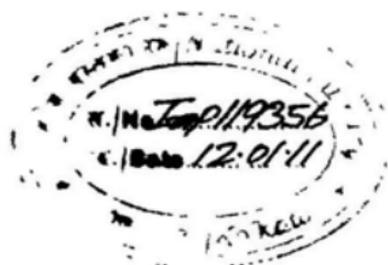


LETTERS TO THE PEOPLE  
OF INDIA  
ON  
RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT  
By Lionel Curtis.

Calcutta

Printed and Published by C. H. Harvey at 41, Lower Circular Road.

1917



## Preface.

As the Joint Address from Europeans and Indians to the Viceroy and Secretary of State has been coupled with my name in the Indian Press, I must briefly explain my connection therewith. Having made some studies of Indian Government more especially relating to the United Provinces, I submitted them for criticism to a number of Indians and Europeans for the purpose of verifying my facts and conclusions. Some of my friends who had read these studies, and were anxious that members of both races should agree in advising the Secretary of State, invited my assistance. I outlined a scheme, which I afterwards reduced to writing, but advised them to restrict their agreement to a few principles which seemed fundamental. They accepted this advice; but as it was desirable to promote discussion, the memorandum was published as well as the twelve points to which the signatories subscribed. It was made clear that the agreement related only to the twelve points and that the signatories remained free to differ on all the suggestions contained in the report by which it is prefaced. In the final draft of the twelve articles of agreement my advice was not taken on various points, though none the less I should have signed them as they stand, had I been qualified to do so by residence in India.

For the memorandum by which they are prefaced I accept the sole responsibility. For the sake of brevity it was condensed from materials accumulated in the course of a year's study of the subject, and

number of points raised in the discussions which took place, and in the documents submitted to the signatories, were omitted.

After its publication I was asked by some of the signatories, who rightly wished to promote reasoned discussion, to develop these points in a series of letters to the Press. Five such letters were published, and I must here acknowledge the kindness of Editors who printed them. It was not fair however to make such inordinate demands on their space as the subject required; and for studious readers the matter demanded presentment in more consecutive form. I therefore undertook to bring together what I had to say, including some matter already printed, in the form of a book. The work has had to be done at very short notice. The proofs have been read in haste, and those of the last few chapters I am not able to read at all. I must therefore ask my readers to excuse the blemishes which I expect to find when I see the book in published form. If these are not serious it will be due to the exceptional skill and care shewn by the printers in the hurried and difficult conditions under which their work has been done.

In order that the book may be published at the lowest possible price, some of the signatories have underwritten the cost. In the most unlikely event of any profit being realized, the amount will be paid over to war funds. I must none the less be held solely responsible for any opinions expressed in this book. The signatories are committed to nothing beyond the twelve articles they signed, and the *principle of specific devolution* upon which they are based. The virtue of that principle is its elasticity and the variety of ways

in which it can be applied to all the varying conditions of India. As an illustration of this I appended to the volume a suggestive scheme worked out by my friend Mr. Provash Chunder Mitter, which contains a wealth of information to which I cannot pretend.

The Congress-League Scheme and the Joint Address are also appended. The latter is printed from the types of the published edition, for greater facility of reference. Those to whom these documents are not already familiar should study them before attempting to read this book.

In conclusion, I must acknowledge the kindness of my friends Mr. Pugh, Mr. Arden Wood, and Mr. Harvey, in undertaking to pass this book through the press in my absence.



*December 17th, 1917.*

# Contents.

	Page
<b>PREFACE</b> .. .. .	iii
I.—The Meaning of Words .. .. .	1
II.—The Pronouncement of the 20th August .. .. .	5
III.—Electoral Systems False and True .. .. .	14
IV.—The Existing System and Its Logical Outcome .. .. .	20
V.—The Fruits of Experience .. .. .	32
VI.—Alternative Methods Compared .. .. .	47
VII.—The Goal .. .. .	51
VIII.—The Map of India .. .. .	55
IX.—Administrative Mechanism and Its Reconstruction .. .. .	71
X.—The Training-ground of Electorates .. .. .	75
XI.—Extremists and How They Meet .. .. .	101
XII.—Principles of Representation .. .. .	110
XIII.—The Question of an Upper House .. .. .	117
XIV.—Executive Functions .. .. .	119
XV.—Structure of the Executive .. .. .	122
XVI.—Legislative Powers .. .. .	128
XVII.—Co-relation of Provincial and State Governments .. .. .	137
XVIII.—Self Taxation .. .. .	141
—	
Appendix I.—Mr. P. C. Mitter's Memorandum .. .. .	149
Appendix II.—The Congress-League Scheme .. .. .	163
Appendix III.—The Joint Address .. .. .	(f)

## I

### THE MEANING OF WORDS.

WHEN I first reached India in October 1916, there were two subjects of general discussion. One was the war; the other was self-government. Since the Proclamation which followed the Mutiny in 1858 the final aims of British policy in India had never been defined. The government of India for the good of Indians themselves was the principle which inspired that famous Proclamation. Its terms left for future interpretation the question wherein the good of Indians consisted. But since 1858 no further Proclamation had been made on the subject. Meanwhile the whole situation had been changed by the progress of education, and the British service found themselves forced by a situation in respect of which the supreme authority had left them without instructions. The British service were not to blame. It was the business of the British Parliament and electorate, and of no one else, to give them instructions, and none had been given.

Nevertheless self-government was discussed, in official as well as in Indian society, as the one conceivable goal of British policy. Everyone was talking of self-government last year, so I made it my business to discover what everyone meant by it, and I found no less than four different meanings, none of which conformed to my own conception of what the term, carried to its practical conclusion, must imply.

To begin with, there were British officials who talked of self-government. In answer to my questions I found that some of them meant no more than the emancipation of the Government of India from the control of Parliament and the Secretary of State, coupled with a devolution of specified powers and revenues to Provincial Governments. In the mouths of others it meant the re-partition of British India into Native

States. By self-government some Indians, as well as officials, meant no more than a progressive substitution of Indian for British officials. Fourthly, there were those who thought that executives in India could be left responsible, as at present, to the Secretary of State, and yet be rendered dependent for the exercise of their powers on Indian electorates and elected legislatures. This last alternative was the logical outcome of the Minto-Morley reforms.

The word self-government was used to include these four wholly distinct ideas, and the result, as it seemed to me, was that most people were talking at cross-purposes.

Some months later, I was obliged by circumstances over which I had no control to publish a letter dealing with the subject, and in speaking of self-government I felt bound to explain in unequivocal words the sense in which I used the term. With that object in view I recorded a conversation I had had with an able and responsible friend in one of the Native States. Let me quote the actual words which I wrote and published at that time.

‘I suggested that a great deal of misunderstanding was due to the fact that the term *self-government* was used to include two ideas (I have since found two more) which were in fact totally separate. “In this State,” I said, “you have government of Indians by Indians. It is true you have some European officials who tell me that your Government is treating them well. But none the less the Government of His Highness the Maharaja is the government of Indians by an Indian. It is what we might appropriately call *Home rule*, if that name had not been assumed by a particular movement. But to shew you what I mean by self-government, let me ask you a question: Do you think that His Highness would be well advised to make the two following changes at once?—

“(1) To make the whole Legislative Council elective.

“(2) To undertake to appoint as Diwan the leader who commanded a majority of votes in the Council, and also to dismiss him the moment he ceased to command a majority.”

The most capable Indian administrators I have met are those who have gained their experience in the Native States, which proves the value of responsibility in training men. Some of them are men of the most liberal views, but I doubt whether any of them would think that so drastic a change can be made at one stroke. I think they would say that a Prince who made such a change too quickly would be likely to throw his State into confusion, and thereby delay its progress towards self-government. He would advise that several intermediate steps should be taken, and I think he would hesitate to name any exact time within which the final change could be brought about.

Be that as it may, you will now see what I mean when I speak of self-government. To avoid the risk of this misunderstanding it will be better, I suggest, to drop this ambiguous term and to use the words *responsible government* instead.

And now let me ask you to consider this system of responsible government as applied, not to a Native State, but to the vast and complicated structure of British India. Here you have two orders of government to deal with, the Government of India and also the various Governments of the Provinces into which India is divided. Personally I do not flinch from saying that I look forward to a time when in all these Provinces, and also in the capital of India itself, elective legislatures will sit, with executives wholly consisting of the leaders who for the time being command a majority, and resign the moment they cease to command it.

This is the end to which I am looking, and which can, I believe, be attained, if the goal is

' first clearly conceived, if the steps towards it  
' are carefully thought out, if sufficient time is  
' taken in making such steps, and also if each  
' step is taken in time. I should find it difficult  
' to suggest whether India has more to fear from  
' over-haste or procrastination; and this I say,  
' knowing that so wise, experienced and advanced  
' a democrat as Lord Morley has spoken of that  
' goal as one which may never be reached in India.  
' With all due deference to an authority so  
' weighty I believe that it can, must, and will be  
' reached, and nothing which I have seen in  
' India has shaken or is likely to shake that faith '

## II

### THE PRONOUNCEMENT OF THE 20TH AUGUST.

In the last week of 1916 the Indian National Congress and the All-India Moslem League in their annual session at Lucknow resolved "that the time has come when His Majesty the King-Emperor should be pleased to issue a Proclamation announcing that it is the aim and intention of British Policy to confer Self-Government on India at an early date, . . . and that a definite step should be taken towards Self-Government by granting the reforms contained in the Scheme." This scheme the resolution then proceeded to give in detail. Some months later the Viceroy informed the Legislative Council that the Government of India had forwarded definite proposals for reform to the Secretary of State. Clearly some answer had to be given to the request tendered by the Congress and League before their next meeting. As a matter of mere courtesy they would have to be told whether their demand for a statement of policy was to be granted or not. Everyone, therefore, who had followed the course of affairs, had reason to know that some statement of policy was being considered, and might be expected at any moment. It was open to anyone to formulate and present their views as to what that statement should be.

On the 20th August the Congress and League received their answer. In form, as well as in substance, the answer differed from that suggested in their resolutions. They had asked for a Proclamation of the King-Emperor, such as that which was issued when Indian Policy had been last defined in 1858. The statement they got on the 20th of August was embodied in the form of an answer to a question in the House of Commons put to the Secretary of State for

India. The pronouncement was in substance the most important ever made on the place of India in the British Commonwealth. We cannot at this distance know what considerations induced a Cabinet, burdened with the exigencies of a terrible war, to make a pronouncement of such capital importance in a manner so unpretentious. Some allowance must be made for the difficulties which the Imperial Government has to face before we criticise the course they took. But to anyone, who knows anything of India, it must be a matter of regret that a pronouncement changing the whole direction of British Policy in India should have been made in a form so inadequate. Its significance must and will be determined by the gravity of the matter it contains. But that significance would have been far better understood by Europeans and Indians alike, had it been embodied in the form of a Proclamation, and, still more, had it been followed by such explanations by the Imperial Government and by the Government of India as its terms require. These terms are singularly plain. Yet dealing as they do with constitutional conditions new to India, their full significance has not been appreciated.

