

the work and the responsibility. While China in the East and Persia in the West of Asia are awakening and Japan has already awakened and Russia is struggling for emancipation—and all of them despotisms—can the free citizens of the British Indian Empire continue to remain subject to despotism—the people who were among the first civilizers of the world? Modern world owes no little gratitude to these early civilizers of the human race. Are the descendants of the earliest civilizers to remain, in the present times of spreading emancipation, under the barbarous system of despotism, unworthy of British instincts, principles and civilization.

### RIGHT NO. 3—JUST FINANCIAL RELATIONS

This right requires no delay or training. If the British Government wills to do what is just and right, this justice towards self-government can be done at once.

First of all take the European Army expenditure. The Government of India in its despatch of 25th March 1890, says:—

Millions of money have been spent on increasing the army in India, on armaments, and on fortifications to provide for the security of India, not against domestic enemies or to prevent the invasions of the warlike peoples of adjoining countries, but to maintain the supremacy of British Power in the East.

Again the Government of India says :

It would be much nearer the truth to affirm that the Imperial Government keeps in India and quarters upon

the revenues of that country as large a portion of its army as it thinks can possibly be required to maintain its dominion there; that it habitually treats that portion of its army as a reserve force available for imperial purposes; that it has uniformly detached European regiments from the garrison of India to take part in Imperial wars whenever it has been found necessary or convenient to do so; and more than this, that it has drawn not less freely upon the native army of India towards the maintenance of which it contributes nothing to aid it in contests outside of India and with which the Indian Government has had little or no concern.

Such is the testimony of the Government of India that the European Army is for Imperial purposes.

Now I give the view taken in the India Office itself.

Sir James Peile was a member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India, and represented the Indian Secretary on the Royal Commission (Welby's) on Indian Expenditure. Sir James Peile in a motion, after pointing out that the military policy which regulated Indian Military expenditure was not exclusively Indian, urged that:

It is worthy of consideration how far it is equitable to charge on a dependency the whole military cost of that policy, when that dependency happens to be the only part of the Empire which has a land frontier adjacent to the territory of a great European power.

Here then these extracts of the Government of India and the India office show that the European Army expenditure is entirely for British Imperial purposes, and

yet with flagrant injustice the burden is thrown by the Treasury upon the helpless Indian people.

In the same way all the Government expenditure in England, which entirely goes to the benefit of the people in England, and which is for British purposes, is imposed on the Indian people, while the Colonies do not pay any portion for similar expenditure in England. This expenditure should, in common justice, not be imposed on India. It is unjust. Here then, if we are relieved of burdens which ought not in common justice to be imposed upon us, our revenues, poor as they are at present, will supply ample means for education and many other reforms and improvements which are needed by us. This question is simply a matter of financial justice. I have put it on a clear, just principle, and on that principle India can be quiet ready to find the money and its own men for all her own needs—military, naval, civil or any other. For imperial expenditure we must have our share in the services in proportion to our contribution.

These just financial relations can be established at once. They require no delay or preparation. It only needs the determination and will of the British Government to do justice. Lastly as to self-government. If the British people and statesmen make up their mind to do their duty towards the Indian people they have every ability and statesmanship to devise means to accord self-government within no distant time. If there is the will and the conscience there is the way.

Now I come to the most crucial question—particularly crucial to myself personally.

I have been for some time past repeatedly asked whether I really have, after more than half a century of my own personal experience, such confidence in the honour and good faith of British statesmen and Government as to expect that our just claim to self-government as British citizens will be willingly and gracefully accorded to us with every honest effort in their power, leaving alone and forgetting the past.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I shall give you a full and free answer.

In 1853, when I made my first little speech at the inauguration of the Bombay Association, in perfect innocence of heart, influenced by my English education into great admiration for the character, instincts and struggles for liberty of the British people, I expressed my faith and confidence in the British Rulers in a short speech from which I give a short extract :—

When we see that our Government is often ready to assist us in everything calculated to benefit us, we had better than merely complain and grumble, point out in a becoming manner what our real wants are.

And I also said :

If an Association like this be always in readiness to ascertain by strict enquiries the probable good or bad effects of any proposed measure, and whenever necessary to memorialise Government on behalf of the people with respect to them, our kind Government will not refuse to listen to such memorials.



Such was my faith. It was this faith of the educated of the time that made Sir Bartle Frere make the remark which Mr. Fawcett quoted, *viz.*, that he had been much struck with the fact that the ablest exponents of English policy and our best co-adjutors in adapting that policy to the wants of the various nations occupying Indian soil were to be found among the natives who had received a high class English education. And now, owing to the non-fulfilment of solemn pledges, what a change has taken place in the mind of the educated !

Since my early efforts I must say that I have felt so many disappointments as would be sufficient to break any heart and lead one to despair and even, I am afraid, to rebel.

My disappointments have not been of the ordinary kind but far worse and keener ; ordinarily a person fights, and if he fails he is disappointed. But I fought and *won* on several occasions, but the executive did not let us have the fruit of those victories—disappointments quite enough, as I have said, to break one's heart. For instance, the "statutory" Civil Service, Simultaneous Examinations, Lord Lawrence Scholarships, Royal Commission, etc. I am thankful that the repayment from the Treasury of some unjust charges has been carried out, though the Indian Secretary's salary is not yet transferred to the Treasury as it was hoped.

But I have not despaired. Not only that I have not despaired, but at this moment, you may think it strange

I stand before you with hopefulness. I have not despaired for one reason and I am hopeful for another reason.

I have not despaired under the influence of the good English word which has been the rule of my life. That word is "Persevere." In any movement, great or small, you must persevere to the end. You cannot stop at any stage; disappointments notwithstanding, or you lose all you have gained and find it far more difficult afterwards even to begin again. As we proceed we may adopt such means as may be suitable at every stage, but persevere we must to *the end*. If our cause is good and just, as it is, we are sure to triumph in the end. So I have not despaired.

Now the reason of my hopefulness which I feel at this moment after all my disappointments, and this also under the influence of one word "Revival," the present "revival" of the true old spirit and instinct of liberty and free British institutions in the hearts of the leading statesmen of the day. I shall now place before you the declarations of some of the leading statesmen of the day, and then you will judge that my faith and hope are well founded, whether they will be justified or not by future events.

Here I give you a few of these declarations, but I give an Appendix A of some of these declaration out of many.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN

We believe in self-Government. We treat it not as an odious necessity, not as a foolish theory to which unfortun-

ately the British Empire is committed. We treat it as a blessing and as a healing, a sobering and strengthening influence.

[Bradford, 15-5-1901].

I remain as firm a believer as ever I was in the virtue of self-government.

[Ayr, 29-10-1902].

But here is another self-government and popular control, and we believe in that principle.

MR. JOHN MORLEY

Yes, gentlemen, the sacred word 'free' which represented, as Englishmen have always thought until to-day, the noblest aspirations that can animate the breast of man.

[Palmerston Club, 9-6-1900].

In his view the root of good government was not to be found in bureaucracy or pedantocracy. They must seek to rouse up the free and spontaneous elements lying deep in the hearts and minds of the people of the country.

[Arbroath, 23-10-1903].

The study of the present, revival of the spirit, instincts and traditions of Liberty and Liberalism among the Liberal statesmen of the day has produced in my heart full expectation that the end of the evil system, and the dawn of a Righteous and Liberal policy of freedom and self-government are at hand for India. I trust that I am justified in my expectations and hopefulness.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we have not only all the powerful moral forces of justice, righteousness and honour of Britain, but our birthright and pledged rights, and the absolute necessity and humanity of

ending quickly all the sufferings of the masses of the people, from poverty, famine, plagues, destitution and degradation, etc., on our side. If we use those moral forces, which are very effective on a people like the British people, we must, we are bound to win. What is wanted for us is to learn the lesson from Englishmen themselves, to agitate most largely and most perseveringly by petitions, demonstrations and meetings, all quite peacefully but enthusiastically conducted. Let us not throw away our rights and moral forces which are so overwhelming on our side. I shall say something again on this subject.

With such very hopeful and promising views and declarations of some of the leaders of the present Government, we have also, coming to our side, more and more, Parliament, Press and Platform. We have some 200 members in the Indian Parliamentary Committee. The Labour Members, the Irish Nationalist Members, and the Radicals are sympathetic with us. We have several Liberal papers such as *The Daily News*, *The Tribune*, *The Morning Leader*, *The Manchester Guardian*, *The Star*, *The Daily Chronicle*, *Justice*, *Investor's Review*, *Reynolds*, *New Age*, and several others taking a juster view of India's rights and needs. We must make *India* a powerful organ. We have all sections of the Labour or Democratic Party, the British Nationalist Party, the Radicals and Liberals generally, taking larger interest in Indian matters. The large section of the British people to whom conscience and righteousness are above every

possible worldly thing, are also awakening to a sense of their duty to the vast population of India in their dire distress and poverty, with all its dreadful consequences. When I was in Parliament and the only Indian, I had the support of the Irish, Radical and Labour Members. I never felt helpless and alone, and I succeeded in several of my efforts. We must have many Indian Members in Parliament till we get self-government. Under such favourable circumstances let us not fail to make the most of our opportunity for our political emancipation. Let us, it is true, at the same time do what is in our power to advance our social and industrial progress. But for our political emancipation, it will be a great folly and misfortune for us to miss this good fortune when it has at last come to us, though I fully admit we had enough of disappointments to make us lose heart and confidence.

I base my hope upon the "revival" of the old British love of liberty and self-government, of honour for pledges, of our rights of fellow-British citizenship. In the short life that may yet be vouchsafed to me, I hope to see a loyal, honest, honourable and conscientious adoption of the policy for self-government for India—and a beginning made at once towards that end.

I have now expressed to you my hopes and reasons for such hopes for ourselves. But as the Moral Law, the greatest force of the Universe, has it,—in our good will be England's own greatest good. Bright has wisely said:—"The good of England must come

through the channels of the good of India . . . In order that England may become rich India itself must become rich." Mr. Morley has rightly said:—"No, gentlemen, every single right thing that is done by the Legislature, however moderate be its area, every single right thing is sure to lead to the doing of a greater number of unforeseen right things." (Dundee, 9-12-1889) If India is allowed to be prosperous by self-government, as the Colonies have become prosperous by self-government, what a vista of glory and benefits open up for the citizens of the British Empire, and for mankind, as an example and proof of the supremacy of the moral law.

While we put the duty of leading us on to self-government in the hands of the present British statesmen, we have also the duty upon ourselves to do all we can to support those statesmen by, on the one hand, preparing our Indian people for the right understanding, exercise and enjoyment of self-government, and on the other hand of convincing British people that we justly claim and must have all British Rights. I put before the Congress my suggestions for their consideration. To put the matter in the right form we should send our "Petition for Rights" to His Majesty the King-Emperor, to the House of Commons and to the House of Lords. By the British Bill of Rights of 1689—by the 5th Clause "The subjects have the right to present petitions to the Sovereign."

The next thing I suggest for your consideration is that the well-to-do Indians should raise a large fund

of Patriotism. With this fund we should organise a body of able men and good speakers, to go to all the nooks and corners of India, and inform the people in their own languages of our British rights and how to exercise and enjoy them. Also to send to England another body of able speakers, and to provide means to go throughout the country and by large meetings to convince the British people that we justly claim and must have all British rights of self-government. By doing that I am sure that the British conscience will triumph and the British people will support the present statesmen, in their work of giving India responsible self-government in the shortest possible period. We must have a great agitation in England as well as here. The struggle against the Corn Laws cost, I think, two millions, and there was a great agitation. Let us learn to help ourselves in the same way.

