called on to send out an electric light installation to Kabul, or a printing press to Bhutan, together with the artificers to set up the plant and teach its use, as on a level with the ordinary tradesman of Europe.

Some of the heads of these large firms in Calcutta or Bombay have the income of merchant princes; they may not be often found in the Bengal or Byculla Club, but meet one of them in private life and you may easily discover a better educated person than yourself. After all, it is not astonishing that the social level in such a community as the Europeans of Calcutta or Rangoon should be high. "The economical advantages of commerce," says John Stuart Mill, "are surpassed in importance by those of its effects which are intellectual and moral. It is hardly possible to overrate the value, in the present low state of human improvement, of placing human beings in contact with persons dissimilar to themselves, and with modes of thought and action unlike those with which they are familiar." One is tempted to wonder whether that generalisation was suggested to his mind by his interviews with returned men of business at the India House; but in any case the Associated Tradesmen of Anglo-

India are a body who can afford to hold their heads high.

It is necessary to keep in mind that the non-official European community, for all practical purposes, is represented by the business communities of the three Presidency towns, and that of these the Calcutta congregation is by far the most important. Outside these centres one may find Chambers of Commerce and various Associations with long titles and small memberships, but they are too few and scattered to count towards large issues in their several capacities. They usefully represent important provincial interests; but politically, if they wish to say anything, they must say ditto to Calcutta, in which there is no harm, the political interests of Anglo-Indians all over India being identical. Now, as long as the Government made Calcutta its winter headquarters, Anglo-Indian opinion was able to exercise informally its due influence on the Government. It may be allowed that Calcutta in the strength of its position was frequently, like the Labourites to-day, unnecessarily truculent and aggressive in the expression of its sentiments, and the ebullition in which it annually indulged

over the Government migration to the hills was a local extravagance, no outside opinion craving that the Government of India should be tied the whole year round to Calcutta. But it remains a fact that the connection with Calcutta did enable the Anglo-Indian view of public questions to be presented with due weight to the Government, and the real power which this opinion could bring into action on occasion was revealed in the Ilbert Bill collision. To-day there is no effectual means of focussing the remonstrances of an indignant community; but the strength of the great agitation against Lord Ripon's measure lay, not in the fact that the cheers of the indignation meeting of 1883 penetrated through the windows of Government House, but that more than half of the officials belonging to the Government of India itself had notoriously by that time been convinced that the Viceroy was in the wrong.

This could not happen now. Since the removal to Delhi the Government of India no longer comes into contact with outside European opinion at all, and this has already modified its character with extraordinary rapidity, considering the few years that the change has been in effect. A considerable

portion of its members appear to have thought that with the new régime it behoved them to thrust authority out of sight and to put on the garb of the supple, contriving politician. Intent on effecting this change of costume, they have succumbed to the influences they meant to take charge of. In the quietude of Delhi and Simla the debating in the Legislative Council has come to assume an exaggerated importance in the eyes of the small centre circle of official life. The thirty or forty Indian Councillors and journalists who appear at headquarters in connection with the meetings are the only public of which the members of the Government see much at close quarters, and with whose opinions and views they stand much chance of being impressed. The consequence is a great accretion in the importance of the class of questions which the non-official Councillors particularly cultivate, and a drop in the prominence of those with which they are not concerned. The same tendency is at work in the Provincial Councils, but much less distortingly, because the Provincial Governments are in touch with their publics in every direction at first hand. But in all this influence acquired over the Government

by the quasi-representative system the European element have no share, and by so much has their position deteriorated, for no fault of their own.

To appreciate how much the position has turned against them, it is only necessary to go back to the days before 1892, when the Additional Members were selected by direct nomination. At that time the Government, knowing no politics, took things as it found them, and simply chose the men who were marked out as most representative of substantial interests, and most likely to be of assistance for practical purposes to the work of the Council. Under this system two or three of the leading members of the Calcutta Bar, including, I think, invariably, the Advocate-General of Bengal, as well as two or three of the leading men of the business world, were taken up each season into the legislature. These outside members brought a fresh mind to public affairs, which was of real advantage to their official colleagues, and the lawyer members especially were of high value to a Government which has little assistance to fall back upon in this regard. When controversial questions arose, the debates were on a far higher level than those of to-day, notably in

the matter of financial criticism, as anyone can convince himself by turning back to the Reports of the Council proceedings of that period.

What is the position now? The Council has been trebled in numbers, while the representation of the entire European community is confined to the two members who sit for the Chambers of Commerce of Calcutta and Bombay respectively, the latter of whom, it may be said, would never be chosen by the general voice, since the Bombay business world has a peculiar character all its own, and its chief is often a man who is totally unknown to the public at large. To the domiciled Europeans and Eurasians a member has been allowed, but when the infinitely more important European community asked for the same privilege they were told that it was impossible, for the reason that it would involve an additional seat. In spite of this convincing objection, the Association in which they have been driven to combine to defend their interests, and which has a larger membership merely as a matter of numbers than any existing constituency in the Imperial Council, is still asking for this one member, but apparently without any prospect of success.

In the writer's opinion, it makes a mistake in continuing to press the matter, since an isolated European non-official could do no more than put in an occasional forlorn protest, while his absence is eloquent testimony to the hollowness and irrationality of the representative system in its Indian application.

In general, the European community has not greatly troubled about the prejudicing of its position by experiments in representation. Its reliance has been in the integrity and impartiality of its Government, and even when clashes occurred, as over the indigo question, the suffering interest could appreciate the motives that made it decide against them. In the long run men felt that a Government that stood for equal justice to all classes could be trusted with the cause of its countrymen, even if the very desire to be fair sometimes gave it an unconscious bias. It is only of late years, since it has seen the Government deteriorating and acknowledging expediency and the desire for the favour of particular classes as motives for action, that the British non-official world has in spite of itself been driven to combination and protests. On the other hand, if the Europeans

have lost faith in their Government, the Government has given the best proof that it has not ceased to rely upon them. As the war had drained the country of every British soldier who could possibly be spared, the Government was forced to be anxious about the internal situation. The loyalty of the people of India was splendid, but there was too much opportunity for the development of emotions of another sort.

For some six weeks of the late autumn of 1914, between the departure of four-fifths of the British garrison and the arrival of the Territorials, the maintenance of British rule rested largely upon the shoulders of the Volunteers, Europeans and Eurasians. This body, numbering about 40,000 in all, were willing enough, but in a rudimentary state as regards organisation, training, equipment, and disciplinary powers. More was required, and early last year came the order for the formation of the Indian Defence Force. The average Britisher has probably never yet realised that compulsory military service is now in force in India, as far as his own countrymen are concerned, but this is the case. The Defence Force takes in every individual of the community between the ages of eighteen

and forty-one, while the older men are caught up by the Act into a sort of Landsturm, not required to serve beyond local limits. Otherwise the whole force is subject to military discipline, has to undergo a prescribed training locally, followed by a couple of months' course at some military centre, which may be in a distant part of the country, and at the end is liable for service in any part of India. The introduction of the system was bound to bear very hardly on Anglo-India, where such a thing as an unoccupied man of military age is unknown, and where the system, whether of Government or of private establishments, is to work with a minimum of Europeans in the control posts, who are therefore almost indispensable.

