

village, the town, and the district, so called in India, which corresponds to the English and American county or the French department. These areas are the field of what, in technical language, is called *local government*. In a later page we shall see how sharply the sphere of local government is to be distinguished from that of political government which belongs to provincial and national authorities. The one deals only with administrative detail, the other includes the settlement of wide political issues.

In all great communities the political field is, or ought to be, divided between one central government, and a number of provincial governments. There are various reasons for this, which can best be explained by keeping in mind the United States. Congress at Washington could not pass all the measures required by the different parts of that vast and varied community. It would break down for want of time, and its measures would not be sufficiently adapted to the needs of the various local communities. We cannot imagine one law and system of education for the whole of America. And, if we could, its administration from one centre would be too rigid. Areas so far removed as California and New York, need different systems, adapted to their local conditions and administered in response to the feelings of each community. Apart from this an educational system, administered from Washington for all America, would be too vast for any one authority to control.

These reasons for provincial governments and areas are sufficient; but they could be multiplied indefinitely. It is for want of such institutions that social reform is paralysed in the British Isles, France and Italy. One central government is unable to cope with the needs of thirty or forty millions. Effective social reform will never be attained, unless or until they develop self-governing Provinces commensurate with those of Switzerland, the Dominions, or the United States. The first problem before India is to get areas in which provincial self-government can be made effective.

At present the major self-governing provinces of India are as large as, or larger than, the three nations referred to above. How comes it that India is divided into units so vast?

Some light will be thrown on the question by a glance at the map of North America, as it existed in the middle of the 18th century. Its soil was then divided between three Great Empires, which all centred in Europe. Spain claimed to administer, as one huge province, all the territories now covered by Mexico, California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Alabama and Florida. Similarly France claimed a vast triangular territory, of which the north-eastern angle was opposite Newfoundland, the north-western angle near Winnipeg, and the southern angle at the mouth of the Mississippi in the Gulf of Mexico. England claimed a much smaller area, the coast strip extending from the boundary which now divides New Brunswick and Maine to the northern boundary of Florida.

The vast territories of Spain and France were each governed as one great province from Mexico City and Quebec, respectively. The much smaller British strip was already, by the middle of the 18th century, partitioned into no less than thirteen self-governing colonies. This partition was the natural and necessary result of self-government. Now that the Spanish and French territories have all been brought under electoral government, they have all had to be subdivided in the same way. The lesson, which can be freely illustrated from Asia, is that centralised autocracies develop satrapies which are far too large for the purposes of provincial self-government. The old Chinese provinces are on far too large a scale for this purpose. Aggregates so vast include communities so various as to need different laws and institutions to suit their peculiarities. Provincial self-government has been evolved to meet this need. Quebec and Ontario were once placed under a single Government, which suited them ill; for one was Catholic, the other Protestant; one French, the other British. Roman law was the basis in one province, and English com-

mon law in the other. The creation of a federal government enabled them to develop as sub-nationalities of one great nation, like the English and Scots, and yet to be separated as self-governing provinces able to develop their respective institutions in harmony with their different conditions.

In Australia there were no such social, religious legal distinctions. The eastern coast belt was first organized as one Province of New South Wales, the whole of which was subject to the jurisdiction of the Governor at Sydney. But the moment popular institutions were introduced the settlers in the territories now known as Victoria and Queensland found themselves out in the cold, as compared with the central districts adjacent to Sydney. The community was too large for effective control under popular institutions. The result was that the electorates of Victoria and Queensland were both detached, and placed under separate Provincial Governments of their own.

If the areas of provincial self government are too large, an artificial and irksome unity is imposed upon the too widely different elements embraced, which presently demand to be sub-divided into smaller self-governing areas. Provinces, moreover, planned on the scale of nations tend to fall apart as separate national units. And besides all this, self-government, always a difficult business in its beginnings, is much more difficult, if first applied to a community so great that the various representatives know little of parts other than their own. To attempt self-government on too wide a scale is to prejudice its success at the outset.

All this has an obvious bearing on the existing Provinces of India. They are for the most part the artificial creations of a paternal and highly centralised Government which has its mainspring in England. They were designed as the satrapies of a vast oriental dependency. The United Provinces, for instance, contains 48,000,000, and is larger than any European state but the Russian and German Empires. It contains a large variety of languages, races and levels of

society. To attempt the first essay in responsible government, by applying it to so vast and varied an aggregate, is to prejudice the whole experiment. It is also to court failure in the last stages of this great project of creating a united and self-governing India. These vast satrapies, conceived on the scale of considerable nations, will learn, under the influence of electoral government, to think as such, and so tend to fall apart, like the overgrown provinces of China. If India is to be taken as the true national unit, as it must be, it is of vital importance to consider now what the proper provincial units are to be, out of which the whole national fabric can be built. The moment you begin to establish electoral Governments, the boundaries of their jurisdictions, lightly sketched by the pencils of officials and diplomats, begin to bite into the political map like acids. The boundaries of artificial areas like those of Roumania, Bulgaria, and Serbia, carved out of the Turkish Empire, have within a few decades become lines over which their respective inhabitants have fought and bled. The internal peace of India generations hence will depend upon the wisdom and foresight with which the areas of provincial self-government are planned in the initial stages of the new departure.

Once again we may refer for guidance in solving this problem to the example of the United States of America. That Republic is divided into forty-eight states, with an average population of 2,000,000 souls. Of these the most closely settled is New York, with a population of 10,000,000. Thus, if we take the largest state of the United States of America as our standard, British India with its population of 240,000,000 might appropriately be divided into some twenty-four larger and smaller States. The term "States" was suggested to me as having two merits. In the first place it helps to suggest the model of the United States, and to keep it in mind. In the second place it gives a description nicely parallel to that of the Native States which might, I suggest, be conveniently described as 'Principalities.' This change of title will enable us



to adopt the American term State in describing the provincial areas, which, as I think, India must have in a federal system based upon popular government. And in this connection let me add that the division of India into some twenty-four States would give areas far more comparable to the major Principalities, the largest of which, Hyderabad, contains 13,000,000 inhabitants. It is natural to suppose that the Princes of India will come to play a part in the life of the great nation to be called into being. If they follow the example set by several of the leading Princes, who have laid the foundations of a representative system, they will develop in the direction of constitutional monarchies, in sympathy with movement inaugurated in British India. The Princes themselves should be gathered in the Upper Chamber of a great Indian legislature, so that the Indian nation of the future will not lack the leadership, for which it will naturally look to its hereditary statesmen.

In suggesting the most populous state of the American Union with its population of 10,000,000, as the standard to be used for States in India, no suggestion is made that these States should be constituted on any mechanical principle. The defect of the present areas is that they are too mechanical. The province of Bihar and Orissa, for instance, combines communities with an almost cynical disregard of the differences between them. The plan suggested will remedy these unnatural unions. This particular province would fall naturally into three Provincial States—Bihar with its population of 24,000,000, and Orissa and Chota Nagpur with 5,000,000 apiece. But Orissa itself ought to be increased by the inclusion of those people of the same language and race who inhabit the northern extremity of Madras and the Central Province. The disparity in size between these areas is no greater than that which exists in the United States, and in all the other federal Unions. Bihar is of course a dangerously large unit upon which to begin an experiment in provincial self-government, and might have to be subdivided, as Virginia has been. The first con-

sideration is to get communities which, as contrasted with those of the British Isles, France and Italy, are not too large for effective self-government on really provincial lines. Where possible, historic areas like Sind should be taken. But unity of language, race and religion are also important factors, and language is the most important of all. The greatest obstacle to a real extension of popular government in India is the practice of conducting public business in the English tongue. By all means let English occupy the same position as Hindustani has in Northern India, since the time of the Moghul Empire. In English lies the hope of National unity, and of knowledge from the outside world. Let the public records be kept in English; extend knowledge of that language in every possible direction. But if all discussion of public affairs is conducted in English, then public life is going to be confined for many generations to come to a narrowly restricted class. How can electorates ever be brought to grasp the questions submitted to their judgment, if all public discussion is to be conducted in a foreign tongue? The use of the vernaculars in politics is essential, if India is to advance towards responsible government at any but the slowest pace. The areas of Provincial self-government must be designed largely with a view to making it possible for public business to be discussed in a language which all the legislators can speak with ease, and which the largest possible number of electors can understand. Given these conditions, a vast number of landholders and others, who cannot conduct debates in English, are rendered available for public life. The hope of popular government lies in the vernaculars.\*

The educated classes in India have long claimed their country's right to develop on the lines of a

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\* I had scarcely penned the above words when three Oriya gentlemen, who had just been attending a deputation to the Viceroy and Secretary of State, called to see me. Their attention had been caught by the treatment of the question of areas in the Joint Address, and they came to urge the necessity of basing self-government on racial and linguistic units. One part of the Oriya people are included in Madras and another in the Central Province. Naturally they desire a reunion with Orissa which will bring together, in one self-governing state, some 10,000,000 Oriya-speaking people.

self-governing Dominion, and that claim has now been recognized in words which I venture to prophesy will prove as irrevocable as Magna Charta itself. I have heard a number of Indians say that it is only in the last few months that they have begun to realize what responsible government means; and indeed it would be strange if it were otherwise. If Socrates were here he would say that such confessions were the beginning of wisdom, and if you are to take the self-governing Dominions as the model upon which you mean to construct the polity of India, it is vital to realize what a Dominion means. A community so different as India cannot copy their constitutions outright. The real lesson they have to teach is, that of all commonwealths, the polity of India must be built up by a series of experiments and in accordance with the lessons they give. But certain lessons can be learned at once, from the experience already gained by the Dominions, and one of those lessons can be read in Quebec. No one will question now that it was a mistake upon Durham's part to try to force this French people of the Roman Catholic communion into an unnatural union with the British and Protestant community of Ontario. The main point of the federal structure adopted by Canada is that it enables a national union to be realized, while leaving distinct racial, linguistic and religious units, organized as self-governing provinces, to lead their own life under their own conditions.

If this experience is held in mind, can we really look forward to a United States of India within the British Commonwealth, under which Sind and the Canarese-speaking people are tied and bound into the same self-governing unit as the Marathas? Are not the Marathas themselves entitled to a State such as will perpetuate the traditions of that famous community? Are the Tamil and Telugu peoples of Madras to be given no separate institutions of their own? Are the Oriyas to be left dispersed amongst three Provinces, the larger section being left under the permanent domination of the people of Bihar? To base responsible government

on such units is not only to ignore the experience of the other Dominions, but to violate principles for which we are fighting in this war. You cannot base responsible government on units evolved on principles which are the antithesis of that system. You cannot graft figs on thorns, nor grapes on thistles.

The greatest of all the lessons to be learned from the United States and the self-governing Dominions is that India must build up her own constitution from her own experience. But before this can happen India must be given a chance of earning her experience. She must also be given electorates capable of reading that experience, and organs through which they can express their views. At present the people of British India have no experience of anything but of the vast unwieldy satrapies in which their races and religions are jumbled together. Before they can really judge of their own future needs, they must be given some experience of self-governing units of a size and character such as have been found necessary wherever responsible government has been achieved on federal lines. When this has been done, India will be in a position to choose for herself, as the result of her own experience, what areas are needed for the achievement of her ideal.

