experience or mental grasp, who is strongly in favour of this proposal. One circumstance that cannot but strike your Lordships as remarkable, is the comparative absence of hostile criticism of this idea by the Anglo-Indian Press, and, as I am told, in Calcutta society. I was apprehensive at one time that it might be otherwise. I should like to give a concrete illustration of my case. The noble Marquess opposite said the other day that there was going to be a vacancy in one of the posts on the Viceroy's Executive Council—that is, the legal member's time would soon be up. Now,

suppose there were in Calcutta an Indian lawyer of large practice and great experience in his profession—a man of unstained professional and personal repute, in close touch with European society, and much respected, and the actual holder of important legal office. Am I to say to this man—"In spite of all these excellent circumstances to your credit; in spite of your undisputed fitness; in spite of the emphatic declaration of 1833 that fitness is to be the criterion of eligibility; in spite of the noble promise in Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858—a promise of which every Englishman ought to be for ever proud if he tries to adhere to it, and ashamed if he tries to betray or to mock it—in spite of all this, usage and prejudice are so strong, that I dare not appoint you, but must instead fish up a stranger to India from Lincoln's Inn or the Temple?" Is there one of your Lordships who would envy the Secretary of State, who had to hold language of that kind to a meritorious candidate, one of the King's equal subjects? I press it on your Lordships in that concrete way. Abstract general arguments are slippery. I do not say there is no force in them, but there are deeper questions at issue to which both I and the Governor-General attach the greatest importance. My Lords, I thank you for your attention, and I beg to move the Second Reading.

The Creation of Provincial Executive Councils.

[In the House of Lords on Tuesday, March 9th last on the order for the report stage of this Bill being read. Viscount Morley moved an amendment regarding the creation of Executive Councils.]

Viscount Morley of Blackburn said :—I have now to move an amendment. It is in effect, the full restitution of what was the third clause (Power to create Provincial Executive Councils), which your Lordships rejected on Thursday last. I hope your Lordships will believe that in moving what is in effect the restoration of this third clause I am not animated by any particular pertinacity. Of course, I regretted the rejection of the clause, and I regret it still, and I have a particular reason for regretting it, because I understand from authorities in India that the effect there is unfortunate—that is the word—that the effect of the rejection of this clause is unfortunate, very unfortunate. I am sure every noble lord in the House is keenly alive to the cardinal importance of the way in which the people of India—all the various communities which make up what we call India—watch what we are doing at home here in the India Office and in

Parliament, and it is above all things desirable that we should allow no impression to get abroad in India that we are negligent in looking at the real effect of what we are doing. Feeling this, and observing that both the noble Marquis the leader of the Opposition and the noble lord opposite, Lord Curzon, were careful to say—and Lord Curzon has repeated it in a letter which appeared in the *Times* on Saturday—that they had no rooted objection to the principle of the clause, that their resistance to the clause was not meant to be of a permanent kind, and the noble Marquis even suggested that we should by-and-bye, in the course of the present Session I think he said, bring up that clause in the form of a Parliamentary Bill, I telegraphed to the Government of India and to the Viceroy as to their views. I thought it was just to Parliament and to your Lordships to find out what their view was, because as I understood, the objection of noble lords opposite, of Lord Lansdowne and Lord Curzon, and of my noble friend on the cross bench, was founded upon this, that the opinion of the Government and authorities in India had not been effectively ascertained.

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND EXECUTIVE COUNCILS.

I have now received a reply to that inquiry of mine. With your Lordships' permission I am not going to argue as to the merits of the clause. That was argued

adequately and sufficiently in Committee. I am not going to say a word about the arguments for or against the clause. I have to communicate to your Lordships the views of the Government of India. These are not the exact words of the telegram, for reasons which the noble Marquis will understand, but it is as good as a textual reproduction.