Outside half a dozen big centres, moreover, the Europeans are scattered over the country in diminutive communities, altogether too small for military purposes. The man at a little station, therefore, has had to move to a larger one, even for his preliminary training, submitting to all the inconvenience of such a change; but the hardest case of all, probably, is that of the planter, who, sole manager of his own garden, and probably that of his next-door neighbour departed for

the army, is haled off to the Defence Force, leaving the concern to Providence and a jemedar.

According to all accounts, the Defence Force Act has been so worked from Simla as to bring about the maximum of hardship to individuals with the least effect; but be that as it may, the burdens which have fallen on magistrates and judges, clerks and commercial travellers, impartially, would not have been endured in vain if there was any hope that they would teach the rulers and the British public generally how indisputably the European element is the backbone of the Indian Empire. To make the fact more staring is the contrast of the Indian branch of the Defence Force. For thirty years the National Congress had been annually affirming the inherent right of an Indian to bear arms for his own country; so to meet the pent-up demand the Government, while it was introducing compulsory service for Europeans, announced the creation of a Volunteer Defence Force for Indians, stipulating that the numbers should be limited to 6,000 until the training machinery could be expanded to meet the expected inrush. Some time after, when the results were announced, it appeared that the recruits

numbered about 300. Finally, after great exertions and drum-beating on the part of the people's leaders the list has been closed down on a total roll of about 5,000, which is a sufficient comment on the reality of the passionate aspirations after military service in the defence of the country of which so much was heard until the door was opened.

To turn to another side of life. No survey of the European position in India ought to overlook the missionary element, which, however, generally is overlooked. The Company, always very tender on the subject of Indian sentiment, delighted to show its impartiality by repressive measures against the early missionaries, while its own chaplains could be safely trusted not to light the brand of religious enthusiasm. Gradually the missionaries worked their way to toleration, and, inspired by the evangelicism of the day, began to foresee the time at hand when the printing press and the spread of education must bring about the speedy collapse of heathenism. The movement then came to encounter a new opposition, with its headquarters in Liberal opinion in England, and from Sydney Smith to Matthew Arnold its designs against the

religion of the country were subjected to a galling fire of banter, in which the Anglo-Indian Press freely joined. That standing antagonism within the last couple of decades has completely died down, principally because the movement itself has changed direction. The missionary, in fact, though he does not say so, has almost ceased to seek to proselytise. The Indian Christian population numbers now above three and a half millions, and a body of this size naturally shows appreciable growth decade by decade by the natural process of increase within its own ranks. But of this total over two millions are returned as absolutely uneducated, showing that the immense majority belong to the depressed classes, people whose conversion could never have been regarded as the spoiling of a Hindu.

For the rest, the missionary of to-day may be a physician, fruit-farmer, dairyman, poultry-raiser, or anything useful, but in the majority of instances he is an educationist pure and simple. It is in his schools and colleges that he comes into contact with Indians of the better classes; but the aim of conversion has to be kept in the background, for if it came to be successful it would empty the institutions. So he ploughs his lonely

furrow content to do good indirectly by influence, holding himself aloof even in the mofussil from European society and its interests, without entering much into the minds of the people. Yet all the time the zeal of his supporters at home does not seem to lessen, and up to the outbreak of the war, while Government improvements might be held up for shortness of funds, the missionary, and especially the American missionary, never seemed to fail for resources to carry out any extensions that he had in view. There is probably no means of arriving at what the different missionary bodies spend each year in India, much less at what they have laid out in the aggregate during the century that they have been at work, but it must be a vast sum. Against the European official it may be said (though it is a poor-spirited sort of argument) that even if he supplies the good administration that has created the wealth of to-day, he sends some portion of his salary to England, and his pension has to be paid in England, and that in this respect his emoluments are a drain on the country. But at any rate the missionary stands economically on irreproachable ground. His small salary and such retiring allowances as he may

enjoy are paid throughout by those who send him, and the amount that he manages to procure for the building and service of colleges, schools, hospitals, rural dispensaries, training farms, and so forth, is all net gain to the country. There can hardly be another such instance of sustained philanthropic endeavour as this tide of benefaction and benevolence which has flowed from West to East during the past century, sad to say without producing any commensurate results even in the creation of ordinary goodwill. But the effort is not a thing to be ignored in taking account of the relations between the countries, and the position which the missionaries have acquired is one that entitles them, merely on secular grounds, to be considered before coming to a political settlement which might imperil their footing in the country.

A more singular position, indeed, was never contrived by political perversity than this which the new reform scheme contemplates for the European element in India. The first thing that any person of any part of the world has in mind, and cannot help having in mind, when he thinks of modern India is of a country which is what it is by virtue of the British connection. Under whatever aspect its

current affairs and conditions are looked at, everything comes back to a British source. The term "British India" does not merely express a territorial sovereignty, for by this time it may be broadly said that there is no India that is not British. The sojourners who represent the potent, transforming energy of the ruling country are few in numbers, but very strong in position and influence. They represent all the driving force in every department of administrative activity, in material progress and enterprise, and they have, too, the moral strength that comes from being the representatives of a civilisation which the Indians, in proportion as they advance, set themselves to imitate, down to the adoption of their speech as a common language for the educated. And in face of these conditions we are setting ourselves to devise a political system in which this predominant community is to be simply set aside; in which one section, the officials (as long as they are retained), will be voiceless, as belonging to the public service; and the other, because of the fewness of its numbers, can never be represented in any real sense of the term. An arrangement that begins by doing such flagrant violence to the realities, how can it be expected to work?

CHAPTER VIII

THE POLICY OF ASSOCIATION

WHEN reformers of the school of Montagu speak to us of changes delicately described as "tending in the direction of self-government," it is presumable that some thought for the morrow must have crossed their minds. They cannot be supposed to be proposing a revolutionary alteration in the conditions governing the character of the relation between Britain and her Dependency merely for the sake of getting clear of a temporary difficulty such as a troublesome agitation. That would be to imagine ourselves back in the days when the first Irish Home Rule Bill, with all its consequences, was launched in a fit of impatience with obstruction in the Commons. No; we *must* have grown wiser since then: and therefore, when these Indian schemes make their appearance, we conclude that the authors have in view a self-governing India taking her place in the Imperial system something after the manner of South Africa, the new Govern-

ment taking over the debt, obligations, and properties of its predecessor, with a minimum disturbance of vested interests—capital to remain secure in its investments, the private person free to pursue his industry or calling, the ports free to British trade, discarded British officials duly indemnified, and visible connection maintained by a Viceroy, and perhaps a few provincial Governors, with formal powers. All to go on as before except for the installation of an Indian Government working in general harmony with the ideas of Westminster—in short, a policy of association. The impediment, unfortunately, is that the conditions to be dealt with do not bear the smallest resemblance to those of South Africa or of any other Dominion. Some of the difficulties, or rather impossibilities, of finding any Government that will not glaringly misrepresent the masses of the people have been touched on above. We have now to look at the question from the Imperial point of view.

