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PAPERS FOR WAR TIME. No. 30

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# India and the War

By

JOHN MATTHAI

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# INDIA AND THE WAR

BY

JOHN MATTHAI

A MEMBER OF THE ANCIENT CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA

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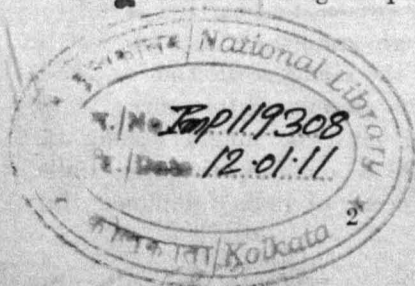
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## BASIS OF PUBLICATION

This series of Papers is issued under the auspices of a Committee drawn from various Christian bodies and political parties, and is based on the following convictions :

1. That Great Britain was in August morally bound to declare war and is no less bound to carry the war to a decisive issue ;
2. That the war is none the less an outcome and a revelation of the un-Christian principles which have dominated the life of Western Christendom and of which both the Church and the nations have need to repent ;
3. That followers of Christ, as members of the Church, are linked to one another in a fellowship which transcends all divisions of nationality or race ;
4. That the Christian duties of love and forgiveness are as binding in time of war as in time of peace ;
5. That Christians are bound to recognize the insufficiency of mere compulsion for overcoming evil, and to place supreme reliance upon spiritual forces and in particular upon the power and method of the Cross ;
6. That only in proportion as Christian principles dictate the terms of settlement will a real and lasting peace be secured ;
7. That it is the duty of the Church to make an altogether new effort to realize and apply to all the relations of life its own positive ideal of brotherhood and fellowship ;
8. That with God all things are possible.



## INDIA AND THE WAR

IN estimating the results to India of this war, it is safe to say that it will have no effect on the great masses of the people—at any rate, no direct effect. There was a slight tremor, almost approaching to panic, among the villages round about Madras on the east coast and near Cochin on the west coast, when the *Emden* appeared in Indian waters and threw a few shells on to the land and sank a few ships. The story goes that the captain of the *Emden* got hold of a few fishermen when he was prowling about Madras and told them to tell their fellows on land that the British *raj* had been defeated on the high seas, and that his ship was the vanguard of a host of other German ships on their way to India. The story, like most war stories, lacks confirmation, but that there was some sort of apprehension among the village folks is certain, from all that one has heard. An Indian government official wrote to say that for a whole week-end he was occupied with receiving callers from neighbouring villages anxious to be assured that there was to be no change of *sirkar*. That tremor has now passed with the disappearance of the *Emden*, and things have got back to their even tenor. The war apparently is forgotten except in the little echoes that come gently and fitfully from the bazaars of the city. Other and more important matters now fill the mind—births, marriages, and funerals—and so long as the sun shines and the rains fall in their season, and the tax is not too heavy, and there is enough grain and salt, life will be as tolerable as ever; for the villagers' attitude to life is seldom anything more than an amused tolerance.

The effect of the war must be sought among the educated class. They are a small minority in India, a tiny speck in the vast ocean of India's millions. But

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on that account they are not to be disregarded. It would be a mistake to ignore their influence. If this war had no effect at all on any other class in India, even then it would be worth a serious attempt to gauge the extent to which it is going to tell on the men educated in our colleges. If they are a minority, they wield an influence immeasurably beyond the extent indicated by mere numbers. There is, of course, a fairly common impression that it would be possible in some way to secure the continued support of the masses in the work of maintaining order and progress, while the educated men stand aside. It is a rather surprising notion. Imagine a Hindu joint family, composed of men of various degrees and sorts of relationship, who, even if they do not always live under the same roof and maintain themselves out of a common fund, yet preserve many of the more human bonds of the family. Imagine two or three men in this close association of many single families sent to one of the English-teaching colleges for education. They grow up under the admiring eyes of the whole group. The examinations they pass are the pride of every one in the family ; to hear them read a book and spell out the English of it is delight itself. It is not likely that if they happen to hold a strong opinion on any matter, it will be easily discountenanced by those who have grown up with them in the same household and have looked up to them for the last word on every question. Take this joint family and plant a number of such families in a compact village community. The village community has lost much of its old cohesion, but not all. The ancient village site remains, old traditions survive, there are tender memories and there is the sweet round of village festivals. Imagine half a dozen men who have emerged from the darkness and obscurity of the village, and after laborious years have secured that mystical thing, a degree. Very often, it is true, their occupation takes them to the city, and the bonds that bind them to the village are loosened. But there are periodical visits