The pronouncement, of course, contains much that is not new. It reaffirms principles which have figured as common-places in the speeches of Secretaries of State and of Viceroys since the time of Lord Morley. Such for instance is the promise to increase the association of Indians in every branch of the Administration, and of the gradual development of self-governing institutions. The really new and therefore important matter was that contained in the words defining the goal to be sought. The Congress and League had asked the Imperial Government to proclaim "that it is the aim and intention of British Policy to confer *Self-Government* on India at an early date." In the answer made to them on the 20th of August they got something else, and indeed more than they had asked for; and they got it in far more definite terms. The goal is stated, as "the progressive realization of RESPON-

"RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT in India, as an integral part of the "British Empire." The words "Responsible Government" here appear for the first time in any official pronouncement on Indian Policy. I have seen it suggested in the Public Press that they were substituted by the Cabinet for the words, "Self Government", used by the Congress and League, in a fit of absence of mind. As a glance at the first words of the pronouncement will shew, its terms were discussed in correspondence between the Imperial Government and the Government of India. The delay which took place, after the despatches of the Government of India were sent to London and before the Pronouncement was made, is sufficient evidence that every word was discussed and weighed. A writer who objects to "Responsible Government" as the goal of Indian Policy, cannot get rid of it by imputing carelessness and levity to British statesmen. "Responsible Government" must have been used in the place of "Self-Government" with a full knowledge of the meaning it conveyed. Our first business, therefore, is to see what was the meaning which the Imperial Government must have attached to it.

All executives are of course responsible to some higher authority. The Governor-General in Council is responsible to Parliament in England. So were the executives of Ontario and Quebec in the time of Lord Durham, and those of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony in the five years succeeding the War. They were so responsible because they could be dismissed and replaced by the Secretary of State acting as the Agent of Parliament. The demand arose in these countries (and at one time or another in all the self-governing Dominions), that the power of dismissing and replacing their executives should be taken from the Secretary of State and vested in their own electorates and in the Assemblies elected thereby. That demand has always been made in the name of Responsible Government. In the minds of men like Mr. Lloyd George and Lord Milner, in whose recollection the demands made and granted in South Africa

are still fresh, the term cannot possibly have suggested anything else.

But the matter admits of no kind of doubt. Within the last few weeks the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, addressing the Convocation of the Allahabad University, used the following words:—  
 “The British Government has announced that the ideal for India is Responsible Government, which means the administration of the country by an executive authority responsible through an elected legislature to the people; and we now have to shape our course towards that goal.”

An executive is only responsible to a higher authority when that authority can remove it and put another in its place. In this pronouncement the goal prescribed for India is identified with that already attained by the self-governing Dominions. It is to be reached as an integral part of the British Commonwealth. At present the Government of India and those of the Provinces are answerable to, and removable by, the British electorate through Parliament and the Secretary of State. The Imperial Government now looks forward to a time when those executives will all be answerable to, and removable by, Indian electorates, through elected Assemblies. It is added, however, that this goal can only be achieved ‘by successive stages.’ The British Government and the Government of India, in other words the Imperial Parliament and electorate, to which both these Governments are answerable, are to decide, from time to time, what those stages are to be and how fast they can be taken. But why are these stages needed? Why cannot the final power of removing and replacing these executives be transferred at one stroke from the Secretary of State to Indian electorates? The answer is contained in the words of the Pronouncement:—  
 “The British Government and the Government of India, on whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples, must be 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.”

In plain words, the British Government, at the moment of making the announcement, sees no electorates to whom it can transfer the responsibility which now rests on itself. The immediate task before it is to develop such electorates in India, and in such manner that it is possible to test the reality of the development. The question how this is to be done is the root of the whole problem set by the Pronouncement of the Imperial Government.

Short of a pronouncement involving the separation of India from England, no declaration of policy more definite and final could have been made. From public statements we know that its terms were under discussion between the Imperial Government and the Government of India since the earlier months of this year. We know that Mr. Montagu engaged to take up matters where Mr. Chamberlain left them; nor is it unlikely that when the records are laid bare, the future historian may find the pronouncement, as issued on the 20th of August, amongst the papers of Mr. Chamberlain. In any case it was accepted by a Cabinet which includes not only a Liberal Prime Minister and a Labour member, but Lord Curzon, Lord Milner and Sir Edward Carson. It was tacitly accepted by the House of Commons and by the House of Lords. Its announcement to Parliament without provoking a vote of censure is equivalent to its acceptance by the Imperial Parliament and electorate. It is now, despite the casual form in which it was announced, in every way a pronouncement of the Imperial Government, a British declaration of policy. It was made by the lawful and accredited Government of a people now in arms to vindicate the word they plighted to the Belgian Nation. If I know our people, they will not go back on their word. It reflects moreover their innermost mind. In the last few days I have listened to one, unconnected with party or press, who was

recently sent to discuss public affairs with the men in the trenches on the Western front. To his questions about India he was met with the answer, "Well, we know little about India. But we're fighting for the British Empire, which stands for self-government, and it's up to England to help India to self-government. That is the principle for which we are fighting."

In the last few weeks I have read and listened to suggestions that this declaration of policy was wrung from England by fear. Would Indians, who have said such things in Calcutta, repeat them within the sound of the guns, to those who stand in the presence of death, to whom the word 'fear' cannot be named? By such words they dishonour not England, but themselves. Not once nor twice in this country have I felt how little they know of India, who only India know. Englishmen must learn to know India better, but to know India you must also know what England is, and that knowledge must be sought in the shambles of Flanders and France.

For the moment, however, I am speaking to my own countrymen in India. Whether it will ever be possible to transfer the control of all Indian affairs to Indian Electorates, and to place India on the same footing as the self-governing Dominions, is a point upon which some of us may differ. But on one point we shall all agree, that unless or until that goal can be reached, the final decision of British Policy in India must rest with the Imperial Government, Parliament and electorate, which for the present is the British Government, Parliament and electorate. Such decisions cannot rest either with Indians, nor yet with the British community in India. But what both communities can do is to give public opinion in England the information it sadly needs, and give it in time. So far the information available there has been drawn from two sources, and two only: from Nationalist quarters and from British officials. From missionary circles little has been heard, and from business circles in India, till the last few months, nothing at all. I am not questioning the truth of what Nationalists say,

or what the officials say. But I do say that the picture placed before the people of England is utterly incomplete, unless it includes information other than that derived from Nationalist and official quarters.

It is for this reason, I believe, that everyone in England will welcome the sudden awakening of their unofficial countrymen here to an interest in public affairs. For the moment the trouble is that that awakening has come too late. A new declaration of policy had been long pending and promised: but the views of the European community were not expressed, until it had been made in terms which are now impossible to alter.

In future the people of England will, one hopes and believes, receive the advice of their countrymen here. The effect of that advice will surely depend on its quality and motive. If it is solely concerned with the interests and privileges of Englishmen in India it will, I predict, weigh but lightly. If on the other hand it comes from men, who are keeping in view the interests of India and of the whole British Commonwealth, and who speak with knowledge, not only of their own business concerns, but also of the public trust which England is seeking to discharge in this country, such advice will, I believe, weigh with preponderant force. The time has come when your countrymen at home are entitled to have your opinions on subjects like commercial representation, and the separation of executive and judicial functions. India is not Morocco, nor the Argentine, nor Korea, but an integral part of the British Commonwealth, and the time is past when Englishmen here could confine themselves to business, as though public questions in India could be settled on none but official advice. And therefore the time is past when the European Association could stand only for securing the privilege of Europeans in India.

With all this I know you will agree. But there is another and even graver point. From time to time England must make decisions, and give pledges with regard to her policy in India,—such pledges as were

given in 1858, and once again on the 20th of August last. You at least know the value of British prestige, which rests simply on India's faith in the two Saxon words 'Yea' and 'Nay.' In the end England will be judged in India by what England herself does, or leaves undone. But at any given moment the people of England largely stand to be judged by their fellow countrymen who are face to face with Indians themselves. The men who return from the trenches will, I believe, see that this promise is kept. Let their countrymen here think twice before assuming positions which must lead Indians to think that Englishmen at home may be made to play fast and loose with their pledges. Those pledges are given to you no less than to Indians, and they also will be making a vast mistake, if they dream that after the war England can be brought to change or go back on one phrase or word of this solemn Pronouncement.

That is the main point. But now there is a kindred point, which I commend to the notice of Indians as well as to my own countrymen at this juncture. The Pronouncement is binding on the Secretary of State *in all its terms*. Under them he was sent here by the Imperial Cabinet, and, as I read them, it is not permissible for him to discuss whether such a declaration should have been made, whether responsible government is a feasible project in India, or whether, let me add, it can be granted outright, or otherwise than by a succession of steps. His enquiry is limited to the four corners of that Pronouncement. The advice he must seek is simply how effect may be best given to it. If this interpretation is right, it follows that everyone who feels he has views to offer at this juncture, should consider whether the Pronouncement is one which he can accept, and whether the views he has to offer are within its terms. It is perfectly open to any one, British or Indian, to say that he does not accept its terms: such views can be addressed to the Imperial Government, to Parliament and the public in England with whom the ultimate decision lies. But the Pronouncement shews that the

## II—PRONOUNCEMENT OF THE 20TH AUGUST. 13

Secretary of State has not been empowered to discuss such views. Surely he is limited by its terms to proposals which can be brought within the lines laid down for him by the Imperial Government before he left England. And the limitation is two-edged. Advice to do nothing, and proposals to grant responsible government outright, are in fact demands that the Pronouncement should be changed, and that new instructions should be issued to the Secretary of State. I venture to predict that it will not be changed, and that these instructions will bind not Mr. Montagu only but all Secretaries of State in time to come until, by successive stages, Responsible Government had been realised in India

### III

#### ELECTORAL SYSTEMS FALSE AND TRUE.

The steps by which the goal is to be reached, and especially the first of those steps to be taken, which must of necessity determine the character of all those which are to follow, are left for subsequent inquiry. The question before us is simply that of discovering the path whereby that goal can be reached most quickly. But in order to do that we must begin by glancing at the point from which we are to start. Except in the district and municipal boards, there are no executives removable at the will of electorates. So far as the Indian and Provincial Governments are concerned, responsible government has no place in the existing constitution. In the last few years an Indian member has been appointed to each of the executive councils, but his responsibility to the Secretary of State differs in no respect from that shared by his European colleagues. Like them he is called to office, and can be dismissed, by the Secretary of State.