Owing to the preponderating importance of the public service, which in India is not only an executive, but the mainspring of all administrative progress, which is, in fact, the

best critic of the Government as well as its agent—a condition which renders the introduction of any Parliamentary system, subversive—the question of association inevitably presents itself in a twofold aspect. Association in the public services is a matter distinct from the political association that we assume to be the aim of present-day reformers. The former has been carried out to a considerable extent already, and, as far as proposals go, to the fullest extent compatible with the maintenance of the existing system, in the recommendations of the Public Services Commission. Nevertheless, as has been already seen, the Commission's scheme has been flouted everywhere as totally insufficient and inadmissible. The Indian demand, with its usual shrewdness, concentrates upon "Simultaneous Examinations," a watchword, outwardly specious, which would have the result in the course of a few years of putting the services entirely into Indian hands. To the multitudes of the Indian colleges an appointment to one of the higher branches of the public service is so great a prize that the competition would be enormous, while to the English candidate the inducement, much smaller to start with, would shrink each year

as the Indian element increased until it disappeared entirely. This may seem an invidious assertion, but it is no more than the expression of a fact, a fact which has already come into evidence in the case of the Indian Medical Service, which has for some years been practically abandoned by the class of candidates that were once forthcoming for it. And at this point of the case we come upon a set of considerations which are wisely kept in the background when possible, but which it is not possible to ignore. It is hard to imagine political amalgamation as a success where there is no social amalgamation; and in spite of surface changes, English education, the frequency of visits to Europe, the adoption by advanced Indians of European manners of life, and the spread of the English language; in spite, too, of much individual goodwill on both sides, the gulf does not tend to close, rather, perhaps, it widens.

Few men can have been so unfortunate as to spend much time in the country without contracting some close and valued friendships with Indians, whose pleasant memories will last through life; but in general intercourse is restrained, as it must be between men whose private lives are rigidly separated.

The most liberal-minded European shrinks from being attended by an Indian doctor or an Indian clergyman, and the idea of mixed marriages excites on both sides a repugnance, justified by the results that ensue when the natural bar is disregarded. A certain distance and scarcity of subjects of conversation naturally follow, more noticeable to an Englishman than to a Hindu, who does not look for intimacy after our fashion in his relations with men of his own race. Belonging to a society which has added to the barriers of caste the Mahomedan institution of the zenana, the Hindu is not a person easily known by anyone outside his own circle. His religion, which enters into all the acts of his life, is not so much a creed as a social system, into which no outsider can enter by virtue of subscribing to its doctrines. To those who are born within the fold all mankind is necessarily severed into the two divisions, Hindu and non-Hindu, as for the Israelites it was divided into Jew and Gentile. But this people in whom the sense of particularity is so strong has been endowed in addition, unlike the Jew, and in contrast with such races as the Armenian and the Parsi, with an inflexible attachment to its own land.

With small powers of defence, but gifted with an infinite patience, it has set itself to absorb or sterilise the successive intruders into its domain, after having made due use of them. As it subdued its Mahomedan conquerors, who nowadays must fall in behind or trust to the sustaining power of the British Government, so it now turns instinctively to the task of getting the upper hand of the foreign Power of the moment. It would, of course, be idle to think of a population of 220 millions following out a reasoned policy, and equally idle to suppose that it could be swayed by any transient sentiments, gratitude for a concession or what not. Docile under authority, if left to its own guidance it must go the way its instincts take it, and there is nothing to suggest that that way will take it in the direction of assimilation.

The idea that India has only to be endowed with self-government to complete the shining circle of the Dominions ignores the vital fact that the Dominions are Britain Overseas, and that India can never come within that description. Because the Dominions are what they are, essentially British in tone and temper, the slenderness of the formal bond of connec-

tion is a matter of relatively small importance. Let us imagine, for instance, Australia so chagrined by the terms of the future peace in regard to the Bismarck Islands that she insisted on secession from the Empire. The retirement might very probably make no sensible difference. The same ideas as before would continue to prevail in both Governments, the same trade would continue to flow backwards and forwards, individuals would not diminish their intercourse nor their friendliness. But in India the introduction of self-government on the Colonial basis would bring changes much greater than a declaration of outright independence on the part of Australia or New Zealand. The ideas of the people are so different that the course of the country, if left to itself, would be centrifugal.

Even if the undisguised hostility of tone which runs through the utterances of the present political leaders were to be appeased by the surrender which in their memorials to Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford they "demand," the conciliatory effect would be of the briefest duration. As has been pointed out above, all the effect of the Morley-Minto reforms has been to swell the agitation for more, in volume and in bitterness. Instead

of being a sedative, they have acted as an irritant. Lord Morley thought that he was embarking on a momentous change which would make an impressive appeal to public opinion when he admitted two Indians to his Council. Now the demand is that this Council, if continued, must consist at least in half of Indian elected members, in addition to whom the Secretary of State is to be assisted by three Under-Secretaries all Indians. In other words, the Indian politician does not want an India Office at all; but if it is to remain in existence, it must be an Office that will bring no check to his plans. Where these stop for the moment does not much signify; a few years of Home Rule will bring about surprising developments, and if the experiment succeeded according to the Congress man's visions, and the Indian Parliamentary system did not end like the Persian, forces would have been let loose that are as yet only vaguely felt below the surface. For instance, to begin with, every Indian in the country is at heart a confirmed Protectionist. If he is thinking of the town, he is for octroi; if of the province, he would like transit duties; if of the country at large, he is for taxing the foreign importer to the hilt.

The whole of the Free-Trade policy he has had to put up with in conformity with the principles of Britain he has looked upon as a system, not of principles, but a giving away of advantages under the pressure of the dominant Power. One can easily judge how far such a people would be content to abide by any system set up for the rest of the Empire after they had had a Government of their own for a few years.

But in fact points on which collision would be bound to arise under any system of Home Rule abound on every side. The financial conscience is the weakest side usually of Indian public men, and in any case is it possible that a popular Government should go on for long without people beginning to question the amount of the obligations it has inherited? The public debt: has not that been swollen by the faults of an extinct régime? Pensions for the retired officers: is not that a matter for the country that sent them out? And so on. The one conservative point in the reformers' programme is that the defence of the country shall be reserved to His Majesty's Government, the reason being perfectly intelligible. But if the British Army remains, causes of friction must

remain. Supposing that the Hindu Parliament prohibits universally the killing of kine, which is the first measure a really popular Legislature in India would pass, who is to see that the soldiers get their beef? Supposing a riot occurs, who is to call out the troops to suppress it? Who is to ensure them fair trial afterwards? If they do not get it, what is the commander to do? It would be no answer to say, that these and similar matters were arranged for in the Act of Transfer. It would merely be said that the Treaty itself was wrong or obsolete. One may be told that the British Parliament could always intervene in the last resort; but the recovery of surrendered powers by the strong hand is a reversal of all ordinary experience. In the case of the Colonies we have seen the spirit of local self-management constantly growing; until in these days even the appearance of interfering in any question concerning their domestic politics is avoided as scrupulously as in the case of a foreign empire. The longer a separate Government in India endures, the more strenuously will any interference from outside be resisted. If this Government were likely to be British in spirit, it might keep direction with the rest

of the Imperial band, while taking its own road. What we complain of in our reformers is that they have not paid the smallest attention to considering whether the spirit of association is there, and yet are thrusting to the front in panic haste a scheme which must miscarry on a vast scale if it is absent. Finally, no one, surely, will ask us to believe that when difficulties arise the Viceroy of the future on his Colonial footing will have any power to compose them. He is more likely to be submerged by difficulties of his own, for he will be confronted from the first with the constant prospect of having to choose between thwarting the desires of India or allowing measures to pass through his hands inconsistent with the intentions or interests of the King-Emperor's Government.