Let me illustrate my meaning from the case of the United Provinces, in the plan proposed in the Joint Address. Four self-governing States are to be created within that Province. Oudh, Benares, the Doab, and Meerut, with an average population of about 11,000,000 each. To each of these Governments, is to be given certain specific functions, revenues and powers of taxation. The old Province and the existing Government are to remain in being, administering all the functions which have not been transferred. But at stated intervals those reserved functions and correlative revenues are to be transferred to the self-governing States, as their Governments demonstrate their capacity for the additional burden.

The last powers to be transferred are Justice and Police. When the States are ready to assume these,

the time will have come when Indian statesmen from all the States, and also from the Principalities, must come together to frame a constitution under which the Government of India itself can be made responsible to an Indian Electorate. India will then know who her real leaders are. She will also have developed a real public opinion based on experience. Above all, she will have electorates, legislatures and ministries through whom that public opinion can find expression. The time will have gone when any handful of people can claim to express the voice of India.

Thus when the accredited statesmen of India assemble in Convention to frame the National Constitution, they will have seen the working of self-governing States of the kind which have been found necessary in other federal unions. But the old satrapies will still be in existence; and India can make her choice in the full light of experience. And three possible courses will then be open from which to choose. One will be to abolish the smaller states and merge them again in the old Province. Or else India can decide to keep the States and let the Old Provinces go. There is however a third and quite possible course upon which her assembled statesmen may decide, which has been suggested to me, since the Joint Address was drafted, by an eminent historian and political thinker.

The Indian Community is so much vaster than any which has yet achieved federal self-government, that experience may well prove that between the Central Government and the District, not one but two areas and organs of provincial self-government may be needed. It will be quite open for the convention which drafts the final constitution to decide that Indian society needs the Province on the scale of present satrapies *between the Central Government and the self-governing State*. An Indian nation constituted on these lines would then have a federal government responsible to an Indian electorate, and provincial governments for communities of forty or fifty millions responsible to provincial electorates, and State gov-

ernments for communities of about 10,000,000 responsible to state electorates. °

As to the needs and merits of so novel an arrangement it is fruitless to speculate. The only criterion is experience. But that experience will not be available, unless, in the period of transition, India is allowed to test the value of self-governing States similar to those of the U.S.A. and of the Dominions, in which some unity of race and language and even religion is possible. The governing principle of all arrangements now made should be to enable the people of India, when the time comes for the final step, to shape her own constitution for herself from beginning to end, in the light not of abstract speculations, nor of random quotations from political writers, but of knowledge of her own needs and conditions hardly earned in the field of experience. The priceless gift which statesmanship can give her at this juncture, is a scheme of government in which that experience can be earned, and institutions through which its lessons can be read and expressed.

The proposals set forth in the Joint Address were framed not only to provide a common ground upon which Europeans and Indians could join hands irrespective of race, but also to promote discussion. It is, however, useless to promote discussion between people who are not from the outset prepared to recast their ideas. There are, as I have said elsewhere, things which I should like to have seen added, and others which I should prefer to have seen excluded, in the twelve points to which the signatories subscribed. Having now read and heard volumes of discussion on these proposals, there is, so far, one point only upon which, at the moment of writing, I should wish to modify the original draft submitted to the signatories. I refer to the last part of article three in which it is said that the 'areas *must* be settled at the moment 'when the first instalment of responsible government is 'granted.' Of the soundness of the views given in the last few pages I have since been convinced by the gentleman to whom I have referred. Had his views

been before me at the time, I should not have advised the signatories to adopt these words. It is, I conceive, a duty to those who asked my advice, to tell not only them but the public of any point upon which I have since been brought to think that my advice was wrong.

## IX

### ADMINISTRATIVE MECHANISM AND ITS RECONSTRUCTION.

We have now reached a point at which it will be convenient to notice one formidable criticism which cuts at the root of the whole principle upon which these suggestions are based. It is from the pen of an experienced administrator whose remarks on the subject are as follows:—

Finally, my experience as an administrator confirms the scheme, as alien to the present structure of the administration. Due to historical reasons which it is unnecessary to specify, the functions of government are interwoven in a complete fabric and are not separate garments capable of division. There are no vertical lines along which the fabric can be divided. The district staff are the main threads running throughout the whole.

No official can satisfactorily serve two masters whose instructions will be conflicting, without neglecting the interests of one. There might be some possibility of success with two entirely separate staffs each responsible to its own government, which is surely the case in parallels mentioned by you, but none for a single responsible to two governments, which must be the case until Indian sentiment changes and until India can afford the more expensive duplicate establishments. Without the active support of the district officer, the progress of the departments of agriculture and co-operative credit would be seriously handicapped. How is it possible to divorce the management of forests, so intimately connected with the well-being of the people, from the general administration?

The argument, as I understand it, is ~~not~~ that the various functions of government are parts of a garment woven without seam which cannot be separated from each other. The Public Works Department, the Irrigation Department, the Forest Department, the Agricultural Department, the Education



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Department, etc., must all be kept in relation by the general control of the Revenue Department, i.e. the Commissioners and Collectors and Board of Revenue. Separation of any one department from the rest is alien to the present structure of the Administration.

This reasoning admirably illustrates the point I have made on a previous page, that the Government of a Dependency with its mainspring in England, develops administrative mechanism of a type suited to itself. A responsible Government which takes its impetus from an electorate of its own requires a mechanism of a different type. For responsible government involves a system under which one minister looks after irrigation, another forests, a third agriculture, and a fourth education. Harmony between these departments must be secured by the joint authority of the Cabinet under the leadership of the Premier. It cannot be secured by the district officers, who must eventually come under one minister, whose subordinates cannot control the officers ranked under his colleagues.

I suggest that these difficulties can be overcome by the expedient suggested in the Joint Address. In the last chapter it was urged that existing provincial areas are the natural product of the system under which India has been governed as a Dependency of England. The administrative mechanism is also a product of that system. The solution will be found, in taking provincial areas or States suitable for popular government, in giving them electorates with legislatures and executives responsible thereto, and in leaving those executives to develop departments and administrative mechanism suitable to the needs of responsible government.

In any case the argument is least applicable to the first instalment of functions, because those have already been delegated in some measure to the district boards. So far as the reserved functions are concerned, which remain in the hands of the old Government, it will have leisure in which to rearrange its organization with a view to a more complete separa-

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tion of one function from another, in order to facilitate their successive transfer to the State ministries. The process will consist in gradually divesting the district officers of functions and of appropriating them to specific departments. In the end, the district officer would be left with his general responsibility for maintaining order, and would only pass at the last stage to the control of the State ministry.

This criticism admits that the separation of these functions from each other is largely a question of expense. I agree. The whole system, as at present established, is dominated by the motive of keeping within the limits of an unelastic revenue. And the reason why the revenue is unelastic is twofold, the first place the taxing authority is unrepresentative. An alien and unrepresentative Government must keep down its expenses to the lowest possible point. It has abandoned large sources of revenue which can be tapped by elective authorities. But intense economy, especially in capital expenditure, has also dwarfed the growth of revenues. The institution of authorities, able to raise and spend more because they are elective, will lead to an expansion of existing resources as in Japan. But in any case, without incurring additional expense, there can be no real change in the direction of popular government. Unless the policy proclaimed by the Secretary of State is to be renounced, additional expense must be faced. The resources of the country will bear it, and will expand in response to a more generous public expenditure. Poverty need arrest political progress in India no more than it has done in Japan. These conclusions are based upon a study of the revenue system which I have made elsewhere.\*

If a real instalment of responsible government is to be given, it must carry with it powers of imposing new taxation. Self-government implies self-taxation. No power of voting will create a sense of responsibility in electorates, unless it involves power to order an

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\* Studies of Indian Government, No. 3.

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increase of service to be rendered, coupled with a power conferred on the elective authority to impose the additional cost on the class from which the voters are drawn. There are two ways in which this may be done. Certain taxes capable of expansion, and roughly commensurate in their present yield to the cost of the duties transferred, may be handed over. The other and simpler plan is to hand over a proportion of the existing consolidated revenue commensurate to the powers transferred. This lump sum would grow with the general growth of revenue. If the Provincial State Government desired to spend more on a service, primary education, than the growth of this revenue allowed, then it must have certain sources of new taxation upon which to draw. The excise and power to increase cesses on land are the obvious sources. The essential point is that the new sources of revenue to be drawn upon should involve imposts which the voters themselves will feel.

In order to build up and develop electorates in India the governments responsible thereto must have powers of taxation of their own. But the ministries must also have officers of their own, drawn, of course, from the existing services, but reorganized in departments of a type suitable for control by cabinets responsible to legislatures and electorates. I scarcely see how else the change necessary in the structure of the existing mechanism can be managed. Nor do I see how ministers, legislators, and electors are to develop a real sense of responsibility for the functions entrusted to them, unless they have officers of their own distinct from those of the old governments. The arrangement whereby the District Boards have discharged their functions through the existing departments of government, has I believe gone far to destroy their ~~and~~ as a factor in educating members and electors to a sense of responsibility.

## X

### THE TRAINING-GROUND OF ELECTORATES.

The first step, then, is to call into existence Governments responsible to electorates in each of the States, and transfer to them certain functions and revenues. The crucial part of the problem is to create electorates competent to realize the full significance of this truth has operated, to delay the progress of India towards self-government. How often, for instance, does one hear it said that the transfer to Indians of more responsible offices is an important step in that direction! Now let me say at once that I am in favour of reducing the number of British officials in India to the lowest point compatible with the maintenance of British authority, so long as, and in so far as, the Indian Administration is responsible to the British Parliament. I should like to see this done, if for no other reason, because England can ill spare this continuous drain on her best administrative talent. But Indian officials might be appointed to every office under the Viceroy, without advancing India one step on the road to responsible government. It is not in the Civil Service that the future rulers of India are going to be trained. Personally, I have yet to be convinced that India is going to find its leaders in the ranks of retired officials. It is not men trained in the Russian bureaucracy who are going to lead Russians from anarchy to orderly government. Those who are urging the appointment of more Indians to Commissionerships, Collectors, and other posts of responsibility, as a step preliminary to self-government, and as one which must be taken in advance of all others, are, in my opinion, simply off the track. Responsible government is possible in so far as there are electorates adequate to the burden. Given such electorates, men capable of leader-

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ship will not be wanting, though they will not be found in the ranks of officials. If your bureaucracy were at once Indian throughout and also the most highly trained in the world, you would not be in sight of responsible government until you had evolved responsible electorates. The key to the problem before us is electoral reform. Civil Service reform is another question altogether.