The legislatures consist partly of officials, who in the Governor-General's Council only are in the majority, partly of non-officials, mostly Indians, appointed by Government, and partly of members, almost entirely Indian, who do not hold their seats by government appointment. From the latest returns it appears that the Imperial Council consists of 68 members, 27 of whom are elected. Of these 18 are elected to speak for sectional interests, either land-holders, Mahomedans, merchants or manufacturers. The remaining 9, indirectly elected by non-official members of the nine Provincial Councils, are presumably intended to voice the views of the people at large.

To illustrate the method of election, let us take the case of the member representing the United Prov-

inces. His constituency consists of the 29 non-official members of the Legislative Council of that Province. Of these 29 members, 21 are elected. Of the 21 elected members, 8 represent sectional interests, and 13 the District and Municipal Boards. Of the 13, only 4 are directly elected by the Boards. The remaining 9 are returned by electoral colleges composed of delegates elected by District and Municipal Boards in each of nine Divisions. The Boards are directly elected; so at last we come to the bed-rock of primary voters. The voters to the District Board are simply nominated by the Collector. But he may not nominate more than 100 for any one tahsil, which means in practice not more than one in every 2,000 inhabitants. Educated Indians are accused of seeking an oligarchy under the guise of Self-government. Here, in a law made by ourselves, the image of oligarchy was stamped on the system. This iron limitation is enough to shew how little the fundamental problem of developing electorates figured in the minds of those who elaborated this travesty of an electoral system.

We are now in a position to trace the electoral chain by which a member of the Imperial Council is supposed to represent a voter in one of these Divisions.

1. The primary voter returns a member to the District or Municipal Board.
2. The Boards return members to an Electoral College.
3. The College returns a member to the Provincial Council.
4. The non-official members, including sectional members and those appointed by Government, return a member to the Imperial Legislative Council.

The system is one which destroys any real connection between the primary voter and the member who sits on the Legislative Councils. Repeatedly have I asked those in a position to know, whether a primary voter casts his vote with any reference to the effect it will have in determining the composition of the Legislative Councils. The answer was always in the negative.

For all practical purposes, the non-official members of the Provincial Councils are primary electors, so far as their representatives in the Imperial Council are concerned. They hold no mandate from those who elect them. Their position as elected members is purely and simply a voter's qualification, which takes the place of age, property, education, or any of the ordinary qualifications of voters. One member in the Imperial Council sits by virtue of a majority of 9 votes. The total number of votes, by which all the elected members of this Council are returned, can scarcely exceed 4,000. That gives less than an average of 150 for each member. Similarly, members of the Legislative Council of the U.P. are elected by about 3,000 votes, or an average of about 143 for each elected member.

From this analysis, it is plain that, so far as the Legislative Councils are concerned, the so-called representative system is a sham. The experience it provides can do little or nothing towards developing electorates, for the reason that the primary voter for the District and Municipal Boards cannot possibly trace the effect of his vote on the Legislative Councils. Lord Morley failed to see that this was the crux of the problem, because he would never face in his own mind the prospect of devolving responsibility on Indian electorates, as the Imperial Government has now faced it. Hence the practical importance of the recent pronouncement.

Let us now turn to this essential question, the development of electorates, and see what answers have been given to it. One answer commonly given is that no political responsibility can be given to electorates, until education is far more advanced and more widely spread than it now is. Implicit in this answer is the presumption that the future electors can be educated to a sense of political responsibility in schools and colleges. My answer is that if you were to cover India with schools and colleges until you had multiplied the educated classes tenfold, without at the same time giving them any instalment of genuine political responsibility, you would have rendered India ungovernable under

any system. This I believe is exactly what has happened in Russia. There, public responsibility was limited to Municipal and District Bodies. In the Imperial and Provincial Governments, the educated classes were confined to criticising the executives, over whom they had no control. In the political sphere they were left without responsibility for seeing that the government was carried on. The natural result is that they have been able to destroy government, but have proved utterly incapable of evolving any government of their own, which they could bring themselves, let alone the illiterate majority, to obey. The results are before us, if only in the awful silence which envelops Russia, and recalls those hours in the Black Hole of Calcutta. So deadly and so general is the struggle of each for himself, that no one is able to tell those without of the tragedy in progress within. May the wisdom of her rulers deliver India from a like fate! But that cannot be done by denying education to her people. They must have education, and more and more of it, but the result will be the same as in Russia, unless side by side with increasing education is given a steady and progressive increase in political responsibility.

The truth is that schools and colleges can do no more than teach people how to learn. They can impart knowledge, but wisdom can only be learned in the school of responsibility. It can only be taught by leaving men to suffer by the results of the things which they themselves do; still more, by the results of the things which they leave undone.

Last year I visited a village in Central India where some people had died of cholera. The villagers had promptly gone to the police station, obtained permanganate of potash, put it in the wells and stopped the cholera. The Commissioner, with whom I was camping, told me that only a few years before the police had been mobbed for attempting to disinfect the wells. The change had come about, because, in their own experience, they had seen that permanganate in the wells will stop cholera. Now let anyone con-

sider whether this practical truth would have come home to them, if it had only been taught them in text-books. School teaching will help to disintegrate the deadening effect of custom, to open the eyes of the mind to new ideas, and enable a community to read the lessons of experience more quickly. But the practical lessons of life must come from experience itself. Without experiencing the results that follow the giving of votes, under a system so simple as to make that experience easy to read, education will operate to unfit a people for responsibility in public affairs. The two things must go side by side. The educational value of the present electoral system is destroyed by its complication, and also by the fact that members have no function but criticism, and no responsibility laid upon them. And hence there is none laid upon the voters. But their judgment cannot be developed except by a system which enables them to trace the results of their votes on their own lives; in plain words, by some responsibility.

In the making of electorates, a quality more difficult to develop, even than judgment, is discipline. The hardest lesson a raw electorate has to learn is that of giving the rulers they elect power to rule. The obedience upon which government is founded, even in Autocracies, is at root moral. Despotism rests on a basis of theocracy, on the idea of a law delivered on Horeb. The obedience rendered by his subjects to an Indian Prince is inspired by the belief in his divine title to rule. It is not force which makes the Indian peasant so docile to British rule, so much as an ingrained conviction that power to rule is of itself an evidence of divine authority. To this title the Kaiser is constantly appealing. It has enabled the Czars to rule Russia for centuries. But the idea is one which will not stand the disintegrating force of education. If relied upon too long, it suddenly collapses, as in Russia. And then a people undisciplined by any sense of responsibility, outside the sphere of district, village or town life, are called upon to obey men elected to rule the Province and the Nation. The old principle of obe-

dience is suddenly shattered, before they have had time to acquire the only alternative principle, which is the habit of obeying rulers in the general interest and because they represent the general authority. Self-government rests on a sufficient capacity in enough individuals to put the interests of others before their own. It is the Sermon on the Mount reduced to practice in the field of politics. This habit can, I firmly believe, be produced in any people by constant and increasing exercise. But it is contrary to all reason and all experience of human nature to suppose that it can be produced without the exercise of responsibility, steadily increased as the habit becomes more fully acquired and more widely spread. Mr Montagu's mission is the necessary corollary of that undertaken by Dr. Sadler and his colleagues.

To put the matter in a nut-shell, the view—long current—that an improvement and extension of education is the key to the political problems of India, is a dangerous half-truth. It is but a fragment of the true key, and if tried alone, will break, with the results inevitable when a lock is jammed by a broken key.

#### IV

### THE EXISTING SYSTEM AND ITS LOGICAL OUTCOME.

The best that can be said of the existing system is that it has introduced to the legislatures an element whose point of view is other than that formed in official experience. I believe that legislation and public policy have benefited by the public criticism of laymen. But it trains those laymen merely as critics. It provides no training in, and no test of, administrative capacity or statesmanship. The leaders who emerge and figure in the public eye are necessarily those who can criticise most effectively in the English tongue. They are never put to the test, nor trained by the necessity of having to do anything themselves.

In all Provincial Councils non-officials are in the majority. In Bengal the elected members alone are in the majority.

To these majorities are opposed a minority of British officials bound by the express orders of the Government of India to vote, in every division, in accordance with orders issued by Government. I do not know the reason for these orders. In the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, where I watched the same system under Crown Colony government, officials were left free to vote according to their own judgment on all but questions of primary importance, those, generally speaking, which, under responsible government, might involve a change of the ministry. I do not think the Government whip was issued on half a dozen divisions in the session. Official members were free to speak, and in doing so often influenced the Government in the direction desired by the non-official members. In the Indian Councils no official may speak, except at the instance of the Executive. In the Transvaal there was no such

cleavage as exists in India between official and non-official members.

The whole effect of this system strikes one as singularly calculated to produce a cleavage on racial lines, and to exasperate racial feeling. Inevitably it operates to produce a solidarity of Indian members, on purely racial lines, in opposition to an alien Government, and the cases in which Governments are defeated are steadily increasing. In plain words, moderates are forced into the camp of extremists.

If Government proposes unpopular measures, or resists popular resolutions and amendments, it is not because it likes doing unpopular things. Unrepresentative governments are far more nervous of opposition than those which rest on an ascertained majority of voters. Government only resists the elected members where it is honestly convinced that it cannot otherwise discharge the trust laid on it, and in the last instance because it cannot otherwise maintain order. Already Provincial Governments are directly dependent on non-official votes for the concurrence of the legislature, without which they cannot discharge the duties laid on them. Is it humanly possible, if this system be long continued, that the Executives will resist the temptation to influence non-official members by means other than pure argument in open debate? Wherever this system has been long continued, government by "influence" has set in, degenerating into government by intrigue, and ending in government by corruption.

How far Executives are still able to maintain a working majority it is difficult to say, because they shrink from proposing necessary measures which mean public defeat. But where they do succeed in voting down the elected members, the spectacle of the British phalanx casting a solid vote against them by order is irritating in the extreme. Inevitably it begets a demand for a clear and overwhelming elective majority, as the natural means of relief from the exasperation felt on being voted down by British officials. The present system suggests to Nationalists a line of ad-

vance which will enable them to tie the hands of the Executive without assuming any responsibility for the results of inaction.

The schemes suggested by Mr. Gokhale, the nineteen members, and by the Congress and League, are the logical result of this situation. With one exception, to which I propose to refer later on, all the schemes for development on the lines initiated in the Morley-Minto reform proceed on this principle of strangling the responsible Executive by successive twists of the noose placed in the hands of irresponsible electorates. I have before me a letter from one of the ablest administrators in this country in which he rejects any scheme for the gradual delegation of specified functions on Provincial authorities responsible to electorates. He goes on to say: "I feel that it should not be beyond the wit of constitutional experts to frame a scheme of advance along the road of horizontal lines of increasing popular control over all the functions of government instead of vertical lines separating particular functions and without reaching a chasm that must be crossed at one bound."

