

INDIA UNDER EXPERIMENT

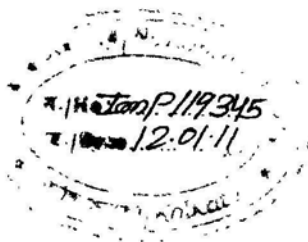
INDIA UNDER EXPERIMENT

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INTRODUCTION

THE public has learned during the past autumn that further changes of the kind usually gilded by the name of reforms are to be introduced in the system of government which has hitherto prevailed in India. Wherever the momentum behind this experiment may lie, it is at any rate not to be accounted for by any stir of public opinion in the ruling country. The measures foreshadowed have not been discussed in Parliament, and, except for the transient gleam of interest imparted to them by Mr. Montagu's personal proceedings, have scarcely been noticed by the Press. By the general public, absorbed in so many other more pressing concerns, they have been totally unheeded. That alone should surely have been sufficient ground for postponing their introduction to a time more favourable for deliberation. But as things are done in these days, there is every reason to anticipate that the world will only hear of the matter after the decision has been arrived at, and when,

as we shall be told, it is beyond the possibility of recall. As the Delhi Durbar was utilised to announce the change of capitals and redistribution of Provinces, in a way that closed the door to discussion or protest, so there is too much likelihood that the Montagu visit will be turned to account to spring upon India, and upon the owner, England, fundamental changes, upon which, it will be protested, once announced, there can be no going back. The combination of Secretary of State and Viceroy is evidently designed to invest their pronouncements with an appearance of authority that will put them beyond question. Who is to demur to the conclusions arrived at by the two chief personages, and only arrived at after a most patient hearing on the spot of the views of all classes? To refuse assent to conclusions proclaimed under such sanction, we must be prepared to hear, is mere impracticability, for the reason that the disappointment of the expectations raised would increase the discontent the changes are intended to remove, and would even sanctify it. The contention may be difficult to answer then, but it does not remove the objections to the manœuvring by which the situation will have been created. The preliminary consultation

of the affected interests which has been going on in India during the winter can only be a matter of form, for the main issue was pre-determined from the day that Mr. Montagu, in August, announced his intention of going to India to prepare the way for the change of policy for which he took the name of the Cabinet. If his ideas were to change under contact with local opinion, could he avow it in face of the undertaking he had given? The reader will be able to form his own opinion of the probability of such a conversion. Taking it for granted, then, that the cause has been prejudged, the object of this work is to set forth as intelligibly as may be to the British public, which, after all, is an interested party to the case, the probable character of these changes, their probable effects and ultimate bearings. The difficulty of the task lies in the obscurity in which the plans of the promoters are shrouded. After the fashion in which "popular" government works, the secret will be carefully kept until the moment when the lid comes off and the public is bidden to swallow the stew with the best face it can, for nothing else will it get. To keep the world carefully in the dark while the selected project is maturing, to plead high

reasons of State for refusing all information during the preparatory stages, to dismiss all criticism as ill-informed and premature, and finally, when the result is produced, to tell dissentients "it is too late now; you should have objected sooner"—this is the simple mode of procedure by which the democratic Behemoth is nose-ringed and brought to follow wheresoever his leaders may be willed to draw him, while with a few adroit pats on the flanks they persuade him to believe that he is taking his own way.

NOTE

“ Il me semble que le bonheur de cette nation n'est point fait comme celui des autres. . . . Voilà qui s'est fait un gouvernement unique dans lequel on a conservé tout ce que la monarchie a d'utile et tout ce que une république a de nécessaire. . . . Je la vois seulement embarrassée de l'Amerique septentrionale qu'elle a conquise à un bout de l'univers, et des plus belles provinces de l'Inde subjuguées à l'autre bout. Comment portera-t-elle ces deux fardeaux de sa félicité ? ”

VOLTAIRE. *Eloge de la Raison.*

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INDIA UNDER EXPERIMENT

CHAPTER I

THE REWARD OF LOYALTY

No one sufficiently interested in the subject to be at the trouble of opening these pages will be unaware that the young years of the present century have been a period of continual activity in the extension of political advancement in India. He is also likely to have been struck by the reflection that the more he hears of reforms the worse the accounts he gets of political discontent. The nature of the changes that have been going on will have to be considered more particularly later. Broadly they fall under three heads: The extension of representative institutions of the Parliamentary type in the form of the Legislative Councils; the extended employment of Natives of India in the public service, which is the prime feature in Indian polity; and the extension of local self-government through the

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fostering of Municipalities and District Boards. This third branch of the subject, though it represents a most useful and promising experiment, hardly comes into the field of controversy, and to avoid loading the discussion may be left aside here. The promotion of representative institutions and the increased employment of Indian agency in the Public Service, though the two things have no necessary connection, have been going on hand in hand. Both lines of advance have been followed in the idea that they would be equally acceptable to the political class whom it was desired to conciliate, and each concession has generally come at the tail of some outburst of agitation for which it is going to be a sedative, but promptly acts in practice as a fresh irritant. Judging by results, the plan of propitiation has proved itself, in this regard, a signal failure. Whatever the explanation, the fact is incontestable that Indian discontent first assumed a serious form simultaneously with its coming to knowledge that Lord Morley was engaged on preparing a great scheme of "reforms"; and now, since it has come to be understood that Mr. Montagu was contemplating another instalment going far beyond the achievements of his predecessor, the

differences and animosities excited by the prospect have risen to a pitch unknown hitherto.

What is the reason for the resumption in such dire haste of a process which has such an unfortunate record? The war, with all the dislocations it is producing in the normal course of civil life, its inroads upon individual liberty, even upon freedom of discussion, constitutes surely reason sufficient for putting off large constitutional changes to a better day. But in the mouth of those who are pressing these changes the war becomes another argument for precipitancy. India requires to be rewarded for her splendid, her astonishing loyalty in the war; and this loyalty of Native Chiefs, of Gurkhas, Pathans, Dogras, Sikhs, Jats, of transport-drivers and coolies, is to be repaid by political concessions to classes with whom these have little more in common than with the Bolsheviks. In addition to its ludicrous inaptness, the compensation argument carries within itself the destructive assumption that if it is not swiftly and adequately recognised this magnificent loyalty will turn to something less pleasant. Moreover, the language used on the subject implies that the sentiment is something un-