I have said at the beginning that the duties of this Congress are twofold. And of the two, the claim to a change of present policy leading to self-government is the chief and most important work.

The second part of the work is the vigilant watch over the inevitable and unnecessary defects of the present machinery of the administration as it exists and as long as it exists. And as the fundamental principles of the present administration are unsound there are inherent evils, and others are naturally ever arising from them. These, the Congress has to watch, and adopt means to remedy them as far as possible till self-government is attained, though it is only when self-

government is attained that India will be free from its present evils and consequent sufferings.

This part of the work the Congress has been doing very largely during all the past twenty-one years, and the Subjects Committee will place before you various resolutions necessary for the improvement of the existing administration as far as such unnatural and uneconomic administration can be improved. I would have not troubled you more but that I should like to say a few words upon some topics connected with the second part of the Congress—Bengal Partition and *Swadeshi* movement.

In the Bengal Partition, the Bengalees have a just and great grievance. It is a bad blunder for England. I do not despair but that this blunder, I hope, may yet be rectified. This subject is being so well threshed out by the Bengalees themselves that I need not say anything more about it. But in connection with it we hear a great deal about agitators and agitation. Agitation is the life and soul of the whole political, social and industrial history of England. It is by agitation the English have accomplished their most glorious achievements, their prosperity, their liberties, and in short their first place among the Nations of the World.

The whole life of England, every day, is all agitation. You do not open your paper in the morning but read from beginning to end it is all agitation—Congress and Conferences—Meetings and Resolutions—without end, for a thousand and one movements, local and national. From the Prime Minister to the humblest



politician his occupation is agitation for everything he wants to accomplish. The whole Parliament, Press and Platform, is simply all agitation. Agitation is the civilized peaceful weapon of moral force, and infinitely preferable to brute physical force when possible. The subject is very tempting. But I shall not say more than that the Indian journalists are mere Matriculates while the Anglo-Indian journalists are Masters of Arts in the University of British Agitators. The former are only the pupils of the latter, and the Anglo-Indian journalists ought to feel proud that their pupils are doing credit to them. Perhaps a few words from an English statesman will be more sedative and satisfactory.

Macaulay has said in one of his speeches:—

I hold that we have owed to agitation a long series of beneficent reforms which would have been effected in no other way . . . . the truth is that agitation is inseparable from popular government . . . . Would the slave trade ever have been abolished without agitation? Would slavery ever have been abolished without agitation?

For every movement in England—hundreds, local and national—the cheap weapons are agitation by meetings, demonstrations and petitions to Parliament. These petitions are not any begging for any favours any more than that the conventional “Your obedient servant” in letters makes a man an obedient servant. It is the conventional way of approaching higher authorities. The petitions are claims for rights or for

justice or for reforms,—to influence and put pressure on Parliament by showing how the public regard any particular matter. The fact that we have more or less failed hitherto, is not because we have petitioned too much but that we have petitioned too little. One of the factors that carries weight in Parliament is the evidence that the people interested in any question are really in earnest. Only the other day Mr. Asquith urged as one of his reasons against women's franchise that he did not see sufficient evidence to show that the majority of the women themselves were earnest to acquire the franchise. We have not petitioned or agitated enough at all in our demands. In every important matter we must petition Parliament with hundreds and thousands of petitions—with hundreds of thousands of signatures from all parts of India. Taking one present instance in England, the Church party has held till the beginning of October 1,400 meetings known, and many more unknown, against the Education Bill, and petitioned with three-quarters of a million signatures and many demonstrations. Since then they have been possibly more and more active. Agitate, agitate over the whole length and breadth of India in every nook and corner—peacefully, of course—if we really mean to get justice from John Bull. Satisfy him that we are in earnest. The Bengalis, I am glad, have learnt the lesson and have led the march. All India must learn the lesson—of sacrifice of money and of earnest personal work.

Agitate, to agitate means inform. Inform the Indian

people what their rights are and why and how they should obtain them, and inform the British people of the rights of the Indian people and why they should grant them. If we do not speak, they say we are satisfied. If we speak, we become agitators! The Indian people are properly asked to act constitutionally while the government remains unconstitutional and despotic.

Next about the "settled fact." Every Bill defeated in Parliament is a "settled fact." Is it not? And the next year it makes its appearance again. The Education Act of 1902 was a settled fact. An Act of Parliament, was it not? And now within a short time what a turmoil is it in? And what an agitation and excitement has been going on about it and is still in prospect. It may lead to a clash between the two Houses of Parliament. There is nothing as an eternal "settled fact." Times change, circumstances are misunderstood or change, better light and understanding, or new forces "come into play," and what is settled to-day may become obsolete to-morrow.

The organizations which I suggest, and which I may call a band of political missionaries in all the Provinces, will serve many purposes at once—to inform the people of their rights, as British citizens, to prepare them to claim those rights by petitions, and when the rights are obtained, as sooner or later they must be obtained, to exercise and enjoy them.

"Swadeshi" is not a thing of to-day. It has existed in Bombay as far as I know for many years past. I am

a free-trader, I am a Member, and in the Executive Committee of the Cobden Club for 20 years, and yet I say that "Swadeshi" is a forced necessity for India in its unnatural economic muddle. As long as the economic condition remains unnatural and impoverishing, by the necessity of supplying every year some Rs. 20,00,00,000 for the salary, pensions, &c., of the children of a foreign country at the expense and impoverishment of the children of India, to talk of applying economic laws to the condition of India is adding insult to injury. I have said so much about this over and over again that I would not say more about it here—I refer to my book. I ask any Englishmen whether Englishmen would submit to this unnatural economic muddle of India for a single day in England, leave alone 150 years? No, never. No, Ladies and Gentlemen, England will never submit to it. It is, what I have already quoted in Mr. Morley's words, it is "the meddling wrongly with economic things that is going to the very life, to the very heart, to the very core of our national existence."

Among the duties which I have said are incumbent upon the Indians, there is one which, though I mention last, is not the least. I mean a thorough political union among the Indian people of all creeds and classes. I make an appeal to all—call it mendicant, if you like—I am not ashamed of being a mendicant in any good cause and under necessity for any good cause. I appeal to the Indian people for this, because it is in

their own hands only, just as I appeal to the British people for things that are entirely in their hands. In this appeal for a thorough union for political purposes among all the people, I make a particular one to my friends the Mahomedans. They are a manly people. They have been rulers both in and out of India. They are rulers this day both in and out of India. They have the highest Indian Prince ruling over the largest Native States, viz., H. H. the Nizam. Among other Mahomedan Princes they have Junagad, Badhanpur, Bhopal and others.

1. Notwithstanding their backward education they have the pride of having had in all India the first Indian Barrister in Mr. Budrudin Tyabji and first Solicitor in Mr. Kamrudin Tyabji, two Mahomedan brothers. What a large share of Bombay commerce is in the hands of Mahomedans is well-known. Their chief purpose and effort at present must be to spread education among themselves. In this matter, among their best friends have been Sir Syed Ahmed and Justice Tyabji, in doing their utmost to promote education among them. Once they bring themselves in education in a line with the Hindus they have nothing to fear. They have in them the capacity, energy and intellect to hold their own and to get their due share in all the walks of life—of which the State services are but a small part. State services are not everything.

Whatever voice I can have, I wish Government would give every possible help to promote education among the Mahomedans. Once self-government is

attained, then will there be prosperity enough for all, but not till then. The thorough union, therefore, of all the people for their emancipation is an absolute necessity.

All the people in their political position are in *one* boat. They must sink or swim together. Without this union all efforts will be vain. There is the common saying—but also the best common-sense—"United we stand—divided we fall."

There is one other circumstance, I may mention here. If I am right, I am under the impression that the bulk of the Bengali Mahomedans were Hindus by race and blood only a few generations ago. They have the tie of blood and kinship. Even now a great mass of the Bengali Mahomedans are not to be easily distinguished from their Hindu brothers. In many places they join together in their social joys and sorrows. They cannot divest themselves from the natural affinity of common blood. On the Bombay side the Hindus and Mahomedans of Gujarat all speak the same language, Gujarati, and are of the same stock, and all the Hindus and Mahomedans of Maharastra Annan—all speak the same language, Marathi, and are of the same stock—and so I think it is all over India, excepting in North India, where there are the descendants of the original Mahomedan invaders, but they are now also the people of India.

Sir Syed Ahmed was a nationalist to the backbone. I will mention an incident that happened to myself with him. On his first visit to England, we happened to

meet together in the house of Sir C. Wingfield. He and his friends were waiting, and I was shown into the same room. One of his friends recognising me introduced me to him. As soon as he heard my name he at once held me in a strong embrace and expressed himself very much pleased. In various ways I knew that his heart was in the welfare of all India as one nation. He was a large and liberal-minded patriot. When I read his life some time ago, I was inspired with respect and admiration for him. As I cannot find my copy of his life I take the opportunity of repeating some of his utterances, which Sir Henry Cotton has given in *India* of 12th October last.

Mahomedans and Hindus were, he said, the two eyes of India. Injure the one and you injure the other. "We should try to become one in heart and soul and act in unison; if united, we can support each other; if not the effect of one against the other will tend to the destruction and downfall of both."

He appreciated when he found worth, and freely expressed it. He said: "I assure you that the Bengalis are the only people in our country whom we can properly be proud of, and it is only due to them that knowledge, liberty and patriotism have progressed in our country. I can truly say that they are really the head and crown of all the communities of Hindustan. In the word 'nation' I include both Hindus and Mahomedans, because that is the only meaning which I can attach to it."

Such was the wise and patriotic counsel of that great

man, and our Mahomedan friends will, I hope, take it to heart. I repeat once more that our emancipation depends upon the thorough union of all the people of India without any obstruction.

I have often read about the question of a constitution for the Congress. I think the gentlemen who raise this question would be the proper persons to prepare one like a Bill in the House of Commons in all its details. The Congress then can consider it and deal with it as the majority may decide.

Let every one of us do the best he can, do all in harmony for the common object of self-government.

Lastly, the question of social reforms and industrial progress—each of them needs its own earnest body of workers. Each requires for it separate devoted attention. All the three great purposes—Political, Social and Industrial—must be set working side by side. The progress in each will have its influence on the others. But as Mr. Morley truly and with deep insight says:—“Political principles are, after all, the root of our national greatness, strength and hope,” and his other important utterance which I repeat with this one sums up the whole position of the Indian problem. He says:—“The meddling wrongly with economic things, that is going to the very life, to the very heart, to the very core of our national existence.”

This meddling wrongly with economic things is the whole evil from which India suffers—and the only remedy for it is—“Political principles are, after all, the root of our national greatness, strength and hope.” And



these political principles are summed up in self-government. Self-Government is the only and chief remedy. In self-government lies our hope, strength, and greatness.

Well, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have finished my task. I do not know what good fortune may be in store for me during the short period that may be left to me, and if I can leave a word of affection and devotion for my country and countrymen I say, be united, persevere, and achieve self-government so that the millions now perishing by poverty, famine and plagues, and the scores of millions that are starving on scanty subsistence may be saved, and India may once more occupy her proud position of yore among the greatest and civilized nations of the world.