I propose therefore to examine this idea of increasing popular control on horizontal lines in the case of the existing executives and legislatures. Let us take the Executive first. The vital question, I submit, by which any scheme of government should be tested is this—to whom is the Executive under that scheme to be made responsible for their final decisions? There are two alternatives and two only: Executives may remain responsible to the Secretary of State, which means to the Imperial Parliament, or else they may be made responsible to an electorate in India. There must and should be divisions in electorates and legislatures. In Executives there can be none, so far as the public is concerned. All experience demonstrates that, unless government is to come to a standstill, the members of executives must thrash out their differences within closed doors. When a member of an Executive Council is voted down, he has but two courses before him: to resign, or else to support the decision of his col-

leagues, if only by his silence loyally observed in private as well as in public. Mr. Balfour once declared that he had often supported in public debate proposals which he had opposed in the privacy of the Cabinet. Every man with experience of public affairs knows that this is an essential condition of executive action. Before a member of an Executive is at liberty to explain his differences with his colleagues he must quit it. They must cease to be colleagues. In Executives there must be unity, and it is for that reason that the selection of his colleagues is usually left to the head of the government. The principle of electing the Cabinet by the caucus of the party in power, introduced in Australia, has now, I believe, been discarded as incompatible with the unity of the Cabinet.

Proposals are on foot to introduce two Indian members into the Executives here, and I very much hope they will be adopted. But the suggestion that these two members should be elected by the non-official members strikes at the root of the first principle of executive government. Responsibility of an Executive means that the members of that Executive are appointed and can be removed by the authority which appoints them. It means therefore that they must be able to explain their conduct to that authority. This proposal means that while three members of an Executive Council are to remain responsible to the Secretary of State, the two others are to be made responsible to the elected members. When they differ from their colleagues they are placed in a wholly false position. If they are loyal to their colleagues, they cannot explain their position to their electorate. Nor can they explain their position to their electorate without divulging the secrets of Council. And if, to escape the falsity of this position, they resign, how then are their places to be filled? The same electorate can only return two new members charged to maintain the difference with those responsible to the Secretary of State. Such an arrangement can be fruitful in nothing but misunderstanding and anger, leading to deadlock. If, as I hope, there are to be

more Indian members, they must be appointed by the Secretary of State, and be responsible to him on the same footing as their colleagues. Or else they must all be responsible to an electorate on the same footing.

We may now turn to plans for increasing control over all the functions of government as applied to the existing legislatures. The steps which can be taken in this direction are few and easy to trace.

The first step is to give the elected members a clear and decisive majority.

The second step is to divide the estimates into two sections, one containing police and other items of vital importance, to be reserved as at present to the control of the Executive; the other section containing items which are left at the disposal of a legislature in which elected members have the decisive voice.

The third and last stage is to submit the whole budget, that is to say supply, to the control of the legislature.

To begin with, it is necessary to note that the word "control" may mean either of two things. It may mean the power of deciding that things are to be done. It may also be used to mean a power of deciding that they are not to be done. If the fabric of society is to be maintained, the Government must in the last resort have power to do anything necessary to maintain it. Before taking a decision, it may expose itself studiously to the influence of external opinion. It may modify its policy in a great variety of details to meet a great variety of views. But in the last analysis it will be faced by the necessity of making decisions which conflict with certain feelings and views. There may be all kinds of knowledge which a Government lacks and which outside opinion can supply. But there is a kind of knowledge which actual responsibility, and that alone, can supply. A Government which cannot or will not in the last resort apply that knowledge, and interpret it into action, is doomed; and the community it governs is also doomed to anarchy. A Government may know that order cannot be enforced, unless criminals are convicted, and that

criminals cannot be convicted, unless adequate protection can be given to witnesses. The existing law may not enable them to give this protection. The law must be changed, and, unless the necessary legislation can be passed, crime will increase until social order is destroyed. In England a Government, which cannot pass such legislation as it feels to be necessary, resigns. Another assumes its responsibility; and that responsibility brings the same knowledge, until both parties are convinced by experience of the necessity of making the change in the law required. But in India the existing executives cannot be removed by the legislatures, and, if they are to maintain order, cannot be divested of power to pass necessary laws however unpopular. They may and should be exposed to the influence of public opinion to the utmost. But in the last analysis they must have the power to decide which responsibility for maintaining order places upon them. The control which a Government must have cannot be divided. It can only be undermined and gradually destroyed.

The first step in all these schemes is to give the elected members a clear and decisive majority. When this is done there is no reason for keeping a small phalanx of official voters, who are not needed to speak, at the disposal of Government. They are not needed when measures are popular; they are perfectly useless when measures are resented. Indeed, they are worse than useless, because their presence is exasperating. Mr. Gokhale proposed that the official members should not be more than were necessary for explaining the Government case. He seems to have realized that their votes cease to have any value as a safeguard the moment they are reduced to a clear minority. The proposal to give a clear, decisive majority of elected members is equivalent to placing the Executive at the mercy of a wholly elective Council, unable to change the Government and with no responsibility for seeing that it is carried on. The question which ought to be considered is whether any Government under any circumstances ought to face that position.

I know what is in the back of the minds of some of those who advocate such measures. They believe that the "influence" of Government with a balance of members will suffice to secure them enough votes on most critical divisions. In its power of patronage, and of conferring titles and dignities, any Government in India has means of influence far greater than exist elsewhere. It is the most upright Government in the world; and yet, if you put it in such a position, it will infallibly yield to such temptation, without realizing, to begin with, that it is doing so. In any case it will suffer from the belief in the minds of its opponents that such means are used. In India, it cannot escape that imputation. Under the existing system, the imputation is already being made.

The above remarks apply to the first stage, that in which the control of legislation is abandoned by the Executive to the elected majority of the legislature. We now come to the second stage, that in which the Executive retains control of funds needed for police and other vital services, while abandoning the appropriation of the balance of the revenue to the elected members. To begin with, this concession is largely illusory, because the real bone of contention is the allocation of funds between police and education, that is to say, between the two different sections of the estimates. The arrangement will not prevent elected members from attacking the Executive for appropriating too much revenue for police, and for leaving too little for the heads submitted to the control of the legislature. The President can scarcely rule such speeches out of order. They will figure conspicuously in every budget debate, and help to aggravate the public temper. Now it is noticeable that, in the Provincial legislatures, attacks on the Government of India for their military expenditure play little part, and unless sufficiently veiled, could be ruled out of order from the chair. In the District Boards attacks on the Provincial Government for not reducing police expenditure, in order to give the Boards more revenue for education, are not heard at all.

One reason is that the financial relations of the province with India, and those of the district with the province, are settled by contracts covering a period of years. But the division of the revenue into two parts, one reserved to the control of Government, and the other submitted to the control of the legislature, can scarcely be made on a fixed basis. It will have to be adjusted every year, and the readjustment will be the occasion of most exasperating discussions.

The Executive know that if they are to do their duty and to maintain order, they must spend so much on police. They cannot afford the balances demanded by the elected members for their own section of the estimates, without imposing new taxation. If elected members wish to spend more money on education, there must be fresh taxation. Now it is a sacred principle of public finance, in the most democratic countries of the British Commonwealth like Australia, that proposals for new taxation must be initiated and framed by the ministers of the Crown, and not by private members in the legislature. The Executive may listen to suggestions from the legislature, but the formal proposal must be made and embodied in a Bill by the Executive. In India, at any rate, the whole responsibility for the new tax, and all the unpopularity accruing therefrom, will rest on the Executive.

The able administrator, whose proposals I am criticising, remarks: "No official can satisfactorily serve two masters whose instructions will be conflicting, without neglecting the interests of one." It will readily be seen, however, that the proposal to divide the estimates into two parts violates this principle. The Executive is to reserve control over one part of the estimates, yielding control of the other part to the legislature. The Executive is to be responsible to the Secretary of State for one part of the estimates; and to the legislature for another part. For the legislators have no other Executive of their own. To give them a separate Executive for the matters assigned to their control is the very proposal which my critic condemns.

So much for the second stage ; and now we come to the third and last stage, that in which the legislators are given the whole control of supply as well as of legislation, the Executive still remaining responsible to the Secretary of State. The Executive can pass no laws, and obtain no money, except by the will of an elected legislature. But the legislature cannot remove the Executive. The Government is only removable by, and is, therefore, still responsible to, the Secretary of State. Of such an arrangement it can only be said that it must from its nature lead, and has in experience always led, to a constitutional deadlock, the paralysis of government and consequent social disorder. The results of such a condition in a country like India can best be judged by those who have spent their lives there.

So far I have been discussing proposals, which are the necessary and logical outcome of the Minto-Morley reforms. Schemes devised on that principle differ mainly in the distance they propose to go down one and the same road which ends in a precipice. The Congress-League scheme would lead India to the very brink. To take one of its provisions only, it is laid down that Executives, whether National or Provincial, are bound by a resolution twice passed within thirteen months, despite the veto of the Governor-General. Let us take two not improbable cases. Suppose that a resolution is twice passed, obliging the Executive to make primary education universal and compulsory within a given time. Such a step would involve a vast increase of taxation. But the whole onus of framing the necessary measures of taxation is left to the Executive. That the legislature would shrink from passing such measures is more than probable. The Executive would then be in a position of having to execute orders, without the means of doing so. The legislature is to have power of issuing orders without the obligation of providing the funds to pay the cost. Such a scheme is impossible from the outset. It is also the negation of responsible government.

Then again the legislature might order the Execu-

tive to reduce the expenditure on police by one half. Such orders might involve an actual violation of contracts legally binding on Government. It might also, in the judgment of the Executive, involve an outbreak of public disorder. The opinion of the Governor-General would already have been recorded in his abortive veto, which would certainly not have been given without reference to the Secretary of State. As public-spirited and honorable men, the Executive, and indeed the Governor-General himself, would have no choice but to resign. The Secretary of State could not find others to take their place, and, without violating his conscience, could not ask them to do so. A deadlock with all its perils would be the result. "I would press," writes one of the advocates of this scheme, "for substantial control of Government until we can get responsible government. The step from the former to the latter will not be a long one."

As one who desires to see responsible government established in India as quickly as possible, I venture to differ. Responsible government can and will be attained by straightforward means. It will not be attained by means designed to destroy all government in the process.