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looked for, a recent growth, the fruit, you are invited to imagine, of the Morley-Minto reforms. This insinuation does the grossest wrong to the spirit of the country. As for the Native Chiefs, people generally do not realise all that they have done and given up in the cause of the Empire since, forty years ago, at the instance of Lord Beaconsfield, Queen Victoria was proclaimed as their Queen-Empress. Not only have they volunteered to send their troops to every military service that offered, but they have consented—a far harder matter to them—to the abolition of transit duties in their States, to the abolition of their own mints, to the abolition of their own armies. The transit duties are to the Oriental mind the first and most natural source of revenue; the local mint was an attribute of royalty, the local army was another. It is impossible for us to realise what sacrifices the Chiefs must have made of their sentiments in giving up these marks of sovereignty, but one after another they were persuaded that the surrender of these individual prerogatives would make for the general welfare of the country, and they complied. They made no grievance of the matter, they asked for no reward; it was only when an ill-judged sugges-

tion was put forward for converting their personal voluntary contributions to the Imperial Service scheme into a fixed levy that they showed signs that their patience was being tried. It was a hard thing for a Native Ruler to give up his own army of his own retainers, even if the army was nothing more than a squadron of "looty-wallah" horse with a banner and a kettle-drum. An Imperial Service Company of khaki-clad Pioneers or a Transport Train unit is not at all the same thing in sentiment, and, moreover, requires regular payment. Still, it represents a free-will offering on the part of the State, whereas to impose a contribution as part of a universal rule would have destroyed all the grace and the chivalry of the idea. Happily, circumstances interfered with the realisation of the plan, and under the tactful, sympathetic working of the handful of picked Military Officers to whom the general superintendence of the Imperial Service Scheme has been entrusted, the system, as it has grown to manhood, has completely gained the affections of the Chiefs themselves. But to speak of the loyalty of this class is in truth superfluous, when almost every year sees evidence of it in their liberality towards projects started by the

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Government for the benefit of the country at large, in many of which, Imperial Institutes, Memorial Halls at Calcutta, and the like, they can only have the remotest personal interest. The danger is, in fact, that their readiness in giving may lend itself to abuse; and on one occasion at least it was only the outspoken protests of the Anglo-Indian Press that prevented their merciless exploitation for the happy thought of an impetuous Viceroy.

Next in the catalogue of services which call for reward (in the shape of representative institutions and increased Government employment for English-speaking discontent) comes the war-work of the Indian Army. That, too, is commonly spoken of as if it were something beyond anticipation and experience—something, after all, it would seem, to the credit of Lord Morley, and an encouragement to persevere in his footsteps. Such language is as absurdly wide of the mark as the impressions on which it rests. The Indian Army has behaved precisely as would have been expected of it. There have been some exceptions to the general rule, it is true—we cannot afford to forget the savage mutiny at Singapore—and there have been uncomfortable “inci-

dents" on a comparatively small scale in various Indian cantonments, but these combined do not weigh a grain against the immense mass of general loyalty.

But who looked for anything but loyalty from the Indian Army? To anyone who has seen the splendid collection of manhood which is represented by the officers of any good Native regiment the supposal of a bad spirit is preposterous. No doubt the Indian soldier is inclined to dislike leaving his own land, no doubt the idea of service against Europeans is unwelcome to him; still more, perhaps, the idea of service against his co-religionists. But these considerations have not counted in times when they had greater weight. The year 1914 was not exactly the first occasion of a call for service beyond seas. In 1801 Lord Wellesley despatched a force from Bombay to co-operate with the British operations in Egypt. A decade later the first Lord Minto sent out the expeditions which took Mauritius from the French and Java from the Dutch. In 1824 came the war with Burma, then an unknown country beyond seas reputed to be held by mighty men of valour. To come to more recent times, in 1877 Indian regiments embarked for Malta, enthusiastic at the

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prospect of a Russian war to follow, and in 1882 went just as readily to Egypt to fight against Arabi Pasha. It would be idle to go to instances such as the Afghan and trans-frontier wars, for the sepoys with whom the Company's forces began enlisted with the knowledge that their enemies would be their own countrymen and co-religionists. Plassey was won by a force of Madrassi sepoys alongside with part of the 39th Foot. The French were driven from Southern India by a force in which Native regiments from the Bengal side figured conspicuously. Fidelity to the service first is a sentiment that runs strong in the Indian nature, and possibly the highest exemplification of it is in the case of the humble police-constable, who goes out to arrest a dangerous outlaw or a wealthy landowner without consideration of whether his man is a Mahomedan or a Hindu. Remunerated at the rate of a domestic scullion, this humble servant of the State has some of the failings natural to his circumstances, but his enemies seldom complain that he fails out of scruples for the caste or creed of offenders. At any rate, there is a high spirit of duty and solidarity prevailing through this civil army, which rests ultimately, like that of the army

proper, on common confidence in its British officers. The only question, in fact, that could arise in regard to the loyalty of the army was whether it might not have been unfixed to some extent by the intrigues of the agitators, who, not only after the outbreak of the war, but for some years before, had notoriously been making very persistent attempts to get hold of the soldiers. The few scattered cases of misconduct that did occur were due to this influence. But the minute outcrop of the mischief in comparison with the efforts made to implant it is in reality a striking sign of how little influence this political class possesses with the mass of the people.

As for these masses, it was the Duke of Wellington, then Colonel Wellesley, who wrote of them that they are the only real political philosophers in the sense of not caring who their governors may be. The bulk of the population still consists of 80 per cent. of peasants, living their own lives in their own villages, the chief change lying in their horizons having been enlarged by the railway, which, much more than the school, has been the general educator. It would be absurd to look in such a population for any reasoned

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loyalty to a foreign Government, and doubly absurd to suppose that they have any appreciation of the changes that have come about within that Government between 1858 and 1918. What they ask of a Government is that it shall be cheap, that it shall let them alone as much as possible—seeing that throughout the Eastern world the contact of minor officials always means oppression—and that it shall guarantee even-handed justice. If, in addition, it helps them over famine and affords them reasonable protection against the landowner and the usurer, their political requirements are tolerably satisfied. No one would pretend that finality has been or will be reached in these respects; but the peasant is much less conscious than his rulers of the shortcomings of the system. It would be foolishness for any one person—even though a foreigner and a non-official—to formulate on his own account any dictum on the general state of mind of that vast population; but it may be said that all the available evidence is that the feeling of the people towards their governors was never so good as in 1914. The period 1896-1910 was notable for an unparalleled recurrence of famines, any one of which would have formerly represented a

hideous total of mortality and suffering; and unquestionably in many parts of the afflicted Provinces a comprehension of what was being done for them by Government, brought home by personal touch with the officers working in their midst, did penetrate the stolid mind of the villagers. Their minds should have also been affected to some extent by experience of the long-continued fight that the Government has been making against plague, though at first its efforts to protect them were an additional terror. The growth of the Co-operative Village Banking system, a departure launched and developed by the unsympathetic British official entirely on his own motion, as he alone understood the burden of rural debt, has undoubtedly contributed to good feeling; and, above all, there was the incident of the King's Coronation Durbar, which beyond any question elicited a manifestation of feeling so universal and spontaneous that it took by surprise those who knew the country best. Allowing for the ease with which an appearance of public opinion can be manufactured in a population where none exists, the stir of delight and gratification which went through India on the occasion of the King's visit was unquestionably genuine, and, allowing for the

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strange way in which the sentiment of Indians attaches itself to the Ruler in virtue of his office—so that he whom we should call a bad Raja does not appear to be less popular personally than a model one—could not have been what it was if the rule of which His Majesty was the embodiment had been unacceptable to the masses.