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to pay, lands to look after, needy relations to maintain, matrimonial affairs of the children to be arranged, and beside the village well gossip is ever busy with the doings of the great ones who have gone abroad. Take these few men out of each of a vast number of family groups and village communities scattered over the infinite plains of India, knit them together by means of a single vigorous political organization, and you get some idea how far and how long you may play fast and loose with this supposed negligible minority.

✓ The first effect of the war in relation to this class is that it has supplied a good test of their willingness to stand by the Empire. But this really need not have been doubted. There have been differences of opinion among them as to the details of immediate policy, and as to how much or how little should be done at any particular time by the Government and the people respectively. But that any perceptible number of them would take advantage of a crisis in the Empire to cause trouble was always unthinkable. The question is often asked whether they are loyal. It is a somewhat difficult question to answer. Not that there is anything in the facts which must be concealed, but it obviously turns on what is meant by loyalty. It is conceivable that in certain circumstances mere disobedience to an isolated executive order may be regarded as an act of disloyalty. To give a definite answer, then, must be difficult, unless we have some standard to go by, and perhaps *Murray's Dictionary* will give us as good a standard as we can find. The definition there of loyalty is 'faithful adherence to the sovereign or lawful government. Also, in recent use, enthusiastic reverence for the person and family of the sovereign'. On the second of these there has never been any question. For Queen Victoria and her successors on the throne the educated class have shown a reverence as great as that of any other class in the country, and the recent Delhi Durbar offered striking proof of it. On the first, their faithful adherence to the

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lawful Government is proved by a simple fact which is often forgotten. The majority of those who constitute this class are either in the various Government services or in the legal profession, and the ambitions of the majority of the rising generation, and of their fathers for them, centre round one or other of these two careers. It is of course true that in the more acute type of unrest which has prevailed in recent years there has been noticeable a certain aversion to entering Government service. But this does not affect the main position. It is obvious that Government service cannot, as a rule, be a career for those who want to destroy the Government. And the legal profession cannot very well be a career for those who would destroy the authority which sustains the courts, and under whose auspices much of the codified law of the country which the courts administer has grown up. It is not merely that the educated class seek to make a living out of professions so intimately connected with the existing political order, but they take an active interest, which even their worst critics will not deny, in every measure meant to render the services and the courts more efficient and more acceptable to the people generally, and therefore more enduring.

The war then, in the first place, has made more manifest than ever the readiness of educated India to keep their place in the imperial system at a really trying moment. But it has, or will have, another effect, which on the face of it may appear to go against the first, but as a matter of fact it does not. This war will immensely strengthen the spirit of nationalism which has been growing in the country within recent years. It is a war, above all, for vindicating the principle of nationality. It began in the attempt by Austria to outrage the life of Serbia as a nation—which Russia would not tolerate. Britain was dragged into it because Germany would not respect Belgian nationality. The moral support of the civilized world has gone to the Allies' cause because, on incontestable proof, Germany has been planning to build an



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empire on the wreckage of independent nationalities weaker than herself. Cabinet ministers in England have more than once pointed to the reform of the geography of Europe on national lines as a sufficient recompense for all the suffering and sorrow. The question will naturally arise, is all this talk of nationality to be confined to Europe? Has it no application in the East? And this question will derive additional force from two facts. First, Great Britain has accepted, and warmly acknowledged, the services of an Asiatic people, Japan, in vindicating the principle of nationality on behalf of a European people. Secondly, Indian troops are fighting on the battle-fields of France by the side of European troops for the same cause. Here, then, is the very principle which has been growing up in our midst, at which some of us trembled, others rejoiced, and which a vast number passed by unheeding. Now it has been sealed as a sacred thing by the blood of the best sons of the Empire.