“The Government in 1905”—that was before the present Government took office—“discussed the question of Provincial Executive Councils. At that time their opinion was adverse to the introduction of Councils in provinces administered by Lieutenant-Governor; but since then conditions have changed and they are still changing. Our opinion now is that the arguments then used against Government by Executive Councils are not any longer of the same force. When the constitutional changes now proposed in the Bill which your Lordships read the second time a few days ago”—“come into operation the situation will be different, and that is our reason for modifying our views. There must then, under the new conditions, be a large increase in the work of Lieutenant-Governors, and we anticipate it will be necessary to give them some kind of further assistance, not only in respect of the actual work of these Legislative Councils, but also with a view to relieving the Lieutenant-Governors of minor execu-

tive matters. We refer to this point in paragraph 76 of our despatch of October 1, as it came under consideration when the general question of reform was being examined. There are already very great calls made upon the time of Lieutenant-Governors"—and so forth—"and there can be no doubt that indirectly the enlargement of Legislative Councils proposed in this Bill will multiply the occasions requiring the Lieutenant-Governors to deal with questions of public importance. We consider that in all probability the best means of giving the required assistance will prove to be the creation of Executive Councils. The members of such a Council would be responsible Ministers who could speak in the matter of Government in a way that no secretaries or other officials could do. For the reason we have given we are in favour of having the power proposed by clause 3 in the Bill, and we should regret if the opportunity which now presents itself of obtaining that power for us were to be lost. We are altogether opposed to the proposal which we understand has been put forward to create forthwith Councils in all the larger provinces, and we desire to make that point clear. We see no present necessity for a general change of this character, and it should be made, if it is to be made, only in the light of experience. That clause 3 would give us. We should exercise the power

given under clause 3 gradually and cautiously and only after the fullest consideration of the effect of the new conditions in such province."

Now, my lords, that is the position taken up by the Government of India. That is the request, if I may so call it, that they address to Parliament—namely, that we should take this opportunity of giving them those powers, of caution in exercising which they give an assurance that I know every noble lord in the House will thoroughly trust. I submit that it would be prudent for this House not to postpone this. The noble Marquis opposite says: Postpone it. Why? We all know what happens in a Session of Parliament. Supposing towards July the noble Marquis will say: Now the time has come when we could give the Indian Government the powers which we refused them in March. I cannot think that is a business-like or politic course. I cannot think on what substantial grounds he will resist my proposal to reinsert the clause giving the Government of India powers which the noble Marquis does not deny might, with a little more experience, be useful, and which, as I say, will be used cautiously and carefully.



Closing Speech on the Second Reading of the Indian Councils Bill.

[On the order for going into Committee on the Indian Councils Bill, on Tuesday March 4th, 1909.]

Viscount Morley of Blackburn said he desired to make one or two observations. The debate on the second reading was a very remarkable one in many respects. There was, if he might say so, great knowledge shown. Noble lords with enormous experience and knowledge of India gave the House the benefit of their opinions on the Bill, and he was bound to say that the criticism was perfectly fair and that it was made in a temper towards the Bill and towards those who were responsible for it of which no kind of complaint could be made. He thought Lord Midleton had described truly the mood of the House when, in an early sentence of his most interesting speech, he said the House and the country had come to a position when we had to face the facts, and that the facts we had to face made it impossible either to stand still or not to make a move in advance. He believed that the passing of the second reading of the Bill without a division was a sign of the sense that that House had of the peculi-

arity and gravity of the situation we had to meet. It was inevitable, in such a situation, and with a Bill of the magnitude and importance of this, that the authors of the Bill should have to face a great deal of criticism and observations, and two or three noble lords opposite, and one or two behind him, did criticise the Bill and make points of objection to this or that feature in it. It was impossible to bring forward any Bill whatever, whether a very moderate Bill or a fuller Bill such as the one they were now talking about, without exposing a good deal of surface to criticism; but, having carefully studied and weighed all the points that were made on the second reading, he did not feel that the foundation or substance of the Bill had been damaged, or that any good reason had been shown why they should not proceed with it, and proceed with it with a determination—this was a very important point—not to whittle it away in Committee, nor to defeat the effect which, as Lord Curzon had admitted, it had had of relaxing the tension in India. He hoped, therefore, that nothing done in Committee would impair that most desirable consequence.