In a previous chapter I urged that government not be developed merely by the State, but that it be given in schools and colleges, so that electorates can be made to take on some responsibility. The kind of education fit to exercise more responsibility is not the same. It is only by exercise that electorates can be rendered responsible. Such responsibility may and indeed must be limited, to begin with; but in order to have effect it must be real. Representative government hinges on the fact that electorates cannot do things for themselves. They must have representatives through whom to do them. Those representatives they must be able to dismiss by their votes, for otherwise their agents would not be responsible to the voters. But political responsibility is always a reciprocal relation. If it means that executives and legislatures are responsible to the electorates for carrying out their mandates, it means no less that the electorates are responsible to their representatives for rendering them the necessary obedience and providing them with the funds and powers. A genuine responsibility is always bilateral. It is not enough for an electorate to instruct its representatives to build more roads, to multiply schools and colleges, or to settle contentious issues this way or that. They must also learn by experience that these things cannot be done unless they are prepared to see those representatives impose taxation upon them, and to acquiesce in the exercise of powers without which their elected rulers cannot give effect to their mandates. Just as the electorate must from time to time have the power of dismissing its agents, so must the agents themselves be able to retire and refuse to serve unless the electorate will grant them the means and powers required to give effect to its mandate. The system must be so

simple as to bring home this elementary position as quickly as possible to the electorates.

In various quarters it is strongly argued that electorates must first be prepared by experience in the field of local government. The advocates of this view would begin, where Lord Ripon tried to begin thirty years ago, by making district, village and town boards really responsible to electorates. And their reason for this position is, as in the last chapter, they cannot get the letter I quoted in the same, under which some propose a transitional system of electoral authorities. Provincial functions are transferred to existing Provincial Governments while others are reserved to the Central Governments.

In order to examine these positions it is necessary to realize that the spheres of local and political government are divided by a line that is fairly clear. The field which can be covered by local government is much the same in all countries. It is of necessity confined to the settlement of administrative details, and the framing of minor regulations and bye-laws inseparable therefrom. The London County Council is perhaps the largest and most important body of the kind in the world. Its population and revenues exceed those of many sovereign States. On education alone its annual expenditure is in millions of pounds: and yet if it were empowered to pass an Education Act, or to change the constitution of the minor municipalities within its area, its whole status and character would be radically changed. It would then have assumed functions now vested in Parliament and discharged through the Minister of Education, and the President of the Local Government Board. It would have outstepped the limits of Local Government, properly so called, and have entered the field of a Provincial Government;—a thing which would be quite possible, if the United Kingdom were parcelled out at the same time into a number of similar provinces containing five million people and upwards.

A Provincial Government is an organ which deals with political subjects, that is to say, with questions

of principle, upon which not merely the interests but also the consciences of great sections of the community are at issue. There is all the difference between a body which administers roads, sanitation and schools, and one which can decide, by the measures it passes, the relative positions of Hindus and Mahomedans on Municipal Bodies, the principles upon which religion is to be handled, or the extent to which such religious language is to be used in schools. You cannot hand over the functions of such a particular Board and the Board of Schools. You could have Councils of Wales, or the Local Government Education Acts and I could have Education to the County be too small or empower them to pass Educational Acts. They would be too small, and the diversity created would be too great. But all these powers might well be given to a Provincial Government representing the whole of Wales. Such a body would then be exercising political powers. It would stand above the field of Local Government, and of mere administrative detail, such as can be delegated to a County Council or District Board. Thus there is a clear line between the administrative functions which can be delegated to a local body, even so large and important as the London County Council, and the political functions which can be exercised by Provinces, which may be as small as Prince Edward Island in Canada, or Rhode Island in the United States.

The same is equally true of India. The creation of local authorities and the definition of their constitutions and powers is a political function. It is none the less one which cannot be undertaken by the Government of India, but must be relegated to Provincial Governments. In recent years the educational policy of the Government of the United Provinces and municipal legislation have involved the settlement of sharp issues between the Hindu and Moslem Communities. In such legislation the Provincial Government decides the nature of the minor revenues assigned to these bodies, and within what limits such revenues can be increased or reduced. It has also to decide what grants from Government revenues are to be placed at the disposal of

the Boards, and especially the principle upon which such grants are to be apportioned amongst the numerous local authorities. The decision of such issues cannot be left to the district and municipal boards. To them is entrusted the construction and maintenance of roads and drainage systems, the control of building, etc., and the making of bye-laws dealing with these subjects. In the educational sphere, it is left to the Boards to decide where to open new schools, where to close schools, where to aid them, how to staff them, how to train the staff, where to build new buildings, how to build them, and so on. In many of these matters they are required to satisfy certain minima conditions laid down by the Local Self-government Board or the Educational Department.

It will perhaps help to elucidate the matter, if we take one example showing the kind of question which cannot be relegated to local authorities, but must, because it is political, be decided by a Provincial Government.

Before the Muhamnadan invasions from the north the principal language of these provinces was Hindi, a language closely allied to the ancient Sanscrit, closely associated therefore with Hinduism, and written in the Nagari script. For the purpose of administration the Muhammadans took many words of Hindi and compounded them with many Persian and Arabic words of their own. The result was Hindustani, the language of administration, of the camp and of matters of everyday life; and this language was written both in the Persian and also in the Nagari script. The result was a *lingua franca* which, though written by Hindus in the Nagari, and by Muhammadans in the Persian character, is in conversation available to both for the limited purposes of ordinary life. For literary expression, or for the purpose of rational discussion, whether of politics, religion or morals, the Hindu resorts to Hindi words, while the Muhammadan on the other hand uses Urdu words of Persian and Arabic origin. Thus it is only for the most ordinary purposes that Hindus and Muhammadans converse in



a common language. For all higher purposes the one converses in Hindi, and the other in Urdu; and each is written in a different script.

These conditions occasion no serious problem in the earlier stages of a child's education. So long as teaching is confined to simple words and ideas, common basis of Hindustani provides all that is needed. The text-books can be printed in both the Nagari and Persian scripts, the children of Hindus and Muhammadans can thus learn to read either or both. But when the child begins to pass beyond the stage of simple words and ideas, the restricted vocabulary and the simplified grammar of Hindustani begin to break down, and his teaching must be given, and his text-books must be worded, more and more either in Hindi or else in Urdu. The choice raises the whole issue between the two religions. A similar position might easily have arisen in the south-east of Europe, where members of the Latin and Greek Churches mix. Such a population might have evolved a mixed patois of Greek and Latin words for the purpose of ordinary conversation. But the moment that education had reached a certain point, parents of the Roman religion would wish to have their children taught in the language of Latin origin, in which the liturgies of their Church were expressed, while those of the Greek Church would wish their children to be instructed in the Greek tongue.

In either religion are extremists, who would, if they could, secure a decision in favour of the language of their own religion, and the suppression of the other language as a medium of education. No reasonable person is likely to listen to such views; and, therefore, the practical question arises, whether the bifurcation into Hindi by Hindu children, and into Urdu by Muhammadan children, is to take place before the stage of vernacular education, as provided by Government, is passed, and, if so, at what point. In 1876 and again in 1903 the Government of the U.P. tried to solve the problem by insisting on the policy of prescribing readers in the limited common language. A committee was appointed in 1910 to draw up a scheme

for the preparation of new readers, and a majority of the members "held that in higher readers some simple passages of literary merit should be interspersed with lessons written in the common language, and that such passages must of necessity be in distinctive Urdu or Hindi."

The Government, however, adhered to its previous position, and dissolved the committee. In the next four years the whole position was explored by several committees, and became the subject of wide discussion. From these discussions emerged a distinct preponderance of opinion in favour of bifurcation before the child had passed the stage of class IV. But as to the exact point at which the bifurcation should begin, and as to the way in which the text-books should be prepared, a variety of different schemes were produced. Obviously the question was one which admitted of settlement in a great variety of different ways, each of which might be regarded as more or less favourable to either of the rival religions.

With all this mass of varied opinions before him, the Lieutenant-Governor sat down in 1914 to decide the question. He began by stating the principles upon which he proposed to base his decision as follows:—

The conclusions of the Lieutenant-Governor then are that<sup>2</sup>—

- (a) The common or Hindustani language, printed in either Persian or Nagari type, should be used in the primary readers, so long as it has anything to teach;
- (b) When the common language has nothing more to teach, the pupil should learn to read Urdu or Hindi according to the wish of his parents;
- (c) The readers printed in the common language and used up to the end of class IV do not allow the pupil to leave his primary school with that mental equipment which it is desired to give him.

In other words, while His Honour accepts the policy of teaching the common language so long as possible, he

believes that bifurcation may be deferred too long. At present, in his opinion, it is unduly deferred, and valuable time is lost reading and re-reading a primer when it has ceased to serve any purpose as a means of progressive education. He considers therefore that bifurcation should begin a little earlier than is now the case. Primers on the lines of those now in use, printed in either character, should be retained for classes I and I<sub>A</sub>; and there is also required for use above those classes, what for brevity may be designated a senior reader in the common language, similarly printed, and graduated in difficulty, so far as possible, from the beginning onwards. All these books should contain lessons in prose only. When the teacher is satisfied that a class has mastered the senior reader, he should at once promote them to one of two supplementary readers. Such promotion would not ordinarily come until the end of class III, and may even be later, according to the capacity of the pupils. The sole test should be whether the class has mastered all that it can learn from the senior reader; and it is for the master, and the master alone, to say when this happens; but it should usually be possible for the last half of the year in class IV to be spent on the supplementary readers. These should be composed in distinctive Urdu and Hindi respectively. They should contain both prose and verse, taken as far as possible from standard authors; but religious and didactic passages should be avoided, so as to respect the sensibilities of Hindus who may be taking Urdu, or Muhammadans who may be reading the Hindi course. The preparation of the supplementary readers should be undertaken as soon as possible, by the Provincial Text-Book Committee, who will have the advantage of studying the readers which were drafted by the committee presided over by Pandit Rama Shankar.

The course of study thus indicated will, Sir James Meston trusts, maintain the principle of elementary teaching in a simple common language so long as such teaching has an educative value; while it will ensure that the pupil leaves class IV with an education which will not only be of practical value to him in after-life, but will also open for him the door to the literature of his religion and his ancestors. This was, he feels sure, the aim of all the members of Mr. Justice Pigott's Committee, though the attempt at reconciling divergent views led to a form

of compromise which would have presented difficulties in practice.\* The alternative he has decided to adopt will, he believes, not prove open to this objection, but he does not pretend to hope that it will please all schools of thought. *The question has reached a point where mutual concessions seem impossible; and it is clearly the duty of the Government to formulate a decision, making the interests of the child its sole consideration, and the progress of sound education its only aim.\**

In the joint scheme it is proposed to transfer minimum powers at the outset to ministries responsible to legislatures and electorates for areas such as could serve as the future self-governing Provinces of a United States of India. These minimum powers would include the control of local government, and of primary education. This does not mean that they would be nothing but enlarged district and municipal boards, but the very opposite. It means that these new and popular Governments would be charged with the control of local authorities, which from the nature of the case those bodies cannot exercise for themselves. The State Governments would be bodies charged with the settlement of political questions such as cannot be relegated to district, village and town boards. They could, for instance, pass an Education Act, and in doing so would have to face and settle all the disputes between Hindus and Moslems, which the recent legislation in the United Provinces has roused.