CHAPTER IX

THE BRIGHT ALTERNATIVE

No one likes to meet a scheme that comes forward decorated with the claims of a contribution to human progress, however elusive that idea may be, with a blank negative; and thus it is only natural that, as people have become more and more convinced by nearer consideration of the overwhelming objections to Indian reform on the lines laid down by Lord Morley and continued by Mr. Montagu, they should have turned to thoughts of circumventing the difficulty. Recent news from India shows that certain English non-officials and enlightened Indians have been taking counsel together for the contrivance of compromise schemes of representation; but as the proposed arrangements would seem to be artificial and elaborate, and as they are not the least likely to commend themselves to the Congress and the Moslem League, they need not be discussed here. A different line of advance, of a clearer, broader character,

which might supply an escape from the threatened enthronement of an eclectic oligarchy of lawyers and pedagogues in the seat of power at Delhi, may be summed up generally in the term decentralisation. This long word may mean little or much, but the ideas it adumbrates have been active since the subject was stirred by a Royal Commission which, like the Public Services Commission, travelled up and down the country, and was eventually delivered of an overgrown report. Those who have read through this ponderous production must be few indeed, but in the meantime decentralisation had got itself talked about, and everyone is by now convinced that in the sense of giving more freedom and initiative to the Local Governments it is the first administrative need of the day. But from administrative reform we may carry on the idea to political reform, and Lord Islington, in a notable address delivered at Oxford last year, gave clear indications that he, for instance, had been making this passage, and had been coming out on conclusions not unlike those once made familiar to the British public by the advocacy of Mr. John Bright. The tide of events ebbed away from the position where Mr.

Bright stood when the Government of India was passing into the hands of the Crown, but in recent days it has been flowing back, and were he alive now he might return to a cause which he ceased to press after he recognised that the tendencies of the times were contrary.

The first thing that anyone will notice who goes back to Mr. Bright's utterances on the subject is their complete unlikeness to those of our present leaders. He has no idea of concealing his hand, he never shrinks from stating his aim or from facing the ultimate effects of his proposals. If he thought that he had it within his reach to confer a good upon the people, he would have poured contempt on the idea of giving them a glimpse of it and then telling them that they must await the bestowal for some geological period. Mr. Bright took his stand on the position that the British occupation of India must be a transitory phenomenon in history. Fifty or one hundred or five hundred years it might last, but the end must come of such an unnatural connection, and it was our business to leave something behind that would endure of itself after us. The grand defects he saw in the British system proceeded from the

centralised character of the Government, and, above all, in the concentrated power of the Governor-General. As a Quaker he hated war; that the chronicles of British India from 1800 to 1858 had been a story of wars was undeniable, and for this he was disposed to lay the blame on the personal ambitions of successive Governor-Generals. On other grounds, moreover, he considered the office a stumbling-block. "I believe," he said, "the duties of the Governor-General are far greater than any human being can adequately fulfil. He has a power omnipotent to crush everything that is good. If he so wishes, he can overrule and overbear anything that is proposed for the welfare of India; while as to anything that is good, I could show, with regard to the vast territories over which he rules, he is really almost powerless to effect anything which these countries require. . . . I do not know at this moment, and I have never known, a man competent to govern India, and if any man says he is competent he sets himself at a much higher value than those who know him are likely to set him." Then Mr. Bright went on to his own remedy. "I propose that instead of a Governor-General and an Indian Empire we should have

neither the one nor the other. I propose that we should have Presidencies, and not an Empire."

The expression "these countries" will have been noticed in the above sentences, as coming from a man who never used language at random. It was a deep sense of the diversity of India that led Bright into revolt against the British Indian system. Much more would he have scouted the notion of handing on the same scheme of government to Indians. It was, in fact, just because he was looking for something better that he was brought to his separate Presidency system. As usual, he is explicit enough about this: "Does any man with the smallest glimmering of common sense believe that so great a country, with its twenty different nations and its twenty languages, can ever be consolidated into one compact Empire? I believe such a thing to be totally impossible. We must fail in the attempt if we make it, and we are bound to look into the future with reference to that point." "Under the Presidency system," he goes on, "if it were to continue for a century or more, there would be five or six Presidencies built up into so many compact States; and if the sovereignty

of England should be withdrawn, we should have so many Presidencies, each able to support its own independence," instead of "leaving the country a prey to that discord and anarchy which I believe to be inevitable if we insist on holding these vast territories with the idea of building them up into one vast Empire."

Things have come round within these last days with startling rapidity into a situation which brings Mr. Bright's concernments with the future into relation with practical politics. The withdrawal from India is coming into plain view as the logical consequence of the schemes of politicians who, unlike him, instead of frankly disclosing their ultimate purpose, do their best to hide it like a guilty secret. The question before us is whether Mr. Bright's scheme of provincial Home Rule offers any refuge from the glaring faults of the Home Rule of to-day. Alas! it is too soon found to be beset with equal objections. It will have been seen that the first condition of his plan is the disappearance of the Government of India and Governor-General, and the substitution of some half-dozen Presidencies, each knowing only in the last resort the

paramount control of the Secretary of State. These Provincial Administrations are to be of equal status, each with its own Governor, its own Council and Legislature, and its own army. And each, of course, was to raise and spend its own revenues. But the first objection is that it is not possible to make out of the major Provinces of India a group of independent States in any sort resembling, for instance, the Australian Colonies, with their general similarity of circumstances, each with its own seaboard and an unlimited stretch of waste hinterland at its back.

Under any scheme of the kind the Punjab would have to bear three-fourths of the burden of defence for the entire country, though it would have no sea-coast, no foreign trade, and no customs revenue; while rich Provinces like Bengal and Madras would have the trade and revenue, but would be free of the burdens of defence. It is true that Mr. Bright contemplated that each of the States should maintain its own provincial army; but where would be the incentive for the raising of an effective army of Bengalis, representing so much superfluous cost and effort, on the hypothesis that the scheme worked smoothly? If, on the other hand, as is tolerably certain,

human nature being what it is, the Northern Provinces, after a few years, should refuse to put up with their disadvantageous position and begin asserting their superior physical force to amend it, as they used to do of yore, there would be an end of the provincial system, and we should be faced with the choice of renewed British intervention or a relapse into the chaos that followed on the decline of the Moghul.