THE CHARGE OF RUSHING THE BILL.

It was said that he, as the responsible Minister, had rushed the Bill, or, at all events, some points of it, and he had seen it stated in some of the Indian tele-

grams that there was a frantic haste in the consideration of this measure. He could not imagine what people could mean who considered the facts. It was three years ago since this policy was, as it were, put on the anvil. The Government of India sent a despatch containing their views of the policy which they hoped might be embodied in a measure so far as Parliamentary sanction was necessary. The Government at home sent them back a reply begging them to reconsider this or that point and to submit the whole case to the local Governments and local authorities. That was done. It took a very long time, but it was very carefully and even exhaustively done. The end of it was a second despatch in October of last year. The Government at home considered it again, and they made certain modifications in it. But those were not hastily made. Did any one believe that an Indian Secretary—was there any one of the 15 men who had held the office of Indian Secretary—who would have dreamed of framing and completing a measure of this importance without consultation with the Viceroy and the Government of India? It was quite impossible and not conceivable, and he could only say that he was entirely guiltless of the frantic haste and hurry of which he was sometimes definitely accused. Lord Lansdowne had pointed to the last stage of all, and referred to his requirement, so to call

it, from the Government of India, that their views, so far as the heads of the regulations were concerned, should be in his possession when he had to move the second reading of the Bill in their Lordships' House. It was quite true that no great length of time was given for the consideration of those proposals to be framed afterwards in the regulations. But the local authorities had had all the topics before them for three years. They had had, he thought, two solemn and formal inquiries into them, and had given a great deal of evidence to the Decentralisation Commission, much of that evidence touching points now in the Bill. The air had been full of all the topics for three years, and surely, then, there was nothing unreasonable or hurrying in asking these gentlemen and the authorities they represented what they thought as to the line of this or that regulation. He hoped, therefore, that noble Lords opposite, and their Lordships at large, would absolve him from having been hasty at all. On the contrary, no one could have been more deliberate or more anxious to have consultation with the Government of India than he was, and he did not believe that anybody there would say otherwise.

WHAT REGULATIONS HAVE BEEN DECIDED UPON.

He had promised, in reply to the request made to him, that he would on this occasion describe to the

House, so far as he could, 'the general heads of the regulations so far as they had yet arrived in discussing and settling them. Everybody agreed that it was for the Government of India to shape and frame these regulations in conformity with principles laid down at home, but not arrived at without full consultation and deliberation with them. He would state first the points already settled which were to be dealt with by regulations, rules, or proclamations. The first regulation already settled fixed the number of members of the Imperial Council and the Councils of Madras, Bombay, Bengal, the United Provinces, Eastern Bengal, Punjab, and Burma. He would not trouble their Lordships with the number, but they were fixed.

The Marquis of Lansdowne: Do they approximate to the maximum laid down in the schedule?

Viscount Morley said he was not sure that they did. The number of the Imperial Council was to be 65, including the Viceroy; Madras, Bombay, Bengal, and United Provinces, 47 each; Eastern Bengal, 37; Punjab, 25; and Burma, 17. The next point was the quorum, which was fixed at 21 for the Imperial Council; 15 for Madras, Bombay, Bengal, and United Provinces; 12 for Eastern Bengal; and eight for Punjab and Burma. The third point settled was the term of office, which was three years for ordinary members and

one year or less for the class known as experts. They had settled, too, the method of filling casual vacancies. In the case of casual vacancies to be filled by election, the proper body or group of bodies would be informed of the vacancy by the head of the Government and requested to elect a member. If no such member was elected within three months of the date of receiving the request, the head of the Government might then nominate, at his discretion, a person belonging to the community or local area which the body or group of bodies was supposed to represent.

• THE BUDGET DEBATE SETTLED IN PRINCIPLE.