They would also, from time to time, have to face the invidious task of apportioning Government grants between the various local authorities. This apportionment is now determined by settlements made in 1914, which expire in 1919. In that year a State Government in the U.P. would have to decide how much of its own revenues could be spared for grants-in-aid to the boards, and (a far more formidable task) how that sum is to be divided amongst all the bodies in question. The settlement of 1914 was an example of administrative skill carried to its highest point. It

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\* Lieutenant-Governor's Resolution of August 25th, 1914, p. 25.

was a masterpiece of applied statistical science, based upon an infinity of data and patiently worked out to the last detail. It is almost too perfect for the rougher conditions of popular government, which means government by laymen. Without a long official training it would be difficult for a minister to master the technical calculations; and it is safe to add that in no popular assembly in the world would more than a handful of members be found able to grasp the explanations, assuming that the minister was competent to give them. Even in the British Parliament, which, in point of education and intelligence, is inferior to no other elective Chamber, a minister would be most likely forced to adopt some cruder and therefore less equitable basis of division, such, for instance, as population. He would shrink from the dangers of asking members to ratify a scheme which few or none of them would understand. As a piece of distributive justice, the settlement made would most likely compare unfavourably with that which was made by the science, exactitude and industry of the I.C.S.

Another feature of this settlement to be noticed is the position of those who made it. They were men disposed by nature and training to justice; but had they been otherwise they had no temptation to injustice. Their tenure of office was not affected by the manner in which their division of the grant was received, and by that division they had nothing remotely to gain or lose. The consent of the legislature was not even required, for the calculations were examined and finally ratified by the Lieutenant-Governor in the quiet detachment of his own study.

A glance at countries where provincial self-government exists, will reveal the totally different position of a minister holding office by virtue of a majority of legislators who are looking to their constituents for re-election. Not merely his own tenure of office, but that of his colleagues, would be affected by that issue and might even depend on it. The minister would not be called upon to satisfy the whole body of mem-

bers, but rather the majority who keep him in office. The fate of a ministry often depends upon a margin of votes from certain particular districts, and the voters of those districts may convince their members that their re-election will depend upon how far they secure from the Government a generous share of the plunder. And thus begins the sordid struggle which Americans aptly call the fight for the pork barrel. This struggle appears but little in debate. It proceeds behind the closed doors of ministers and whips, who are given to understand, by no uncertain signs, that the continued support of this or that member will depend on the share of the plunder given to his constituents. Such divisions of public money test the capacity of a people for doing justice between themselves. But it also develops that capacity by exercise, assuming that the test is not so severe as to break it down altogether. A complete and final collapse of justice leads to disorder.

The third and most instructive example is afforded by the controversy between the protagonists of Hindi or Urdu. It is issues like these which test and exercise the faculty of self-government to the full. For mere money is capable of division, even if the division be unjust. But in life there are issues, moral, religious and political, deep as the well-springs of human belief, such as are not capable of division. There are principles upon which those who hold them will be willing to accept an adverse ruling from a third party who stands outside the controversy, because, knowing his detachment, they believe in his justice. It may well happen, however, that they would go to extremes rather than accept that same ruling at the hands of the party to which they are opposed.

The relative positions of Hindi and Urdu in the vernacular schools, which the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces had to decide in 1914, may be taken as a typical example of such issues. No pains were spared to elicit from educated Indians, whether by means of committees or discussions in the Legislative Councils, an expression of all their different

opinions. The Lieutenant-Governor studiously exposed himself to the influence of these various views. He saturated his mind in all the reports and speeches stating the reasons upon which they were based. And then having done so he wrote: "Mutual concessions 'seem impossible; and it is 'clearly the duty of the Government to formulate a decision.' " And so he recorded a decision which was not exactly any of those which lay before him, but one, the terms of which he had framed for himself. And because he was a foreigner, a member of neither religion, unbiased, therefore, in his interests, absolutely detached in his point of view; and universally recognized to be so, his decision was accepted almost without demur and certainly without resistance on the part of either of the religions involved. In this manner the question was decided for the time being, though in future years it is sure to be raised again in some form or other.

There are certain features of the case which from the standpoint of this enquiry call for remark. If a question at issue can be settled by willing agreement of *all* the parties concerned, that is usually the best possible decision. But the fact that such settlements are not always possible is too often ignored. The existence of law courts backed by the sheriff, policeman and soldier is a standing witness to the fact. And as may be seen in the present case, there are issues beyond the jurisdiction of courts, which cannot be settled by agreement, but which cannot be left unsettled without inflicting grievous injury on third parties and on future generations. Such issues a Government must sooner or later decide on lines not wholly acceptable to one party or even perhaps to either. This was what Washington meant when he said, 'Influence is not government.' The influence of rulers should be used to the full to induce an agreement between the parties at issue. But failing such agreement the time comes when Government must decide, or civilisation will stagnate or decay. And the decision must be accepted by a body of opinion strong enough to neutralise resistance, not necessarily because the

decision is approved, but rather because the majority of thinking men are resolved to uphold the authority of Government

The decision in question was not the one suggested by any of the parties concerned. And yet it was accepted by all those parties because it was made by a man in whose anxiety to mete out impartial justice everyone believed. But it was not merely in this justice of one individual they trusted. That individual was responsible to the Governor-General, the Secretary of State, the British Parliament, and finally to public opinion in England. The first could advise his dismissal, the second could dismiss him, the third could exact it, the fourth could demand it. The acceptance of such decisions in India is not based merely on confidence in the justice of an individual officer. It is based to an even greater extent on confidence that an authority six thousand miles away will appoint officers who are just, and remove those who fail in their charge. The manner in which decisions of such issues are accepted in India, is largely due to the fact that those who make them are answerable to an authority remote from the seat of controversy. Let anyone consider whether this decision could have been so made and so accepted if the same individual had been a prime minister, responsible not to the British Government, but to an electorate in the United Provinces, and dependent for the tenure of his office on the support of a majority in the Legislative Council, elected by a majority of the voters. Imagine the position of the same individual, with the same character and reputation in this wholly different position, and one then begins to see how much depends upon the fact that he is now responsible to an authority which is detached and impartial because it is foreign.

It is this that is meant by saying that the Government of India is in trust. The acceptance of decisions made by that Government between two rival sections in India is due to the confidence in the trustees, by reason of their disinterest in and detachment from the issues at stake. Where questions are at issue between



India and the British trustee, as in the case of the cotton duties, this confidence is wanting.

The immediate administration of vernacular schools, within limits carefully prescribed, has been entrusted to District and Municipal Boards. Within those limits, they are charged with the task of making decisions which must often affect minor matters at issue between Hindus and Moslems. They might support *Maktabs* at the expense of *Patīśālas*. A religious majority on a Board might abuse its position in appointing the teachers. But the crucial decisions on matters of policy, such as that dealt with in the present case, are made for them by an authority responsible to a Government and public opinion outside India.

In the Joint Address a method has been suggested whereby decisions of this class might be relegated to a ministry responsible to a provincial electorate, and removable from office by the vote of a majority of legislators elected by a majority of voters. For the purpose of this enquiry it is useful to consider how the decision in question would have to be made under these circumstances. It is fair to assume that the same pains would be taken to elicit opinion as was taken in the case of the present Government.\* An Indian Minister of Education, either a Muhammadan or a Hindu, would then draft the terms of a decision, which would be discussed, and probably modified, in the Cabinet Council. The Government supporters would be sounded as to whether they would be prepared to back the decision. And, if the Government were wise, means would also be taken to ascertain how far the minority in opposition and their constituents would be prepared to accept it. And all this time, it must be remembered, the point at issue would be the subject of a burning public controversy. Meetings would be held, angry speeches would be made, and bitter articles would be written. Ministers would scarcely think of finding the best solution. Rather their efforts would be directed to finding one which their supporters would be prepared to back, but such

as would not drive the minority of voters into an active or passive resistance of the law when passed. For the decision would have to take the form of a Bill to be debated by the legislature in open session; and upon the acceptance or rejection of the Bill the fate of the ministry would depend. The existence of the ministry itself would certainly hang on the issue. The best decision would scarcely be reached in the heat of the controversy. The best result attainable in practice would be the acceptance of some decision by the minority when they had been voted down. And that acceptance would depend, partly on their patriotism, upon their desire to support a system under which Indians could settle Indian questions for themselves, but largely also on the tolerance of the majority, on their willingness not to abuse their power shown by making concessions which would render the decision tolerable to the minds and consciences of their opponents.

When compared with the smooth, detached and accurate working of a good bureaucracy, responsible government is an ugly business, even in the British Isles. Why then, if you have such a system in India, should you seek to replace it by responsible government? An answer to that question can only be found by reference to the ultimate aims which government should seek.

Some light may be thrown on the subject by considering an imaginary case in another field. As anyone knows who has been in an army when rations are short and soldiers grow hungry, the question of apportioning the food available has a wonderful effect in revealing the character of different men and different units. In exceptional regiments you will find the men stinting themselves, so as to be sure that comrades, perhaps weaker than themselves, have enough. In such regiments the officers will readily leave the apportionment of the rations to the men themselves.

And now let us turn to a regiment of average men, some better and some worse. In many regiments, unhappily, there is pilfering in the cook-house when

rations are short. In such a regiment, if the division of rations be left to the men themselves, some selfishness will be shewn. The weaker and more unselfish will not get all they should. The justice done is rough and imperfect. There is some bickering which is rather squalid, but no positive violence, no actual starvation of the weaker men. So the officers leave the men to work out the division for themselves, trusting that, given sufficient time, they will learn to do the thing more fairly. And experience, indeed, teaches that, given time, this will be the result. This regiment, if the officers do not interfere, will gradually approximate to the standard of the first regiment described.

Thirdly, we may take the other extreme and exceptional case, that of a regiment where the men in the cook-house eat their fill, and when the remainder does reach the rest, the stronger take so much that the weaker or less selfish actually starve and go sick. Or else there are constant disputes that end in a fight. In the case of such a regiment the officers must watch the food in the cook-house, to see that it is not pilfered by the cooks. And when the food is prepared, they must measure out the proportion justly due to each of the men, and watch while they eat it, to see that it is not taken from them. Externally, justice and order will prevail. The scene presented in the cook-house, and by the men at their meals, will contrast favourably with that presented in the second regiment described. There will be no unfairness, no ugly bickering, no squalid disputes, no pilfering by the cooks, and generally less waste. And yet results so secured by supervision of officers, however necessary, are almost barren of hope for the future. True they will enable the men to see what justice and order mean; but when that is done, the spirit of fairness will develop but little, until they are able to assume some responsibility for dividing the food themselves. To become more just they must have opportunities of injustice; and unless they can be given some such responsibility, and some such opportunity, they will never begin to realize what a hateful thing injustice is.

In this fanciful picture is implicit the philosophy of freedom, the whole issue at stake in the present war. If material development, visible order, mechanical efficiency and financial economy in the present and in the immediate future are the ends in view, then the Prussians are right. The decisions of Government should be left to a handful of men of the clearest intellect and the strongest character. And, as in Prussia, the Government from first to last must aim by all means in its power to foster a habit of unquestioning submission in the people they rule.