## BABU SURENDRANATH BANERJEA

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### INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, 1915

Mr. President, brother and sister delegates, ladies and gentlemen,—I am confronted with an initial difficulty in moving this resolution. A spectre is conjured up to frighten us out of this resolution. We are told by our critics—and they are as multitudinous as the stars of heaven (*laughter*)—and by our candid friends that to move a resolution of this kind at a time like the present and to formulate proposals of reform now is to embarrass the Government. If I could be persuaded of the soundness of this view, I, for my part, would have no part or share in this resolution, furthermore, I would ask you to drop it. For, Brother delegates, our attitude,—the attitude of the educated community—throughout the crisis of this war has been one of fervent devotion to the Throne (*applause*) and of active co-operation with the Government. Agitation is far from our minds. We may deliberate, discuss, even formulate proposals of reform, but we are resolved,—we, the men of the Congress are resolved—to embark upon no agitation, no controversy, and not to let loose the forces of public opinion so as to bring pressure to bear upon the Government.

Brother delegates, this war cannot last for ever. Peace must come. God grant that it may soon come.

We have to prepare ourselves for peace, for the situation in which we will find ourselves upon the conclusion of peace. I can think of no more patriotic task than that. We have to play the part of men, and let us equip ourselves for that exalted function. Brother delegates, the idea of re-adjustment is in the air, not only here in India but all the world over. The heart of the Empire is set upon it: it is the problem of problems upon which humanity is engaged. What is this war for? Why are these numerous sufferings endured? Because, it is a war of re-adjustment, a war that will set right the claims of minor nationalities, uphold and vindicate the sanctity of treaties, proclamations—ours is one (*applause*)—charters and similar “scraps of paper.” (*laughter*). They are talking about what will happen after the war in Canada, in Australia; they are talking about it from the floor of the House of Commons and in the gatherings of public men and ministers of the State. May we not also talk about it a little from our standpoint? Are we to be charged with embarrassing the Government when we follow the examples of illustrious public men, men weighted with a sense of responsibility at least as onerous as that felt by our critics and our candid friends?

Brother delegates, the resolution says that the time is come when a definite advance must be made for the attainment of our goal, which is Self-Government. (*applause*.) But, brother delegates, there are those who tell us that we are unfit for self-government (*cries of “shame,”*) that the goal is distant, very distant, so

distant as to be illusory (*laughter*), and not even with the tiny eye of hope can we obtain a glimpse of the promised land. A high authority speaking from his place in Parliament said that, so far as his imagination could pierce, he could not conceive of a time when India would be fit for Parliamentary institutions. The same authority is the author of the reform scheme. (*Laughter*). But, brother delegates, I am no prophet, and do not desire to be one (*laughter*), though my ancestors were in their own humble sphere. But I will say this, that it will be one of the bitterest ironies of fate that will hand down Lord Morley to remote generations as the Simon De Montfort of the future Parliament of India. (*applause*.) We are not fit for self-government! Let us examine that proposition. (*laughter*.) Brother delegates, self-government is the ordering of Nature, the dispensation of Divine Providence, (*hear, hear*), every community must be the master of its own destiny. That is a part of the divine law, a part of the immutable order of the universe written in every line of Universal History, written in characters of life by the inscrutable hand of Divine Providence. If there is to be a deviation or a departure, it must be transitional and transient, and like the needle of a compass always pointing northwards; ours deflects steadily towards the goal, which is Self-Government.

Brother delegates, Self-Government, being the normal condition of things, it is incumbent upon those who say that we are not fit for self-government, that it is a

distant possibility, so distant that it fades away into the mist of the unseen future,—I say it is incumbent upon them to prove their case. The burden of proof is upon them and not upon me, (*laughter*). But in a chivalrous spirit, imitating the chivalry of this Congress, I will come to their rescue, I will take upon myself the burden of proof, I will descend from the vantage ground I occupy, and fight my adversary in the open (*applause*) with his own instrument and upon terms of perfect equality. Let us survey the past, examine the present, look around us and then pronounce our verdict. Brother delegates, in the morning of the world, before Rome had been built, before Nineveh and Babylon had emerged into the historic arena, our ancestors had founded those village organisations (*applause*) which represent the first beginnings of self-government. So well organised, so tenacious of life and vitality they were that they survived the crash of Empires, the subversions of thrones, changes of dynasties, and they lived within living memory (*hear, hear*). Coming down to more recent times, what do we find? Wherever we have been tried, Sir, we have not been found wanting. We have been tried in the matter of local self-government, under conditions admitted by Lord Morley to be adverse; and yet the experiment has proved successful. We have been tried in the higher regions of self-government under the Reform Scheme of 1909 and again we have been successful. And let us look around. Here is this vast, this stupendous gathering of representative men from all parts of India. Is there any part of

the world which can present an equal of a gathering like this. It has been said that self-government is government by discussions. How do we discuss here? How do we deliberate? How do we consult? How do we compromise? We do all that with a sense of moderation, of self-restraint, regard for constituted authority, which is proof positive of our capacity for deliberation. (*Hear hear and applause.*) But that is not all. The best training ground of self-government is the institution of self-government, and Mr. Gladstone is my authority for it. This is what he says: "Liberty alone fits a people for free institutions." If you do not give us liberty, if you do not give us free institutions, how can you say we are unqualified or unfit for free institutions? Then again, in another place, he says: "Free institutions alone qualify a people for Self-Government." If you deny a people free institutions, you take away from them the most useful academies and seminaries and institutions for training in self-government. Let me look abroad. Take the case of Japan. Japan was given full Parliamentary institutions immediately after Japan had emerged from the times of medieval barbarism and at the present moment, after a training of fifty years, all Europe, openly proclaims that Japan is qualified for the highest forms of self-government. Again, take the instance of the island of Phillippines. Only the other day, it became a province of America. America has given her, with the gracious generosity of a great republic, free institutions, and those institutions are

working admirably. Therefore, let not our calumniators start the objection that we are disqualified for self-government. We say, you are out of court; because you have not given us free institutions; and it cannot be said that we are qualified or disqualified unless we are given these institutions.

Brother delegates, the resolution lays down the principles upon which the scheme of reform is to proceed. First and foremost is Provincial autonomy. In that resolution to which my Hon'ble friend Sir Ibrahim Rahimtulla spoke just now, there was a reference to this particular matter. In the forefront you have placed the question of Provincial autonomy. What is Provincial autonomy? It is the government of the province, not by the bureaucracy of the province, but by the chosen representatives of the people; it is the government of the province by the people of the province for the benefit of the people of that province. That is what I understand Provincial autonomy to mean. The basis of Provincial autonomy is financial independence. Brother delegates, the revenues of the province belong to the province. Many, many years ago, Sir James Westland, speaking from his place in the Imperial Legislative Council, said that the revenues of India belonged to the Government of India, *(laughter)*. I wholly dissent from that view. The revenues of India belong to us, to you and to me, *(applause)*. The revenues of India belong to the people of India *(applause)*, held in trust by the Government of India for our benefit. And I am sure that a trustee is at

liberty to delegate that trust to a subordinate authority. Therefore, we, who, I hope, shall soon become a sovereign people" (*applause*),—we who represent the people, the majesty, the dignity, the authority, the throbbing aspirations of the people, we appeal to the Government to delegate its powers over the revenues of a province and entrust those revenues to the Government of that province. That is the first part of the programme that we suggest. Then, you will ask: "If you take all provincial revenues, what will the Government of India do?" Well, there are imperial revenues such as customs, salt, railways, post and telegraphs,—and opium there was, but it is dwindling, and it is a good thing too (*laughter*)—all these belong to the Government of India and the revenues of the Government may be subvented by contributions from the provincial Governments.

Ladies and gentlemen, we stand upon very firm ground in asking for Provincial autonomy, because it is contained in the great Despatch of the 25th August, 1911. An attempt has been made to attenuate the message contained in that document. Confronted with a hostile House, Lord Crewe, as Secretary of State, declared—*I think he was a bit afraid of Lord Curzon and Co.* (*laughter*)—confronted by a hostile House, Lord Crewe declared that this Despatch contained nothing more than the delegation of power from superior to subordinate authority. That is not borne out by the contents; and what is more, the assumption was promptly refuted by his lieutenant, who, in his



free atmosphere of a Liberal Club,—I am speaking of Mr. Montague—said that this Despatch represented a new departure in Indian policy and opened up a new vision to the people of India. Truly, it is a new vision; truly, it is the beacon light which will guide us in the grand march which is to lead us to the promised land. We take our stand upon this Despatch, we resolutely adhere to it, and we ask the Government in season and out of season to redeem it.

Gentlemen, there are other suggestions made in this resolution. Mr. President, you have reminded me of the time (*Cries of "Go on" "Go on."*) I cannot be unfair to other speakers, there are other points in the resolution and only to one or two of them I shall refer (*cries of "no" "no," "more, more"*) I shall be here the whole night in that case. The resolution refers to the expansion and the reconstitution of the Legislative Councils. Well, gentlemen, I am a member of two Legislative Councils, and I know something about them. In my own province, it was declared with a flourish of trumpets that we had a non-official majority, a very captivating phrase, "a non-official majority;" but a pure undiluted myth, this non-official majority. This non-official majority is a very different thing from a popular majority. We have occasionally to fight the Government, we occasionally have to be in the opposition,—not always—but I do not remember that we have ever been able to defeat the Government except on one occasion. Therefore, the myth of a non-official majority must be dispelled. We must

have a living, absolute, unqualified majority of the representatives of the people (*applause*) in the Legislative Councils. Further the powers of the Legislative Councils must be enlarged. We move resolutions—I am one of the greatest sinners in that respect—and these resolutions are sometimes graciously accepted, and more often ungraciously rejected (*laughter*). When they are accepted, what does it matter? A resolution, after all, is a pious hope and aspiration: the Government are under no statutory obligation to give effect to it, though I must say as a matter of great credit to the Government of Lord Carmichael (*applause*) so far as he is at least personally concerned as the head of the Government,—he is full of liberal instincts—resolutions accepted by that Government would not always be a pious hope. But, gentlemen, in a matter of this kind we cannot allow ourselves to be dependent upon individual discretion, which would often lead to individual caprice. We say, and I hope the All-India Congress Committee will say, that every resolution accepted by a majority in the Legislative Council shall be binding on the Government and be given effect to.

One or two other points. I have been encouraged by the attention which you are giving me, but it involves a reciprocal duty on your part, namely, that you will do your best to bring this controversy about self-government to a triumphant issue, (*applause*). Brother delegates, we have got Executive Councils. My friend was a member of that Council. He will not let us into the secrets of that prison-house. But I

think if the depths of his heart were sounded, it might be possible that we may be able to extricate a residuum of sub-consciousness which would tell us that at times he felt isolated, that he would have felt better, happier, more comfortable if he was associated with an Indian colleague. And as a matter of fact, I need not leave this thing to your imagination. Sir Syed Ali Imam, in that admirable address which he gave,—my friend knows it, he nods assent—in that admirable address which he gave in reply to the dinner that was held in his honour, said that at times a cloud of depression hung over his mind, that at times he felt discouraged and was only encouraged and supported by the active sympathy of His Excellency the Viceroy (*applause*). Therefore, I say, we, the Congress, should come to the rescue of our Indian representatives in the Executive Councils, and demand that there shall be a substantial increase in the number of such representatives in the Executive Councils, and, what is more, they shall be the elect of the people (*applause*). A Raja or a Maharaja, a Nawab Bahadur will not do, (*laughter*). We want popular representatives, who, if under the statute are not answerable to us, would, under a moral obligation, be responsible to us. Therefore, my suggestion would be: at least one-half of the members of the Executive Council must be Indians and they must all be elected.