He came to the second head—rules settled in principle. The discussion of the annual financial statement was the most important branch of the new system. He need not dwell upon this system, because it was described very fully and clearly in the Blue-Book, and it was not easy to summarise. Coming to the Imperial financial statement, the Legislative Council would resolve itself into Committee and discuss it by heads sitting *de die in diem* till it was finished. Each item would be explained by the member in charge, and every member might move resolutions and divide the Committee on them; such resolutions being in the form of recommendations to the Government, who, of course, were not

bound any more than they were either^{*} in their Lordships' House or in another place to take action upon them. When the Committee had finished, the Government would make such alterations in the Budget as it thought fit, and the Budget in its final form would be submitted to the Council, when there would be a general discussion and no more resolutions. All through, certain items of revenue and expenditure, including the State Railways and the Army, were excluded from the debate. That was a very important limitation. The discussion on the Provincial Budgets would be on somewhat similar lines, except that a standing Committee of the Council would be appointed, not more than 12 in number, and equally divided between officials and non-officials, to consider the Estimates in a private and informal manner, in their first stage. In their second stage, the Council would resolve itself into Committee; and in the third stage the Council as such would discuss them, as in the case of the Imperial Council. The subjects of general interest would be discussed subject to the following conditions, which had not yet been put into the form of rules: (1) Resolutions must relate to matters of public and general importance; (2) no resolution should of itself have any force or effect; (3) the order of business was to be under the entire control of the

President; (4) the President to have power to disallow any resolution if, in his opinion, it was contrary to public policy; (5) certain classes of subjects, to be defined when the rules of the business were drafted, to be expressly excluded. So much for the matters that were settled in principle.

MATTERS REMAINING FOR DETERMINATION.

The Bill left the following points to be dealt with by regulations, rules, or proclamation. There were three possible ways of proceeding—regulation, rules (a narrower instrument), and proclamation, which only arose, in two or three cases. The points to be dealt with were:—(1) The number of members, only the maximum being fixed by the Bill; (2) the number of a quorum; (3) the term of office; (4) the manner of filling casual vacancies; (5) the conditions under which and the manner in which, persons resident in India might be nominated or elected; (6) the qualifications for being nominated or elected a member. There were rules not yet settled affecting the discussion of the annual financial statement, and the asking of questions. As to the Executive Councils, they were called into existence by proclamation, and they were now considering—and the Government of India especially—what powers of the Lieutenant-Governor should be exercised by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council

the number of the members of Council, their powers and duties, and the way of appointing temporary and acting members.

THE MANNER OF ELECTION.

The next question was the regulations still under consideration. All that had been decided as to the manner of election—and this, of course, affected the burning question of Mahomedan representation—was that there was to be election in the proper and natural sense. The ordinary way for nomination was for the Viceroy or Lieutenant-Governor to ratify the recommendation. The question arose: Ought they to persevere with that system, and still retain what was called nomination, but what was really ratification or confirmation in the case of members elected? The view of the Government was that it would make election rather—he did not say farcical in effect, but it would certainly make it look farcical if, after expanding the Act of 1892 in order to carry further the principle of election they reserved to executive authorities the power of saying whether election should be void or should be a valid choice. The Government had decided that there was to be no ratification.

DISQUALIFICATIONS.

Of course, that led to the necessity of going into the question of qualification. Every legislative body

—certainly the House of Commons—exercised its right of excluding from membership within it persons coming within certain categories. The Government had not yet quite settled what those disqualifications were to be, and the Government of India in a telegram about ten days ago had provisionally proposed the following as disqualified persons:—(1) Females (*laughter*); (2) persons of unsound mind; (3) persons under 25 years of age; (4) insolvents, subject to the conditions which existed in our own country in the matter of bankruptcy; (5) persons who had been convicted of a non-bailable offence, when such sentence had not subsequently been quashed or reversed; (6) persons who had been dismissed from the service of the Government and declared ineligible for employment under the Government in future.

THE “RAGGED EDGE” OF DEPORTATION.