If, on the other hand, the character of the people at large, the development in common men of their innate sense of justice, and of their faculty of doing justice to each other at their own expense, is the end in view, then Government will decide nothing which it can relegate to the decision of those people themselves, without permitting a break-down of social order. The choice lies between results we can handle and see, reduce to cash values, depict in reports and tabulate in figures, and those which cannot be seen, measured or described, or ever be perceived in the span of our own lives. You can measure railways in miles, and their earnings in cash. You can enumerate the acres brought under irrigation, estimate lives saved from famine and disease, and exhibit an unprecedented growth in the population. You can dwell on the increase of schools and scholars, the improvement in tillage and in crops per acre, and the growth of industrial undertakings. There is something so definite and tangible in it all; and rulers who compile such reports have the satisfaction of knowing that they are telling of things which they themselves have helped to achieve. The effect which a system has on the character of a people can never be stated in figures, and can scarcely be perceived in the life of a single administrator. It is in the end a question between ponderable and imponderable values, between things to be seen with the eye, and those to be seen only in dreams, between seed that the sower may reap, and that which shall only whiten to harvest long after he is dust and his memory forgotten amongst

men. The heaven-sent ruler is one with an ear deaf to audible praise, an eye fixed upon a goal which he shall not reach, and above all, an indomitable faith in the power for growth in the weakest of his kind.

The issue is between immediate efficiency, a rapid, material and calculable progress, and the slow incalculable growth of character. But in the long run there is no conflict between the policy which looks to develop the character of people, and that which seeks to promote their efficiency. The policy which looks only to efficiency and measurable progress, ends by destroying the objects it pursues. If Englishmen have established order in countries which could not create it for themselves, it is only by virtue of qualities developed through ages, in which their own characters have been tempered and moulded by their own mistakes. Such justice as Englishmen have imported to India has been learned in the doing of much injustice among themselves. And if Englishmen know how to get things done, that lesson has slowly been learned by enduring the results of their own neglect. It is much to have stopped bloodshed in India, to have created order to have enforced justice, to have given her a modern equipment and to have set her on the path of material progress. But the character of a people will not always stand still, even in the East. If it does not get better it will surely get worse. England cannot always provide these benefits for India without fatally enfeebling the character of her people. Neither material equipment nor even the enforcement of peace and justice between man and man, are ends in themselves. They are hardly means. They are rather the beginnings of means. The end is simply the character of the people, which is formed in the process of adjusting their relations to each other. The establishment of social order from without renders it vastly easier for a beginning to be made. Suddenly to impose upon strength and faculties still unexercised the whole burden of maintaining order, is to jeopardise the conditions under which responsible government can begin. But unless or until genuine responsibilities

are imposed on those few who are in some sort able to assume them, neither the capacity for making decisions will develop, nor yet the numbers of those who show promise of developing such capacity. All minor ends must be subordinated to that of fostering this native capacity, which, as it grows, will in ages to come yield a harvest of native efficiency and capacity for justice. Without travail there is no birth, and the glories of motherhood are hard to discern in the throes of delivery. 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and all things else shall be added unto you' is a saying as true in politics as in any other department of life. One final truth issues from the commonplace details set down in these pages. If effect on the growth of character is to be taken as the criterion of policy, it is not enough for Government to consult the people. The burden of making decisions must be imposed upon those in some sort able to decide.

Even amongst the wisest and most experienced of those who have dedicated their lives to India there is much shadowy thinking on this subject. Some months ago publicity was given to the following remarks by the present writer:—

"The policy of the British Government is to develop (nationalist) opinion and to allow it to influence policy more and more. The responsibility of final decision it still reserves to itself. But it now looks to a time, however remote, when it will be able to transfer that responsibility to a section of Indians sufficiently large, disinterested, and capable of sound political judgment to assume it."

These words seem to have occasioned no little alarm in the mind of so old and sincere a friend of Indian aspirations as Sir Courtenay Ilbert. In the Imperial supplement to *The Manchester Guardian*, issued on March 20, 1917, Sir Courtenay Ilbert wrote the following comments on these words:—

What does the writer exactly mean when he says that self-government is the aim to which British policy in India must be directed? . . . It is a pity that he did not make his meaning more clear, because his words

may be quoted against him, and because self-government in the colonial sense would be a false ideal to pursue. India cannot copy patterns supplied by Canada, Australia, and South Africa. India must be developed on Indian lines, upon lines appropriate to Indian conditions, lines very different from those on which the great democracies in the self-governing dominions are running their course. In marking out those lines regard must always be had to Indian political opinion, which, as Mr. Curtis justly observes, is a reality, and an important reality, difficult though it may be to ascertain, and unsatisfactory as may be some of its features. It is a curious and puzzling blend, produced by the interfusion and interaction of Western and Eastern thought, abounding in paradoxes and contradictions.

This veteran exponent of liberalism cannot bring himself to regard *self-government in the colonial sense* as other than a false ideal for India to pursue. In the kindness of his heart he seeks to acquit me of a meaning so dangerous and absurd. Yet that is the only meaning my words will bear, and I must avail myself of this opportunity to repeat that that was the only meaning they were meant to convey.

No sane man wants India to copy *word for word* patterns supplied by Canada, Australia and South Africa. Not so did Australia copy the Canadian Constitution, nor South Africa those of Canada and Australia. They each examined their own conditions, and framed an instrument more or less suited thereto. They worked as engineers must severally work, whether they are designing an internal combustion engine to drive a motor-car, aeroplane, ship or pump. But all were applying one principle, that first reduced to practical form in the British constitution, the principle which seeks to impose responsibility for political decisions on all the members of the community affected by those decisions who are in some sort capable of making them. They are all, in short, expressions of the principle of responsible government. I must say once for all, without any kind of qualification, that the application of that principle as rapidly as possible is for me the only intelligible goal of British policy in

India. Together with the question of self-preservation, of foreign policy and defence, it is the greatest of the problems which this Commonwealth has to face. It is the *articulus stantis aut cadentis reipublicae*,—the cardinal principle by which this Commonwealth will stand or fall.

What is the other ideal which Sir Courtenay Ilbert, Lord Morley, and the large number of public men who use language like this, have in mind? So far as I can discern it is accurately stated in the words he has quoted from my own letter:—

Broadly speaking, Government is at pains to recognise such opinion as there is. It accepts it where it can, often when it thinks that Nationalist opinion is not the best, ignoring it only where it appears so unsound that to accept and act upon it would lead to disaster. The policy of the British Government is to develop that opinion and to allow it to influence policy more and more. The responsibility of final decision it still reserves to itself.

Here, it may be observed, is an exact description of the policy actually applied in 1914 to the settlement of the issues between the Hindi and Urdu vernaculars. No pains were spared to elicit Indian views on the subject from those capable of formulating and expressing them. Every phase of Indian opinion was before the Lieutenant-Governor. His mind was steeped in them. Had he been thinking of absolute efficiency in education, regardless of the prejudice in favour of either language, he might, perhaps, have decided in favour of one of them. He recognized the existence and reality of the feeling in favour of their own dialect entertained by each of the two religions. And having done so he made his decision, in discharge of the trust imposed upon him for the interests of his Province by the Imperial Government in England.

If this principle of government is the end-all and be-all of British policy in India, there is little which remains to be done in order to complete its final application. If, on the other hand, the burden of final decision is ever to be transferred to the people of India themselves there is almost everything to be done. But



you will not have done it, or begun to do it, merely by substituting Indian for English officials from the Viceroy downwards. Under the present system the responsibility for decision would still be made in obedience to the authority outside India, which has the power to dismiss those officials. To make a beginning you must take certain clearly-defined functions of government, including taxation, and impose the duty of making decisions in respect of those functions on men responsible to, and therefore removable by, electorates all over India. To begin with, these electorates can only include the minority, however small, which is capable of judgment. In respect of the functions imposed upon them, those small electorates must act as the trustees of the majority of their fellow-countrymen, who are as yet incapable of political judgment. No educational means must be neglected to awaken the political consciousness of the classes outside the electorate, and to include them within it as rapidly as they are qualified. But of all those means the most potent will prove to be the spiritual commotion engendered by the system itself. It is the spirit of freedom, moving in the darkness of chaos, that creates light, calls new worlds into being, and peoples them with life and thought. It is as the four winds which blew in the valley of dry bones, till the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up on their feet, an exceeding great army.

The growth of genuine electorates embracing all religions and all castes will mark the progress of India up the difficult path of responsible government. So too will the disappearance of religious distinctions in those electorates, and the appearance of members of every caste side by side in the same cabinets and legislatures. And the growth in size and quality of the electorates will in practice determine the pace at which functions of increasing gravity can be transferred from the old Governments to the new. Above all it is essential that in this vast community the progress of the forward parts of India must not be tied down to that of the more backward. It is the example of

the more progressive communities in successfully discharging weightier functions, which more than anything will stimulate the backward to fresh efforts. There is nothing so contagious as example. Any system, which presupposes a uniform rate of advance to be imposed on the various Provinces, will load the whole of India with fetters. Each must be enabled to advance at its own pace, not merely for its own sake, but rather because it will stimulate the others. And you must be prepared for retreat where you are proved by experience to have gone too far and too fast. Otherwise the courage to experiment and advance will be wanting. But for this there must be faith in the intention to advance; to create and maintain which faith rests with the Parliament of the whole Commonwealth, and for every member of that Commonwealth in all the seven seas, who is mindful of the principle by which it stands or falls. But mere intention is not enough; there must be clearness of vision and thought. "Indian political opinion," says the writer quoted above, "is a curious and puzzling blend, produced by the 'interfusion and interaction of Western and Eastern thought, abounding in paradoxes and contradictions.'" But the first responsibility of Englishmen is for their own thinking. Now, if ever, it is for us to see to it that our thoughts are neither anxious nor puzzled, are free from all paradoxes and contradictions, and above all true to ourselves, our traditions and our past. But in this we shall fail unless we first state our own ideas with precision, and then apply them to actual and particular cases. 'Influence is not Government.' And that distinction is as valid in India to-day as it was more than a century ago in the United States. Does Sir Courtenay Ilbert mean that we can continue indefinitely to elaborate the machinery through which opinions in India can be rendered accessible to the Government? Does he really think that it will suffice for Government to render itself more and more amenable to the influence of opinions which are often conflicting? And when all this has been done, is Government in the end, finally and for

all time, to reserve the responsibility of decision to itself? Is that task of deciding between conflicting interests never to be imposed on people in India themselves? Is the final control of functions like education never to be entrusted to Indians? Is the power to impose new revenues on themselves for the extension of those functions never to be given them? Are they never to be burdened with the difficult task of distributing those revenues between minor authorities? Are controversies between the various religions always to be settled in the end by the officers responsible to a Government in London? To bring these questions to a fine point, take the controversy over Hindi and Urdu described in these pages, which, in some form or other, is certain to rise again and again. Is a time never to arrive when decisions of that order can be made by men responsible to Indians, removable by Indians, or in plain words by an Indian electorate? And if ever electorates prove themselves capable of making and sustaining such decisions, can the process be stopped till all issues, however great, which affect Indians alone, are settled by men responsible to Indian electorates alone and removable at their bidding?