One may repeat, therefore, that the general sentiment of India was probably, in its passive way, never better affected towards the British connection than at the date when the war broke out. But in any case how should we have expected the people to behave? Did we suppose that they would declare for the Germans? In this respect there was abundant guidance from the past. Not one in a thousand peasants had up to that moment ever heard of the Germans; but a good deal had undoubtedly been heard of the Russians by the time that they had worked their way to the environs of Herat. From the Caspian to Calcutta there is a continuous highway of communication, and from the day when the Emperor Paul, in 1801, formed the first scheme for a Russian invasion, the Indian ear had become sensitive to echoes of the tramp of

approaching hosts in the north-west. Louder continually grew the sound as they came pushing on through the Turkoman country, absorbed Khiva, Bokhara, and Merv, until at last it broke into a crash with the collision at Panjdeh in 1885. All these years India had been invaded each winter by the caravans of Afghan merchants, easy-going, free-spoken giants with rosy cheeks and long curls, who penetrate every corner of the country down to Tuticorin; inveterate traders and wanderers who did not break off their annual rounds even during the Mutiny. When these strangers lit their fires in the market-town at evening their talk would be of the "Russ," and doubtless they did not spare the imaginations of the country-folk as to the coming terror. Towards the end of the century a vague presentiment of a great collision impending must have been abroad everywhere; but there was certainly no sign of any disposition in favour of the Russians. What conceivable inducement, then, should the Indians have had for attaching themselves to Germany, who in the interior of the country, if known at all, was only known in the person of a trader in some despised *métier*—a buyer of bones, hides, bristles, or a commercial traveller pushing

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cutlery made up to resemble that of Sheffield ? The German missionary no doubt abused his position to the utmost of his capacity, but would not be much better placed for mischief. In fact, the German inability to influence coloured races has been shown by their failure in Africa, where they had a long-established footing to begin with. If they could have raised the natives against us there in the east and west, they would not have needed to trouble with India. It is not, of course, to be denied that they did establish relations to a certain extent with the Hindus in North America and with the agitators in Bengal. But it is these who represent the advanced wing of the agitation which it is now proposed to propitiate, and who form the only notable exception to the general loyalty.

In conclusion, it is totally misleading to speak of Indian loyalty, Indian discontent, Indian wants and wishes, and so forth, when the attitude and feelings in question vary totally in different Provinces. These expressions are cultivated sedulously by the politicals for the sake of producing an artificial appearance of unity, and have to be used sometimes for the sake of brevity, but the impression

they convey is a perversion of the reality. One great Province, for example, since the war began has shown, let us say, an uncertainty of disposition which has been a constant anxiety to the Government; while another has exhibited a shining example of the opposite disposition, that would deserve recognition had it been forthcoming from any part of the Empire. The Punjab since the outbreak of the war has given proof of a spirit not inferior to that of 1857, when it saved India for Britain. This Province, with a population of less than twenty millions, was furnishing when the war began about 55 per cent. of the strength of the entire Indian Army. Instead of considering this remarkable contribution sufficient, the people of the Punjab treated the outbreak of war as a call to themselves, just as if they had been Australians or Canadians. Many hardy tribes, men with all the makings of soldiers, but who had not been accustomed, like the Sikhs, to the practice of enlistment, now came forward to answer the appeal in swarms. Recruiting has flourished ever since. The total contribution of the Province up to the beginning of November last was 220,000 men, of whom four-fifths were combatants. In the last

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three months of this period the recruits numbered 39,000, more than the total for the whole of the rest of India. The only slackening to be feared is from the shrinkage of the population of military age. That amounts to about four millions, including the Punjab Native States, and even in the Punjab different parts of the Province differ. In one of the five Divisions the people show comparatively little bent for military service, with the result that the call falls all the more heavily on the others. What the strain involves which the willing population takes on itself is shown by the figures for the Rawul Pindi Division, the head centre of supply for the army. They are well worth a moment's attention. In the first period of the war, to the end of March, 1915, 45,000 recruits were enlisted altogether in India; of these, the Rawul Pindi Division furnished 11,000. By the end of October last its contribution had amounted to 75,000, of whom five-sixths were combatants, this, added to the number of men already serving in the ranks when the war broke out, bringing the total to over 100,000 men from a single portion of a single Province. This meant, said the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir M. O'Dwyer, in a local Durbar, that one man in every six of fighting age is serving in the defence of the

Empire. Of one tehsil of the Division, the Deputy-Commissioner wrote: "It has become normal for a boy on reaching maturity—if not before—to go off and enlist. A number of villages in this ilaqua contain only old men, boys, and invalids!" In the Rawul Pindi Division the people are chiefly Punjabi Mahomedans, but in the Sikh districts the spirit has been equally fine. In the Sikh State of Jhind, whose people are only in a secondary sense subjects of the Empire, out of a total of 49,000 of military age, one man out of every seven has gone into the British service; and the neighbour States of Patiala and Nabha show scarcely less striking results. Well may this be called "magnificent" loyalty, which shows the people voluntarily undertaking a burden equal to anything that could have been imposed on them by any system of conscription, had that principle been conceivable. But the unblushing appropriation of the loyalty of Northern India as a reason for rewarding Provinces which practically have not furnished a man to the Empire's cause with political boons which would ultimately place the military classes under the power of Bengalis and Madrassis is an extravagance that can only pass as long as the situation is not understood.

CHAPTER II

THE REWARD OF DISAFFECTION

IF the foregoing brief survey of the condition of things as they stand among the classes who have been contributing to the war disposes of the idea that the motive of political reforms can be in the necessity of rewarding them, since the scheme does not benefit them at all, it must needs be that the purpose behind the project is that of conciliating the discontented. As a loose description of this class, it might be said to consist of those who have been educated at the schools and colleges, which for practical purposes are all under the superintendence of the Government Department of Public Instruction. It would be very wrong to imply that all the educated are discontented. There are large numbers of them, especially among the considerable body employed in the public services, who are just the contrary, thoroughly loyal, but these are not heard of.