The vital defect of the Minto-Morley principle is that it leaves the whole responsibility for government on one set of men, while rapidly transferring power to another set of men. It operates to render electorates less fit for responsible government, instead of more so. It creates a situation eminently calculated to exasperate the Executive and legislature with each other, and therefore to throw the British Government and the Indian community at large into a posture of mutual antagonism. The elected members, untempered by any prospect of having to conduct the government themselves, have everything to gain by harassing Government, and preventing it from passing the measures which it knows to be vital. In actual practice what happens, is not that Government is defeated,

---

<sup>1</sup> Letter to the *Bengalee* dated November 22, 1917.

but rather that it shrinks from proposing measures which it knows it cannot pass. The nerves of the State are slowly but surely paralysed. The elements of disorder grow and raise their heads. Every necessary measure for preserving order is denounced as an act of tyranny. The foundations of law decay, until suddenly, as in Ireland, the whole structure collapses, order has to be restored at the cost of bloodshed, and the growth of constitutional government is indefinitely postponed. No Government suffering from creeping paralysis can maintain its prestige. Even in India the prestige of Government does not depend upon outward show, upon ceremonies, uniforms, salutes, and the like, but simply on ability to discharge its functions. I regard the future establishment of responsible government in India as the greatest achievement in which my own race can share. But Government, as the leaders of the Russian revolution are discovering, is the only possible basis of self-government. Home rule can be given to Scotland or Wales, if they asked for it, to-morrow. The real difficulty of giving it to Ireland is that Government has never been firmly established in that country. In India no measures are real steps to self-government which operate to render it ungovernable in the process. Under the plan proposed, no elective member of the legislature contracts any responsibility for the maintenance of order. He merely develops into a hostile critic of the Government's endeavour to do so. He is given no chance of demonstrating any capacity to get things done. Popular leaders are brought to the front mainly by ability to harass the Government in trying to do them. There is no gradual transfer of responsibility. When public irritation has been raised to boiling point, and the final deadlock is reached, the only further concession which remains is to make the Executive responsible to, and therefore, removable by, the legislature. This means the institution of responsible government at one stroke in a community where electors and legislators have been given no previous exercise in political control. The intermediate stage

#### IV—EXISTING SYSTEM AND LOGICAL OUTCOME 81

of divided control is so eminently calculated to produce public irritation that it would, in my opinion, be far safer to take this step at the outset. That course, however, is specially rejected in the recent pronouncement of the Secretary of State ; so it does not therefore come within the scope of these notes to discuss it.

## V

### THE FRUITS OF EXPERIENCE.

The fact is that no system will succeed under which it is not possible in the last instance to secure harmony between the Executive and legislature in matters essential to government. The discovery of the means whereby this can be done in a Government based on election is the great achievement of England ; and it is worth while glancing at the manner in which that discovery was arrived at. In the early Middle Ages, the King ruled and enacted the laws. Then came the stage at which Parliament had acquired the sole right of making laws and voting supply, while the executive power remained in the hands of the King and his ministers. There were no legitimate means of harmonising the action of the Executive and legislature, and conflict between the two, mitigated by corruption of Parliament by the Crown, was the keynote of the constitutional struggles of the 17th century, which ended in the downfall of the Stuart line. The first two Hanoverian Kings, who succeeded the Stuarts, were foreigners who knew no English and were mainly interested in their German dominions. The government of Great Britain they left to ministers who could control the House of Commons. George III, who knew English, and was more interested in his British than in his German dominions, tried to go back on this system. By wholesale corruption he endeavoured to make Parliament amenable to his will, and chose as his ministers, not the real popular leaders, but men who would stoop to be instruments of corruption. One result was the loss of America. The situation was saved by the fact that the Younger Pitt, the popular leader, gained a great ascendancy over the King, whose mind presently began to fail. The principle that the King must choose as his ministers men, who for the time being were able to command a

majority in the legislature, was gradually established. The principle was finally confirmed with the advent to the throne of a girl Queen in 1837. Thenceforward the Sovereign was removed from the position of ruler to that of an hereditary President in a commonwealth. The power of the mediaeval Sovereign passed to the leaders, who, for the time being, were able to command a majority in Parliament. This command of the legislature was the condition of office. *Responsible government is simply a means of securing that the Executive can control the legislature, the necessary condition of all government.*

The history of constitutional government in Scotland, Ireland and the Colonies enforces the same lesson.

The Scottish Parliament first came into effective being in the struggle with the Stuarts. The crisis began when, in 1693, the Scottish Parliament passed a Bill fatal to the monopoly of the English East India Company. Tweeddale, the King's minister, yielding to his feelings as a Scottish nationalist, disobeyed the orders of William III and ratified the Bill. Serious complications with Spain were the result, and finally the financial ruin of Scotland. The efforts made to render the system workable by corruption broke down. Nationalist feeling was too strong for such expedients. The crisis was precipitated in 1701, when the Scottish Parliament refused to pass a Bill providing that on the death of Queen Anne, the same King should succeed to the Scottish as to the English throne.

Separation and war were avoided by the merging of the English and Scottish Parliaments in one Parliament of Great Britain. The problem of securing harmony between the legislatures and executives in both countries was thus consolidated and transferred to Westminster to find its solution there a century later.

The very same problem was provoked by the Irish Parliament in the reign of Henry VII. The problem was partly solved by Poyning's law, which deprived the Irish Parliament of all power of initiative. Many other causes were operating to prevent the establishment of order in Ireland. The system, such as it was,

was worked by open corruption. For value paid in titles, patronage and coin certain powerful families, called the "Undertakers," made themselves responsible for obtaining in the legislature the majorities required by the Irish executive. But again nationalist feeling was too strong for corruption. In 1782, in the throes of the American War, Poyning's law was repealed, and Ireland was given a constitution strictly comparable with that which is now proposed for India. Corruption was worked to the full; but government atrophied, till, in 1798, Ireland was a scene of weltering chaos and bloodshed. The remedy was found by merging the Irish in the British Parliament. The difficulty of granting Home Rule to Ireland to-day largely has its roots in the anarchy which prevailed throughout the 18th century.

In the American colonies the same system obtained from the outset. The Executives could not obtain the laws necessary to secure order between the colonists and the Indians, nor yet the revenues needed for purely American purposes. The result was the revolution and secession of the colonies. The position had then to be faced by Washington. The basic elements of American society were drawn from the most law-abiding classes in England. But Washington found that he was dealing with a society which had grown unused to the restraints of any government whatever. Implored to use his great influence to restore order in Massachusetts, he replied with the memorable aphorism "Influence is not government." Charged with the task of creating an American Government, he solved the problem by making the Executive and legislature amenable to the same electorate. In a rigid and imperfect manner he anticipated the great discovery of responsible government, which had yet to be made in England.

The same features as had vitiated the American system were reproduced under the Quebec Act in the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada. The legislatures were elective, while the executives, though mainly if not entirely consisting of Canadians, were

appointed from England. Chronic and increasing friction were the result, leading to deadlock, and ending in the third decade of the 19th century in two rebellions, one in each Province. Lord Durham was then sent out, and produced a report on the whole situation, which first explained to Englishmen the nature of the great discovery they had made at home—responsible government. Durham recommended its application to Canada. He pointed out that no executive can continue to discharge its functions unless it can control the legislature. This, however, was impossible where, as in Canada, the mainspring of the Executive was in London, while the mainspring of the legislature was in Canada. The Imperial Government must either abolish the elective principle in the legislature, and so make it subordinate to the Executive, or else place the Executive in the hands of the leaders who controlled the legislature for the time being. The power of the Executive to carry laws, money and otherwise, essential to the maintenance of the Queen's government, was an absolute necessity. His advice was taken, and applied, not only to Canada, but also to other parts of the British Commonwealth, wherever the material for adequate electorates already existed.

The system condemned by Durham was recently revived in the case of the Transvaal in the Lyttelton constitution of 1906. The files of *Hasard* are not accessible, but I venture to suggest that, if any one will search them, he will find that the case urged against that measure by the Liberal opposition rests on the considerations adduced in this memorandum. That constitution never came into force; but, had it done so, no one, in the light of after events, can doubt that it would have come to a deadlock in the first session. The Appropriation Bill would never have been passed, and the Governor would have been faced with the same situation as confronted Durham in Canada.

In all these cases, be it noted, the materials for electorates existed already. These struggles were not, in fact, the exercise which fitted electorates for res-

possible government. Rather they resulted from communities already fit for self-government, who were feeling about in the darkness, until they discovered by trial, failure, and retrial the mechanism whereby the action of the Executive and legislature could be harmonised on the basis of popular government. The lesson of these blunders can be read. There is nothing to be gained by repeating them in a country like India, but infinite peril by reason of the irritation they cause.

The experience gained on this subject in various parts of the British Commonwealth is ably reviewed by A. Lawrence Lowell, the President of Harvard University, in the second volume of his standard work, *The Government of England*, which is, by the way, on the syllabus of the Calcutta University. He then goes on to examine two cases in which the Imperial Government, having advanced along the lines now proposed in India, had to go back instead of advancing to responsible government

#### THE CROWN COLONIES

The old system of a governor appointed by the Crown coupled with a legislature elected by the people has disappeared also in most of the colonies whose inhabitants are not mainly of European origin, but in this case the evolution has proceeded in the opposite direction. And here it may be observed that in some colonies where the population was white a hundred years ago, it is no longer so now, not in consequence of any great change in the proportion of the races, but because however numerous the slaves might be, they were, until freed, of no political account. In this way most of the British West Indies, where formerly the Europeans were almost alone considered, are now filled with a teeming free population, of which the whites form a very small part.

The history of Jamaica may serve to illustrate the transformations by which the earlier form of government has been turned into that of a modern crown colony. Captured from the Spaniards in 1655, the island was

---

\* "The Government of England," by A. Lawrence Lowell, volume II, Chapter LVI.

rapidly settled by Englishmen, and Lord Windsor, on his appointment as Governor in 1662, was instructed to call legislative assemblies according to the custom of the other colonies. Thus a government of the familiar type was created, with a royal governor, an appointed council, and an elected assembly. A score of years had not passed before friction with England began, and although in this instance matters were soon adjusted, troubles arose again later, and throughout the eighteenth century we find in a milder form quarrels, of the same nature as in the North American Colonies, constantly breaking out between the Governor and the Assembly. That body refused for years to vote a permanent revenue, and made appropriations to be expended only by officers appointed by itself. In fact, by a series of local acts the collection and expenditure of the revenue was taken almost entirely out of the hands of the Governor, and transferred to commissioners who were really the members of the Assembly under another name. Had the island been inhabited only by Englishmen, these difficulties might eventually have led, as in Canada, to the grant of a responsible ministry, but the presence of slaves, ten times as numerous as the free whites, led in the nineteenth century to both economic and political upheavals.