The Government of India were now specially considering a question undoubtedly of great moment—namely, whether the persons dealt with under Regulation 3 under the Act of 1818, should be declared for ever disqualified. Nine or more persons were now deported under that regulation. He slipped into an error the other day in replying to Lord Midleton on this subject. He did not now bind himself to take the view he then expressed. He thought it required a

great deal of consideration. All these questions of disqualifications had come into prominence because of the cessation of the ratification and confirmation from executive authorities. The moment they arrested that process it became necessary to lay down rules and categories of exclusion. In regard to all these categories, and in the question of the deported men and so forth, he hoped the House would take the counsel which Lord Courtney gave the other day, and which, he confessed, he had much at heart. He thought it was vital for the success of this policy and this measure. If they were going to give these great extensions of power, let them not do it in a grudging way. If they made their list of disqualifications too large, if they included certain classes of people in India, he was afraid it would leave what he might call a "ragged edge" behind. It was vital that they should leave as little ragged edge as possible, if ragged edge there were at all. Of course, it was necessary to make provision to meet the case of corruption in elections. On any member becoming disqualified under any of these heads, the head of the Government would have power to declare his seat vacant. It was proposed by the Government of India that the oath or declaration of allegiance should be taken by every nominated or elective member before he took his seat, and unless he did so he should not be qualified to sit.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS.

As to the rules as to questions, there were already rules on this subject, and the only important alteration would probably be in respect of supplementary questions. They heard a great deal in the debate on the second reading as to the evils that would arise from a promiscuous multitude of supplementary questions, such as they were familiar with in this country. Upon this rule no final decision had been arrived at, but it was proposed as follows:—"No discussion shall be permitted in respect to an answer under this rule. A member may be permitted to ask a question for the elucidation of a matter of fact or of information asked for. The President may disallow a supplementary question without giving a reason for doing so." That was the last explanation with which he need trouble the House as to the purport and scope of the rules and regulations, and he hoped the noble Marquis would consider he had explained them pretty fully. (*Hear, hear.*)

THIRD READING OF THE INDIAN COUNCILS BILL.

[*In the House of Lords, on Thursday, March 11, 1909. Viscount Morley of Blackburn, in moving the third reading of this Bill, said :—*]

This motion brings us, not I daresay to the last, but certainly to a decisive stage in this legislation. The importance of this legislation has been much dwelt upon by noble lords opposite, and I hope they will believe that no one recognizes more fully than I do the responsibility that we all take in passing this Bill. 'I accept, not the anticipations of noble lords opposite, but I accept their view that the operations which may follow the passing of this law will be, in one direction or another, of a serious character, well deserving of our fullest attention. I must say that, with one exception, I have no complaint to offer of the tone and scope of the criticisms which noble lords opposite who are so competent to speak on Indian affairs bestowed upon our proposals. They were, I think, open to a perfect answer ; but the true answer, after all, will be found in the events that follow the working of the Act. We, for our part—and when I say we, I hope I may be allowed to include not only His Majesty's Government here but the Govern-

ment of India—anticipate from this Act the most beneficial results. If things should take an untoward turn the responsibility would not lie alone with us. I think the fact that noble lords opposite did not divide against the second reading—with which I have not the slightest intention of taunting them—shows, I think, they feel that the responsibility of rejecting our proposals would be a very grave and serious responsibility from which in the legitimate discharge of their public and patriotic duty they naturally shrink.

CLAUSE THREE.