Freedom, which in its political aspect is responsible government, is a human and not a Western ideal. True it was first conceived and applied in the West. But the truths of religion were first conceived and applied in the East. It was there men learned to worship their common Father at Jerusalem, Mecca and where the Ganges flows. "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." The whole earth is the temple of freedom, and the heavens themselves the dome that covers it. Its spirit moves wherever men are learning to do justice to each other, even at the cost of injustice done. A noise and a shaking there will be, as the bones draw together, but a breath is coming from the four winds. The principle that men are responsible to each other is at work, and wherever it works it will

grow with exercise. That principle, and no other, applied in detail to the facts of their own lives, has produced the constitutions of free nations. It has raised great armies willing to die, that in their dust that principle may live. And it is upon that principle, and no other, that a constitution which will bring freedom to India must be framed. The text of that constitution will be that neither of Canada, Australia or South Africa. It will 'be developed on Indian lines, upon lines appropriate to Indian conditions.' But that will only be when it is developed by trial of Indian conditions, by the increasing application of one human, unalterable principle of society to Indian facts, by readiness to recognize, not the failure of a principle which cannot fail, but only of the mechanism by which we seek to apply it. And the pace of progress will be in direct proportion to the extent to which the machinery enables us to distinguish failure from success. If there are to be electorates in India, and those electorates are to increase and rise to a fuller sense of the trust imposed on them, then surely they cannot be made too clearly to see that the trust rests on themselves, and what it is. Surely the officers who administer that trust must know what exactly it is for which they are responsible, and to whom. One Executive cannot obey the orders of a Government in England, and also the behests of an Indian electorate. So long as executives exist in India responsible to an authority in England, those executives must spare no pains to elicit and understand Indian opinion in all its varieties. They must steep their minds with knowledge of what is thought and felt by those whom the decision they frame will affect. But when they decide they must be held responsible for their decisions by one authority and one alone. And all the members of every executive must be held responsible to that authority, the Indian no less than the English members.

But the converse proposition is equally important, and no less true. If there are to be executives in India responsible to Indian electorates, they must know clearly what those responsibilities are. And they must

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be responsible to those electorates so long as they hold office. They cannot be partly responsible to any authority outside India. And the responsibility, which one executive has to its legislature and electorate, must be shared alike by every member of it until he resigns. •There can be and must be public divisions in electorates and legislatures. In executives there can be none. A divided executive is the negation of responsible government.

## XI

### EXTREMISTS AND HOW THEY MEET.

The proposals suggested in the Joint Address are exposed to a fire of criticism from two extremes. Some of the Nationalists have awaked to the fact that the Congress-League scheme contains no element of responsible government. They begin to realize that the hope of India lies in achieving responsible government, and they are anxious that the Provincial Executives should be made responsible to electorates for all their functions at one stroke. They are, therefore, concerned to prove that two Governments cannot exist side by side in the Provinces, the one responsible to electorates for some functions, the other to the Secretary of State for all the rest. Their attitude on this question is reinforced by a desire to obtain the control of police at once.

The more cautious section of Europeans, on the other hand, are anxious to see the promised reforms confined to the sphere of local government. They also are concerned to demonstrate that a specific devolution of some Provincial functions to Governments responsible to electorates, while others are reserved to the Governments responsible to the Secretary of State, is impossible.

Probably they believe that when local authorities have been made responsible to electorates, there are two stages which still remain, and that then Provincial Executives can be made responsible long before a similar change need be made in the sphere of the Government of India. This view, however obvious it may seem, will not, I believe, bear analysis. Why are functions of government in India, and in other countries of a like magnitude, divided between the Central Government and those of Provinces? The answer is twofold. In the case of functions like education, variety of treatment is required to suit the local conditions of

different areas. But there is a second and no less important reason. The maintenance of law and order is the basic function of Government. It is for the performance of that duty, first and foremost, that the Governor-General-in-Council is responsible to Parliament through the Secretary of State. But the organization required for the purpose is so vast that it cannot be managed in all its details from one centre like Delhi or Simla. It must, for administrative reasons, be devolved on Provincial Governments, which are in fact nothing more nor less than local departments of the Government of India. That Government can remain responsible to Parliament, only so long as the Provincial Governments remain responsible to itself for the *final* control of Police.

I lay particular stress on the word *final*, because I am not assuming that the police need always remain as one closely organized department from the Inspector-General to the village chaukidar. I see no reason why the management of the village constables should not be relegated to the new elective authorities from the outset. Then there are the great bulk of the police, who correspond to those which an English County Council controls. It is possible that these could be transferred to the control of the State Governments at an intermediary stage, provided always that a force competent to deal with political dacoity, anarchism and the like is reserved to the control of the Provincial Executive responsible to the Government of India. Provided that forces are retained strong enough to step in and restore order in the case of any break-down on the part of elective authorities, those authorities might be entrusted with the ordinary police work and large sections of the police during the transitional stage. An arrangement like this would enable Government to test the capacity of State Governments for maintaining order, before taking the final step of handing over the reserve or military police, including all the functions connected with the Criminal Investigation Department. When using the word police in these letters, I must be understood to

mean reserve forces necessary and adequate to deal with political crime and to restore order under all conditions. But whenever the final transfer of this reserve force is made to elective governments in the major Provinces, the Government of India itself must then be made responsible to 'their' electorates. The transfer of police to Executives responsible to electorates is tantamount to the consummation of responsible government, to the attainment of the final goal set forth in the Pronouncement.

In all federal countries the control of police is in the hands of the Provincial Governments. The Central Government has nothing to do with police, unless disorders are such as to demand suppression by troops, when the Central Government steps in. Indeed you may say that a great country is ripe for full responsible government, when in a sufficient number of provinces, electorates have been proved to be capable of maintaining order for themselves. From these provincial electorates a national electorate can be constituted fit to be trusted with the fullest responsibilities. I suggest, therefore, that a stage will be reached when the Imperial Government, judging by results ascertained by experience, will have to decide whether the electorate of this or that State can be entrusted with control of police. Whenever a sufficient number of State electorates have been given that control, then such electorates have been proved competent to form a general electorate to which the Government of India itself can be made responsible. It comes to this, that when control of all provincial functions, including police, can be given to electorates in the major provinces, then India is ripe for full responsible government. The transfer of police can only be made as the last preliminary, before the final change by which complete responsible government will be established. The changes by which electorates are made responsible (a) for all provincial functions, (b) for those of the Central Government, must come so near together as practically to be part of one operation. To speak of handing over all provincial



functions, including police, to electorates is, in effect, to contemplate the consummation of the goal, the final establishment of India as a Self-Governing Dominion.

If this reasoning is sound, the Secretary of State is debarred from listening to demands that all provincial functions including police should be handed over, at this stage, to Executives responsible to electorates. He cannot accept such proposals, without transgressing the plain and explicit terms of the instructions by which he is bound. It is clear that the Imperial Government intends to transfer the responsibility for the whole government of India, which now rests on the British electorate, to Indian electorates as soon as may be. It is equally clear that it sees no electorates at the moment on whom that responsibility can be laid. It intends to develop such electorates, and to prove their strength, before laying on their backs the final function of government. I am sure that no British Parliament will consent to transfer the control of police to electorates, before they have seen what the electorates are going to be and have gauged their capacity.

As personally I believe that Parliament is right, I will not shrink from giving my reasons for that belief. Such limited electorates as there in India have never been exercised in responsibilities outside the narrow field of Local Government. To take those electorates, or any others which can be framed on paper, and to place upon them at one stroke the basic responsibility of maintaining order, would, in my judgment, expose India to the very disasters which have overtaken Russia. It is not the damage to life and property of which I am afraid, nor even the danger to the British position in India, for England was never so strong as she now is. My principal reason is that the one thing which can seriously postpone the achievement of responsible government by India is a catastrophic break-down of responsible government at the outset. Responsible government can, I believe, be achieved in measurable time by a

process of evolution. In my judgment it can only be delayed indefinitely by revolution, by civil war, or a general break-down of public order. I am weighing my words when I say that continuous progress towards responsible government can only be delayed by subjects who try to undermine order, and by rulers who shrink from the duty of enforcing it.

It is for this very reason that I am slow to accept the view, held by a section of my own countrymen, that provincial functions cannot be transferred to electorates by instalments. An electorate, it is urged, cannot assume any political functions entrusted to the Provincial Government, without assuming the whole. The fifth proposition affirmed in the Joint Address—"that during the period of transition, governments "of two types must co-exist, the one responsible to "electorates for specific powers, the other to the Secretary of State for all other powers"—is challenged and denied. Have these critics realized the practical results of their own position? It means that a full and final responsibility for all political functions, including the maintenance of order, will sooner or later have to be placed, practically at one stroke, on electorates trained in nothing but the details of district, village and town administration. These electorates are to be confined to responsibilities in the sphere of local government. They are to be given no political responsibilities; and yet we are to look forward to a time when all the political responsibilities of India are to be placed on their backs together. It is just this which has happened in Russia, and the results are before us.

The idea that electorates can be trained for the discharge of political functions in the narrow sphere of district, village and town administration, is in my judgment a pure illusion. Whatever the text-books may say, they were not so trained in England. In the time of Cromwell the principle of election in Local Government was practically confined to small and narrowly restricted groups in the boroughs, which contained only a fraction of their population. In the

Parliamentary elections responsibility was confined to a minority so small that it was in fact an oligarchy. The circle of voters has been gradually broadened downwards, until, under the recent Act, it will, I am told, include a little more than one-fourth of the whole population.

My own short official experience in England and South Africa related for the most part to Local Government. As a political student I have seen something of Local Government in most parts of the British Commonwealth. Like the liver in the human body, local authorities are the least satisfactory organs in the body politic. The details with which they deal do not, unhappily, attract and évoke the best talent, either in administrations, or in electorates. The best men do not in practice come forward for election. It is also notorious that in all countries "a lamentably small proportion of electors record their votes at the poll. I have seen the condition of local bodies in India adduced as conclusive proof of the inherent unfitness of Indians for any form of responsible government. Well, all I can say is that, if a political student were to test the capacity of Americans for self-government simply by a study of their local and municipal bodies, he would infallibly come to the conclusion that here was a people incapable of governing themselves. You will not evoke or develop whatever latent capacity for self-government there is in India, until you have imposed on electorates the burden of deciding such issues as are now decided, and can only be decided, by Provincial Governments. At present those Governments decide all the great questions at issue between Hindus and Muhammadans. Real political training will not have been started, until you have remitted some of these questions for settlement to executives and legislatures responsible to electorates including Hindus and Muhammadans. The great sections into which Indian society is divided must be exercised in the practice of settling these issues for themselves. The mere administration of Education and Municipal laws made over their heads, will never

afford this training. Electorates must have power to pass laws for themselves, which determine the relative positions of Hindus and Muhammadans, and of their respective scripts and languages, in the educational and municipal system. But to give this process of training a chance, the existing Governments must stand by, with all their experience, and with all powers necessary, to maintain order. To jeopardize order at the outset is to jeopardize the whole prospect of developing electorates such as will presently be able to maintain order for themselves.