In 1807 Parliament forbade the slave trade, and this caused a scarcity of labour in Jamaica. In 1833 it went much further and against a protest of the Assembly denying its right to interfere in the internal affairs of the island, it abolished slavery, granting to the planters a compensation which they regarded as wholly inadequate. As the negroes in that climate could easily get a living from unoccupied lands without working for wages, emancipation struck a severe blow at the industries of the colony. In 1838 Parliament again undertook to legislate about the domestic concerns of the island; this time by an Act which took the regulation of prisons out of the hands of the local authorities. Whereupon the Assembly, in consideration of "the aggressions which the British Parliament continue to make on the rights of the people" of the colony, resolved to "abstain from any legislative function except such as may be necessary to preserve inviolate the faith of the island with the public creditor." The English ministry then brought in a bill to suspend the constitution of Jamaica. This, however, was defeated in the House of Commons, causing the fall of Lord

Melbourne's cabinet, and although Sir Robert Peel failed to form a ministry on account of the famous "Bedchamber Question," Melbourne on returning to power made no second attempt to pass the bill.

The planters must have felt that England was hounding them to their ruin, for in 1848 the foundations of their former prosperity were undermined still further by the adoption of free trade, and the removal of preferential tariffs in favour of sugar from the British West Indies. The Assembly, under the pressure of economic distress, passed retrenchment bills, which the appointed Council rejected as a breach of public faith, and the deadlock continued until, by the offer of a loan of half a million pounds, the Assembly was induced in 1854 to consent to a revision of its fundamental laws. The new constitution of that year enlarged the powers of the Governor in various ways; among others by transferring to him the functions hitherto exercised by the members of the Assembly when acting as commissioners for collecting and expending the revenue, and although he was to be assisted in the performance of his duties by an Executive Committee composed of three members of the Assembly and one of the Council, those members were to be selected by him.

For half a dozen years the new machinery worked well enough, but the opportunity for political deadlocks had by no means been removed, and in 1860 strife between the Governor and the Assembly began afresh. The first occasion thereof was a question about the responsibility of the Executive Committee for an over-expenditure; but the quarrel, as often happens, wandered off into other paths, and might have continued merrily on its way had not an alarming insurrection of the negroes broken out in 1865. Governor Eyre was accused of cruelty in suppressing it, but his action, which was vigorous and decisive, won the admiration of the white people. They had, in fact, been thoroughly frightened, and were ready to surrender their political rights for the sake of having a strong executive. At the close of 1866, therefore, the legislature of Jamaica authorised the Queen to create a new government for the island, and by an Act of Parliament the elective Assembly, after a life of two hundred years, came to an end.

Under the constitution which went into effect in 1867, the island became a crown colony with a single

Legislative Council, composed of six unofficial members, all appointed by the Crown. The former were the principal officers of state in the island, such as the Colonial Secretary, the Attorney-General and the Commauder of the troops, while the Governor himself acted as chairman. But the political experiments in Jamaica were not yet over. After a few years the planters recovered from their fright, and longed to have the administration of public affairs once more in their own hands. In 1876, they sent a memorial to the House of Commons, asking that the inhabitants might have representatives in the Council and might control the revenues. The Secretary of State replied that a suggestion to alter the constitution so recently established, could not be entertained. But when similar petitions were made in later years, the government yielded to the extent of permitting half of the seats in the Council to be elective. The change was made by the Constitution of 1884, whereby the Council was to consist of the Governor, and of nine appointed, and nine elected, members. Inasmuch as the Governor could control the appointed members, such an arrangement would appear to place a constant majority at his command, but this result was modified by a provision that a two-thirds vote of the elective members on financial questions, or a unanimous vote of those members on any other subject, should be decisive, unless the Governor considered the matter of paramount public importance. In other words, he had power to override the elected members, but he was not intended to use that power for current affairs.

Except for a few changes that do not concern us here, the Constitution of 1884 remained unaltered until 1897, when the Council was enlarged in a way which must be described in order to make clear the present method of controlling that body. The elected members were increased from nine to fourteen, one for each of the parishes in the island. At the same time the official and appointed members were raised only to ten, or, including the Governor, to eleven, but he was empowered to add four more if a question of great importance made it necessary to do so. In short, he was normally in a minority in the Council, but as a last resort could transform his appointees into a majority. This he did a couple of years later, after a long series of altercations with the elected members, chiefly on the subject of the taxes.

For some time insular finance had been perplexing. There had been deficits, and the Governor with the appointed members felt that the revenue must be made to balance the expenditure; while the elected members, suffering under the weight of the existing taxation, were loath to increase their burdens. Finally, in 1899, the Governor proposed a tax on typewriters, sewing machines, books and magazines and when the elected members refused to vote for it, he made appointments to the four additional seats on the Council. The step was taken after a consultation with Mr. Chamberlain, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, and although the additional members resigned soon afterwards, on an undertaking by the elective councillors to vote for the tax, their appointment showed that the home government were prepared in cases of serious disagreement to exert its authority by overpowering the elective element in the Council.

The history of Jamaica is the more instructive, because the government in its transition from the old type to its present form has passed through an unusual variety of metamorphoses. It has had alongside of the Governor an Assembly wholly elected, a single Legislative Council wholly appointed, and a Council in which the elected members were, or could be made, a minority. Each of these forms is still found in the crown colonies, but save in a very few cases the first of them has disappeared and the prevalent types are those in which the legislature is composed exclusively, or for the major part, of appointed members.

A more recent example of the tendency to do away with an elective assembly, where full responsible government cannot be granted, may be seen in the case of Malta. After its capture from the French in 1800 the island was at first under the sole authority of a Governor, who was often the Commander-in-Chief of the forces there; and in fact it is the great importance of Malta as a naval base that has prevented it from acquiring any large measure of self-government. Strategic considerations will not permit the people to govern themselves as they please, and yet the inhabitants, who enjoyed a representative assembly before the coming of the Knights of St. John, are so numerous that the post cannot be treated, like Gibraltar, simply as a garrison. But this peculiar condition, which has precluded government by responsible

ministry on one side, and pure military rule on the other, does not make the political events in the island less valuable as an illustration of the difficulty of maintaining a semi-popular form of administration.

An advisory council was associated with the government of Malta in 1838-39, but no trace of popular representation was introduced until 1849, when the Crown by Letters Patent created a Council of Government, composed of the Governor with nine appointed, and eight elective, members. This gave the people of the island a chance to make their opinions heard, but not to make them prevail, for the government always had a majority at its command, and at times used it so freely as to foster a strong desire to bring the local administration under real popular control. The agitation continued for many years, and finally a plan for a new Council, based upon petitions by the Maltese themselves, was put into effect by Letters Patent of 1887. It reduced the appointed members to six, and increased the elected ones to fourteen, of whom ten were chosen by the ordinary voters, while the clergy, the nobility, the graduates of the university and the chamber of commerce had one representative apiece. Thus the elected members preponderated heavily, and what is more, on money bills their votes alone were to be counted. On the other hand, the Crown had not only the usual veto and an exclusive right to initiate measures dealing with the revenue, but reserved to itself an ultimate power to legislate independently by Order in Council.

The Maltese soon found that their actual control over the government was less than they had expected, and as early as 1891, after the elected members had resigned as a protest against the policy of the Governor, a riot was caused by the attempt of a mob to overawe the Council. Dissensions continued, with resignation as an occasional resource, but the popular party had no specific issue as a basis for opposition until 1898. In that year Colonel Hewson, a British army officer, who had given evidence in English as a witness, and was asked to sign a translation of it into Italian, the official language of the court, refused to do so on the ground that he could not read what he was required to sign. Thereupon he was committed for contempt of court; and although the Governor saved him from going to gaol, indignation was felt that a British officer should be ordered to prison

by a British court for refusing to sign a statement in a foreign tongue that he did not understand. Mr. Chamberlain directed the Governor to lay before the Council ordinances making English as well as Italian the official language of the courts, and when the Council rejected them, they were enacted by Order in Council in March 1899. The elected members protested, resigned, were returned again without opposition, and then refused to pass money bills, which were in turn put in force by Order in Council.

The question of language involved a singular state of affairs. Italian, which had been substituted for Latin in the courts after the English occupation, was the tongue of the educated classes, but not of the great mass of the population, who speak Maltese, a dialect based upon Arabic. It could fairly be asserted, therefore, that English was quite as appropriate an official language as Italian. The question affected the schools as well as the courts.

Some time before a plan had been put in force whereby the children were taught Maltese in the two youngest classes, and then the parents were allowed to choose whether they should study English or Italian, with the result that by far the greater part of them chose the former. But now the elected members of the Council, claiming that the voice of the parents was not really free, demanded that Italian should be the regular subject of study, and declined to pass some of the appropriations for the schools unless an ordinance for the purpose was adopted. In an interview with Mr. Chamberlain their delegates went much further, asking for responsible government. Such a request was of course refused, with an intimation that the elected members did not fairly represent the people of the colony; and in view of the small proportion of voters and the still smaller number who went to the polls, this may very well have been true.

The leaders of the opposition to the government set on foot a vigorous agitation in the island; while in the Council they passed their ordinance for the schools; only to see it met by a veto. Thereupon they rejected appropriation, resigned, and were again re-elected. Clearly the constitution as it stood did not work. The popular element was too strong or too weak to please any one; and finally in 1903 the gordian knot was cut by Letters Patent which abolished the Council, and substituted

another composed, in addition to the Governor, of ten appointed, and only eight elected, members. The Governor was given also the sole right of initiating measures, and thus the Council was reduced to a consultative body where the representatives of the people can express their opinions, but have no means of putting them into effect. After an experience of seventeen years the Constitution of 1887 had been abandoned, and the conditions of 1849 have been restored. Nor was the result due to a change of party in England, for the Letters Patent of 1887 had been issued by a Conservative ministry. *The constitution of that year was doomed to fail, because it created two independent forces that were almost certain to come into collision, without any power which could bring them into harmony. Parliamentary government avoids deadlock by making the executive responsible to the legislature. Presidential government limits deadlocks, because all the organs of the state must ultimately submit to a superior tribunal, the electorate of the nation. But a legislature elected by the people coupled with a Governor appointed by a distant power, is a contrivance for fomenting dissensions and making them perpetual*

Such being the experience of the British Commonwealth, as interpreted by an American investigator of the highest authority, advocates of this principle are commonly driven to defend it by appealing to the examples of Germany and Austria. Mr. Gokhale, for instance, advises that "The relations of the Executive Government and the Legislative Councils so constituted should be roughly similar to those between the Imperial Government and the Reichstag in Germany." Before, however, we accept German guidance in the task of extending self-government to India, it is well to examine a little more closely, than I think Mr. Gokhale had done, the inner working of the elective institutions which the monarchs of Central Europe have used as a mask for despotism. Some years ago I had an informing conversation on this subject with the correspondent of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, which was then an organ of German liberalism. "How is it," I asked, "that your Emperor is able to pass his budgets and measures through an assembly based on male adult suffrage?" "Because," my German