On the other hand, it may be truly said

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that all the discontented are educated. Even the crudest youth who is got hold of to fling the bomb or fire the revolver is invariably found to have received some tincture of education at a school before he was fit for the promptings of the anarchist. In passing, it may be noticed that the revelations produced in recent criminal trials of the moral state of the schools where some of these anarchist crimes have been hatched have been so frightful that they must have raised an outcry in England if it were possible that the public here should be effectively responsible for what happens in India. One of the worst corrupters of youth, who has paid the final penalty, was an ex-teacher at a missionary college, a man who had been well liked and trusted by his English colleagues. But of course all the discontented are not anarchists. At the other end of the line is the urbane gentleman who brings forward resolutions in his Legislative Council which he knows well are in no danger of passing, because it is pleasant to feel oneself in the van of progress, and also because a little opposition does one no harm with Government, being often the shortest road to a C.I.E. But one way or another, be it moderate or extremist, fictitious

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or fanatical, there is no question of the existence of a body of opposition in the country, which alone has the ear of the outside world, and which is constantly increasing in volume in defiance of every palliative hitherto devised by the rulers. The situation is a serious one, as everyone will acknowledge who realises that to the Government, on whom all this criticism and complaint constantly drips, there is no alternative. In the second place, in spite of the vast size of India, of all the radical differences between the different components of the population, the opposition has no checks within itself. There is no discrimination of right, left, or centre. Temporary personal differences between leaders, such as broke up the National Congress at Surat, are of no consequence whatever in the long run. The only one outstanding difference of interests among the agitators was merged when the Moslem League last year formally announced its amalgamation with the Hindu Congress. Henceforth whatever is wrong—and all the complaint falls on the head of the Government. But between an irremovable Government and an undivided, implacable Opposition, allowed the freest opportunities of expression, the situa-

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tion must eventually grow serious. The question now, from the political point of view, is whether the concessions in contemplation are likely to act as a remedy.

It must be allowed that the argument from experience is not encouraging. Whatever view may be taken of the different measures that have been introduced during the last forty years with the object of popularising the Government, it is a simple matter of fact that, severally and in the sum, they have had no other effect than that of increasing the volume and embittering the tone of the opposition. To attempt to analyse the causes of this anomalous manifestation would be a long task, but of the fact itself there can be no more question than of the deepened discontent of Ireland since the passage of the Home Rule. Lord Ripon's popular policy of the early eighties was speedily followed by an agitation that led to the formation of the National Congress, whose whole tone has been more or less vehement condemnation of the existing order of things.

Occasionally a conciliatory orator may counsel patience till the transient darkness of the present age has dissolved into the glories of a state in accordance with Indian

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aspirations; but this is the utmost. I can never remember having read a Congress speech which was a frank, reasoned upholding of the British administration—not because Indians, as will be found in private conversation, are not alive to its merits, but because such a line would expose the speaker to unmeasured obloquy in the Indian Press. Lord Lansdowne enlarged the Legislative Councils, introducing into their composition the new element of a certain proportion of non-official members to be nominated by various public bodies and interests, such as the Chambers of Commerce, the Universities, and the big landholders' associations. This Bill of 1892 also made provision for the regular discussion of Budgets, imperial and provincial. Hitherto, as the status of the Councils had been merely that of committees engaged upon the details of legislation, even the Imperial Budget could not be discussed unless it involved the passing of some Bill. So if there was no new tax or duty requiring to be imposed or abolished, the Indian Chancellor of the Exchequer simply read his statement, and financial discussion, with all that general ventilation of public affairs that comes in its train, was postponed for another year. It is easy to judge, there-

fore, that Lord Lansdowne's measure was in reality a very important departure in the direction of giving Indian public opinion a voice and influence in Government affairs. But there was nothing in it to appeal to the school which set the tone of the National Congress, and the opposition never ceased to grow in acerbity. Four years later the country came to be faced with a rising of the hill tribes all round the North-west Frontier under some strange general stirring of antagonism towards their unaggressive neighbour, and Lord Elgin's Government felt obliged, in the interests of security, to put another rein upon the weak bridle holding the Native Press.

In Lord Curzon's day agitation was kept in abeyance outwardly by the belief that the Government was in strong hands, but towards the latter part of his Viceroyalty two measures were introduced which produced violent searchings of heart—the reform of University education and the partition of Bengal. The latter was a provincial grievance merely, and to this day it is a matter of doubt how far the loud-voiced agitation which burst out over the subject was a genuine one or a case of a pretext seized by a faction on the look-out for

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a good grievance. At any rate, the complaint did not come from the districts that were severed off by the partition, but from the unaffected half whose centre was Calcutta. It is difficult to believe a change which touched no man in any material respect whatsoever could have been a lasting trouble, and in any case it is flattering to British rule that a territory which represents nothing more than a series of administrative arrangements should have come to acquire the sanctity of a motherland. But though Lord Morley would not cancel the partition, he was much impressed by the surface vehemence of the agitation, and thus the demonstrations which culminated in the impressive crowning of Mr. Surendranath Bannerjee as Sovereign of Bengal were among the reasons that brought him up to the conviction that the Government must be popularised according to British political recipes.

The first result was most unpromising; it was no sooner understood that the Secretary of State and the Viceroy were projecting an extensive scheme of "reforms" than agitation began to assume a new and darker shade. From meetings on the Calcutta maidan,

addressed in a turgid imitation of classical British exemplars, it was a long but swift transition to that of the orators who now began to inflame audiences of a different character in Upper India. The Government was obliged to act in self-defence, and not too soon. The excitement aroused by the idea of impending reforms spread from the Punjab even to Madras, and when it led to rioting in the somnolent far south of that tranquil Province it was evident that the right of public speaking must be placed under restriction. Measures were adopted to that end, but to get rid of the heads of the disturbance another means was adopted. There was a Regulation still in existence that empowered the Government to arrest an inconvenient person in British India, and deport or intern him at its pleasure. Passed in 1818, at a time when the British Raj was still confronted by powerful independent elements in the country, it was intended to provide a means for dealing with people of the class of descendants of the Peshwa (such as Nana Sahib, if he had shown his hand earlier, instead of posing as an Anglophil), emissaries from the Courts of Lucknow or Delhi, the Sikh Rani Jindhan, and the like.

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Now this antique ordinance was brought out by a Radical Secretary of State to be employed against ordinary subjects of the Government for an ordinary class of offence, and a very useful instrument it was found, to judge by the employment made of it.

As the enthusiasm created by the prospect of political reform extended, further encroachments upon the established course of judicial procedure followed. The various secret conspiracies aimed at the overthrow of the Government which in due time succeeded the inflammatory public meeting quite outran the capacity of the statutory law courts, with their cumbrous system, which gives every serious criminal case the chance of expanding over three trials. It was impossible to deal with batches of eighty or ninety accused on a scheme of procedure which would have merely made the judgment of the Sessions Court, after a three or four months' investigation, the preliminary to a retrial in the High Court. A new emergency jurisdiction had therefore to be created in the shape of Special Tribunals of three Judges appointed *ad hoc*, who, working under simplified rules as to the admission and record of evidence and in the spirit of justice rather than legality, have managed to

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get through their work, which is exempt from the right of appeal.