But apart from this, no one less resolute, and, it may be said without disrespect, less prejudiced, than Mr. Bright could contemplate getting rid of all vestige of a central authority in India. If collections of States so homogeneous as the Australian Colonies have been forced to federate for the better management of their common affairs, it is clear that States made up of various races, separated by almost all the differences that can divide men, with a long tradition of past hostilities into the bargain, could not set up in business at all under the system in contemplation without having contrived some form of central Government. It is impossible to conceive a condition of things under which it would be open to the Government of Bengal, offended, say, by some quarrel between the Allahabad

and Calcutta Universities, to seek satisfaction by shutting out sea-borne imports from the United Provinces. Matters, then, such as customs, internal trade (whose importance in a great territorial country English people are apt to overlook), the railways, the posts and telegraphs, the currency and coinage, must be placed under the regulation of some common authority, which, moreover, will require to be furnished with the power to enforce its decrees. An Australian or an American, however much he may detest particular acts of the Federal Government, does not dream of repudiating it, because at its worst it is his Government. But a newly constituted Federal Government in India would in its relations with the Provinces have no moral force whatever behind it, and if it is to be effective must lean on some external support. Again we come back to unhappy Britain, which, after having surrendered all the advantages of the connection, is still found saddled with all the invidious responsibilities.

It may be said, perhaps, that it is a waste of time to follow up to their consequences extravagant notions entertained by no person of sober judgment; but there are many views

in active circulation at the present moment that are not particularly marked by sobriety, and when the idea of an early British withdrawal is indisputably in vogue, it is worth while to point out by how many roads we arrive at some barrier to that simple settlement. But supposing for the sake of argument the big questions relating to the retirement of the British power comfortably disposed of, let us take the case of one of the new quasi-autonomous Provinces started in life on its own account with an Administration of the type prescribed by Indian politicians —that is to say, an Executive Council of four or five members, headed, to begin with, by a *fainéant* English Governor, and an elected Legislative Council which cannot turn out this Executive, but which can criticise and rebuke it, alter its budgets, pass the laws which it must enforce, and dictate by means of resolutions the policy it must follow. Obviously, in no long time all power must pass into the hands of the second body, and the question is—accepting the democratic principle—what is the prospect that it will represent the people as a whole ?

Now, Mr. Bright took as the model of his Presidencies the Province of Madras. He

considered it as geographically the most compact unit, and the most adaptable generally for the purposes of his scheme. It is at this day in some respects the most advanced Province in India. But if we look at the population of Madras, we come upon a diversity as various as can be found in any other portion of India. The great mass of the people are of the Dravidian race, Tamils and Telugus, speaking their own languages, as different from Hindi as from Latin. Then there are 6,755,000 who speak Malayalam, and 1,600,000 speaking Canarese. The unity of the Province consists in religion, 87 per cent. of the whole population being Hindus. Socially, however, and politically religion is no bond, for the Brahman or the Nair have no more in common with the Hindu Tamil coolie than with the lowly Christians of the Madras bazaar. These inferior multitudes probably do not feel it as any grievance that the Brahmans have a practical monopoly of the places in the public service, employment to which they can scarcely aspire. But a political ascendancy would be a different matter, for it would mean that they would be taxed and managed exclusively in the interests of those above them. To some extent this has

lately been borne in upon them, and, as well as they can, they have been manifesting their objections to reform. The British democrat may say that, being a great majority, they have the remedy in their own hands. Why not a Tamil party, a Peasants' League, an Indian Christian Association? The answer is that no one who knows these people can contemplate a franchise extending to the masses. The political classes themselves would oppose any such proposal strenuously, and they would be right.

One consideration more. Provincial autonomy in any shape has the defect that it would not, as a policy, in the least appeal to the class whom we are striving to satisfy. All their aim, on the contrary, is to obscure and get out of sight the existence of any differences of whatsoever kind between Indians. Whenever we hear them speaking, it is of the Indian nation, the Indian opinion of a subject, Indian aspirations and Indian demands. Their great object is to get the outer world to forget the differences between a Beloochi and a Babu, and so to accept them on their own presentation as the people of India. They are clever tacticians who know the value of reiteration, but those who

are taken in by the artifice must be those who are determined to be deluded.

The idea of autonomous Provinces cannot, moreover, be considered without reference to the existence of the Native States. These principalities collectively cover an area of over 700,000 square miles, as against the million square miles of British India, with a population of 70 odd millions against the 315 millions of the British territories. They have fallen into their places with wonderful loyalty in the general scheme of the Indian Empire under the Crown, but how would it be when the common tie that binds them in allegiance to the Sovereign was removed and they found themselves the next-door neighbours of provincial republics with no claim upon their deference? The dominions of the Nizam, even without the Province of Berar, are about the same size as Behar and Orissa, and rather larger than the new Bengal. Kashmir is even larger than Hyderabad territorially. The extent of the Central India Agency, into which comes the great State of Gwalior, is more than that of Bombay without Sind and little less than that of Bengal. In the day when Mr. Bright advocated his

separate Provinces, all the Chiefs had armies of some sort, and some of them large armies. If the Government of India had on his advice been abolished there and then, the military predominance would have passed to the Nizam and the Maharaja Sindhia, who would have been left with the most powerful armies in the country; and if the new Provincial Governments had preserved good terms with these Chiefs, they would have had to acknowledge the situation by a considerable show of deference. The change that has taken place in the States and their rulers during the last three or four decades is quite as great as any change that can be pointed to in British India. The Chiefs, when the writer first knew the country, were intensely suspicious of each other, jealous of their gradations of rank, and their only social intercourse was when they happened to meet at a Durbar. Now they have become a select society of friends, united, many of them, by the memories of past days at the Mayo College or in the Cadet Corps, and even the announcement that a Hindu Raja has been paying a friendly visit to a neighbouring Nawab rouses no astonishment.

The Administration has changed as much

as the rulers. Formerly it was often easy to tell that one had crossed the border of a Native State from the mere appearance of the country and people. Nowadays the visitor to such places as Jeypore, Gwalior, Mysore, and many others, with their architectural beauties, their modern institutions, the high standard of order, comfort, and contentment observable on every hand, and maintained without friction, comes away with the feeling that he has seen India at its best and happiest, and many have said it. I am not writing to suggest that there is an imperative need for revolutionary departures in any shape, but if we are invited to consider the case for British withdrawal from the country, we might surely, while we are about changing the foundations of rule, take account of the alternative reconstruction available in the form of making over the country to a Federation of Native States. The idea is, of course, beset with abundant objections, but it is not more impracticable than self-government with representative institutions to be worked by men who have not the vestige of a democratic conviction in their compositions, and we should at any rate be starting the new order with a form of government comprehended by the people.