I said there was one exception to my absence of complaint. I am not going to travel again at length over the ground of my complaint as to the rejection of the third clause of the Bill. The other day I said that authorities in India had telegraphed to me that they regarded that rejection as an unfortunate incident. I see in some prints that I ought to have mentioned who those authorities were; and there was an implication that they were authorities of no particular account. The authority—I do not know why I should not mention it—was the Viceroy. The Viceroy's judgment the day after the rejection of the clause took place was that the rejection of the clause was unfortunate, and I have since seen language used by a very important person that it was disastrous. I have been blamed for

bringing again before your Lordships the third clause two or three days after it had been thrown out. I am assured that it was an unusual course in your Lordships' House; but I thought it my duty in fairness to the House that, after they had thrown out the clause, they should know and be guided by the knowledge and, as I hope, the impression of the result of that proceeding in India. It was through no pertinacity or stubbornness, however, to force my own proposal upon the House, because I have felt all through the proceedings since the debate began that this is not the case of an ordinary party Bill, and noble lords opposite have not treated it in that spirit. I cordially admit that, of course, as Lord Curzon reminded your Lordships and His Majesty's Government that the resources of civilization are not entirely exhausted by the rejection of the clause in your Lordships' House, and it may be, as Lord Curzon hinted, that another opportunity at a not considerably later date may be given to this House to examine the arguments for that clause and the position in which that proposal stands.

CONSULTATIONS WITH INDIAN SPOKESMEN.

I turn for a moment with great reluctance to a sort of semi-personal point. Language is used in public prints, and I hear something of it even in private conversation, that there has been some mystification on

my part, and random and schoolboy innuendoes are thrown out, almost lurid descriptions are sometimes drawn, as to the origin and source of this Bill. I must apologize for taking up your Lordships' time with a matter of this kind, but still it is best in an important proceeding of this sort, that all who take an interest in this subject—and there must be, I hope, many thousands of people who do take an interest—should know how this matter has proceeded. What do people mean when they say that reforms were wrung from the Secretary of State by an Indian political leader—a certain Indian political leader well known to some of your Lordships? I ask the House, was it not the business of a Secretary of State or a Viceroy when undertaking a great scheme for improving local Government in India, was it not the business of those two responsible Ministers to gather opinion upon proper details of such a scheme from every source, official and unofficial? (*Cheers.*) If you are going to try to improve the administration of a country, is a Minister, whether at Whitehall or at Simla, to shut his eyes and ears to opinion from every source and to the very persons who may be most concerned by the right or wrong, the expediency or in expediency, the sense or folly of his measures? Is there a single member of your Lordships' House, however he may doubt the policy of this Bill, who will deny for a

moment that the business of a Minister or a Viceroy was to hear opinion on every side?

Now, Mr. Gokhale, who is well known as a prominent and responsible spokesman of a very highly important section or branch of Indian opinion, came to see me at the India Office before the despatch of the Government of India of October last reached this country. I wound up our conversation with a request, which I have made to other people, that he would be so good as to write on a sheet of notepaper his views as to the reforms which he and his friends desire, and he did so on the spot. The very self-same process I went through with a spokesman of the Mahomedans. He visited me, I made to him the same request, and he complied in the same way. I do not call that wringing a measure from a Minister; and, if it is worth mentioning, I may say that I never had any communication whatever after that—which I think, was on some day in September—with Mr. Gokhale until the day before he left this country—after my despatch had gone—when he called to say good-bye. What did I do with those two notes? I followed in every proceeding connected with this policy, and especially with this Bill, the ordinary regular official course with one exception, which I will mention in a moment. No proceeding was ever more strictly in order, was ever

more above board, no transaction ever went through the not very exhilarating precincts of Whitehall more strictly in accord with ordinary rule and procedure. What happened? Those two notes and a great quantity of other material were laid before a Committee. Here was the exception that I made to the ordinary procedure. Before the Indian despatch arrived I received a summary of its contents from the Government of India, and I appointed a Committee from the Council of India, and I was able to invite to that Committee *amicus curiæ* the noble lord who sits behind me. [Lord MacDonnell indicated dissent.] They had these communications before them. I was not present. Then came the despatch of the Government of India, and that was discussed in the most strict conformity with the ordinary procedure of the India Office. It was referred to the appropriate Committee. Two or three members from the Council were added to the Committee, and they threshed out the despatch, and came to the conclusions which ultimately formed the basis of my despatch of November last. That is the whole story. I only regret that I did not see a great many more Indians. I saw all that I could; I wish I could have seen more. So much for that.