The justice which these Special Tribunals have administered has been very little criticised. Nevertheless, they are not institutions that a constitutionalist can regard with a friendly eye, even if he may reluctantly admit their necessity. But before the large-scale conspiracy came upon the scene, the era of anarchist outrage had intervened. The bomb first burst on the Indian world in the murder of two English ladies at a quiet mofussil station by an explosion intended for a Civilian Judge who had incurred the resentment of the Nationalists. Then followed a series of outrages of the same general type, which culminated with the attempt on the life of the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, as he was heading a State procession through Delhi. All the crimes, or attempted crimes, of this period have a common resemblance in having been perpetrated by young men, sometimes not out of boyhood; and on this account they were sometimes dismissed as the work of irresponsible students. But it is now well known that behind each of the actual criminals was a band of instigators, reaching back to the headquarters of the society, who spent perhaps

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months in working their intended agent up to the proper frame of mind. Moreover, it has to be remembered that for one youth found willing and trustworthy for the actual execution of an outrage, scores were probably sounded and tampered with, so the spread of the poison cannot be judged by the number of those brought to the dock. In fact, the really serious feature about the anarchist propaganda is not the amount of crime that has been committed, but the fact that the whole student world, the manhood of the coming generation, has become familiarised with the doctrine that the cause of the country may be promoted by crime, and that the vilest crimes become sanctified when committed for that cause.

Next to adopting such a creed himself, the worst thing that can happen to a young man is that he should know that it is held by many about him. In the first instance, the men to be initiated would be told that they had the means of freeing the country in their hands if they would but devote themselves. The English officials were few—only three or four to each district—and a combined scheme of assassinations would therefore soon bring foreign rule to an end. It was this vein of

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purpose that ran through the outcrop of murders and attempts at murders which occurred sporadically from Dacca in Eastern Bengal to South Kensington, and in which, for some obscure reason, in practically every instance the victim marked down was known for his special sympathy with the people of the country, as, for instance, Sir Curzon Wylie; Mr. Jackson, the collector of Nassick; Sir Andrew Fraser, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal; and Lord Hardinge himself. Presumably the idea was that if a beginning was made with notably popular characters, the policy of ruthlessness would find no scruples to check its momentum afterwards.

After a year or two of this, however, the plan of campaign underwent a remarkable change of direction. The organisers, for whatever reason, had come to feel that success did not lie in the extermination of the British official, and the next effort was turned upon their own countrymen, the Native officers of the Police. Unlike the first movement, the new departure was confined almost entirely to Bengal. There any Police officer who had shown himself vigilant and capable in the detection of political crime soon came to know

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that he carried his life in his hand. The series of assassinations of investigating officers which now set in were marked by the utmost audacity, several of these crimes being committed in crowded thoroughfares in Calcutta, and one of them within the precincts of the High Court itself. The object was to terrorise the intelligence branch of the Police as a preparative against the new form of activity that was in contemplation. Suddenly the public began to hear of burglaries in the country districts, crimes of a new type in which the ordinary housebreaker was replaced by gangs of youths of the middle class, armed with revolvers and after a fashion disciplined, who posted sentries to secure the approaches while others entered the house to secure the owner's horde and rifle his zenana. Unless report errs grossly, the leaders in these enterprises were generally rural schoolmasters. The proceeds of these burglaries, which were often large, were generally paid into the central crimes fund, and it appears to have been this association which after the outbreak of the war got into touch with German agents in the Straits and Sumatra, and, in concert with them, devised a wild scheme for an insurrection, which seems to have been timed to come off in the mid-

winter of 1915-1916, and naturally came to nothing. This Neo-Thuggism, or "political criminality" as it was officially labelled, appears to have been practically confined to Bengal, where it thrived on the weakness of the provincial administration.

The only other element in the population who can be suspected of any dealings with the Germans were the Indian out-residents in the States, especially among their haunts along the Pacific Coast. For some reason the Hindu mind goes bad with special rapidity in the pleasant climate of California, and the colony at San Francisco, under the leadership of the notorious Hurdial—an Oxonian like his counterpart Mr. Krishnavarma of Paris—had become little better than a murder school. Unfortunately, their tenets had spread to men of a different class, chiefly Sikhs, who had come to frequenting British Columbia because of the demand for labour. When the local Government, becoming aware of the undesirable spirit at work among this class, had prohibited Asiatic immigration, the leaders determined to see whether an entry could not be forced. They chartered a vessel, took up Sikh immigrants from the Straits, China, and Japan, and eventually appeared at Vancouver

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demanding an entry. The patience of the local authorities averted a collision, and the *Komagata Maru* slowly made her way back to Calcutta, freighted with as ill-minded a set of men as has assembled on one deck since the days of piracy. Strangely, they were allowed to land with their arms, of which they promptly availed themselves at the railway-station where they were told to entrain, a serious conflict ensuing, with a considerable bill of casualties. After this they were confidently sent off to their homes in the Punjab, where the forward spirits at once set about attempting to organise a general insurrection, which was to have commenced with the seizing of local treasuries and gone on to the capture of arms and military stores. But they had chosen the wrong place; the general loyalty and sense of the Punjab countryside was too pronounced to give them any real chance of success and the intended revolt collapsed, after having been carried far enough to show how clearly the rural people were not for incendiary politics.

No survey of the recent state of India would have been adequate without reference to this unpleasant subject. Different people will no

ATTITUDE OF INDIAN CRITICISM . 33

doubt read its importance differently. There are optimists who are able to regard violence of this kind as a mere speck on the mirror; there are others who look upon it as a putrid fungus requiring summary eradication. Without attempting to hold the balance, it may be suggested that the serious feature is the little condemnation that "political" crime receives from public opinion. It was left to the Punjab peasantry to produce an effective opposition to the movement brought over in the *Komagata Maru*. The Press and the platform will deprecate an outrage, when it has to be noticed, in the correct language imposed on men claiming to share the standards of civilisation; but when the State is obliged to take some measure for dealing with the mischief, an extension of Police powers, restrictions on public meetings, or an amendment of the Press regulations, then the opposition takes a different language. The mild disapproval of crime or violence disappears in the hot indignation excited by the precautions adopted against its spread, with their infringement of the liberties of the citizen. The "moderate" legislative councillor deplors the necessity of the measure in his Council, and warns the Government of the grave