CHAPTER X

ON THE VERGE OF THE PRECIPICE

If there is any truth in the exposition presented in the foregoing chapters, the reader will have come to discern that we have arrived in India at a situation to which there is no parallel. A Government with a record of admitted success and continuous improvement, strong and powerful, popular with the masses of its subjects, and looked up to by them as an embodiment of rectitude and impartiality, is on the point of being manœuvred out of its seat of power by a newly grown clan of men who have made none of the exertions and endured none of the sacrifices that Liberty requires of her suitors before she is won. Their pretensions are not backed by the masses of their countrymen, but they impose them on the outer world by a borrowed Western vocabulary and a surface enthusiasm for Western political ideas. The strength of this movement lies, not within itself, but in the sympathy, or, it would be

truer to say, in the indifference, of the British democracy. "They seem to be making a great rumpus about self-government; if self-government will satisfy the beggars, why not let 'em have it?"—that seems to be the attitude of a great number of our homely politicians. But deeper than this, of course, is the feeling that the changes foreshadowed by Mr. Montagu are democratic—that is to say, progressive, elevating, virtuous; and then still deeper down is the strange fatalistic idea that any democratic proposal, once launched, must go on to its accomplishment. How often in this connection does one hear the expression "There can be no going back," a proposition that no one would accept in private life if he saw himself making for a precipice, but is often accepted as closing the question. If India was in the condition to-day of England in 1830, in a state of fierce and general agitation for political reform, it would be another matter; but the discontent and sedition that are abroad are not founded on a desire for political reform, and the political leaders with whom we are dealing have even now no control over the would-be revolutionaries. Their aim, if they do not formulate it, is simply to attain a position from which

they can lay hold of the revenue raised from the masses for the benefit of the middle class, free education, an octopus bureaucracy, interminable litigation, and the like. It is a perfectly intelligible ambition, but it is hardly the business of the British democrat to promote it.

Wherever the successes of democracy in Britain may lie, it is hard to discover its virtues in that field of British responsibilities which is represented by the Indian Empire. It used to be commonly said at the time when the Crown was taking over the Government that now would be seen a great increase of public interest and Parliamentary interest in the affairs of India. People feared, in fact, that the interest might be excessive, and that the House of Commons busybodies would by incessant criticism and inquisitiveness exert a warping influence over the Secretary of State. These expectations have turned out on a par with the prophecies so often heard on the laying of a new cable or the launching of a new steamer, that the two countries are evidently approaching to the day when closer intercourse will bring better social understanding, and in fulness of time social fusion. In point

of fact, Parliament has never been so much occupied with India as it was in the decade 1773-1783, when the virulent charges made against Clive during the passage of Lord North's Regulating Act drove the founder of British India into melancholia and suicide, and when the King threw himself into the fray to defeat the India Bill of Mr. Fox, and thus paved the way for the rise of Mr. Pitt. A return to the excitements of those days might be a serious matter now, with an educated Indian public waiting for the reports at the other end of the cable; but it is evident that no such revival need be apprehended. The interest of the House of Commons in India has shrunk *pari passu* with the advance of democracy, until even the annual discussion of the Indian Budget seems to have been quietly allowed to lapse. If the House of Lords were now to be abolished, India as a Parliamentary interest would be extinct. This indifference, which casts all care upon the Secretary of State, leaving him, or rather asking him, to pursue his own way, be it bad or good, as long as the ruling country is not troubled with the unwelcome subject, is a strange manifestation as the eventual outcome of all that we are accustomed to hear

of the merits and the tendencies of popular government.

A singular phenomenon to those who have feared that the besetting sin of democracy in dealing with distant possessions would be an excessive interference in details, hampering the power of the Executive and sapping its sense of responsibility, must be the situation now before our eyes in India, where a couple of worthy gentlemen of no commanding reputation and little experience have assumed a free hand to settle questions that would tax the highest statesmanship. And more than this, they have not only obtained in advance the support of the present Government for whatever settlement they may arrive at, but have pledged any succeeding Government to persevere and follow a policy, even though it is still undisclosed. The pledge is of no validity, for it is axiomatic that no Government, much less a single Minister out on the loose, can bind its successors; but it will make the difficulty of going back upon a decision additionally formidable. In any case, that two persons, having obtained the connivance of the Cabinet, should be left to fashion out an undertaking of such consequence to the Empire at their own will and

discretion is a remarkable illustration of the effectuality of government by the many when it comes to practical working.

In truth, the constant lip-homage to democracy as a good in itself, which is nothing more than flattery addressed to the multitude by those whom the system has brought to the top, is an unwholesome symptom of the times. Though freedom of opinion suffers in these days under a sense of discouragement, men have been found bold to aver that democracy is on its trial; and without going to that stretch of audacity, it may be said that most thoughtful persons have come to recognise that it is not democracy that brings about a good social state; but that it is where it finds a good social soil to start upon that the democratic system of polity takes root and flourishes and puts forth fruit abundantly. The United States furnishes the world with the best example of the latter conditions; but, on the other hand, in Turkey, in Persia, in China, and, last of all, in Russia, we have surely had recent and melancholy examples enough of the fact that a change in the form of government and the adoption of nominally representative institutions can do nothing to remedy diseased

social conditions, or to restore a declining national constitution, or to create a public spirit that is absent. The introduction of representative institutions into India as the governing principle, with Home Rule for the goal and the disappearance of the British element at the different stages along the road, would not follow the same course as events have taken in Persia or Petrograd, since democracy is a cult that each nation modifies as it receives it according to its own qualities or deficiencies. What the Hindus would eventually make of it is a mere speculation, but there is not an element present in the conditions of the experiment to encourage a belief that the outcome could be answerable to the hopes of its British authors. For the Indian agitation, as is implied even by its latest exponents, is not for Home Rule proper, but for the rule by an eclectic class of a country to be held down by British bayonets while they have their way of it—a conception altogether new to political reformers.

As we near the conclusion, the writer anticipates the criticism that he has not disclosed any plan of his own. The answer is that it would require considerable self-confidence on the part of any single person to

suppose that he had any plan for dealing with such a situation as that which has been brought about in India. The object of these pages has been to show how serious the position is, and to awaken those who may read them to the very real danger that the British public may find that, while its attention has been turned elsewhere, it has been committed by hasty agents to changes that may lead up to nothing less than the loss of its Indian Empire, or to the necessity of the reassertion of British authority with a stronger hand. It has been shown, to the best of the writer's competence, that a Home Rule settlement established, with however specious an equipment of representative institutions, must fail, because in the social conditions of the country there is no basis for such a political edifice, and because the class that would monopolise the working of the new system would have no physical power to enforce its own rule. Conscious of this, the most advanced of the agitators couple with their demands the condition that Britain shall retain the business of defence; in other words, that the British Army shall remain and the British Navy continue to be responsible for the protection of Indian trade.