“friend replied, “ whenever the Reichstag has rejected “measures which the Emperor deems essential, the “Emperor has dissolved them, and appealed to the “nation to support him. And so far the nation has “always given the Emperor the majority for which he “has asked.” “Do you mean,” I enquired, “that “your Emperor goes electioneering, and that the voters “support him against their own representatives?” “That is what it comes to,” he said. “You, of “course, do not understand the power which the “Kaiser’s claim to divine right still has over the minds “of the German people, a power reinforced by an un- “broken chain of military success for the last century.” “But this claim to superior wisdom based on divine “right,” I objected, “will scarcely continue to prevail “indefinitely with an educated people like the Germans. “Sooner or later the voters will refuse to listen to the “Kaiser’s appeal, and will support their own represen- “tatives by returning a majority pledged to reject the “Emperor’s measures.” My friend threw up his hands “in horror and cried, “God forbid! We should then “lose our constitution. The Emperor would simply “dismiss the Reichstag, collect the taxes and proceed “to administer the country without them, with the “army at his back.” “But the army,” I urged, “is “the nation in arms. Why do you fear that the nation “in arms should support the Emperor against the nation “at the ballot box?” “It is just the habit of military “discipline,” he replied. “So long as the German “people are dazzled by a course of unbroken military “success, the prestige of the monarchy will remain un- “impaired and all powerful. The power of the head of “the army over the soldiers will be stronger than the “spirit of freedom amongst those soldiers in private “life.” From that moment onwards I felt that war was inevitable. If the system rested on the military prestige of the dynasty, and the habit of blind obedience in the ranks, that habit would have to be exercised in war, and the prestige of the dynasty would have to be refreshed with new victories. And now, when the failure of the Kaiser’s brutal designs is cast-

ing its shadow on the dynasty's prestige, the Reichstag is beginning to assert its claim to make and unmake the Executive. To that claim the Kaiser is opposing his own, that his ministers are responsible to him alone, as he himself is responsible, not to the people of Germany, but to God. The system cannot outlast the failure and fall of the Prussian autocracy. Reformers will be wise to look for some other model upon which to base the first steps towards responsible government in India.

Outside the British Commonwealth a number of countries have endeavoured to pass from paternal to popular government. Of these I can only think of two important cases in which the transition has been effected without a long series of revolutions and civil disorders. These two are Italy and Japan. The nucleus of modern Italy was Piedmont, a state in which constitutional government had already been achieved. In both these cases the transition was watched and tended by native monarchs who, unlike the German Emperor, used their personal prestige to guide the nation from paternal to popular government. Mr. Price Collier states that on several occasions, when the opposition in the Japanese Assembly threatened to embarrass the Government, a message was sent to them from the Mikado that their speeches disturbed the souls of his ancestors. Instantly the opposition collapsed. In plain words the Mikado, in guiding his people towards responsible government, made full use of the religious veneration with which his throne was regarded. In India an alien Government has no such appeal to make. Still less can it go on election campaigns like the German Emperor.

Elsewhere the movement towards responsible government has proceeded through a series of violent and bloody disorders. France, Mexico, the South American Republics, Turkey, Persia, China and Russia are cases in point. Not all of these countries can be said to have yet reached the goal of responsible government; and the failure has been most marked, where ever the country was so large that it was necessary to

organize Provincial democracies as well as a central democracy, and bring these different organs of Government into proper relation with each other. The reason for the success achieved in America and the British Dominions was in great measure due to the fact that the provincial democracies were thoroughly developed and established before any attempt was made to bring the central government under popular control.

## VI

### ALTERNATIVE METHODS COMPARED.

Imperial, and even provincial, executives are somewhat removed from the facts to which their decisions relate. The springs of action may be weakened at headquarters some time before the effects are seen in the field. A poison may be none the less deadly because it is slow, but the connection of cause and effect are harder to trace. It is perilously easy for one generation to ignore the results of a system which will only mature in the time of their successors. But when in 1912 Mr. Gokhale proposed to extend the principle, already applied to the Indian and Provincial Executives, to the District Executive, Lord Hardinge's Government were quick to see where it led. Speaking on behalf of that Government, the Member for the Home Department reviewed that proposal as follows:—

“ Well, Sir, as the Hon'ble Mover has said, he only wishes this Council to be advisory to *begin with*. This council of nine men when we come to look to Mr. Gokhale's proposals we find that so far from being advisory to begin with, they are very largely administrative councils, and that is the view which has been taken by many Hon'ble Members of this Council—they want not advisory but administrative or executive councils. Well, Sir, I have said enough to show that Collectors and executive officers will not be rendered more efficient by a council of this kind ; but that if local matters are to be referred to anybody, it must be local bodies and that the hopes lie with them ; but in case this Council desire to pass this resolution in agreement with the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, I should like it to feel not only that this Collector's council might be to *begin with*, but what it might become to end with. I fear myself that the nine councillors intended by the Hon'ble Mr Gokhale as nine muses to inspire the Collector, would end by becoming nine millstones round his neck. If that should come to pass, we might as well do away

with the unfortunate Collector altogether. Now, Sir, the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has not repeated what he has said in his evidence before the Decentralisation Commission, and it may perhaps interest you to know before you agree to his council of nine. Under his scheme you would already have succeeded in abolishing the post of Commissioner, and there would be no one left between the Local Government and the Collector.

“ If I have been able to convince Hon'ble Members here that the Collector would also go, I should very much like to know what the opinion of the Council will be. I hardly suppose that the Hon'ble Mover himself contemplates this result absolutely with equanimity. I do not think that the Council will do so either, and I am perfectly sure that any such idea as the elimination of the Collector or the emasculation of his power would be viewed with the utmost consternation and concern by the masses of the people, to whom the impartiality of the Collector, and, I may add, his independence, is the very sheet anchor of their trust in British administration. As far as Government is concerned, I can only say that if this proposal, as devised by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, were carried out and carried to its logical conclusions, it would undermine the executive power of the Government, and it is quite impossible therefore that the Government of this country can contemplate for a moment its executive powers being undermined.”

The general teaching of experience needs to be studied to the full. But the real intrinsic nature of the problem before us has to be grasped, and a new solution devised to fit its peculiar conditions. We shall not solve it by tearing leaves wholesale out of the records of precedents. We must think for ourselves, and have the courage to add a new page to the volume of human experience. The root of the problem, I suggest, is to bring electorates, however small, into being; to give them genuine responsibilities; to enable them to trace the effect of the votes they give on their own lives and so to connect cause and effect; to watch the results; and to add responsibilities with a generous hand, as fast as the results justify the addition, at the same time increasing the electorates as rapidly as may be.

It is in the light of this conception that I propose to examine the one expedient which I have so far seen proposed which does not proceed upon the principle of leaving the Executives responsible to Parliament in England, while making them dependent for their powers on elective assemblies in India, unweighted by any responsibility for seeing that the government is carried on. The plan in question is to institute complete responsible government in one selected area and observe the results. Underlying this suggestion is, I feel, the fallacious assumption that communities being either fit or unfit for self-government, statesmanship, therefore, consists in discovering to which of two categories a given community belongs. Now India is of all countries the most diverse, not only in race, language and religion, but also in the degree of advancement attained by its various parts. One test of one part would be little or no criterion of the others. Moreover, the institution of full responsible government in one province only would tend to make the others unmanageable. Men are sentient beings; and you cannot import the methods of a physical laboratory into political research. The general unrest produced throughout the rest of India, which was asked to wait indefinitely, would react on the favoured province, and prejudice the results of the experiment there. If the first experiments on responsible government are to succeed, it must be in an India at peace in her own mind and throughout her coasts.

This expedient, moreover, mistakes the whole character of the problem, as I see it, which is to train electorates throughout India by the exercise of real responsibilities proportioned to the strength of the electorate for the time being. The process of education should proceed simultaneously in all parts of British India, according to the pace at which each community is able to move. The example set by the more advanced communities will be simply invaluable, but only if the more backward communities are given the opportunity of emulating and imitating that example at once, so far as in them lies. They must be

allowed to feel that the successful exercise of one power will quickly be followed by the addition of others.

This particular proposal has been mooted by men who are just as firmly convinced as I am that responsible government is the only sound goal of policy, and are no less anxious to reach it. On several occasions, however, I have met people who honestly believed that the goal of self-government for India was a mirage, and have done their best to convert me to that view. Such people are fertile in negative advice. Having listened to the reasons against every suggested course, I have always made a point of asking them what positive suggestion they would offer, assuming that public opinion in England insists that something should be done. Pressed to this point, the advice of such men has usually been to initiate full responsible government in one province as an experiment. That, they believe, would convince public opinion at home of the truth of their own conviction that responsible government is a goal of policy impossible for India. I agree that the results of so drastic an experiment would be likely to fail. But the failure would lead to a wholly misleading conclusion. You might just as well set out to test the potential vitality of a man long bed-ridden, by sending him to march twenty miles the first day. The proper course is to develop his strength by a little exercise gradually increased as the patient can bear it. That I submit can only be done by transferring some genuine functions to Indian executives responsible to electorates, and by increasing the burden as each of them shows its capacity to carry more.

## VII

### THE GOAL.

The principle of specific delegation is highly elastic. It admits of infinite diversity of application. To begin with, it involves a reconsideration of the map. But that is a virtue rather than a defect; for, if anything is certain, it is this, that a map of India designed from first to last to suit the needs of a highly bureaucratic government, with its mainspring in England, is not suited to a country governed by Executives responsible to electorates in India itself: and that is the goal to which we are now pledged. Every step we now take, and specially the first, must look to a time when all purely Indian questions will be decided in India by Indian electorates. We are bound to test all our proposals by the question how they will lead to that goal, and, when it is reached, how far they will harmonize with its conditions. The very object of stating a goal is to avoid makeshifts, which come to stay, and hang about the neck of the future like millstones. It is capacity to work with an eye on the distant goal, which distinguishes the statesman from mere politicians who live from hand to mouth.

Now what are purely Indian questions? To answer that question we must ask another—what is India? The goal of responsible government implies an ideal inseparable from its attainment—a self-governing nation or nations, a Dominion or Dominions within the limits of the British Commonwealth. Now is India to be the future home of one nation, or a group of nations; of one Dominion, or of a group of Dominions? To bring matters down to a fine point, is Europe the model upon which India is to develop, or rather is she to seek her example in the territories covered by the United States of America? There are two schools of thought on this subject, and it is essential that the issues between them should be thought

out in time. For everything which follows will depend upon which of those two conceptions are chosen.