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consequences he foresees from repression; the vernacular Press, always in a fury, assumes an extra vehemence, often descending into bathos as the writers proceed to enlarge on the unhappy future of the people now that their last safeguards have been taken away. In explanation of the practically unvarying hostility of all the criticism that the Government encounters from outside, which has become such an unfortunate feature of the situation in India, the prime cause to be taken into account is the attitude of journalism. The audacious juxtaposition of a free Press and an absolute Government was due to Metcalfe's repeal of the existing Press regulations when he was officiating as Governor-General in 1836. The act has been often in later years absurdly ascribed to his credit on grounds that could not have occurred to him. There was no Native Press in existence in his day, and the papers he was concerned with were a few European journals in Calcutta, conducted by men who deserved little respect on their own account, but who are still remembered for the severities with which they were treated. Metcalfe could hardly foresee the day when a news-sheet of local personalities, whose circulation trickled

perhaps as far as Murshidabad and Midnapore, would become a live force in the country, and he aimed merely at putting an end to the unedifying squabbles to which the clash between the Government and a few struggling editors was constantly giving rise. As far as his immediate object was concerned, the Liberal policy was completely successful. In the course of a few years' time the old journalism was replaced by publications like the *Friend of India* and the *Calcutta Review*, a newspaper and a magazine that would have been a credit to any community.

But the result was that when education had spread, when railway communication had been introduced and extended, the Native Press, when it came into being, found itself in possession of a clear field, of which it soon began to take advantage. People who elaborately ascribe every symptom of discontent to some pre-existent sense of injury or repression will find it difficult to make out that explanation here. The Press, to begin with, was mostly, outside the Presidency towns entirely, in the hands of persons of small estimation. They turned to opposition often by way of recommending themselves to the notice of Government for an appointment,

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sometimes by way of exploiting the opportunities opened to the profession by the excessive tenderness of their countrymen in the matter of blackmail. Moreover, the Indian Press, to begin with, was entirely in Hindu hands, and the Hindu is a determined pessimist. Like the Hebrew of old, he looks back to a golden past, when the fair land and large belonged exclusively to his own people, and fastens his ideas on a revival of this age of splendour in the future; but in the meantime the world is full of darkness and unrighteousness, against which one does well to cry out. Hence, to the vast majority of readers only jeremiads are acceptable. A paper which aimed at giving the Government side of questions would have no readers. Let it be remembered, also, that the Indian paper appeals to its public solely on the side of politics. In this strange literature there is no room for "City" intelligence, for literature, the drama, music, sport, fiction. The general news of the world is represented by a reprint of Reuter's telegrams of the day before clipped from a European journal; agriculture, the grand interest of the country, by a clipping from a Government bulletin, which, if the news happens to be bad, may furnish a

leaderette. But virtually the whole pith of the paper is in its politics, and its politics consist in little more than a perpetual prejudicing of the acts and motives of the Administration, spiced with attacks on the personal iniquities of individual officers.

But what a Government, the European reader may be inclined to think, to have exposed itself to such a stream of invariable criticism ! The answer is that it is precisely the measures that the English reader would most approve that have aroused much of the most vehement opposition. A violent Hindu agitation sprang up, for instance, against the Bill brought forward and enacted by Lord Lansdowne's Government for the protection of child-wives married in form. Again, all the agrarian legislation in which the Government has been periodically engaged for the last forty years, which forms in the bulk an achievement of enormous importance to the masses on the land, has invariably been opposed, whether in Bengal, the Punjab, the United Provinces, or the Deccan, in a way that might lead to the belief that the protection of the peasantry was the most unjust of causes. Because a measure is of a " popular " cast, therefore, this no more secures it a favour-

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able reception than the heralding of Lord Morley's constitutional reforms put a stop to agitation. Even as far back as 1878, when the Native Indian Press was a small affair, comparatively speaking, Lord Lytton's Government was obliged to take powers for dealing with newspapers transgressing too patently the liberty of free speech. The Act could not be accused of working harshly, since no prosecution was necessary under it; but Lord Ripon repealed it, and since then the story of the Indian Press has been one of successive accesses of violence, reluctantly imposed checks, and fresh denunciations of the restraint. -

Once and again the Press has produced an open-minded independent journalist like the late Mr. Malabari of Bombay; and the rôle should be a tempting one, for he who follows it has the field to himself and is secure of the appreciation of the rulers. Nevertheless, the fact remains that these rare exceptions are too few to count, and that the Press at large is little more than an agency for creating and organising an opinion unfavourable to Government. It has already done a vast deal of mischief, and it is, indeed, an open question whether a free Press and a foreign

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Administration, perpetually judged and misjudged in face of a vast uncritical population, are institutions permanently compatible.

Since 1885 the forces of the Press have been backed up by the influence of the National Congress, whose attitude is also that of standing opposition to the Government. The formation of this singular association was principally due to the late Mr. A. O. Hume, the ornithologist, who on retirement from the Civil Service seems to have been disposed to make things uncomfortable for the Government he had quitted. Mr. Hume started from certain positions to justify the movement he was setting on foot; one of which was the most extraordinary assertion ever enunciated by a man of his knowledge of the country. He said that in every village in India there were men who knew more and talked more of political affairs than could be found in any similar European societies. He maintained that vague stirrings of spirit were at work throughout the country, that the discontentment was becoming conscious of its possession of physical force, and that unless it were guided into constitutional channels of activity the end would be an explosion. The Congress,

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it may be observed, has been in activity for thirty years, and Mr. Hume's intelligent villagers are still absolutely indifferent to its existence. To do the originator justice, he foresaw this. The important part of his scheme was not the annual Parliamentary performance, but the formation of a corps of missionaries who should go out two by two, like the Apostles, and indoctrinate the villagers in their homes with a knowledge of their political rights and wrongs.

It does not require much acquaintance with India to judge what direction such a movement must have taken from the very start. But the gentlemen who assembled in the Congress pandal at Christmas had no fancy for spending the year in tramping the country as missionaries, and when Mr. Hume came to see that the National movement was to be confined to oratory and resolutions, his interest in it evaporated; and the other Englishmen who from time to time have taken a part in the Congress proceedings have been persons of quite a different type—publicists in search of a pedestal. Along with the occasional M.P., the Congress has now and again been able to put upon the dais a prominent Parsi or Mahomedan gentleman. The presence of

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these sympathisers served to justify the title "National," but did not alter the fact that the Congress has always been, until quite recently, a Hindu movement. The Mahomedans did not want it, and the Congress people did not want them, in any quantity.