What are the earliest consequences to be expected of this parody of Home Rule? The peasantry, vaguely aware of a general relaxation in the authority of the Government, and catching some of the excitement of the political hubbub, breaks out into agrarian risings after the manner of the late tumults in Behar, but on a vastly larger and more formidable scale. No one can, in fact, calculate the extent to which such ferments might not spread when the restraining influence of the British District Officer and his handful of assistants had been withdrawn. But the army is still there, and is now called upon by the new Government to restore order. So that the next step in the process is that our forces are brought upon the scene to crush and quell our late subjects and friends, the ryots, for the sake of the politicals. The impossibility of setting up a Government which has not the power of sustaining itself leads, indeed, to consequences absurd in contemplation, ruinous if they should come to reality. The ethical aspects of the position have been set forth by Froude in a passage so apposite to the present case that I cannot forbear to quote it here:

The right of a people to self-government, says the historian, consists, and can consist, in nothing but their power to defend themselves. . . . There is no freedom possible to men except in obedience to law: and those who cannot prescribe a law to themselves, if they desire to be free, must be content to accept direction from others. The right to resist depends upon the power of resistance. But when resistance has been tried and has failed, when the inequality has been proved beyond dispute, the wisdom, and ultimately the duty, of the weaker party is to accept the benefits which are offered in return for submission; and a nation which will not defend its liberties in the field, nor yet allow itself to be governed, yet struggles to preserve the independence which it wants the spirit to uphold in arms by insubordination and anarchy and secret crime, may bewail its wrongs in wild and weeping eloquence in the ears of mankind—may at length, in a time when the methods by which sterner ages repressed that kind of conduct are unpermitted, make itself so intolerable as to be cast off and bidden to go its own bad way; but it will not go for its own benefit. It will have established no principle and vindicated no natural right: liberty only profits those who can govern themselves better than others can govern them, and those who are able to govern themselves wisely have no reason to petition for a privilege they can take or keep for themselves.

The sentences occur at the beginning of Froude's work on Ireland. But even the miscarriage of Home Rule in Ireland would be a small matter as regards the general consequences in comparison with the miscarriage of Home Rule in India.

Yet, it will be said, expectations have been raised which cannot be blankly negatived. You cannot expect Mr. Montagu to return from his "epoch-making" mission with the confession that he has been able to achieve nothing. It may be submitted that Mr. Montagu's personal reputation does not concern the world at large; but undoubtedly the situation he has gratuitously brought to a climax does present us with the prospect of a violent and troublesome agitation if the promise of self-government should be suddenly withdrawn. On the other hand, it is true that those who have held out to political India the promise of emancipation have continually coupled this with qualifications as to the generations that the process must require, and with exhortations as to the need of abundant patience before the fruit can drop. This part of the discourse is seldom well received, and it is perfectly certain that

no tinkering reforms will be of the least avail as a remedy for discontent and disaffection. Like the Morley-Minto measures, they will merely swell the outcry. The patience that we ask of the Indians might possibly be employed to better effect by ourselves in simply facing the present outcry, and determining to go on in the exercise of that authority which Britain cannot really resign, on the principles of justice, impartiality, and a paramount concern for the general welfare of the people. It is more than possible that if this intention could be clearly understood agitation would subside, and the classes now against us, because they believe us to be wavering, would be more disposed to take their own place in the system. But, of course, the difficulties of setting up any declaration of policy that would be accepted as binding are great, because of the uncertain attitude of the British electorate. All that can be said is that if that public cannot be brought to distinguish the shadow from the substance, if they persist in believing the people of Hindustan to be oppressed and unhappy in the absence of forms of government completely similar to their own, the old question of whether a democracy can be capable of ruling a de-

pendency will have been answered in the negative.

Confronted, however, as he has been, by the evidence of the emphatic objections to his policy of benevolence entertained by large communities on the spot, the likelihood seems to be that Mr. Montagu will endeavour to temporise with some scheme which shall combine the appearance of large concessions with the provision of a more or less elaborate system of checks. No expedient on those lines, if the checks are to be effective, will appease the agitators, who are quicksighted enough in these matters, and the reform will be merely a starting-point for a fresh campaign against the remaining restraints. The difficulty of our reformers, whether in Simla or the India Office, seems to come largely from their persistence in regarding the country as a single administrative unit. Decentralisation may be on their lips, but their hearts are far from it. Every tax, every duty, every policy that is announced by "Resolution" is issued for the whole country indiscriminately, when the circumstances of different Provinces and the character of their populations may vary as much as those of Belgium and East Prussia.

Allowing that as a political system the idea of autonomous Presidencies with no connecting central organisation, Mr. Bright's idea, is an impossibility, is it necessary to keep perpetually to the other extreme? A great opportunity was palpably lost when the reform of the Legislative Councils was taken in hand. There was no need that the new system should have been imposed on the whole country at one stroke, when it might have been introduced in one or two Provinces to start with, and the working of the experiment watched. But in any case, it should have been confined to the Provinces in the first instance, and the Viceroy's Legislative Council left as it stood. The Provincial Legislatures deal with business at first hand, and their non-official members, as men acquainted with the people and country, can and do bring on occasion useful help and criticism. The Viceroy's Council stands on quite a different footing, and there was no necessity for change. Had it been allowed to remain as it was, the European element, through the nominated members, would have continued to enjoy a fair representation, and one glaring anomaly in the present situation would have been avoided. As it is, the Imperial Legislative

Council, while it has eclipsed the others politically, consists of a collection of persons supposed to represent different selected interests in different parts of the country, whose coming together in one Chamber has merely helped to create that artificial appearance of unity that is responsible for so much error and mischief. The mistake once made, in face of better advice, cannot be repaired, but it is submitted that if compromises are in quest, the best way if the Councils are to be converted into Parliaments would be to commence with one or two Provinces, leaving the Viceregal Council severely alone on its present footing. If this were coupled with the exclusion of Calcutta and Bombay as separate enclaves somewhat on the model of the Delhi territory, which the Government of India reserves to itself, so as to secure the great European interests in those centres, a start might be made with Bombay and Bengal. There would be difficulties, of course, plenty of them, but the plan might offer an escape from the wholesale plunge into self-government, with all its dark possibilities.

Then as to the policy of association. Here, again, if anything is to be done, it must be by striking out on new lines. We must escape

altogether out of the hackneyed path of the Civil Service Commissioners, and the Indian Education Department, and the Public Services Commission. Experience has proved with dismal certainty that the young Hindu who passes for the Civil Service, however good his essay on the predecessors of Dryden, or however much he may have assimilated the marginal theorem in economic analysis, is not a success as an associate. The Hindu matures early, and these young men who come over from the Indian colleges to enter at Oxford and Cambridge, or to study law and medicine, have already lost the openness and pliancy of boyhood. They keep to themselves in their own colonies, acquire little touch with European life, and are, quite intelligibly, apt to resent well-meant intrusion in the feeling of the Greek saw, "Don't try to live in my mind." It is common knowledge that there are none in India so anti-English as those who have been educated in England. The two prime plotters of anarchist crime—Hurdyal and Krishnavarma—were both men who did notably well at Oxford. Is it not plain that, if the aim is to anglicise the Indian to good purpose, there must be a total change of system; he must be caught

young, at the age when the Admiralty catches its boys for the Navy? Then, with five years at a public school, there would be a chance of turning him out an Englishman in spirit, and at any rate with some firmly rooted English friendships and a stock of wholesome English associations that would be an influence through life. Of course, the parents of the boys who surrendered them at this early age would require some sort of guarantee as to their future prospects; also, they would have to be selected parents of means and respectable position, and all this would involve a recasting of the present system and a break with the Civil Service Commissioners. But, after all, is not anything better than stolid persistence in the way of assured failure?