The great diversity of India in respect of race, language and religion, points to Europe rather than the United States as the natural model to be followed. If so, our aim will then be to mould Bengal, Madras, Bombay, the Punjab, the United Provinces, and the other existing provinces of India into nations, each with a domestic government responsible to itself. But if we are really keeping the goal of responsible government in our minds, this conception breaks down at the outset. We are bound to look at future needs, as well as at present conditions. These units, large as they are, have common interests which are strictly Indian, railways, tariffs, social law and commercial law, which cannot be controlled by these units acting apart. The recent experience of South Africa, and the older experience of the other Dominions, and of the United States, proves that a number of self-governing units cannot control these interests, without establishing a central government responsible to all the communities alike. Unless we look forward to an Indian Government responsible to the whole people of India for the control of interests too large for any of her provinces, those interests will have to be controlled by the Imperial Government from outside. That is the view expressed in Lord Islington's recent lecture at Oxford, but it is utterly incompatible with the Pronouncement of the 20th of August. If Indian tariffs are always to be controlled by the Imperial Government, then matters which are strictly Indian will be controlled by an authority outside India, and that is the negation of responsible government: The nations of Europe, with all their diversity, have such interests in common, interests which cannot be controlled, so long as they remain divided in separate camps, with no common authority and no common law. Hence the spectre of war, which the United States has long banished from her shores, haunts, and will long continue to haunt, Europe. Unless India is doomed to the fate of Europe, her common interests must be controlled.

We are pledged to the goal of transferring that control to India herself.\* Responsible government means no less, and it is in realizing that control, in becoming the mistress of her own house and in all its chambers, that India will transcend the diversity of her races, religions and tongues, and attain in the end to the consciousness of nationalism and to the verity of nationhood. The recent declaration leaves us no choice. It is not Europe which we can take as the model for India, but a super-nation, conceived on the scale of the United States of America, as that nation would have been, had it remained within the precincts of the British Commonwealth.

This conception, which we cannot evade, without being false to our pledges, brings with it the motive, in the absence of which all schemes of self-government, all projects of making a nation in India, will fail. The ideal of an Indian nation, the appeal of Indian patriotism, is the choice which educated Indians themselves will make. The appeal of a Bengali nation, or of a Punjabi nation, is not of itself large enough to evoke the spirit of devotion upon which alone self-government can rest. It was love of Japan which moved her people to seek from all the world the knowledge which might raise their country to the plane achieved by other great nations of the world. This devotion to a great country, existing or to be, is the spiritual force without which education degenerates into mere instruction. If we do but think what the task of an English schoolmaster would be, could he never appeal to a sense of English nationalism, we shall realize this truth. As the name of England stirs ourselves, so must the name of India be brought to stir the children of this country. Personally I see in India little trace of spontaneous devotion to the British Commonwealth, or of Imperial patriotism as I conceive it,—the kind of sentiment which makes Australians and Canadians feel they would die sooner than see this Commonwealth perish, or their own nation cease to be part of it. Roots from which this greater love has sprung have yet to be planted in

India, and we must not look to gather that rich harvest, until the seeds of freedom have long flourished in her soil. Some gratitude exists in the minds of those who realize the benefits of British rule. Much loyalty there is on the part of princes and nobles to the person of the King. The legend of that King ruling a quarter of mankind has its hold on the oriental imagination of the dumb millions of the Indian mofussil. But those strong though delicate ties of mutual esteem and affection, by which the citizens of a true Commonwealth are knit, have yet to be developed. They will spring in time from the new policy. Their growth will be the triumph of a later age. For the present I believe there is nothing to be gained by artificial forcing of an Imperial patriotism, until a true Indian patriotism has become conscious in the life and soul of this people. Cultivate that; give it scope for expression, and above all a field for exercise; and one day the greater love of the greater Commonwealth will be found to have come without observation. With educated Indians this may be sooner than we now dream, if they be but given their place in the supreme councils of this world Commonwealth, to which they are entitled, and from which, indeed, they cannot be spared.

## VIII

### THE MAP OF INDIA.

It is in assuming the control of Indian affairs that an Indian patriotism and its after-fruits will develop. And no vision smaller than India will give to her people the internal driving force they need. Let us face the ideal of a united India in all its magnitude and in all its diversity. Let us face the difficulties with which that magnitude and diversity confront us, and endeavour to reduce them at the outset so far as we can. What place, for instance, has Burma in the vision of a future Indian nation? Geographically she is as far removed from India as Rangoon is from Calcutta. In race, language and religion, her people have scarcely a point in common with those of India. The attempt to incorporate Burma in the fabric of Indian administration is the consequence of a system, the antithesis of popular government, which groups different communities without reference to anything but immediate administrative convenience. Burma was incorporated in India when our policy was dominated by the conception of a vast Eastern dependency. That conception is now abandoned, and India and Burma ought to be divorced. The people of neither country desire the alliance. The Burmese member has no proper place in the Indian legislature. If we really intend to create a united self-governing India, Burma should be emancipated from the Government of India, and should either be placed under the personal rule of the Viceroy, or its Government should be rendered answerable to the Secretary of State for India direct. It will be more contrary to nature to force Burma into the fabric of an Indian nationhood, than to incorporate Ireland in Great Britain, or Finland in Russia. To this important extent the problem can be simplified at once.

India, we have said, must come to control affairs

which are purely Indian. She is however to remain an integral part of the British Commonwealth. Her foreign affairs are those of the whole Commonwealth. She can never therefore control them apart. They form an integral part of the foreign affairs of the whole Commonwealth, in the control of which she must come to share. The Indian frontier is a large item in foreign affairs. Live wires run from it throughout the whole of Asia and Europe, the mismanagement of which at this end may involve the whole Commonwealth in war and set the whole of the world on fire. Here is the one critical frontier in any part of the British Dominions, and, if India were now inhabited by a people already as fitted and practised in self-government as those of England herself, it would not be possible, so long as they remain part of the British Commonwealth, to place the Indian frontier under the control of a Government responsible only to the people of India. That frontier must remain under the sole, unfettered control of the Imperial Government charged with the conduct of foreign affairs. This principle ought to be enunciated and implemented now, and effect can only be given to it by reserving from the outset a strip, however narrow, from sea to sea, which would isolate a self-governing India from any contact with foreign frontiers. The proposal means no more than completing the policy inaugurated by Lord Curzon when he separated the North-West Frontier Province from the Punjab. That province has simply to be extended down the right bank of the Indus to the Arabian Sea, and eastwards along the foothills of the mountain barrier, taking a narrow strip not more than a few miles wide along the frontiers of Nepal, to the point where the boundaries of India and Burma meet on the confines of Tibet. The self-governing India of the future would then be as well isolated from complications with foreign powers as Australia herself. The future destination of the frontier province would be signalized by removing it to the personal control of the Viceroy from the jurisdiction of the Governor-General in Coun-

cil, the members of which are destined to become hereafter the ministers of a cabinet responsible to an Indian Parliament. This arrangement would be closely analogous to that under which the Governor-General of South Africa is, in that capacity, the legal head of the Union Government, while, as High Commissioner, he is responsible to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, as *de facto* ruler of all British South African territories not included in the Union.

If once it were understood that India were to be separated from foreign complications by a province destined to remain subject to the Imperial Government as absolutely and as finally as Malta or Gibraltar, the whole project of developing India as a self-governing Dominion will begin to assume a different aspect. A large factor in the alarm, with which the cautious Englishman views that prospect, arises from the half-conscious dread in the back of his mind as to what would happen to the peace of the whole Commonwealth, if this, its one critical frontier, were relegated to the charge of a Dominion ministry. Such a thing would be utterly wrong in principle. Imperial control of the frontier ought to be established from the outset, and, when once that has been definitely settled, the Imperial Government can embark on steps for establishing India on the same footing as the self-governing Dominions with a lighter heart and a clearer mind.

The territory, then, of which I am thinking as the home of a future self-governing Dominion is the Indian Peninsula bounded by the Indus, the line where the plains meet the Himalayan range and the line which divides Burma from Assam and Bengal. It is to this territory that we should consider how we are going to apply the conception of a supernational organization on the lines of the United States of America, as it would have been, had it developed as a self-governing Dominion of the British Commonwealth. Let us think how this conception affects the internal structure of the map. American publicists of the 18th century were accustomed to speak of the thirteen States as "these nations." The application of the word "nation" to

any State of the American Union would be quite impossible to day. An American thinks of the whole Republic as his nation, and the State has now been reduced to its proper level in his mind—to the level of a province. But the province is an essential organ of that vast polity. It was far too great ever to be ruled on the lines of self-government by one Administration from one centre. A nation so vast could only govern itself, provided that it was cut up into a number of provinces, each managing its own affairs for itself. These provinces had first to be got into working order on self-governing lines, with areas appropriate thereto. Then, and then only, could they be brought into proper relation to each other and to a central national Government charged with the conduct of all functions too large for the several provinces to control. Amongst the problems which distract Russia at this moment are those of finding areas appropriate to provincial self-government, of equipping them with electoral Governments of their own, of reconstituting the National Government on an electoral basis, of giving to each authority its appropriate functions and revenues, and of driving all these coaches through the gate of a revolution side by side. In India, happily, there is no need to court disaster by trying to do all these difficult things together in one operation.

With all the experience before us of America and the self-governing Dominions her map can be re-adjusted on lines compatible with the popular control of her institutions

In guiding India from paternal to popular government one vital truth has always to be kept in mind. The areas and administrative mechanism developed by a system of paternal government, are utterly different from those developed by a system of popular government. When introducing responsible government in a great country which has never had it before, you must be prepared to revise your areas, and to reconstruct your administrative system. As every practical man knows, popular prejudice is always a factor which has to be considered in political arrangements. There

is in human nature an element of conservatism which makes a great number of men cling to any arrangement to which they are accustomed. To a detached observer, one of the most pathetic features in the Indian situation is the tenacity with which certain elements of its people cling, and those the most vocal, to features in the system organized by us foreigners, which are in fact the greatest obstacles to popular government. One is our educational system; another is the Permanent Settlement; a third the vast satrapies into which our system has divided India. No statesman will disregard the prejudices of a highly conservative people in favour of the existing order. On the other hand no ruler will be worthy of the name of statesman who will not help Indians to escape from our arrangements, and from their own prejudice in favour of them, when to do so is necessary for the attainment of popular government in fact as well as in name. The tendency to act as though statesmanship consisted merely in listening to those living men who can make their voices heard is the curse of modern liberalism. It has been the undoing of Ireland, and may easily be that of India. Even where a people can speak with one united voice, their verdict may be fatal to after-generations, whose voice cannot as yet be heard. The duty of statesmen is to think out the plan which is right in itself, to state that plan clearly and boldly, and then guide the community towards it as closely as popular prejudice will allow, not failing to appeal to their innate sense of trusteeship for those who come after them.

I propose, therefore, to begin by considering what conditions, apart from popular prejudice, are needed to realize most quickly the scheme of responsible government for India outlined in the Pronouncement of the 20th of August. I shall then go on to suggest in what manner the people of India can best be helped to approximate to those conditions for themselves.

Now, looking at any great country, it is easy to see that there are certain areas correlative to certain organs of government. At the bottom you find the