In attempting to apply the principle of nationality to India, the predominant objection would be that it could have no application in a country so full of diversities. It will be remembered that we are confining ourselves in this paper to the educated class, and we started on the assumption that they have a possible influence on the masses out of all proportion to their numbers. If these educated men, then, have developed a feeling akin to nationality, and if we are right in our estimate of their influence, the likelihood is that it will not be restricted to them, but, sooner or later, in whatever form, will be carried forward to the masses. Twenty-five years ago, competent observers on Indian affairs made no distinction between the educated class and the masses, but considered that the growth of nationality in India was an impossible thing with regard to both alike. Sir John Strachey, for example, wrote<sup>1</sup> in 1888: 'A native of Calcutta or Bombay

<sup>1</sup> *India*, p. 3.

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is as much a foreigner in Delhi or Peshawar as an Englishman is a foreigner in Rome or Paris'. It is a significant fact that in a recent edition<sup>1</sup> of the book in which this passage occurs, an edition revised by the present Permanent Under-Secretary of State for India, a great authority on Indian matters, the following note has been added :

This is still substantially accurate as regards the mass of the population. But as regards the educated classes, a common system of government, the spread of trade and commerce, the increasing habit of travel, and the diffusion of the English language, have of late years done much to break down the walls of separation between different parts of India. An educated Indian is now at home in any of the larger cities. The National Congress holds its annual gatherings, which attract large throngs of delegates and visitors, in turn in every part of India. It is significant that the language used at these gatherings is English, the one tongue which makes men differing in race and language to understand each other. The ideas also are European. The emergence of a distinct Indian nationality among the educated classes is possibly only a matter of time, if existing conditions endure. Whatever direction its predominant sentiments may ultimately take, it will owe its origin and inspiration to the English language and English political thought.

The problem of nationality is an exceedingly difficult problem to discuss with any degree of precision. Nobody seems sure when it begins or how it grows or what is essential and non-essential in the complex of things which make it. But probably Sir Thomas Holderness is right, in the passage quoted above, in putting a common system of government first among the causes of Indian nationality. Various things are necessary, such as language, traditions and culture, both to prepare the ground for the formation of the sentiment and to help it forward when it has once been set on foot, but it does look as if some kind of a revolt against a common system of government is the thing that primarily brought it to conscious life in many of the European countries which have been

<sup>1</sup> *India*, fourth edition, 1911, p. 18.

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the great homes of nationality. A common system of government, in countries where the constitution is inorganic, creates nationality less by placing itself alongside of the people than by creating in them a sense of grievance, real or fancied, against itself, and stimulating them into opposition. It matters not whether the grievance is well founded or ill founded. What matters is that it should be honestly entertained. Government is a thankless job even in the freest and best governed of countries. It is especially so in a country which is not free ; and every kind of ill which men suffer is first laid to the charge of this palpable and ponderable cause. A common feeling of grievance would by itself be impotent unless the ground had been prepared beforehand by such factors as a common culture or common language, sufficient communications, etc. But the unity which these latter things help to make is, as a rule, passive and unconscious of itself until it receives the stimulus of a sense of common interests against the Government. It is strange that such a strong, spiritual force as nationality, which has been accounted worthy of so much bloodshed, should really start in a common sense of mere material interests. But so it appears. The point was recently summed up by a well-known writer<sup>1</sup> on questions of modern history in this form :

The nationalities of Europe became conscious of themselves through a common sense of injustice, of moral and physical and intellectual discomfort—the result of sheer bad government. The philologists alone could not have created the national sentiments which have formed and are transforming the map of Europe, nor could the poets, the prophets and the historians. They gave form and a voice to the sentiment that existed or was born ; but the sentiment itself was due to the instinctive drawing together of the peoples, conscious of common interests and aspirations, for mutual support against systems of government that had become intolerable to them. Once set going, the sentiment of

<sup>1</sup> W. Alison Phillips, *Edinburgh Review*, 1915 (January).