Within the last year or two, however, the fresh exasperation of spirit produced by fresh reforms and promises of reforms to come has extended even to the Mahomedans, until at last their special organisation, the Moslem League, has formally joined causes with the Hindu Congress. Thus the Government is now confronted, for the first time, with the united opposition of the political classes in India. In another chapter an attempt will be made to show what this opposition seeks and what it signifies. Enough has been said above to indicate that the statement that the condition of the country is one of conspicuous loyalty requires considerable exceptions, which it will not do for the political reformer to put away as the work of an insignificant minority, seeing that this minority consists of the very classes with whom he is concerned, and to whom his "reward" is designed to appeal.

CHAPTER III

THE APPROACHING CLIMAX

THE shortest vision has been able to discern for some time past that things in India were working up inevitably to a crisis. The latter part of the Viceroyalty of Lord Hardinge, a diplomatist who, on coming to the business of conducting a Government on his own account, disclosed advanced political leanings, foreshadowed unmistakably what was coming, and the situation was brought to a head by the appointment of Mr. Montagu as Secretary of State, with the almost simultaneous announcement that Mr. Montagu was to transfer his office from Whitehall to Delhi to settle all difficulties out of hand by his presence on the spot. Reasons will be given in the sequel for opining that the mission he has undertaken with such alacrity raises the gravest cause for apprehension and the least prospect of any possible good result. Mr. Montagu acted under no compulsion; the invitation of the Viceroy to India was rather

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a confession of personal perplexity than a binding summons, and the war was the best of all reasons for retarding the consideration of fundamental changes. But Mr. Montagu as this is written has already reached the scene of his triumphs, the engagement is joined, and it will probably be left to Parliament and the British public to discuss the decisions arrived at after they have been announced in such a manner as to make subsequent discussion a business of form. Meantime, to appreciate the situation it is necessary to judge what the different parties are after. Mr. Montagu has explained his own position, and incidentally that of the Government, as far as in present times the Government is likely to have paid any attention to the matter, in his speech in the Commons in August announcing his forthcoming Indian tour. The passage is so important to the whole question that it must be quoted textually here. He said:

The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which* the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the Administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the

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progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire. They have decided that substantial steps in this direction should be taken as soon as possible, and that it is of the highest importance as a preliminary to considering what these steps should be that there should be a free and informal exchange of opinion between those in authority at home and in India.' His Majesty's Government have accordingly decided, with His Majesty's approval, that I should accept the Viceroy's invitation to proceed to India to discuss these matters with the Viceroy and the Government of India, to consider with the Viceroy the views of local governments, and to receive with him the suggestions of representative bodies and others. I would add that progress in this policy can only be achieved by successive stages. The British Government and the Government of India, on whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples, must be the judges of the time and measure of each advance, and they must be guided by the co-operation received from those upon whom new opportunities of service will thus be conferred, and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility. Ample opportunity will be afforded for public discussion of the proposals, which will be submitted in due course to Parliament.

This pronouncement gives us, at any rate, what Mr. Montagu means. It indicates the pressing home of a policy on the recognised lines of British Radicalism. The next thing is to see what the Indian political opposition means; what other Indian interests mean; what that ignored factor, the European element, means; finally, what changes in the direction of "the development of self-governing institutions with a view to the realisation of responsible government" are likely to mean. In regard to the Indian political body there is no difficulty in ascertaining its aims, or, as the phrase goes now, its aspirations, for these people, with their natural instinct for the tactics of agitation, admit no differences to appear as to the articles of their programme. The Congress practice of passing year after year a number of identical resolutions, many of which were, at any rate when the meetings started, totally outside the regions of practical possibility, had the effect of giving these demands, by dint of constant iteration, the appearance of unredressed grievances with a great volume of opinion behind them. The note of a particular session might vary according to the temperament, responsibility, experience, of the President and managers of that

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year's gathering, but the items of the omnibus resolution, such as repeal of the Arms Act, the complete separation of executive and judicial powers, have been acquiring solidity by age and repetition. At a time when provincial decentralisation and provincial independence have come under increasing discussion as the lines along which Indian administration should develop in the future, there is no sign whatever of difference of provincial sentiments or interests being at work in the Congress or, indeed, among the Indian members of the Viceroy's Council. On the contrary, the clue of the politicals is always to suppress from view all notice of local distinctions and divergences, to speak of India as one, demanding the same measures and the same remedies with equal urgency by the mouth of one public opinion. Whether this leaning to unity may be ultimately traceable, as the political philosopher might maintain, to the physical character of the country, or whether it is an effect of the uniformity of ideas produced by a State system of education, or whether it comes naturally to a people with a highly developed aptitude for getting round their rulers, this convention of a single political interest and opinion

is the most characteristic feature of the agitation.

It was exhibited with delightful unconsciousness by His Highness the Aga Khan in a letter to *The Times* last autumn, which deplored that there was no Member from India sitting in Parliament, like the late Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, who could have given the House the Indian view! As though there could be no shade of difference in the view that every man in Hindustan must take of such a subject as the Montagu-Chelmsford projects! Singleness of opinion carried to this extent can only mean that there is no real public opinion—and this is rather the trouble in India.

As it is, it does not require an Indian M.P., in the shape of a Parsi gentleman domiciled in London, to discover for us *the* Indian view of the Aga Khan. Although the front of the Congress line is allowed to present no appearance of diversity, it is not in itself stationary. It is, in fact, always advancing. The reforms outlined in the political testament of Mr. Gokhale, published to the world last May, are already pronounced to be behind time and obsolete. The school of Mr. Gokhale, the

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party of Moderates, which Lord Morley elaborately played to capture and bring over, is already out of the running. "We really pity those members of the European community," an Indian paper recently declared, "who try to delude themselves or others that there is such a party as Moderates in this country." Why be a Moderate and put up with petty concessions when Home Rule is dangling within reach? Why, indeed? And the upshot is that the midway men and the gradual progress men have to come up into the front line. What the political Indian wishes, as most of us would wish if we were in his place, is to see the last of the British altogether. The difference (the unfortunate difference if the reader likes) is that the Indians who would see us gone are perfectly incapable of filling the vacancy for themselves. The captains of the movement are well aware of this, and therefore do not at all recommend the severance of the connection. "Home Rule within the Empire" is a good substitute, promising all the pleasantness to India and all the gravamen to the Empire. The white ensign would still protect, for a trifle of £100,000 per annum, the argosies from the Thames and Mersey, which would yield up

just as much of their value in the way of duties as would not prevent the trade from dying out altogether. A British Army would be obviously indispensable, not only for the sake of protection against external intruders, but because the Indian Army, if left by itself, or some one of its component elements, Sikh, Mussalman, or Gurkha, might assume a disagreeable predominance. The maintenance of the Viceroyalty on the status of that of Canada would be desirable as giving dignity and stability to the new Government, and as providing a check against inconvenient pretensions on the part of any of the Native Princes.