Gentlemen, my last point is that to which reference was made by my friend Sir Ibrahim Rahimulla. Fiscal domination is even more disastrous than political

domination. That was uttered from this platform by a friend of mine. Well, we say, in one part of the resolution, "the readjustment of the relations between the Secretary of State for India and the Government of India." We have asked for Provincial autonomy, we have asked for Provincial independence, the independence of the revenues of the province. We must also ask for the independence of the Government of India. We must ask that the fetters now imposed by the India Office on the Government of India should be withdrawn, and the Government of India should reflect the public opinion of our people, not the public opinion of Manchester or Lancashire, (*laughter*). For instance, if those fetters are removed, I am confident that excise duties on cotton goods would disappear in a trice. And, therefore, it is of very great importance. Brother delegates, I will not dwell any more upon this point of the resolution. The resolution says further that a Committee should be appointed to confer with the Moslem League, with the Committee of the Moslem League, (*applause*) and to draft a scheme of reform. I have noticed with satisfaction the cheers which have greeted that statement. The Moslem League meets to-morrow in this City. I rejoice that they are going to hold a session (*applause*). Our fraternal greetings go to the Moslem League (*applause*). We sympathise with them in their patriotic efforts (*applause*) and may the Divine Dispenser of all blessings preside over their deliberations (*applause*). That is what we feel, that is what I feel, and I am sure that is what the Congress

feels (*applause*) about the Moslem League. We are brothers, standing shoulder to shoulder, practically upon the same platform (*applause*) for the advancement of the common interests of the same Mother, (*applause*) the mother of Hindus, of Mahomedans, of Parsis, of Sikhs. And this disconsolate mother lies prostrate at our feet and it is our most sacred duty to wipe off her tears, to uplift her, to elevate her, to bring her back to her own position. And can you do so alone? I say no. Hindus, Musalmans, Parsis, Sikhs must stand upon the same platform before this great accomplishment is achieved. And Brother delegates, in this matter the goal of the Congress and of the Moslem League is the same. They want self-government within the Empire. We want Self-Government within the Empire. I am sure a scheme of reform, a combined demand put forward by the League and the Congress, backed by the voice of United India, and supported with unflinching tenacity, is bound to be irresistible. Brethren, let us stand together, Hindus and Mahomedans, under the same banner of Self-Government. Let it float aloft and let us carry it to a triumphant issue. (*Applause.*)

Brother delegates, there is one little matter referred to in this resolution which I desire to call attention to. Mr. President, I won't take more than five minutes. The Subjects Committee have authorised the All-India Congress Committee to prepare a programme of continuous work of an educative and propagandist character for the spread of our ideals of self-government. As an old Congressman, this appeals to me most

powerfully. Self-Government has been our watch-word from the very beginning of the institution of the Congress. In 1890, we sent a deputation, and we got, as the result of that deputation, the first instalment of Council reform by the Parliamentary Statute of 1892. Then, Mr. Gokhale, of honoured memory, (*applause*) used to visit England every now and then as our delegate and helped materially in the elaboration of the reform scheme. In 1914, just before the outbreak of the war, my friends the Hon'ble Mr. Bhupendranath Basu, the Hon'ble Mr. Samarth, Mr. Jinnah and one or two others went as a deputation to England in connection with the reform of the India Council. Well, brother delegates, the psychological moment has now arrived. Let us make a supreme effort which will culminate in the crowning triumph that will give to us and to our country the inestimable boon of self-government.

One word more and I have done. Mr. Asquith observed in the passage which you, Sir, were pleased to read the other day—he said in the course of a great speech that the Empire rests not upon the predominance of artificial and superficial rights of men based upon colour, but upon the loyal affection of free communities built upon the basis of equal rights. Well, we want to be free communities, we want to enjoy equal rights with the rest of the Empire. The angle of vision in England has changed. But has it changed here? I think the answer must be in the negative (*laughter*). The Press Act

with its severity has caused great uneasiness; the rigours of the Arms Act have not been relaxed; we are barred out of the commissioned ranks of the Army; we are not permitted to be enlisted as volunteers. In England, the cry is for more men and more men for the front. Why do not they appeal to us? Our manhood and our youth are anxious to draw the sword in the defence of the Empire. (*applause*). But the call never comes to us. A little more trust in the people is needed. (*Hear, hear*); and if that trust was forthcoming, it would be reciprocated with enthusiastic gratitude. Let our rulers read the open page of Indian history and note the lesson it teaches. A stranger, the son of an adventurer, Akbar, has enthroned himself in the hearts of his people. What was the fascination that enabled him to do that? He loved and trusted the people, and they loved and trusted him in an abounding measure. Centuries have passed since he has been laid in his quiet grave; his princely dynasty has disappeared; the Moghul Empire has crumbled into dust; but the name of Akbar excited the profoundest veneration amongst Hindus and Mahomedans alike. That is the outstanding lesson that it has taught.

Brother delegates, we want self-government—And why? Because we want to be a nation. We want self-government for the highest ends of national and moral regeneration, for uplifting our people. Our sense of civic responsibility cannot develop to its fullest height so long as the brand of political inferiority is marked on our brow. We must be free men before we

can be good, responsible and well-meaning citizens. And therefore, this campaign is a moral as well as a political campaign; and we have on our side the sympathies of civilised countries and the good wishes of the true-thinking in all parts of the world, the majestic forces of time, and above all, the blessing of Almighty Providence. Thus equipped we are irresistible, invincible. Armed with that faith, we have started this campaign and, God willing, in the fulness of time, we shall have established in this great and ancient land the inestimable blessings of Self-Government under British ægis. (*Loud and long continued applause.*)



## THE BISHOP OF MADRAS

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### INDIA AFTER THE WAR

It may seem premature to discuss what is to happen after the War, till the War is over and the victory won. So far as Europe is concerned, this is probably the case. It will be time enough to consider how the map of Europe is to be re-arranged when we can see the end. Before that comes many things may happen which will greatly modify the final settlement of accounts. On the other hand, in India the War is clearly bringing us face to face with definite problems of great difficulty and complexity, that will need long and anxious study before they can be rightly solved, and it is not too soon to begin at once to consider the problem that we have got to solve and the difficulties which lie in the way of its solution.

In the first place, then, we must frankly recognise that the War is bound to have an enormous influence on Indian life and thought and upon the whole political situation. The Russo-Japanese War had an extraordinary effect on India and one could feel the thrill of a new hope passing over the whole continent when it was over, but this War will have a far more potent and widespread effect on the peoples of India than the war between Russia and Japan. To begin with, India is

taking a direct part in it. Indian blood is being freely shed, Indian treasure is being lavishly spent. In the Russo Japanese War India was only an interested spectator: in this War she is one of the actors.\* And while the former was a mere local War for material interests, this is a great world struggle of conflicting moral and political ideals. The liberty and civilisation of the world are at stake, and the princes and peoples of India feel to-day that they are making history. The day that Indian troops, therefore, landed at Marseilles marked the beginning of a new epoch in Indian history, it put India into a new position not only as regards the British Empire, but also as regards the progress and civilisation of the world. Never before has India taken part in a great world-movement. Shut off from the rest of the world by the great barrier of the Himalayas, she has lived her life, dreamed her dreams and thought her great thoughts apart in solitude. Now her long period of isolation is at an end. She is taking her part in a great War that is to decide the future progress of the world's civilisation for the next hundred years.

It is well that we should try to realise what a change this sudden entry on to the stage of the world's history must make in the outlook, the feelings and the ideas of the Indian peoples. If we may compare great things with small, it will be like the change that comes over a boy when he goes to school. The sudden passing into a new world affects his whole way of looking at things and even his attitude towards his parents. We must expect that there will be a similar change in India

and that when the War is over she will enter upon a new stage in her history.

Even before the War, the political situation in India was one of unstable equilibrium. On the one hand it is acknowledged by all reasonable men that the great needs of India—peace, justice, unity, social reform; education and the development of its material resources—can only be satisfied by the maintenance of British Government. The outburst of loyalty to the British Empire and to our Sovereign at the beginning of the War was a striking testimony to the strength of this feeling among Indians of all classes. There is undoubtedly a very small body of anarchists in Bengal who still carry on a criminal campaign of outrage and assassination against the police and the British officials and there is a section of the Nationalist party who are now starting a campaign in favour of Home Rule for India immediately; but with these exceptions it is true to say that the desire for the maintenance of British rule is universal among the great mass of the peoples of India. On the other hand, the last fifty years have seen the rapid growth of an educated class throughout India who have received a Western education, are imbued with English political ideals and by reason of a common language and civilisation have been inspired with a sense of National unity, and which the Indian National Congress is the outward and visible sign. Among this class of educated men there has been growing up for the last half-century an increasing desire for a larger share in the

Government of their own country, a longing that India should have its place in the sun, and the vision of an Indian Nation, independent and Self-Governing, taking its place with the Colonies of Canada, South Africa and Australia, as an integral part of the British Empire. We must not imagine that the War will alter the fundamental facts of the political situation and lead the educated classes of India to abandon their ideals. People in England are apt to imagine that the great outburst of loyalty in India at the beginning of the War has put an end to political unrest, and that, when the War is over, we shall find ourselves in smooth waters : but that is an utter mistake. If educated Indians desired a large share in the Government of their own country before the War began, that desire will be far stronger when the War is over ; if the desire to realise the ideal of Self-Government and to play an honourable part in the history of the world was strong in the hearts of the Indian peoples before the Indian troops landed in France, it will become incomparably stronger after the War.

All Englishmen would acknowledge that these are honourable ambitions and that the vision of the India that is to be is a noble and inspiring ideal, and that there is, nothing in this ambition or this ideal in any way inconsistent with perfect loyalty to the British Empire or with the full and frank recognition of the fact that for many years to come the strength and efficiency of the British Government are absolutely necessary, if the ideals are to be attained. There is,

therefore, no reason in the nature of things why we should look forward with any apprehension to the fact that the War is bound to give an immense stimulus both to the honourable ambitions of the educated class and also to their longing to realise the ideal of a Self-Governing India. At the same time there has undoubtedly been a conflict between the ideal of the Englishman in India and the ideal of the educated India during the last few years, and we must expect that the conflict will be more acute after the War. It is not due to the fact that the two ideals are necessarily irreconcilable, but simply to the fact that each of the two races naturally tends to look at the political situation from a different angle and to take an onesided and partial view of the problem it presents. It is perhaps natural that this should be so, simply because Englishmen and Indians differ so widely in temperament and mental characteristics. We English people are by temperament suspicious of ideals; we naturally fix our attention on present facts and deal with them as best we can: our whole interest is in the *status quo*: we live and work for the present and do not look forward to the future, and that to a very large extent is the secret of our success in the building of the Empire. It has been said that England conquered India in a fit of absent mindedness, and this is partly true: we did not come to India with any idea of Empire or with any intention of conquering India: we came as traders; we established factories because they were necessary for the security of our trade;

we assumed the Government of Districts and States because it seemed necessary to do so for the security of our factories, and so we were led on by the practical necessities of the case step by step until at last there came out this Empire ! We are doing much the same thing now ; we are taking one step after another by the education of the people, the extension of railways and telegraphs, the spread of the English language, the training of the people in the arts of Government, the creation of a sense of unity among the peoples of India, and we are thus preparing the way for great political changes in the future ; but we never trouble ourselves to look ahead or seriously to think what is the inevitable goal towards which we are tending. Sufficient unto the day is the good and evil thereof.