But there appears to be no reason why the system indicated should stop short at the candidates for the public services. A certain number of expensive State scholarships, more really in the nature of travelling fellowships, are given to Indians to enable them to get a technical training in European factories and workshops. In nine cases out of ten, nothing seems to come of it. The literary young man keeps to the bookwork of the business, and

eventually emerges into the world as uncertain of finding his footing in it as when he started. If instead of one scholar we took twenty boys, say, of the weaver caste, and apprenticed them to Lancashire cotton-mills, there would be a chance that some of them would turn the experience to good account for themselves and for their country, and so with the other trades hereditarily followed in India. Again, we build in India a model Agricultural College with the idea of infusing the science of the subject among the landowning classes and their connections. But a college that does not lead to appointments has no attractions for the middle-class student, and the institution remains empty. Much, again, might possibly be done by getting hold of young boys of the agricultural classes, placing them with cottagers in England, and letting them take their education at the village school while they learnt farming under a farmer. These boys, taken from the hardier classes, would be unencumbered with the besetting Indian notion of the indignity of labour. They would grow up in the habit of making themselves useful, and by the time they were twenty-one might be fine fellows and good citizens to boot. The trouble would be that

most of them might decline to return, but those who did would be worth something to their native land.

These suggestions may labour under the imputation of being of a speculative cast, whereas the ways we have adopted have nothing against them but proved failure. But however that may be, the principle contended for has become a matter of the first practical importance in the case of the army, now that the King's commission has been formally opened to Indians. For a time, no doubt, all the available places will be required to meet the claims of Native officers who have done conspicuous service during the present war. But in fulness of time the question of direct appointment will come up, and it is one that deserves to be weighed beforehand.

The first consideration is that the new element should not break up the life of the regimental mess, which in India especially is the officer's home, and this, again, requires that the Native officers who are brought in must be men completely anglicised. An occasional promotion from the lower grades, being probably a man of the right sort, can get along well enough; but when direct appoint-

ments become systematic the only chance of avoiding failure lies in social fusion, for which it is necessary that the Indian officer should become as his fellows. I believe it was His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught who, when the question of commissions was ventilated many years ago, suggested the establishment of an Indian Sandhurst. The proposal, suitable enough for the time when it was advanced, would seem to be out of the question now. If such a military college educating young men did not become a hunting ground for agitators in every capacity from the Professors down to the table servants,* the cadets would, some of them at any rate, be exposed to sinister influences before joining, in the vacations, and after leaving college. But if the Indian officer is to be worth his place, he must not be a doubtful quantity. Again, to give him a fair chance he must be caught young—educated preferably at a British public school, and on discharge from Sandhurst or Woolwich gazetted, not to an

* This is no extravagant supposition. In one of the criminal conspiracy trials it came out that a determined anarchist had wormed his way as a tutor into the household of the foremost of Indian loyalists, Maharaja Sir Pertab Singh of Jodpore.

Indian, but to a British corps. After three or four years with a British regiment, in addition to previous training, you would have a man thoroughly steeped in the spirit and tradition of the service, capable of taking his place without effort amongst his fellows, and beyond temptation to a relapse. The material is there if it is properly selected and properly utilised.

There is a certain sense of futility, however, in the discussion of suggestions of improvement or palliatives while the main question remains unsettled—namely, whose is to be the rule? A singular situation it would be if the British power in India, which has outridden so many emergencies, which before it was securely established found itself confronted by the ambitions of Bonaparte, which within present memories was cheerfully bracing itself to meet the apparently inevitable onset of the Muscovite—if this power should be discovered to have been surrendered away in a fit of national absent-mindedness. It will be useless in that case to lay the blame on the political genius of Lord Chelmsford, or on the personal ascendancy of Mr. Montagu, for the fault will lie with the indifference of

the British public. As a last word one might entreat that public to dismiss for once confused politico-moral ideas as to natural rights, self-determination, and what not, and to look at the matter from the point of view of its own interests, which have their own clear claim to consideration. For if there is any validity in the arguments that have been advanced in the preceding pages, they lead with uncompromising distinctness to the conclusion that the step now being thrust upon us, however much its nature may be concealed by wrapping it up in the current phrases of everyday political controversy, must in reality be a decisive one. We have under our eyes in Ireland an example of how the concession of Parliamentary Home Rule has given birth to a fierce agitation for complete independence and severance, even before the new system has come into operation. How is it to be imagined that we can set up any half-way house for India? Can it be supposed for a moment that a huge and distant country, with its millions of Asiatics who have only the vaguest notions of the land which claims their allegiance, will maintain its placid course along the road we have staked out for it, in due observance of the constitutional rules,

checks, and conventions prescribed to preserve the connection and to secure the interests of the Imperial power after the exercise of effectual authority has been resigned? The idea goes clean contrary to all probability and experience. India cannot serve two masters, and if Britain stands aside she will have to cleave to the men on the spot. She will not like it, but the election will not be hers, it will have been forced upon her by the people of England, who therefore should surely weigh well the consequences of the innocent-looking step that they are invited to take. That they are indifferent to the subject can scarcely be believed, seeing that the preservation of India against the Russian menace was the pivoting point of our foreign policy from the middle of the nineteenth century to its close, seeing even at the present moment what costly and distracting efforts are imposed upon Britain's sorely taxed energies by the necessity of preserving her dominion in Asia. What other meaning has the campaign in Mesopotamia except that of a precaution to keep the enemy's influence at a safe distance from India? It would seem, therefore, that after all we are very much of the same conviction as those before us who

judged that no sacrifice or exertion or personal hazard was too great if they helped their country to win this great prize and to hold it against the envy of the world. But if in these last days the democratic mind has become insensible to the appeal of national prestige, the merely material consequences that would follow to every household in the country from allowing India to slip out of our keeping should be well appreciated. They cannot, of course, be tabled out in advance, but their general effect could not fail to be immense.

Considering the array of vested interests involved, the capital sunk, the numbers dependent on its returns, the importance of Indian products to British industry, the numbers of British employed in the country either officially or commercially, the army of persons on this side—merchants, shippers, distributors, producers, and consumers—whose prosperity and convenience are more or less bound up with the Indian connection, is it not plain that the effect upon them, and by consequence upon the whole people of this country, of any rupture of the tie would amount to a social disaster of the first magnitude? The instal-

ment of a Hindu Government in India, whether it led up to internal chaos or to internal passivity with exclusiveness against the outer world, would in fact be the beginning of a revolution in the material condition of the English people.

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