Thus safeguarded and guaranteed, the Indian politician looks forward jubilantly to the establishment of a national Government invested with the full power of the purse, with the making of the laws in Councils, Central and Provincial, in which his party is to have a complete preponderance, with the complete control of the Executive, and of the administration of justice. To ensure a free hand to the new dispensation, the functions of the Secretary of State for India are to be reduced to those of the Colonial Secretary *quâ* his relations with the self-governing Dominions,

and the India Council abolished. Given this starting-point, the reformers wisely do not insist on the immediate and complete disappearance of the British element from the Councils, the public services, or from trade and business within the country. Men with much less gift for political manipulation could see that with self-government conceded, the rest would follow of itself. The European, official or non-official, would remain simply on toleration, since the new Government could at any time make his position unendurable. The abandonment of authority as the principle of Government in favour of that of popular volition too obviously means the surrender of the whole British position in India, and complete capitulation to the agitators even before they had in their own minds begun to think seriously of success.

It is true that the sympathetic entertainers who roll up the edge of the curtain to disclose to the gratified audience entrancing visions of the times to come—Lord Hardinge, Lord Chelmsford, Mr. Montagu—at the same time warn them that the realisation must take a long time, some indefinite time, and adjure them to tranquillity and patience. It is no wonder that the tail of the discourse is the

least heeded portion. If the things promised them are so good and so wholesome, why should there be all this delay in their bestowal? Why should they even be deferred in deference to the continuation of the war, which does not touch Indian domestic politics? The agitators, in fact, recognise that the distraction of the British public in the war is their great opportunity, and therefore the Montagu-Chelmsford pronouncements were a signal to them, and one cannot blame them therein, for raising the pitch of the reform cry. With infantile simplicity, the Indian public of all sections was exhorted to co-operate in preserving a "calm," an artificial calm, during the visit of Mr. Montagu, in order that the two intellects that had undertaken the settlement of these high concerns might work undisturbed; as though it were probable, or indeed, on the democratic theory, desirable, that great masses of people with the most divergent interests should look on in religious silence while their destinies were being settled for them, or content themselves with a memorandum in statement of case. The inevitable result of the Montagu proceedings was an immediate spread of agitation, in which classes hitherto regarded as inaudible

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have been stimulated to combine and remonstrate lest their interests should be disposed of unnoticed.

The seed of the climax to which we are now approaching was sown in a far-back day when someone invented the phrase "India for the Indians." The saying summarises in four words a whole train of argument which there is no shame in admitting has a peculiar cogency for the British conscience; and if the Indians were a homogeneous people, if they were capable of defending their own country on our withdrawal, of forming a Government that could be trusted to discharge the obligations which would be incurred on the transfer, if they were even reasonably unanimous in desiring us to be gone, Britannia, however painful the consideration, might feel herself forced to consider whether she was not under moral obligation to wind up her Hindustan branch of business. She would be back on that other saying, a still older one, that the only Indian question is how to get well away from India. But the smallest reflection will show that none of the conditions exist that would allow the matter to be brought to this simple issue.

In the actual circumstances all that the phrase "India for the Indians" does for us is to suggest the question, Which Indians? As things stand, there is first the great cleavage of the population into the opposing bodies of Hindus and Mahomedans, whose historical antagonism is fully maintained in the minds of the masses to-day. Next, within the Hindu fold there are racial divisions—for example, Rajputs, Bengalis, Beharis, Mahrattas, Dravidians, Jats, etc., people who have little in common but the acknowledgment of Brahmanism and the worship of the cow. Nearer to the Rajput and the Jat physically come the Sikhs, who are not Hindus. Further, between Hindus of the same country there are all the divisions of caste, separating them into watertight compartments socially; and yet again there are castes which are divided internally by being part Hindu and part Mahomedan. Then there are people who may have some tincture of Hinduism, but are ethnically totally different from all these, such as the Nepalese and the population of the Himalayan region. Add to these people who are separate from any of the above and from each other in race, religion, and character, the Burmans; the

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aboriginal tribes of Central India and the Central Provinces; those of Orissā and the adjoining States; the tribes of Assam hills and frontier tracts; the peoples of the Divide between Burma and Assam and between Burma and Chittagong. This congeries includes people in every state and degree of civilisation, from the Jain mystic who fears to take the life of a flea to the Lushai who till the other day was a professional head-hunter. It includes also nearly 4,000,000 Native Christians, mostly in a very depressed social condition.

The single common tie running through this variegated conglomeration of humanity is allegiance to the British Power, and their consciousness of the fact was touchingly manifested at the King's Durbar in 1911, which gave the sentiment an opportunity of expression. That great demonstration showed that the central fact of an all-powerful, just, benevolent Government had come to appeal to minds which would scarcely have been supposed receptive to any political ideas. Yet, after all, it is not astonishing that a foreign Government should not be debarred from the attachment of people to whom a Bengali, for instance, is equally a foreigner. It is not to be imagined that the great majority

of the outer circles have any notion of what is preparing for them between Whitehall and Delhi; but the knowledge of the impending changes afoot seems to have spread further down and more rapidly than would have been expected, and it immediately provoked apprehension and remonstrance to an extent truly significant considering the unenlightened, unorganised communities from which the counter-demonstrations spring. The beginning came from Madras, a Province which probably contains a greater mixture of races and conditions than any other, the Brahman influence being securely established at the top of the pyramid. Here Mr. Montagu's boon of representation is interpreted as boding the absolute ascendancy of the Brahman, and it is with this fear that the protest meetings have been continually occupied. But even in Calcutta, the particular preserve of the Babu and the agitator, home of a people whose mind is stayed on the repetition of political commonplaces—even there we are met with symptoms of reaction, public meetings of the lower castes who have taken the alarm in earnest now that they see that there is a real danger of reforms which will mean for them subjection.

Above all, the knowledge that an extension of representative institutions is impending has been sufficient to arouse the latent antagonism between Mahomedan and Hindu in a way that discloses the thinness of the film of agreement by which the Congress and Moslem League leaders professed to have closed over the gulf. Within a few weeks of Mr. Montagu's announcement the most formidable Hindu-Mahomedan riot of recent times had broken out in the tranquil province of Behar. At the time of writing there is no information available beyond the accounts in newspapers of the evidence given at the trial of some of the rioters, but there seems to have been a prearranged movement throughout the Hindu countryside to pick a quarrel with the Mahomedans over the sacrificial festival called Bakr'idd, and to "let them have it." The purpose was thoroughly effected; the Mussalmans, being in a great minority, were helpless, and the police could not cope with the mobs of villagers. In over one hundred villages their houses were broken open and sacked, and the occupants, men and women, plundered and maltreated. In a district where formerly not a company of sepoy had been necessary, order had to be restored