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nationality becomes an end in itself ; it develops into a sort of religion, fierce and exclusive and intolerant in proportion as it is new.

¶In India, there are undoubtedly certain large obvious contrasts among the people, there is also a certain background of unity in literature, traditions, culture, and so forth. What has happened to minimize these differences and to accentuate the common features ? The answer is that it is the various unifying influences of British rule ; but the unity itself is, to a large extent, made conscious and kept alive by a certain common feeling of dissatisfaction.

Some one will ask, what is all this discontent about ? For that we must go back to Queen Victoria's Proclamation to the Indian people in 1858. There was a great mutiny of the troops in India, and enormous damage and bloodshed followed. It was rather a military than a popular movement, but it coincided, strangely enough, in point of time, with some of the well-known European national movements such as the Italian revolution ; and it is conceivable that when Queen Victoria as the head of her people gave this solemn charter to the people of India, there was an idea at the back of many minds that it was really a charter granting full possibilities of national life to India. The document, in the tone and spirit of it, is undoubtedly a very large-hearted and generous document. ' In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward.' About the same time as the granting of this charter were founded the principal universities of India ; and one of the first results of their education began to be manifest exactly twenty-five years after, just enough to mark the lifetime of a generation, in the founding of the Indian National Congress. The result of the education was, broadly, to make manifest to the people the possibilities implied in Queen Victoria's charter, to awaken the consciousness and energies of an ancient people to the goal of a national life. So in this analysis two things stand out

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—first, a solemn compact by England with the people of India, granting them a full measure of national life ; second, partly arising from this and impelled by the force of western education, a growing sense of nationality among them.

Let us come back to the war. The Prime Minister, speaking on the war last August, in one of the greatest speeches ever delivered in the House of Commons, said :

If I am asked what it is we are fighting for, I reply in two sentences. In the first place, to fulfil a solemn international obligation, an obligation which, if it had been entered into between private persons in the ordinary concerns of life, would have been regarded as an obligation not only of law but of honour, which no self-respecting man could possibly have repudiated. I say, secondly, we are fighting to vindicate the principle which in these days, when force, material force, sometimes seems to be the dominant influence and factor in the development of mankind—we are fighting to vindicate the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed, in defiance of international good faith, by the arbitrary will of a strong and over-mastering power.

The question which we put to the British people, or will put as soon as the pressure of this war is over, is this : What about your solemn agreement with *us* ? What is going to be your attitude to the question of nationality in your own dependency ?

But we have not got yet to the point of the grievance. It turns on the following passage in the Proclamation of 1858 : ‘ And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects of whatever race or creed be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity to discharge.’ This is a cautious and duly guarded statement, but the spirit of it leaves no room for doubt. In the first place, it will be answered that the vast number of subordinate offices in the service of Government in India are nearly all filled by Indians, that therefore they have already a very considerable share in it.

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This would in a sense constitute a good answer ; but it is weakened by certain circumstances which are liable to suspicion and misunderstanding. The salaries attached to these offices are such that, as a rule, they will not compensate Englishmen for the inconvenience of leaving home ; the offices are so numerous that, even if you will, you cannot get Englishmen to go out in sufficient numbers to fill them ; the duties involved are more or less of such a laborious character, requiring enormous patience and a very intimate knowledge of local minutiae, that they will not get done satisfactorily by Englishmen. So you will be met, if you make this answer, by the obvious rejoinder that you are making a virtue of necessity. Take, therefore, the superior offices, the places where men do things comparatively on their own initiative and responsibility, and in doing so feel that they find full scope for their powers. As a matter of fact, it is round places of this kind, in which what is concerned is not so much the desire to make a living as the more worthy desire of making one's personality count adequately in the life of one's country, that the sentiment of nationality naturally enough often centres. Suppose, for the purpose of argument, we take offices to which a salary of £800 or more is attached as offices which would give this opportunity—and the supposition may not be far wrong—there were in 1910 in all 1,721 such appointments in India, and of these Indians held 161.<sup>1</sup> Now, roughly, there are in India 40,000 English-speaking graduates of universities. And how comes it, in spite of this relatively unlimited choice, that there is this very large gap between the number of superior offices and the number of Indians actually holding them ? The Indian graduate may be a very inferior person, but when he has made the fullest use of the best educational facilities which your administrators have fashioned and placed at his service—and, mark you, placed with the set purpose at the beginning of fitting men for this very thing—when at the end of it,

<sup>1</sup> *Moral and Material Progress of India, 1911-12*, p. 66.