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS.

Then we are charged with not paying attention

enough to the Government of India.* I will not go into the constitutional and statutory relations between the Secretary of State and the Government of India. They are well known. They are beyond cavil and dispute. This is no occasion for opening that subject, and I hope for my own part that no such occasion will ever arise, because there are *arcana Imperii* which it is not expedient, I think to make matter of debate in Parliament. The case of the relative rights and duties of the Secretary of State and the Viceroy does not arise because I doubt if ever there was in the history of discussion between two Ministers, heads of powerful departments, a discussion such as the Government of India and we have carried on for a great many months, but closely and constantly during the last two months, carried on with a more complete absence of the spirit of contention. (*Hear, hear.*) I say that—and my words will be open to public scrutiny or the scrutiny of those who know all the secrets, such secrets as there are—without any misgiving or hesitation of the spirit in which we have worked together. The only thing I am going at this moment to read is in my despatch of November to the Government of India, replying to their despatch, in which I applauded, recognized, and thanked them for their industry, patience, thought, and candour. And then I say: “It is a sincere satisfaction

to me to find myself able to accept the substantial part of your Excellency's scheme, with such modifications as would naturally occur to different minds"—the Governor-General in Council and the Secretary of State in Council—"handling problems of remarkable difficulty in themselves and reasonably open to a wide variety of interpretation." That spirit, which animated both myself in Council and the Governor-General in Council, has gone on unabated and unimpaired, and if there are points that we have pressed that they would not of themselves have proposed there has been no serious demur. If there had been serious demur to such a proposal as, for example, that of the official majorities or the proposal to take power to appoint Executive Councils in the great provinces, I should have been shaken. Therefore, I hope the House will believe that these, I will not say arguments, but these innuendoes—I am not accusing the noble Marquis of stooping to that—of which I hear so much are really random, undeserved, and complete moonshine.

INDIAN POLITICAL LEADERS AND OUTRAGES.

I have no more to say about the Bill except this. It has been admitted all through—the noble Marquis has not denied it, and Lord Curzon expressly admitted it—that we had reason to congratulate ourselves so far on the fact that the introduction of the Bill and the

announcement of the policy which it was my fortune to make in your Lordships' House in December have produced a remarkable abatement in the tension which was formerly a source of difficulty and embarrassment to Lord Minto's Government. Without making a boast—it is too early yet—as to the effect of the Bill I think the House will be interested to know of the account I received on March 6. I cannot reproduce the text but I hope your Lordships will allow me to convey to you the substance of it. It bears on the Bill and on the public mind in this country in judging the Bill.

The insinuation that Indian political leaders are still unwilling to denounce outrages is not the case. So I am assured. Immediately after murder of the Counsel [the hateful murder the other day of the prosecuting Counsel in the Court] an influential native meeting was held in the Town Hall of Calcutta to protest against the outrage. The Moderates are quite genuine in their wish to assist in putting down anarchy. India is not, so I am assured and readily believe, and all the evidence points in the same way, in a state of insurrection. That is not to say that we may not expect further isolated attempts at outrage. The Government of India do not believe them to be instigated by any political party of the least importance. Any further outrages which may probably occur at intervals would

in no way indicate widespread sedition or justify a belief in the disloyalty of the political leaders. The position now is really one for police watchfulness. Isolated outrages will not in any way justify [I commend this to any of your Lordships who doubt the policy of the Bill or have misgivings in connexion with it] the assumption that the general state of the country is dangerous.

I hope the House will think that that is a very satisfactory state of things. Language of that sort could not have been used six months ago. I am not taking credit for that improved state of things entirely to the Bill, but I am very earnest in pressing on your Lordships, as I have done all through the stages of the Bill, this fact—that any interruption or whittling away or retardation of this Bill will do something to impair what is satisfactory in the account I have just had the honour of communicating to your Lordships. I beg to move that this Bill be read a third time. *(Cheers.)*