On the other hand, Indians are essentially idealists ; their whole interest in the past has been centred in religion, philosophy, and the abstract sciences of logic and mathematics. They have never taken much interest in history ; their tendency is to concentrate on ideals, to go back to first principles, to dream dreams and see visions, and largely to ignore the intermediate steps by which the visions and ideals must be realised. In this respect there is a strong resemblance between the genius of the Indians and that of the Germans. Bernhardt remarks in one of his books that the most important fact about a politician is his conception of the universe ; and the debates of the German Reichstag are full of fervent appeals to these general conceptions

of the universe. Appeals of this kind would be greeted with shouts of laughter or with cold contempt in the British Parliament. Mr. Balfour was a philosopher and as his conceptions of the universe, but he would never dream of appealing to them in the House of Commons. But, as I have said, this love of ideals and abstractions is thoroughly Indian. A few years ago, when I was visiting a college in India, I attended a debate, got up for my benefit by some college students. They had chosen as the subject of debate the superiority of celibacy over matrimony. The subject was a purely abstract one so far as they themselves were concerned, as they were all married men, and the discussion was equally remote from the ordinary facts of life; the leader of the opposition began his speech by standing with great fervour and conviction. 'Celibacy is contrary to the categorical imperative of Kant.' As another illustration of the same characteristic of the Indian mind, I may quote the effort of an orator in a humbler rank of life. When I was in Calcutta, I formed a guild of Indian Christian servants; at our first meeting the question was discussed whether the limit of age for admission to the guild should be seventeen or eighteen. The Bishop's butler spoke first and solemnly began, 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth'; the intermediate facts necessary for deciding the question before us were entirely ignored.

When people with such utterly different mental characteristics look at the political situation as it now

exists in India, they naturally view it in an entirely different way. English officials in India as a rule fix their thoughts on the facts and needs of present and ignore the ideals of the future; educated Indians fix their minds on the ideals of the future and to a very large extent ignore the facts and needs of the present.

On the one hand, the English officials do not at all realise what a natural and honourable ambition it is on the part of the educated class to desire a greater share in the Government of their own country, nor how splendid the vision is of a self-governing India; nor can they understand how difficult their position must necessarily be in India from the mere fact that they are foreigners governing a people with an ancient civilisation and history of their own. They forget that no educated and civilised people like to be governed by foreigners, however well they govern, and that the desire for independence and Self-Government is a simple elementary fact of human nature. They have always imagined that because they have governed well, their Government must necessarily be popular. It was once said by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman that good Government is no substitute for Self-Government; opinions may differ on this point, but we ought to realise more fully than we do the enormous disadvantage we labour under owing to the mere fact that we are governing India as a foreign bureaucracy.

Then, again, it is hard for us to realise the fact that India has a civilisation of its own, which it ought to develop upon its own lines. There are certain



principles of thought, morality, social life and political progress which are common to all mankind. It is our duty and privilege to establish these principles in India ; but, on the other hand, the exact form which these principles will assume in India is necessarily different from that which they have assumed in England. Our function is to sow seeds and let them grow in accordance with the genius of the Indian peoples. India has got its own contribution to make to the thought, the religion, the social and political life of humanity ; but it can never make this contribution unless it is allowed ultimately to grow and develop upon its own natural lines in accordance with its own genius, and this is not possible without political Self-Government. At the present moment the progress of civilisation in India necessarily proceeds upon Western lines ; it is at every point governed and directed by Englishmen ; but our ultimate aim ought to be the development of a truly Indian civilisation on Indian lines.

And then, again, it is difficult for Englishmen in India to realise that in spite of the facts of past history, it is still true that the ultimate basis on which the British Government in India must rest in the future, is the will of the Indian peoples. Englishmen have been accustomed in the past to talk of India as a conquered country. We constantly hear it said that after all we have won India by the sword and intend to keep it by the sword ; in the same way English people in India have often spoken of themselves as the ruling race. Such language has always been foolish and mischievous ;

it has tended to wound the self-respect of educated Indians and it has made more galling than it need have been the yoke of foreign Government. But what we need to realise now is that as a statement of our future position in India such language will be a complete anachronism. Whatever may have been the origin of the British Government in India, its only justification now is the fact that it is necessary for the welfare, the happiness and the future progress of the Indian peoples themselves and that the great mass of the Indian peoples wish it to continue. Were the peoples of India ever to become fit for independence and to wish for independence, the British Government would have done its work and would retire. The idea that we can ever maintain our Government by force against the general will of the Indian people is unthinkable. Even if it were physically possible, our conscience would never allow us to use force and shed blood to maintain a foreign Government in India, if the mass of the people wished for a Government of their own. And the present War is making it doubly impossible for us ever to try to impose our Government upon the peoples of India by force. We are fighting now to the death against the claim of a single nation or race to impose its civilisation on the world and to dominate the other nations of Europe; but if it is wrong for Germany to attempt to impose her *Kultur* upon unwilling nations, it is equally wrong for England to attempt to impose her Government and civilisation upon India against the will of the Indian

peoples. We cannot fight for one set of principles in Europe and then apply another set of principles in India.

At the same time the present War is surely striking proof that the British Government can take its stand upon the will of the Indian peoples with perfect safety. It has been a wonderful demonstration of fundamental loyalty of the great mass of the princes and peoples of India to the British Empire; and, if it has revealed the loyalty of India to the people of England, it has also revealed to the people of India the value to them of the British Empire. This ought to make a great difference to the practical policy of the British Government in India. Hitherto undoubtedly the policy of England in India has been to a very large extent dominated by a latent fear for the security of British rule. One result of the War surely ought to be to exercise this fear and to lead Englishmen as a body boldly to face the realities of the situation and to base their Government on the will of the people.

The outbreak of sedition in the Panjab at the beginning of 1915 and the revelations made at the trial of the conspirators of a plot to massacre Europeans, raise a revolt among the Indian troops and drive the British out of India may seem at first sight to show that this fear is by no means without justification even now, and that the will of the people is a very shaky foundation on which to base our rule. But in reality this very plot only supplies a strong additional reason

for trusting the masses of the Indian peoples. The plot itself was hatched in America and British Columbia. It was probably engineered mainly by the German influence and German money. The conspirators were the men who went over to British Columbia in the *Komagata Maru*, and the people who brought the plot to the knowledge of the British Government were the Sikh peasantry. The fact that the conspiracy utterly failed and was nipped in the bud was due entirely to the staunch loyalty of the mass of the Sikh peasants and soldiers in the Punjab. If the plot proves anything, it is that the British Government need not fear for one moment to take their stand on the will of the great mass of the people of India.

I hope it will not seem presumptuous to suggest that politicians in India may well learn a lesson from the experience of the Christian Church. As a rule, no doubt, the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. But I venture to think that for once the children of light have shown the greater wisdom. The Missionary Societies in India have to deal on a much smaller scale with precisely the same problem as that which confronts the State. They are administering the affairs of a large body of Indian Christians through a small body of foreign missionaries, who correspond very closely to the foreign bureaucracy of the State. There is the same tendency to apply Western methods to an Eastern people, the same discontent with foreign rule, the

same claim on the part of the educated Indians for a larger share in the administration of Indian affairs, the same spirit of unrest ; but the Anglican and Protestant missionary societies throughout India have always recognised the fact that, however good and efficient foreign rule may be, and however necessary it may be for the foundation of the Church, it is essentially a temporary expedient which cannot possibly be regarded as a permanent substitute for Self-Government. They have always maintained that the only possible ideal for the Church in India is an independent Indian Church managing its own affairs, living its own life, and developing on its own lines. They realise that the Self-Government of the Indian Church is necessary to enable it to play its proper part in the life and thought of Christendom. There may be, and there are legitimate differences of opinion as to the steps that ought to be taken in the immediate future for the realisation of this ideal and as to whether it is expedient at a particular time to take a particular step forward or not. But there is no difference of opinion whatever with regard to the ideal itself.

The result of this attitude on the part of the Missionary Societies is that, while there undoubtedly is occasional friction between individual missionaries in the field and their Indian fellow-workers, and difference of opinion with regard to the exact measure of Self Government for which any particular section of the Christian community is fitted, at the same time Europeans and Indians alike are working consciously for a

common end, and are inspired by a common ideal. And this fact dominates the whole policy of the Missionary Societies, each step that they take being intended definitely to be a step onwards towards the one goal. They are intent not on securing their own position or ensuring the permanence of their work and influence in India, but on preparing for the time when their presence in India is no longer necessary. When, therefore, Indian Christians speak or write about the future Self-Government of the Indian Church, the missionary societies do not accuse them of disloyalty or regard them in any way with suspicion. The more talk there is about the Self-Government of the Indian Church the better we are all pleased. We do our utmost to encourage ideas of this kind and to stimulate the Indian Christians to realise their responsibilities and prepare themselves to meet them, and we can look forward to the natural development of their ideas and aspirations with equanimity. Our greatest triumph will be the final establishment of an Indian Church entirely independent of foreign missionaries and foreign control.

I cannot help thinking that in the same way the British Government would enormously strengthen its position in India if it were to make the Self-Government of India as an integral part of the British Empire its avowed object and ideal, encouraging educated Indians definitely to look forward to this ideal and shaping its own policy consistently with a view to this one great end. The Government would then practically adopt

the platform of the Nationalist party. There would be no differences between them as to the end at which they are aiming, and though there would naturally be much difference of opinion, not only between Englishmen and Indians, but also between Indians and Indians, and Englishmen and Englishmen with regard to the particular steps that might wisely be taken at any particular time, still both alike would be working for a common ideal. The difference that this would make in the relations between the Government and the educated Indians as a body, as represented by the National Congress, would be immense. It would alter the whole of the political situation and would do more than anything else to allay the unrest which has been such a disquieting feature of Indian politics during the last fifty years, and it would give a consistency to our work and policy which at the present moment they do not possess. The danger of the present situation consists largely in the fact that, with notable exceptions, Englishmen in India are not only opposed to the feelings and sentiments of educated Indians, but also to the inevitable tendency of their own work and policy. Western education, the influence of British civilisation, British literature and British political ideals have all been tending for the last seventy years to stimulate strongly among the educated classes the desire for national liberty and Self-Government. And yet Englishmen have managed to give the impression that they regard this desire as dangerous and disloyal.

But if, on the one hand, Englishmen in India used to cultivate the spirit of idealism, on the other hand there is an equal necessity for a change of attitude on the part of educated Indians. They need to realise far more than they do at present, the enormous difficulties that lie in the way of the realisation of their ideal of a self governing India.

To begin with, India is a continent, not a country. It is inhabited not by one race but by forty. Its vast population is split up by divisions of race, religion, and caste. The Dravidian races in the South are widely different in temperament and character from the races of the North. The Bengalis are utterly different from the Punjabis, while the Maharattas of the Bombay Presidency are different from them both. The antagonism between Hindus and Muhammadans is notorious; they differ not only in religion but in their ideals of social life and Government. So, too, within the Hindu community there is no real homogeneity. The Brahman and the outcaste are as wide asunder as the poles, much wider asunder than the slaves and their master in the Roman Empire. How to enable these heterogeneous elements to work together as members of one body for the development of a common civilisation is a problem that will tax to the uttermost all the resources of British statesmanship. The political development of India, indeed, must in the future be the work of Indians and not of Englishmen. All that the English Government can now do is to prepare the way and to create those conditions which



will enable the Indian peoples to work out their own political and social salvation. But still the preliminary work of creating these conditions rests in the immediate future mainly with the British Government, and no statesmen in the world have ever had set them a more difficult task.