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you tell him with a wave of the hand, 'You are an inferior person, and your chief fault is your education,' he may be pardoned for feeling a little aggrieved. He says to himself, quite naturally, 'When I was ignorant I was disqualified by my ignorance: now that I am educated, I am disqualified by my education.'

It is perfectly true that if this clause in the Queen's Proclamation, with all its reservations, were taken to a court of law and sued upon between the Indian graduate and the British administrator before an independent and impartial judge, the judge might find considerable difficulty in making up his mind; but when he does, we feel it is more than likely he will make it up in favour of the Indian. But the point is, the Queen's Proclamation was an infinitely greater thing than a legal document. In interpreting an agreement between two peoples in which the sensitiveness and prejudices of one and the honour and justice of the other are so intimately bound up, to put it at its lowest, it is very unsatisfactory that there should be all this wide room for honest doubt. An excellent principle for construing such an agreement was laid down last year by President Wilson in connexion with the Panama question between England and America: <sup>1</sup>

We consented to the Treaty and its language, we accepted if we did not originate it, and we are too big and powerful and too self-respecting a nation to interpret with too strained or refined a reading of words our own promises, just because we have power enough to give us leave to read them as we please. The large thing to do is the only thing we can do.

The essential difference in the two cases is that England and America are two independent and almost equal nations, to whom it is open to resort to force of arms to make their claims good. Surely it need not be urged on a people whose sense of honour has more than once led them into perilous responsibilities, deliberately under-

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, March 6, 1914.

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taken, that an obligation to pay a debt is not weaker, but stronger, when your creditor is too poor to enforce it.

It will be noticed that in the Queen's Proclamation there is no reference to elective, representative government, and that brings us to the big, oft-disputed question, Is the principle of parliamentary government suited to the genius of the Indian people? The question is too vast and vague for any cut-and-dried answer, but now that we are on this subject of nationality, it is worth while to remember a few relevant facts. In neither of the two types of government met with generally in civilized India in the past—the central government of the king and the local government of the village community—was there, so far as we may make out, anything really akin to the method of deciding public matters or choosing public men by counting heads. Almost everywhere the bond was largely mystical and rested rather on imagination than on calculation. Again, the party system which appears essential to any modern democracy seems to depend for its safe working, at any rate in England, where on the whole it has succeeded best, on two things among others—(1) the habit of adjustment incidental to a predominantly commercial people, and (2) an attitude of amused, not over-serious, rivalry between parties which comes of the sporting habits and traditions of the people. Both these considerations are to a large extent inapplicable in India. It must also be remembered that the caste system, which so far has shown but little signs of giving way before western civilization, makes the constitution of our society anything but democratic. The caste system may or may not be an unmixed evil, but it is difficult to imagine that a political constitution could work which is essentially opposed to the general structure of society.

There is no intention here to suggest that if once the Indian people make up their minds to it and bend their thoughts and energies to bringing about such circumstances as will make election and party government and universal suffrage possible, they may not succeed, and