Those, I submit, are the conditions recognized and prescribed in the instructions under which the Secretary of State has been sent to India to seek for advice. It is those conditions which the system outlined in the Joint Address attempts to meet. Apart from extremists on both sides who honestly reject the Pronouncement, all agree that full powers of Local Government should now be devolved on district, village and municipal boards. The Joint Address proposes to go one step further. It notes that the existing Provinces, developed as satrapies of a vast Dependency governed from England, include populations the size of great European Nations. It proposes that the Governments of these vast areas should devolve instalments of political powers on units commensurate with the self-governing Provinces of the other federal countries, upon the model of which it is now proposed to develop the Government of India. That devolution it is proposed to increase, as the new Provincial State Governments and their electorates show their capacity for bearing the burden, until they have shown themselves able to legislate on and administer all functions of government including police. When that point is reached, it is recognized that the time has come when a new Constitution for India must be framed, under which the Government of India itself must be made responsible to the joint electorates of India.

Some better way of doing this than that suggested in the Joint Address may easily be found. I myself suggested in a letter to Mr. Bhupendra Nath Basu,

which has since been published, that the best way might be to establish a responsible Executive for each existing Province, to which functions might be handed over by the old Provincial Governments, as the new electoral authority showed itself able to take them. After studying the mass of criticism that was made on this proposal, I came to the conclusion that smaller units were needed as the States of a future United States of India. That may or may not be. But when we are told that the method of specific devolution in India must be confined to district, village and town boards, and to such administrative details as can be devolved on local bodies, but that it cannot, by any manner of means, be extended to Provincial and political functions, I confess I view such arguments with reserve. Moderates who advance them have not, I feel, faced the consequence of their own reasoning. 'They do not see that, sooner or later, they are proposing to hand over at one stroke all political functions, the whole Government of India, to electorates which have never been called upon to exercise any responsibility, or to decide issues, in the genuine field of politics.

Really the crux of the whole problem lies in finding some plan, whereby instalments of real political responsibility can be placed on electorates, in order that their strength may be developed and proved, before they are asked to undertake the fundamental function of government, the maintenance of order, and where they are ready for that, they are ready for the whole government of India. It is therefore vital that a plan should be found, whereby some provincial functions can be placed in their charge, before they are asked to undertake them all. The public will do well to distrust arguments directed to prove that a thing obviously dictated by common sense cannot be done. I am old enough to remember in the nineties a Committee of Treasury officials who proved that old-age pensions could not be established in England. I have lived to see them established. I have heard the most experienced politicians demonstrate that the Union of South Africa was impossible. I have seen it

accomplished. The truth is that in all such matters the difficulties lie, not in immutable facts, but rather in the minds and hearts of men, which can be changed, and need but the courage of a leader to change them.

## XII

### PRINCIPLES OF REPRESENTATION.

The first step in the path of reform must of course consist in the passing of an Act of Parliament, defining what the reforms are to be, and how effect is to be given them. In defining electorates two courses can be followed. They can be defined in the Act; but, as pointed out in the Joint Address, this course is likely to lead to a dangerous delay. The alternative is to remit the task of defining electorates to Commissioners appointed under, and named in, the Act. The most we can do now is to suggest principles upon which they should be based. To begin with, it is clearly important that the voters should, so far as possible, belong to the class who will feel the incidence of new taxation imposed by the men they elect. My own belief is that any fresh burdens, however imposed, will mainly fall on the land. How far the tenants are rack-rented already, I do not know; but in so far as they are not, it will be open to the landlords to transfer the tax to the cultivator by increasing the rents. I would therefore suggest the cultivation of a certain minimum area as the basis of the rural franchise. Nor, would I urge, should any voter, otherwise qualified, be rejected on the ground of illiteracy. Speaking of my own village in England, I would trust the political judgment of a small holder who could not write his name, more than I would that of the schoolmaster imported from London. In India you have, in the British officials, an admirable machinery for recording an illiterate vote, because they stand outside the issues which will divide parties. If necessary, enough of them can be drafted in from outside for the purposes of the election. Due weight can be given to the educated voters through university representation, or the representation of graduates.

In the initial stages of the experiment, the framing of the voters' rolls should be kept in the hands of the Provincial Government. The system should be designed, so far as possible, to make it clear that the legislature of each State is designated, by every possible means, as the body of citizens who are the ultimate trustees of the interests transferred to the State Government. I would leave it open to the Assembly to extend the franchise by legislation, which would be subject to the safeguard of the veto. But I would also leave it open to the Government of the Province to extend or improve the electorate, in case it should develop exclusive tendencies. It is desirable to enlarge electorates, so far as possible, if only because they are then less easy to corrupt. The existing microscopic electorates are a standing invitation to corruption which it is most difficult to discover. I know of a case in another province, in which Rs. 30,000 was spent by an unsuccessful candidate for the Provincial Council.

The next step would be to delimit the constituencies; and this must be done largely with reference to population. So much the larger number of the constituencies will be rural that it would be well to give representation to Universities, or, where there are none, to residents with degrees. Avoid, if you possibly can, separate constituencies based on religious divisions. More than anything else, they will hamper and delay the development of responsible government in India. Proportional representation is the obvious remedy. The complexity lies only in the counting of the votes, which can be done by skilled officials. The voting is simple, and, after a period of trial, the electors will begin to realize that the results reflect the real divisions of the electorate. In this, as in other matters, understanding will come with experience, if only the opportunity of experience be given.

I have stated elsewhere that in several matters my advice was not taken by the signatories to the Joint Address. Communal representation is a case in point, and I am here at liberty to state my own convictions on the subject. Communal representation



as I understand it means that Hindus and Moslems are to vote in separate constituencies, in such manner that a Moslem voter must vote for a Moslem candidate. He may not vote for one of any other religion; and the same applies to any other community to which communal representation is accorded. Moslems will thus learn to depend on an artificial protection, instead of facing the real source of their weakness, their relative backwardness in education. It is like keeping in irons a weak but healthy limb, which only needs exercise to recover its strength.

The concession of this principle when electoral institutions were inaugurated a few years ago, is the greatest blunder ever committed by the British Government in India. I believe that, if this principle is perpetuated, we shall have saddled India with a new system of caste which will eat every year more deeply into her life. So long as it remains, India will never attain to the unity of Nationhood. The longer it remains the more difficult will it be to uproot, till in the end it will only be eradicated at the cost of civil war. To enable India to achieve nationhood, is the trust laid on us; and in conceding the establishment of communal representation we have, I hold, been false to that trust.

The system has eaten into the life of this people so deeply that, already, it is not possible to abolish at one stroke what might have been refused a few years ago. But I feel that we shall be guilty of an unpardonable crime against India if we fail now to make provision whereby these fetters, in which we have allowed her to bind herself, can be loosed.

The experience of America in the matter of slavery may help to a solution. When the constitution was framed, it was laid down that the importation of more slaves from Africa was to cease in a particular year; I think in 1808. And the slave trade ceased in that year. But the courage of the convention failed them in the matter of slavery itself; and no time was fixed after which slavery should cease to stain the soil of America. The result was that eighty years later

slavery was abolished, but only by drenching that soil with the blood of a million men.

I plead this precedent for a definite time-limit to be set in the matter of communal representation. India is tied and bound by the chain of her past. Our first duty is to help her to break that chain instead of allowing one generation to rivet it more firmly than ever on those who come after. The least we can do is to fix a time-limit after which any arrangements now made for communal representation shall expire. Then we may hope that meanwhile the people of India may have learned such trust in each other that minorities will not insist on a system fatal to the development of all national life.

These, I know, are hard sayings for the Moslem community, yet "faithful are the wounds of a friend." Things there are bitter in the mouth, that chewed, swallowed and digested are sweet in the belly.

In the criticisms levelled against the Joint Address, it has often been urged that, before suggesting that electorates should be made responsible for certain functions, we are bound to say what the electorates are to be. This criticism, however specious it may seem at the first glance, will not bear the test of analysis.

To begin with, the Joint Address, like the Pronouncement of the 20th of August, relates, not to conditions in one Province, but to those of all India. It was not possible to compile schedules of voting qualifications appropriate to all the varying conditions of the several Provinces. I do not believe that such information at present exists in the files of the Home Department itself.

To this the answer may be made that discussion of the whole question should be postponed until the information is available, and all the suggested electorates can be described. But this criticism shows a misconception of the elementary conditions under which an electoral system must be framed. You cannot appoint officers to make an electoral system in the air. You must give them instructions. You must first tell them the principle upon which the vote is to

be given. That principle, if our reasoning is right, is simple. *It is that the voters should be those who will in fact feel the effect of the votes given.* It follows, therefore, that the officers appointed to frame the electorate must also know what powers, legislative as well as administrative, the Governments responsible to the electorates are to exercise, and especially what their powers of taxation are to be. And these powers will differ in the case of each Province,—so various are their conditions and levels of advancement. In practice the definition of electorates is the last step, and not the first, in the framing of a Constitution.

The first step, and the only one possible at this stage, is to think out clearly the elementary principle upon which the electorates are to be framed. With what objects in view are electorates to be brought into existence? Our answer is clear and precise, and is so stated for the purpose of criticism and discussion. The object in view should be to fit the voters placed on the list for the exercise of wider political responsibility, for which purpose we contend that some such responsibilities must be given them at the outset. They will certainly make mistakes, and it is only by making mistakes, and by suffering brought on themselves, that they will learn.

Granted an acceptance of that principle, the details can be worked out. Some of them can be settled in an Act of Parliament. Such an Act can enumerate the maximum powers that Parliament is prepared to transfer at the outset, in some Provinces more, in others less. But the definition of the powers to be given to each Province (especially those of taxation) of the electorates and of all other details required for the perfecting of the constitution to be given to each of the new electoral Provinces, must be left to Commissioners charged to enquire and decide on the spot. Otherwise the Bill will break down before it reaches the Statute Book, or else there will be a long and dangerous delay—dangerous because, until this question is settled, India, not knowing what her future is to be, will remain in a state of ferment and unrest.

Upon this subject the words of the Joint Address itself may be quoted.

The new pronouncement was only made on the 29th of August last, and the Secretary of State has reached India within three months from that date. It is utterly beyond the power, even of skilled and experienced officials, to collect within that time the facts and figures necessary before the details of proposals can be worked out. Nor, we venture to predict, will the Secretary of State himself be able to do this, with all the assistance which the Government of India can give him. The short time at his disposal here will be more than occupied with the study of principles, and if any attempt is afterwards made to work these principles into a complete scheme in London, we believe that it will fail for lack of detailed information, which can only be obtained on the spot. Such failure will mean delay, and delay will not be understood in India. It will surely breed distrust and continued agitation. The greatest need of India is that prompt and unmistakable steps should be taken to give effect to the policy outlined in the recent pronouncements. The only way in which this can be done, is by the early enactment of a measure by Parliament such as will set in train the progress of India towards responsible government there foreshadowed.