Then, again, to add to the difficulty, there is a singular lack of ordinary business capacity, governing power and political instinct among the vast majority of the Indian people. To govern an Empire of 320 million people is a big business proposition. It requires great financial ability and power of organisation. But these are just the weak points in the Indian character. The Parsis in Bombay have a genius for business. A few Hindus are successfully managing large business concerns in Bombay and elsewhere. A few Muhammadans are successful merchants; the Indians in South Africa owe their unpopularity largely to their talent for petty trade; but owing to the circumstances of their history for the last five thousand years, the Indian peoples have had no training in business that would at all fit them to administer the affairs of a large Empire. At the present moment, I doubt whether it would be possible to get together a body of Indians who could successfully manage the railways of India; and there is a wide gap between the management of the railways and the administration of the Empire. And this particular difficulty is increased by the fact that State socialism is far more developed in India than in England. People look to the State for everything.

The land is owned by the State; most of the railways are owned by the State; if a new industry needs starting, everyone clamours for the State to start it. The Government is expected to play the part of fairy godmother on a much more extensive scale in India than in England. And that means that it is constantly called upon to embark on enterprises that demand a great deal of business capacity. It is unfortunate, therefore, that so very few of the graduates of the Indian Universities ever embark on a business career. All of them, with very few exceptions, either go into Government service or become lawyers, doctors or teachers. It would be a great step towards Self-Government in India if half of our graduates would devote themselves to business, instead of to Government service or the law.

Then, again, there is the further difficulty that there is at present very little foundation on which to build any form of popular Government, really expressing the will of the Indian people as a whole. There is hardly any trace of democracy in India; the only forms of Government known are despotism and bureaucracy. The Native States are for the most part governed on the principle of despotism, in some cases tempered by bureaucracy, and British India is governed by a bureaucracy tempered by a narrow oligarchy. There is a Legislative Assembly for each Province and a Legislative Council for British India as a whole; but the various constituencies which elect the members of these Legislative Assemblies differ very little in size

from the small boroughs in England a century ago. The number of electors is astonishingly few, and in South India, where more than 80 per cent of the educated classes belong to the Brāhman caste, the Legislative Councils practically represent a minute fraction of the population. It is broadly true, therefore to say that at the present moment popular Government in India does not exist. It is possible that the germ of democracy may be found in the old Village Panchayats; but the highly centralised administration of the British Government has so far destroyed their power and importance that they are at the present moment almost non-existent.

There is yet one more difficulty which must be faced. It is the old familiar difficulty of putting a new patch on an old garment. We have got a system of Government in British India at the present moment which on the whole works fairly well, which has given to India the signal blessings of peace, order, justice, unity, material progress, and civilisation, and no reasonable man would be mad enough to propose that it should be swept away and an independent Indian Government of some kind or other suddenly put in its place. But it is extremely difficult to develop any system of real Self-Government under the shadow of the existing bureaucracy. It is one thing to associate Indians with Englishmen in carrying on a European system of government and developing a European system of civilisation; but it is another thing altogether to train the peoples of India to govern themselves and

to develop their own civilisation' or their own civilisation on their own lines. Here again the experience of the Christian Church is much to the point. The English Church has been introduced into India and has established among a large body of Indian Christians the Anglican system of doctrine, discipline, and worship; we have translated the English Prayer Book into the vernaculars of India; we train our clergy in Anglican theology and administer discipline in accordance with the law of the English Church. Thus the whole system is Anglican through and through, and it is not the less Anglican because we administer it among our Indian congregations mainly through Indian clergymen; we do not imagine that, because an Anglican system is administered by Indian clergymen, it becomes thereby any the more fitted to be the true expression of the faith, devotion, and spiritual life of Indian Christians. What we look forward to in the future is not an Anglican system administered by Indians, but an Indian system of faith, worship, and discipline, developed and managed by Indians themselves. We fully recognise that the fact of the system being administered by Indians does not make it truly Indian or suited to the genius and the needs of the Indian people, and that it will be impossible for a truly Indian Church ever to develop on its own lines until it can grow up independent of English control.

Assuming, however, a spirit of sweet reasonableness on the part of both Indians and Europeans, each trying

to see the other's point of view and both working together with their different gifts and temperaments towards the common end; what possible lines of advance are there towards the great ideal of a Self-Governing India?

The first is obviously to increase the number of Indians in Government service and promote them continually to positions of greater responsibility, with the idea that ultimately the British element in the Government will to a very large extent disappear and India be governed almost entirely by Indians. This is practically the policy which has been steadily pursued for the last sixty or seventy years. Lord Morley's reforms were a great step in this direction, and the further reforms which have for some years past been advocated by the Nationalist party all tend to the same end. This policy undoubtedly is valuable, inasmuch as it serves to train a large body of Indians in the art of administration and to bring the Government more in touch with Indian thought and feeling; but on the other hand, as has been pointed out above, it cannot be regarded as a true solution of the problem that has ultimately to be solved. When it has reached its end it will only be the substitution of an Indian for a foreign bureaucracy. But what is needed in India in the future is a Government based upon and expressing the will of the Indian peoples. The problem before us is not the creation of an Indian bureaucracy, but the development in India of some form of popular Government. One of the foremost Indian politicians remarked very truly a

few months ago. 'Even if all the posts in the Civil Service were filled with Indians, that would not constitute Self-Government for India. Self-Government must begin from below. There can be no such thing as Self-Government until the people in every village have learnt to govern themselves.'

The second line of advance is the development of Local Self-Government in municipalities and villages. This policy has been steadily carried out in India so far as municipalities and districts are concerned since the days of Lord Ripon, and it has achieved a certain measure of success. It has opened out to Indian gentlemen throughout the country an opportunity of useful public service in towns, cities, and districts; it is giving in a certain number of them a training in public affairs; it has accustomed people to the working of representative institutions, and it has undoubtedly sown the seeds of popular Government. It would be unreasonable indeed to expect that a system of this kind would be an unqualified success from the very beginning. It started with a body of men untrained in public business, very often, it must be admitted, deficient in public spirit and more prone to talk than to act; but I think that it is true to say that during the last thirty years Municipal Government throughout India has made steady progress. It remains to extend this system to local Self-Government from the towns and districts to the villages. This is one of the reforms which the late Mr. Gokhale advocated in the statement submitted by him to the Royal Commission on Decentralisation.

He proposed that, in all villages with a population of 500 and over a Panchayat (lit. a Committee of five) should be constituted by statute, to consist of five or seven members, and that the villages below 500 should either be joined to larger adjoining villages or grouped into unions. These Panchayats, he said, should be invested with such powers and functions as the disposal of simple money claims, the trial of trivial offences, the execution and supervision of village works, the management of village forests, the carrying out of measures of famine and plague relief, the control of village water-supply and sanitation, and the supervision of school attendance.

The Village Panchayat is a very ancient institution, dating from the days when the village was a Self-Governing community with a very large measure of independence. The institution of village Panchayats, therefore, would not be a new thing in India. We have utilised them for the purposes of Church discipline in many mission districts with great success. They are institutions which the people understand and which they are capable of working by themselves. There seems to be no reason why they should not be as successfully revised by the State as they have already been by the Church.

A third possible line of advance is much more open to criticism. The ideal towards which we ought to aim in British India is, as has already been said, not a bureaucratic system administered by Indians, but a truly popular Government; but we are confronted with

the difficulty that, on the one hand, we cannot make any advance towards that ideal so long as we maintain the existing system of Government; while on the other hand in British India as a whole the maintenance of the existing bureaucratic form of Government is for the present and in the immediate future absolutely necessary. The suggestion, then, has been made more than once that it might be possible for the State to make some such experiment in particular areas as is now being made by the Church. We are confronted by precisely the same difficulty in the development of our Church life as the difficulty that now confronts the State; the affairs of our Indian Christian congregations are administered by European missionaries appointed by the Committees of Missionary Societies at home, and while this system continues it is very difficult to make any real advance towards the independent life of the Indian Christian Church. What we have done, however, is to take a particular district and put that entirely in charge of Indian clergy and lay-workers under an Indian Bishop; the whole work is supported by Indians and managed by Indians and carried on in accordance with Indian ideas. The experiment met at the beginning with very severe criticism, and obviously there was the possibility of failure; but, even had it failed, failure in a particular district would not have been a great disaster; as a matter of fact, it has proved an unqualified success. Would it not be possible for the State to make a similar experiment? There are already a very large number of independent States in India under despotic



forms of Government tempered by bureaucracy. Why should not one or more of these States establish a popular form of Government? This could of course, only be done by the Indian rulers or princes of these States themselves acting on their own initiative. It is not a reform that could be or ought to be forced upon them by the British Government, and it is also not a reform that could be introduced into any State that had not been previously prepared for it by the spread of education among the mass of the population. But I believe that a few, at any rate, of the more progressive Native States would very soon be ready for an advance in this direction, and that the more enlightened Indian Princes would be glad to introduce this reform, and for the good of their people limit their own autocratic powers and accept the honourable position of constitutional ruler. Even if the experiment was not altogether a success, it would not be a great disaster; it is not likely that such States would be worse governed than some of the existing Native States under autocratic rule. On the other hand, if it was a success it might form a model for the extension of popular Self-Government not only among the Native States generally, but also in British India.

It is a minor point, but I venture to think that it is a mistake to discourage the serious study of Indian politics in our Indian Universities. There is at the present moment a good deal of wild talk and writing on political subjects, but there is extraordinarily little serious and sober study of them. We greatly need in

India a large body of thoughtful Indian politicians of the type of the late Mr. Gokhale, and a great deal might be done to create such a body of men for the service of the State by fostering and encouraging the study of political and social questions in the Universities. I fully believe myself that a school of Political Science in each University, with a body of really able professors to teach the subject, would have a very wholesome and steadying effect upon Indian politics. It would create in each Province a sound body of public opinion ; it would discourage wild and thoughtless talk, and it would raise up a body of men who in time would *be able to apply the universal principles of political science to the special conditions of Indian life and society.*

A more important point is the cultivation of friendly social relations between Europeans and Indians. It may be true that social relation between Europeans and Indians cannot be quite satisfactory so long as there is political inequality ; and it may also be true, as is constantly urged by Europeans, that Indian customs,<sup>1</sup> especially the seclusion of women and the caste rules of the Hindus with reference to food, place great obstacles in the way of social relations between the two races. At the same time it is a great exaggeration to say that there can be no social relations at all between the two races until these obstacles are removed. I can bear witness from my own experience of thirty years in India, both in Calcutta and Madras, that a very large amount of social intercourse between Europeans and

Indians is perfectly possible in spite of all obstacles, and that such intercourse is of the utmost value to both parties. There can be no doubt, I think, that more friendly social relations would do a great deal to enable Europeans and Indians to understand one another and to soften down on the part of educated Indians the inevitable dislike of foreign rule. The existing aloofness of Europeans from educated Indians in social matters necessarily gives the impression of haughtiness and a sense of superiority, and this is exactly what we ought to try by all means to avoid. It may be quite true that as rulers and men of business Europeans are superior to Indians, but it is not desirable that we Europeans should be constantly asserting the fact.