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on the whole, with remarkable success. They are people who in the past built up a great civilization, and they are finding their youth again, and a task like this may not be beyond them. But it cannot too often be borne in mind that political institutions, in every country where they have grown up, are characteristic products of national habits and circumstances, and the adoption of a foreign political formula may necessitate also for its successful working the adoption of foreign habits and circumstances. The one without the other seems impossible. If, therefore, we decide to borrow all this, it may be asked if we shall ever make of our country anything more than a sort of second-rate European nation. And this would go against the essence of the principle of nationality. For that principle, however selfish may be its origin in any particular country, becomes worthy of the travail of a whole world only because of the assumption that each nation has something distinctive to give to the world, which no other nation can give. Suppose we in India proceed to destroy the distinctive and essential bases of our life, which are ours, and set about to produce things which could be had in superior and more abundant form elsewhere, are we doing our duty by the world? If the doctrine of nationality were only this, that the wealthy in each nation should be made more wealthy, and there should be a general increase of wealth in the country, and the learned should be made more learned, and the comfortable more comfortable, it is hard to believe it would be worth a single drop of honest blood. The basic idea of nationality is, or ought to be, giving and contribution, not getting and appropriation. It is presumably also the ground on which political economists base their doctrine of international trade. To put it roughly, if country A and country B have about equal facilities for producing the same commodity, but B has better facilities for producing another commodity useful to the world, it is worth her while to turn to this rather than the first.

So far we have been speaking of the national movement

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as it will be strengthened by this war into a movement of revolt. But it has another side, more important and of more immediate urgency, and that is its constructive side. It is a much more pleasant task to turn to this. This war will increase the interest which has already been growing in recent years in the condition of the masses, who form seventy per cent. of India's immense population. This it will do in two ways. We cannot very well continue to applaud the justice and heroism of a war undertaken for the preservation of oppressed nationalities when vast masses of men lie at our very door in a worse condition, which only lacks the romance of war. Such an effect is noticeable, perhaps, here in England, in a greater awakening of conscience on the slum problem. The same effect will also be reached in another way. If this war drives us to a keener sense of nationality, it will be obvious that we cannot get on very far as a nation when all but a third of our people are still almost entirely absorbed in the lower struggle for bare physical existence. This would be a ground of expediency as the first would be one of chivalry. On both grounds let us assume that the educated classes in India are going now to devote much greater attention than before to the question of the masses. What does this amount to ?

In the first place, it must strengthen the belief in the necessity for maintaining order and security in the country, because the condition of the masses, quite demonstrably, is absolutely hopeless without a fair measure of security. The three commonly recognized problems now are economic regeneration, education, and sanitation—corresponding to the triple infirmity of the ryot, indebtedness, ignorance, and malaria. The solution offered for the first is the formation of Co-operative Credit Societies. It is clear that men cannot be got to mix their several credits when that security is lacking which is the basis of each individual credit. As for primary education, the agriculturist, living as a rule from hand to mouth, cannot be expected to indulge the luxury of feeding the minds of his

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children when the little plot of land with which he feeds their mouths is not assured to him. And the last, sanitation, is impossible without education, and the same considerations therefore apply. These are very simple and elementary facts ; and if we of this generation are convinced that we cannot get far ahead on the road to nationality unless the millions are to some extent lifted, then it seems a clear obligation to submit to whatever humiliations and sacrifices may be necessary for the purpose. The life of this generation is but a short span, but the country must live on for ever, and the humiliation and the sacrifice will not be too great a price to pay if those who come after us may enter upon a goodly heritage. The call that comes to us in India to-day is the call of a dull, drab heroism—therefore, in a sense, a more difficult heroism. If to realize this is our duty, it is the duty of those responsible for the government of the country to see that that cross is not made a whit heavier than it need be. There should be no unnecessary galling and hurting, no flourishing of the cross. The salvation of India must ultimately come, not from the masses, nor even from the Government, but from the educated classes. It is therefore wrong policy to anger them. The task is so great and the labourers are so few that every man of them driven to despair is verily an asset lost.

In the second place, an increased sense of the social need will make an increased demand on the ancient spiritual resources of the people. The mere bigness of the task of elevating two hundred millions of men, the ignorance, apathy, and often the positive resistance of the men themselves, the absence of an effective public opinion which will sustain the worker when individual strength fails, the poverty of financial resources, the shadow of suspicion which in recent years has gathered about us as a class—all these will, it seems, throw the pioneers of this and coming generations more and more upon those higher sources of strength which their fathers knew so well.