The solution of the problem, we suggest, will be found in the precedent set by the Government of London Act of 1899. By this measure it was proposed to abolish more than forty vestries, and establish in their place a far smaller number of municipal bodies. The whole scheme, including the constitution of the new bodies, was firmly outlined in the measure. Yet the Parliamentary draughtsman, situated as he was in the middle of the subject dealt with by the measure, with all the forces of the Local Government Board, the Home Office, the London County Council, the City of London, and the Vestries at his disposal, was unable to cope with the innumerable details which had to be worked out before effect could be given to its provisions. In order to bring the new bodies into existence, it was necessary to delimit areas, fix the number of members on the various bodies, adjust their finances, and disentangle and re-arrange a multitude of details. All this was remitted to three Commissioners named and appointed under the Act. The moment the

Act was passed the Commissioners got to work, and, as their arrangements were framed, legal effect was given to them by orders in Council issued in terms of its provisions.

We believe that the adoption of this course is the only way to avoid a delay which will prove mischievous in the extreme to the peace and interests of India. It is not delay in bringing into being the new organs of Government that we fear. That of necessity is a task the details of which need time for their execution. Any attempt to burke those details will only end in further postponement. The delay, we fear, is in framing a measure which the Imperial Government can adopt for submission to Parliament, and in the passage of that measure into law. The trust of India in Parliament is unimpaired, and if once the scheme of reforms is firmly outlined in statutory form, and Commissioners are appointed to give effect to it, the people of India will not be found wanting in patience. Their energies will, we think, be devoted to aiding the Government and Commissioners in working out the details and carrying them into effect.

We agree, therefore, in advising that the specific points to which our agreement relates, and the outlines of the scheme sketched in these proposals, be laid down in an Act of Parliament: but that all questions, within those outlines relating to franchises, constitutions, powers, finances and such like details be remitted to not more than five Commissioners named under the Act, to be dealt with in India by the Commissioners, in consultation with Governments and People, the arrangements of the Commissioners, to be given the force of law by Orders in Council.

### XIII

#### THE QUESTION OF AN UPPER HOUSE.

In the memorandum prefaced to the Joint Address it is suggested that the State legislature should consist of one Chamber only. No second Chamber was suggested, though I knew that a demand would be made for one to consist either of the largest land-holders, or of members elected by land-holders. The reason is that their hereditary pride revolts against the thought of seeking the suffrage of an electorate. The feelings of a zamindar are those of Coriolanus. But the effect of a landed Upper House will be to make the Assembly a House of lawyers and money-lenders. There will be constant collisions on the subject of taxation between the two Houses, and consequent deadlocks, as in Australia. The whole thing is too cumbersome for Provincial government. Besides, the land-holders, whose position gives them administrative experience, are badly needed in the Assembly. It will be, or should be, the dominant House; and if they are to serve their country, and do justice to their order, they must come to face the ordeal of popular elections. But something can be done to ease the process. On the London County Council the door is opened to a most useful class of members by the following expedient. Two-thirds of the members are directly elected. These members then co-opt another third. Now, if this expedient were adopted, the older land-holders would put up the younger members of their order and support them at the direct election, in order to secure seats for themselves by co-option. If induced to take part in elections, they will tend to become better and more indulgent landlords. They will, moreover, be driven to educate their sons for political life. If once the land-holding class be given the motive and opportunity of taking part in active political life, they may well work the salvation of India in its progress towards

responsible government. An excessive artificial protection of any class invariably leads to its enfeeblement and undoing. Muhammadans, as well as landholders, will do well to reflect on this truth.

I understand that, at present, an agreement exists between representatives of the Hindu and Muslim communities to give 30 per cent of the seats to the latter. If it is decided to give effect to this concordat, the following arrangement might be considered. Let us suppose that forty out of the sixty members have been returned by proportional representation. If the voting were strictly on religious lines, the result might yield thirty-three Hindus and seven Muhammadans. There would then remain the twenty members to be co-opted. Of these thirteen might be co-opted by the Muslim members, and seven by the Hindu members, the total result thus yielding the artificial proportions in the legislature laid down in the agreement. But Indians will have made a long step towards responsible government when they can trust each other so far as to forego such arrangements

## XIV

### EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

In order to sketch the constitution of the executive, it is necessary first of all to consider the functions which the new Governments would have to discharge.

These may be divided into two classes.

I.—In the first place there are the administrative functions which may involve legislation from time to time. Education is an instance. In this connection it is important to note that, under the existing system, educational policy is embodied in executive resolutions and regulations. Under a system of responsible government, it will have to be embodied in Education Acts passed by the Assembly. A change of policy will involve a legislative amendment of the Education Act.

II. In the second place there are the legislative functions, those which involve making some change in the existing laws, which may or may not involve administrative action or change as well. The legalisation of marriages between castes might or might not involve some change in the machinery of registration.

As functions belonging to class I involve expenditure, a fairly complete list of them can be framed by reference to the estimates of the existing Provinces. From these estimates I will endeavour to frame a schedule showing the functions which could be transferred from time to time to the State Governments, leaving a residuum, when the process is completed, which will have to go to the Government of India.

Obviously the first powers to be transferred must be those the details of which have already been entrusted to the District and Municipal Boards.

These are—

#### I.

Vernacular education.

Medical relief.



Rural sanitation.

Veterinary aid.

Roads, other than provincial trunk roads.

The above is the smallest group of functions which could be transferred to the new bodies. I now come to those which might be added, either at once, or severally from time to time, as the administrative record of the new Governments may warrant. Nor is it necessary to transfer the same function to every State; for their conditions will differ. As we saw in the case of the Police, parts of one function can be transferred, leaving the rest for subsequent transfer. Certain forest areas, for instance, could be handed over, the Provincial Government reserving control of the rest. The following is a list of such functions:—

## II.

Provincial trunk roads and bridges.

Agriculture

Co-operative credit

Factories and industries

Museums and archaeology

Registration of deeds

Local railways

Forests

Irrigation

Charitable endowments

Famine relief

Higher education

Thirdly, we come to functions, which would only be transferred to a State when its Government and electorate had proved itself equal to the full burden of responsible government

## III

Law and Justice.

Court of Wards.

Jails.

Police (final control).

Control of the district officers.

When this final transfer had been made to all the States, the old Provincial Government would vanish. Some or all of the following functions would then revert to the direct control of the Government of India.—

## IV.

Irrigation systems included in the areas of two  
or more Provincial States  
Ecclesiastical affairs.  
Archaeology.  
Relations with Feudatory States.  
Territorial and political pensions.  
Ports and pilotage. (In the Presidencies )  
The Boards of Revenue.

With reference to this last item, there is something to be said hereafter.

## XV

### STRUCTURE OF THE EXECUTIVE.

The elected members having been returned, the Chief Commissioner would convene them, and they would proceed to complete the Assembly by co-option. The Chief Commissioner would then send for the member whom he judged to be most capable of commanding the majority of votes and entrust him as Premier with the task of forming a Government. Let us suppose that the functions entrusted to the new Government are those in the first list, together with the control of municipal government, provincial trunk roads and agriculture. These functions would require the following portfolios:—

- Primary education.
- Local government.
- Agriculture.
- Public works.
- Finance.

The Premier would select four colleagues from the Assembly, assign one of these portfolios to each of them, retaining the fifth for himself. And, if he were wise, he would do all this in friendly consultation with the Chief Commissioner. The Government having been constituted, they would meet the Assembly under the presidency of the Chief Commissioner. A speaker would be elected, and the Chief Commissioner would then withdraw.

As the methods of responsible government are strange to this country, it may be as well to explain one side of their working. Ministers, having been appointed, discuss their business and come to decisions amongst themselves in Cabinet, a word which does not appear in the formal constitution. These executive decisions are then brought to the Executive Council, a formal body of ministers over which the Chief Commissioner would preside. The decisions

become operative when signed by the Chief Commissioner. Provided they are legal, he *must* sign them on the advice of the ministers. But, before doing so, a constitutional Governor is at liberty to discuss them with his ministers. Responsibility and the power of decision rest with ministers; but they are only too glad to consider the advice of a Governor who stands aloof from all parties and has perhaps watched the workings of government under several Administrations. Having often been in contact with Governors and ministers in the self-governing Dominions, I can testify to the cordial relations which prevail between them. Ministers often regard the Governor as their best friend and adviser. He, on the other hand, generally refers to "my ministers" in a tone of affectionate enthusiasm. In the situation I am sketching, responsible government in India would begin with an advantage which has been usually wanting in the Colonies. The Chief Commissioner would be an expert, with a thorough grasp of all the public affairs of his Provincial State. His instructions would make it perfectly clear that all control and all responsibility in respect of functions transferred to ministers rested with them, and not with himself. His experienced advice would be at their disposal, and, just because they were free to reject it, they would be all the more willing to seek and to consider it. His experience could influence them to the full. Responsibility would rest with them.

As the point was raised and gave serious trouble elsewhere, it should be laid down that the Chief Commissioner must not ratify any decision which the law officers of the Provincial Government advise him to be contrary to law. Otherwise he must sign, if, after hearing his advice, ministers are unable to change their decision, unless he is prepared to dismiss them and find others to take their place. He should be able to dissolve the Assembly only on two conditions—

- (1) that he can find ministers who will take the responsibility of advising a dissolution, and
- (2) on instructions from the Government of the Province.

The policy of ministers at the opening of a session would, in accordance with the ordinary tradition, be announced in the Chief Commissioner's speech. But the usual conventions should be dropped, and phraseology should be used such as would make it clear to the electorate that the decisions announced were those of their own ministers and not those of the Chief Commissioner. He should appear merely as reporting the decisions of the ministers, like an impartial Chairman reporting the resolutions of a Committee.

The Chief Commissioner, assisted by the Junior Commissioner, would continue to discharge the duties at present associated with his office (other than those transferred to the ministry) as an officer of the Provincial Government. In that capacity he would control the district officers as at present. He would, thus, be well situated to act as a link and a buffer between the officers of the old Government and the new. He would be able to mitigate friction between the district officers and those of the ministry, just as these officers themselves have done in their capacity as Chairmen of the District Boards and Municipalities. He would want his ministry to succeed, and would use his authority with his district officers to get them to smooth difficulties away. But those officers should be specifically divested of all responsibility for functions transferred to the ministry. The discovery which the electors will make, however slowly, that their own ministers are responsible for these things, and that it is through their members that they must seek relief, is the most important item in their education. For the sake of the electors district officers must be warned to decline specifically to touch grievances which come within the jurisdiction of the State ministries.

It may be useful to trace the manner in which the first ministry would assume its functions. Ministers would not take over their functions, until they had organized departments for the purpose. Aided by the Chief Commissioner, each minister would select a head of his department from the ranks of existing officials. Aided by that officer he would obtain the necessary