What we both need to recognise far more fully than we do at present is that Indians and Europeans have different virtues, different faults and different gifts, and that the colossal task of creating a Self-Governing India needs the gifts and virtues of both races. It is utterly impossible for the Europeans alone or for the educated Indians alone to accomplish so great a task. It is imperatively needed that we both work together in harmony and sympathy. We have long ago learnt that lesson in the Christian Church; it is high time that it was fully learnt in the State as well; but it never will be learnt so long as Europeans as a body maintain their present attitude of aloofness and will not make the effort needed to make friends with educated Indians. I do not overlook the difficulties in the way of this. Social intercourse is not easy between

two sets of people who have different interests, different social customs and a different outlook upon life. The mere fact, that, when they meet together socially, they do not know what to talk about, undoubtedly makes social intercourse somewhat constrained. A little while ago the first Indian Bishop, the Bishop of Dornakal, was staying with me at Ootacamund. He was asked to dinner at Government House, and there he sat next to a young English officer who was very anxious indeed to make himself pleasant to the Indian guest, so he started conversation at once. 'Do you play polo, Bishop?' 'No.' Then, after a pause. 'Do you hunt?' 'No.' A longer pause. 'Do you play cricket?' 'No.' A still longer pause. 'Do you fish?' 'No.' And at last, in desperation, 'Do you dance?' A more emphatic 'No' still. But happily the Bishop saw an opening here; he at once plunged into the subject of the differences between dancing in India and dancing in England and proceeded to discuss the ethics of the Nautch. This incident may serve to illustrate the difficulty that naturally exists in the way of pleasant social intercourse between the two races, even where there is every desire to be pleasant and amiable on both sides. It is undoubtedly the case, too, that social intercourse between the two races is greatly limited by the fact that Indian ladies with few exceptions do not come out into society. But, true as all this is and real as these difficulties are, still a certain amount of social intercourse is possible, and it is our interest and duty in India to cultivate it to the utter most.

A great deal can be done by inviting Indian gentlemen to small tennis parties. It is one of the few forms of social amusement in which both races can join with mutual pleasure, and it is one in which Indians can hold their own against Europeans. Subalterns and vakils may have very little to talk about, but when they play a good set of tennis together, a bond of sympathy at once springs up between them. To suggest lawn tennis as one of the means for consolidating the British Empire in India may seem like trifling with a serious subject; but it is not a small matter to discover some method of social intercourse which is pleasant to Europeans and Indians alike, which serves to create mutual respect and mutual sympathy and which will help them to know one another better and so gradually to come and understand one another's point of view more fully. The main point, however, that is of supreme importance is that Englishmen and Indians alike should henceforth make a real and serious effort to understand one another to see clearly the goal for which they ought to strive and to work together in a spirit of brotherhood towards a common end. The War is a great call to brotherhood not only to the British Empire but to the Nations of the world, and the only solution of the great problems which it will create in the world and the Empire alike will be found in the cultivation of the Christian spirit of brotherhood instead of the old pagan spirit of race pride, class prejudice and what has well been called 'private mindedness,' which has hitherto

been the root of all evil in international relations and in the social and spiritual life of States and Empires.

A more serious and difficult question that the War is bound to bring to the fore is that of National defence. Two grievances have for some years past been acutely felt with reference to this matter. The first is the exclusion of Indians from the ranks of commissioned officers and the second their exclusion from the volunteers. At present no Indian can be appointed to a Commission in the Indian Army and no Indian can join the volunteers. The poorest Eurasian can become a volunteer, but not the son of an Indian Member of Council. This is naturally resented as a stigma on the loyalty of the Indian people. The only reason that can be given for it is that a large body of Indian volunteers would constitute a danger to the stability of the British Government.

• But whatever the reason for these two disabilities may be, it is clear that the question will have to be reconsidered after the War. At the meeting of the Indian National Congress held in Madras in December 1914, a resolution was passed urging on Government 'the necessity, wisdom, and justice of throwing open the higher offices in the Army to Indians and of establishing military schools and colleges where they might be trained for a military career as officers of the Indian Army'; and also the reorganisation and extension of the present system of volunteering so as to enable Indians, without distinction of race or class, to enlist as citizen soldiers of the Empire.' This demand was

renewed in the National Congress held at Bombay in December, 1915, and has found expression in numerous local Conferences during the last few months. These questions, therefore, are bound to come up immediately after the War, and it is well that Englishmen in India should begin to consider what is going to be their attitude towards them. Ultimately, it must depend on whether they hold to the old idea that the British Government in India rests on British bayonets or realise that the time has now come to base our policy frankly on the principle that the only possible foundation of the Government of India is the will of the Indian peoples. If that is once realised and admitted, there can be no possible danger in allowing the peoples of India to undertake the responsibility for the defence of their own country. And we need to remember that the lessons of the War have shown us clearly that in the future the only people who can possibly defend India from an attack by land will be the Indians themselves. Happily, there is no prospect of an attack on India by any Great Power, at any rate, for the next fifty years. But if ever the time comes when it is necessary to defend India against serious aggression, her present army will be in numbers hopelessly inadequate. It does not number nearly a million men, and even three millions would be insufficient for a great war upon the modern scale. England might possibly be able to send 5,00,000 men to India at a crisis, but the vast majority of the troops would have to be raised and equipped in India. Surely this ought to be taken

into account when we are considering the question of National defence in India at the present day.

But after all the main point that ought to be strongly emphasised at the present time is that what we need after the War is a change of attitude on the part of both Indians and Europeans. On the one hand, we need a more statesmanlike attitude on the part of the general body of Indian Nationalists and a fuller recognition of the work that has to be done in co-operation with the British Government before Home Rule can become a question of practical politics. The worst enemies of Home Rule are the people who clamour for it to be established at once. The Home Rule for India League has recently circulated a leaflet in England which asks that 'when peace returns to the world, such a change may be made in India's position in the Empire as will bind her by love to her fellow Dominions through the full enjoyment of Self-Government,' and demands that when the War is over 'Self-Government must be established in India.' This agitation is wholly mischievous, and can do nothing but harm to the cause it advocates. It will divert the minds of the less wise and less stable members of the educated class in India from the great works of education, social reform, industrial development and Local Self-Government that must prepare the way for Self-Government for India as a whole, and it will also alienate many Englishmen both in England and in India who are naturally inclined to sympathise with the Nationalist



cause. It will be a serious disaster if the National Congress identifies itself with this agitation.

Then, on the other hand, we also need a new attitude on the part of Europeans in India, both official and non-official, towards the peoples of India and their aspirations, a new ideal for our work, a new conception of the ultimate basis of our power. The all important thing is that after the War we should cease to talk of the population of India as a subject people, cease to talk of ourselves as a ruling race, cease to base our Indian Empire upon force, cease the effort to impose upon the peoples of India a purely Western civilisation, and cease to allow our policy to be dominated by the fear of weakening the position of the foreign bureaucracy. We need to realise that we cannot now base the Government of India upon any other foundation than that of the will of the Indian peoples, that we are here as the servants of the Indian peoples and not as their masters, that a foreign bureaucracy can only be regarded as a temporary form of Government and that our ultimate aim and object must be to enable India to become a Self-Governing part of the British Empire and to develop her own civilisation upon her own lines. How exactly this change of attitude will affect the details of Government and administration in India is a different question. There is room for much difference of opinion as to what ought to be the next steps, how fast and how slowly we ought to proceed, and what will be the wisest methods of attaining our

end. But the all-important thing is to have a definite conception of the end itself, a clear vision of the goal for which we are striving.

HENRY MADRAS

*Contributed to the Nineteenth Century, 1916*

## Mrs. ANNIE BESANT

*In seconding the resolution on Self-government in the Congress of 1915, Mrs. Besant spoke:—*

Mr. President and fellow-delegates,—The resolution which I have the honour to second before you to-day is perhaps the most momentous that has ever been laid before the National Congress during the thirty years of its splendid existence. For, not only does it proclaim the steps to be taken towards the attainment of self-government, but also it lays down principles of reform, which, if they are embodied in the Committee's report, will make self-government a reality not in the distant vista of time but within the lifetime of the present generation, (*applause*) for, I find the bold demand is made that we should have an expansion and reform of the Legislative Councils so as to make them truly and adequately representative of all sections of the people; and most vital of all, to give them an effective control over the act of the Executive Government. Now, if adequate representation is given, if effective control over the executive is granted, then it will be difficult to say that you have not got self-government in India. It is the largest step the Congress has ever taken, and it will make the Congress memorable in the grateful memory of the India of the future. Not only so, but there is the vital proviso that the All-India Congress Committee is to frame not

only a scheme of reform but a programme of continuous work, (*hear, hear*), educative and propagandist (*hear, hear*); not agitation, you must understand, but education and propaganda. I am not clever enough to distinguish between that and popular agitation, but I beg you to cling to the words of the resolution which are doubtless statesmanlike and desirable. (*Laughter*).

In the brief time that is mine, I want to put you three reasons for which this granting of self-government is necessary. One is the practical reason of the need for legislation on certain vital points; the second, the economic condition of the country, the most pressing reason of all; and thirdly, and very briefly, the historical justification for the granting of self-government to India.

Now, as regards the first, the need for legislation. There are certain things that press upon the nation which would be rapidly altered if we had a majority, an effective majority, in the Legislative Councils, and if, as I hope, they be wholly elected. What we require has been laid down for us on very useful lines in the resolution. It was said, and I believe truly said, that it was impossible for England to train India on her literature, and, in the admiration for her hoary institutions, to teach her that taxation without representation was robbery and to expect her to remain taxed and unrepresented and without any effective control over the budgets which are passed year after year. Sometimes people say that an inscrutable Providence has brought Great Britain to this land.

I see nothing inscrutable in it. Great Britain, when England came here, was the only free country, sir, in Europe and Providence chose her to come that she might bring India into touch with Western liberty and especially Western institutions. (*applause*). The designs of Providence only become inscrutable when you have un-British rule in India instead of the British rule that she ought to follow. Then you may well have a conundrum that you will for ever find it impossible to solve.

There is another reason,—a very practical one—why we should believe that, if we have really representative institutions, we shall be able to carry the measures we desire. This Congress has been asking for 30 years for the separation of executive and judicial functions and has not gained it. But in Indian States that separation is already made. Baroda has done it, Gwalior has done it, some of the smaller States already possess it. And when you have self-Government you will not ask for it for thirty years, but you will make it in your first year. (*applause*). You have asked for panchayats. Well, Gwalior, Baroda, Dewas and Patiala and other States have already established those village Councils successfully, and yet in British India it is impossible to get them thoroughly on foot. You will sweep away that Arms Act, of which our President so pointedly complained; you will get rid of the Press Act, which we have already protested against; you will get rid of the Seditious Meetings Act; you will get rid of the power to intern without trial and to imprison

without justification (*applause*) ; you will get rid of that shameful revival of the old Bourbon barbarism, the old Regulation (Regulation 3 of 1818) which exists only in India to-day among all civilised nations of the world. Those are some of the reasons why we demand legislative assemblies with a majority at least of the representatives of the people.