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And who can tell what may be the consequences when a religious system fashioned by rare thought and lonely meditation is brought in contact with hard, practical difficulties in the everyday affairs of common life? Mr. Gokhale is a case in point. To us of the younger generation, it is a regret, deep and poignant, that we shall miss the living inspiration of that selfless and toiling figure, walking in and out among his countrymen whom he loved, with his eyes set on the far future and his hands ever busy plying the things of the present. The nation that produced Gokhale may yet produce others like him, and while we mourn, we need not cease to hope. Mr. Gokhale in religious matters was perhaps in a sense an agnostic, but he was nevertheless deeply spiritual. The Servants of India Society which he founded is essentially a body of monks devoted to social work; and often a phrase that used to be on Mr. Gokhale's lips was that he meant by his Society 'to spiritualize public life in India'. The writer remembers hearing a member of this Society, one of the most respected public men in South India, address a meeting of students in Madras, and he told them how again and again in the depression and discouragement of his work, he fell back on the *Bhagavad Gita* and found in the utterances of the Lord that inspiration which his own strength failed to give him. Another and perhaps a more striking instance is Mr. Gandhi, who led the passive resistance movement in South Africa. He is a more pronounced ascetic than Mr. Gokhale, but the type is the same.

Looked at from this point of view, the war is likely to react in an important way upon India. We in India have seldom looked upon western civilization as anything but a single whole. The relatively minute differences between one country and another do not somehow come home to us, and the apparent collapse of this civilization implied in the war must wake up many minds, of which more will be heard when the war is over, to its probable causes. It is likely that the explanation which will commend itself will



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proceed somewhat along the lines suggested by the Bishop of Oxford in a recent address :<sup>1</sup>

Is it not the case that what we are in face of is nothing less than a breakdown in a certain idea and hope of civilization, which was associated with the liberal and industrial movement of the last century ? There was to be an inevitable and glorious progress of humanity of which science, commerce, and education were to be the main instruments, and which was to be crowned with a universal peace. . . .

I do not know what evils we might find arising from a world of materialistic democracies. But I am sure that we shall not banish the evil spirits which destroy human lives and nations and civilizations by any mere change in the methods of government. Nothing can save civilization except a new spirit in the nations.

We in India too, especially during the past decade or two, have endeavoured strenuously to found the civilization of a newer day on education and commerce. In the upper strata, the cry is higher education and industrial development ; in the lower strata, it is economic regeneration and mass education. Perhaps it is not yet too late to take warning.

To sum up, the argument of this Paper is briefly this : The effect of the war will for the present be confined to the educated class whose importance, however, is not to be measured by their number. It has shown them to be a loyal body willing to co-operate with Government. At the same time it will strengthen the spirit of nationalism among them. The primary cause of the hostile element in Indian nationalism is the extent to which Indians are shut out of the higher offices ; to remedy this is the immediate necessity. In the meantime the question of elective government and the extent of its possible application must be carefully weighed and thought out before any large committal is made. On the positive side, nationalism will be prompted under the influence of the war to devote itself more than before to the condition of the

<sup>1</sup> *The War and the Church.*

## INDIA AND THE WAR

masses ; this added sense of social needs will strengthen the desire for security and peace, it will also lead to a deeper cultivation of the ancient spirituality of the race.

If these considerations are at all valid, it may be added that there is nothing in them to alarm or to alienate either people. There is much to give hope and confidence to both. There have been things in the past to hurt and wound. They need not have been. But it seems we have decided to forget the things of the past. In the face of the unspeakable tragedy which is enacted before our eyes, in which men of many nations are mingling their blood for a common cause, we can afford to fix our eyes away from the past across this vale of tears, on the love and hope and abiding peace of the future. There was no black and brown and white in the blood which flowed from Calvary. Nor is there in the warm, precious, human blood which flows over the battle-fields of Europe. All of it is red alike, and every drop of it, without distinction of race, betokens the sob of a broken mother-heart. Therefore, while this great elemental struggle is driving us back to a sense of eternal values, let us put back—all of us, both those who won and those who lost, those who laughed and those who wept—let us put back the things that divide and hold fast to the things that bind.

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