But take the economic reason. Take first, the incidence of your taxation. It is admitted by the Government that in India there is no effective margin of taxation. It has been pointed out by Mr. Gokhale, among others, that the taxation of this country trenches on the subsistence of the labourer. Mr. Naoroji has pointed out that India's production is only Rs. 30 per head, £ 2 a head, and yet we find that in 1910 Imperial taxation was 3s. 7½d. a head. You need to read blue books, you need to understand what is going on around you. You have a taxation which threatens the bankruptcy of India by the ruin of her agricultural population. The Hon. Mr. Wacha has told us—and there is no better authority—that the indebtedness of the peasantry rises to 500 crores of rupees. (*Cries of "shame."*) Is that no reason for changing the system of Government which produces it? I ask you to consider in relation to this not only the question of taxation but the admitted fact that India is the most heavily taxed country in the world,—not in amount, remember, not in shillings or rupees, but in proportion to the production of the masses of her people (*applause*). You cannot measure taxation by counting the number

of coins; you must find the produce of the labourers, and see how much of that you take when you tax him for the benefit of the State. And when you are dealing with taxation, the next point to remember is that you have admittedly the most costly Government in the civilised world, (*applause*), and therefore the necessity for this crushing taxation. Nor is it only that the Government is costly, but you have to remember that the taxes that are raised largely go out of the country in what is well-known as the drain—that which Lord Salisbury called “the bleeding of India,” and he asked that the lancet should be used in the most congested place. You have to remember that the drain out of the country runs to 20 millions sterling. That Mr. Naoroji has calculated. Another 20 millions goes in various charges, interest on capital, etc., managed in the most extravagant fashion, you must remember. For, the railways and other companies have been dealt with by the State as no business people would deal with them, and had even sold their shares at par when they did not bring in the market even as much as half the money paid for them. I want you, younger men, “passionate youths” as you are, to turn your thoughts to these details of taxation and understand why it is that you demand self-government for India. Then I ask you to remember the result. Now, eleven resolutions in previous Congresses have spoken of the horrible poverty of the people. They say the Congress is a middle class and upper class organisation.

If the Congress were the Parliament of India, the poverty of the people would long ago have been redressed (*hear, hear*). I find the ninth Congress, Resolution No. 8, after concurring in the views set forth in the previous Congresses, states, 50 millions of the population,—the number is yearly increasing—are dragging out a miserable existence on the verge of starvation, and that in every decade several millions actually perish by starvation. I find Sir William Hunter saying that more than 40 millions of the people are always on the verge of starvation. I find Sir Charles Elliot saying that half the population never know what it is to have a full meal. And these, sir, are not "impatient idealists." They are historians (*applause*) and practical politicians. You have to consider that poverty; you have to realise what it means; you have to know the agony of hunger; and then think as Sir Charles Elliot declared, of 100 millions of the agricultural population who never have a full meal. Some amount of impatience is justifiable when the people are suffering to that horrible extent. For this I tell you: that my fear for India is not the passionate enthusiasm of misguided youths, but the spectre of hunger, the frightful spectre of coming bankruptcy, which means the most awful of revolutions, the revolution of starving people whom none can check or rein in, when once they despair of help. (*applause*).

The third reason is historical. Five thousand years ago, this country was trading with ancient Babylon, and 3,000 years before the Christ down to 1613 after



Christ, there is no break in the commercial and in the industrial prosperity of India. 5,000 years of self-government behind you. "But there were wars, there were revolts." Read history before you speak too glibly about the disturbances in medieval and in ancient India; for if there were wars here, there were wars there. Akbar was reigning when Queen Elizabeth was on the throne, and Queen Elizabeth gave the first charter to trade with India. In the reign of James I the first trading company was allowed to establish itself in Surat along the Western coast. Since that time, in England, one King was beheaded, a second king was driven out of the country, and two civil wars on behalf of the exiled Stuarts have taken place. I do not know whether Indian wars were so very much more mischievous than the wars that prevailed over the whole of Europe during those historical times (*applause*):

For, after all, is it not true that village organisation went on through them all? Is it not true that villages were left untouched, save when the Huns swept down with fire and sword? Is it not on record that while the soldiers were fighting, ploughmen were ploughing the land within sight of the battling army? I put this to you as a particular proposition: that the test of the goodness of a Government is the wealth and prosperity of the people. While India governed herself, so long her people were so well fed that every country in Europe fought for the right to have a charter to trade with this country. That was the result of self-government in this country. Whatever faults

might have defaced that system, to-day our President has told us, that India is the most poverty-stricken country in the world. I put the two things before you as the answer to the statement that we are not fit for Self-Government. I submit that 5,000 years of success are greater than the theories of a few Englishmen who consider that Indians are not their equals. (*applause*). We are told in the words of Mr. Edwin Bevan that India is a poor cripple with limbs broken, tissues lacerated, tied up in splints and bandages by the benevolent English physicians and she must not move lest the wounds should not heal. India is no sick man. She is a giant who was asleep and who is now awake. (*applause*).

Are you fit for self-government? Are you not sure? Mr. Gokhale said—and he knew his people well,—he said that you are compelled to live in an atmosphere of inferiority that made the tallest of you bow your heads and that the greatest moral wrong done to India was that she had changed in character under the present method of Government. These men who are here, representatives of India from every part of the land, these men are not the children of savages emerging from barbarism needing to be trained in the elements of self-government by a Western nation. They are the children of heroes; the children of warriors, worthy to govern their own land,—(*applause*), save for one reason: and that is that the very noblest amongst you seems to think himself inferior to the Englishmen around you. Oh, if only you would trust yourselves, if only you

would believe in your own power (*hear, hear*), in your own strength and in your own knowledge (*applause*). If Sir Satyendra can tell us that he stood face to face with the Viceroy, has been an equal man in the Viceroy's Council, can we say that an Indian is not worthy to rule in his own land? Are we to think that he is the one swallow that does not make a summer? Are we not to believe, as I believe, Sir, that there are hundreds like you (*applause*) who would show your own ability if they had a chance to do so?

And so I urge that this resolution be thoroughly carried out and that full representation be given in the Legislative Councils, as a means of self-government, to India. And I pray of you by the memory of your past by the possibility of the greatness of your present, and by the splendid future that lies before you, if, as Sir Pherozeshah Mehta once said on this platform, you are not emasculated as a nation, stand up on your feet like men. For England understands when people meet her face to face (*applause*). England is a country of free men and she does not understand people being contented to be under the rule of foreign domination. Show England by your courage that you are grateful,—as I know you are—for what she has done, but be most grateful that she has taught you the value of free institutions and has shown you by the example of her history how freedom is to be won, and how a nation becomes self-governing. (*Loud and continued applause*).

## THE HON'BLE SIR IBRAHIM RAHIMTULLA

*In supporting the resolution on Self-Government in the Congress of 1915, The Hon'ble Sir Ibrahim Rahimtulla spoke as follows :—*

Brother delegates, ladies and gentlemen,—May I, in starting to support the resolution, make a personal grievance and a personal complaint against your President for having invited me to address this assembly after two of the greatest orators in India (*applause*) have dealt exhaustively and in all its bearings with the most important resolution that has now been placed before you. If the President has been cruel to me, I appeal to you for a little personal indulgence in listening to me with a little patience to enable me to put before you the reasons why I desire that you should all unanimously accept the resolution which is now before you.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, it was two short years ago that, in speaking of the political atmosphere in India on a similar occasion, I compared the relations of the British Government with the people of India to those of a guardian and his wards. I feel, and I believe every one of you will agree with me when I say, that it is with fostering care that the people of India are, in the words of Mrs. Besant, being gradually trained to

appreciate the advantages, value and benefits of free institutions. It is owing to that connection that the guardian wishes the wards in their minority to come forward gradually and reach that goal of Self-Government which is laid down under our Constitution. Ladies and gentlemen, there is nothing more easy than to tell you that we have reached already the stage when we shall get self-government at once. 'No one would be more pleased or more grateful, no one will be more proud to realise that my countrymen have already reached a stage when they are capable of governing themselves without any outside help whatsoever. (*Hear, hear*). If that is so, then there is nothing further to be said. The resolution which is placed before you carries out in spirit the declared creed of the Congress. The Congress lays down that we shall achieve self-government under the ægis of the British Crown, and the measures that are necessary to reach that stage are enumerated, some of them at least, in the resolution that is placed before you.

Ladies and gentlemen, there is one thing more I will say and that has reference to what I said before. I said India was the heritage of two minor sons, known as Hindu and Mussalman (*applause*). I appeal that the best, the most patriotic manner in which you can ever reach that goal, which is dear to the hearts of every one of us, is through the sincere and genuine co-operation (*applause*) of the two minor brothers, so that they might, hand in hand, go and appeal to their guardian for larger and larger, greater and greater political

privileges, which I call the allowances for their maintenance. Ladies and gentlemen, you are all aware—I have stated once before—the cost of living is increasing, our needs are multiplying and we want from our guardian at every step more and more substantial reforms to take us to the goal which we have laid down for our guidance.

Mr. President, I say that it is a good augury that both the League and the Congress are proposing to appoint committees (*applause*) for the purpose of putting their heads together and to arrange and formulate proposals and demands which may carry the Indian nation to the goal so dear to the hearts of every one. (*Applause*).

**DEWAN BAHADUR  
L. A. GOVINDARAGHAVA AIYAR**

*In supporting the resolution on Self-Government in the Congress of 1915, Mr. L. A. Govindaraghava Aiyar said:—*

Mr. President, fellow-delegates, ladies and gentlemen,—I beg to support the resolution that has been moved by the Hon'ble Mr. Surendranath Banerjea and has been seconded by Mrs. Besant. This resolution, you will notice, ladies and gentlemen, lays stress on the fact that the ideal of this Congress is the attainment of self-government within the Empire. You will notice that this resolution accentuates our determination that we shall attain self-government by constitutional means. It shows that the form of self-government that we are anxious to have is one that is similar to what obtained in the self-governing colonies. It shows that we are determined to have a form of Government wherein the right that we shall exercise shall not be any the less than what any other component part of the Empire as such is entitled to exercise. This resolution also indicates that we are perfectly prepared to have our obligations and to discharge our duties, though they may be no less onerous than the obligations and duties of any other part of the Empire. Gentlemen, there is one other aspect of the resolution

which to me is specially appealing, and I hope it is so to you as well. It is this, that the attainment of the objects indicated in the resolution will enable us to rise above that atmosphere of inferiority of which Mrs. Besant has spoken. That atmosphere has corroded our souls and stunted our growth. We are anxious that we should show to the world that we are capable of discharging more onerous duties than are entrusted to us, that we are prepared within the opportunities that might be allowed to us to rise equal to the obligations which the citizenship of the Empire means. We are also anxious that England and the Empire should know that we feel that in the exercise of the rights we have not been given as full and free a play as our past history, present conduct and possibility of the future justify.

Gentlemen, within the limited time at my disposal, I propose to deal with the very few objections that have been and might be raised to the passing of a resolution such as this. The objection drawn from the argument of embarrassment has been disposed of in his own inimitable way by the Hon'ble Mr. Surendranath Banerjea. Gentlemen, it is by not passing this resolution, by not taking the steps indicated in this resolution that embarrassment would be really caused to Government. For you will recognise that sooner or later the war will be over, and when the war is over, there is bound to be a readjustment of the relations among the various component parts of the Empire, and it will then be too late for India to take steps to know her mind,



to formulate her own demand and to tell the Government what with one united voice she is demanding for herself. If there is to be embarrassment, it is not by taking steps such as are indicated in this resolution.

There is another argument that is also advanced ; and that is, that if you insist upon a resolution such as this, you are trying to make a bargain with the Government and that far from showing spontaneous loyalty to the Government you are taking advantage of their difficulties in order to make a profit out of them. That argument I repel with all the force I am capable of. Who can say when the war had begun, when every one of us was anxious within the limitations under which we were placed to do what we could for the purpose of advancing the interests of the Empire, when from every lip rose the hope and prayer that success should attend the British arms and every thing that success to the British arms meant—which of us can honestly and conscientiously say that, when that prayer went forth, we thought of the ultimate benefit that we, as members of the Empire, could expect to realise by the cessation or close of the war? How can it be said that, when Province after Province has hastened to do what it could for the purpose of advancing the interests of the Empire, we ever thought of what it would be possible for us to get after the close of the war? It is perfectly reasonable that the Government recognise that we, who are members of this Empire, must have some legitimate and reasonable programme that we can place before them so that they might be in a position to realise what