

POLITICAL PROBLEMS

AND

HUNTER COMMITTEE
DISCLOSURES

BY

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CALCUTTA.—THE PUBLISHER.

MADRAS.—MESSRS. NATESAN, INDIAN REVIEW PRESS.

LAHORE.—MESSRS. RAM KRISHNA, ANARKALI.

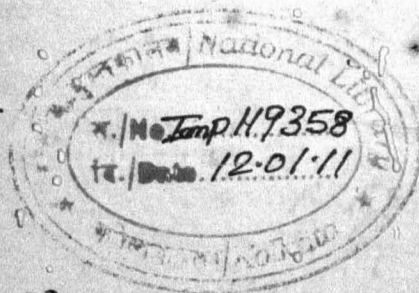
ALLAHABAD.—THE LEADER PRESS.

1920.

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FOREWORD.

In reproducing in book form the articles, all but one of which appeared in the *Leader* of Allahabad, the writer has been encouraged by the reception accorded to his previous work, "The Political Situation," which was favourably reviewed by the press in England and in India and commanded a ready sale. It dealt especially with the disturbances in the Punjab and the imposition there of martial law, but in the present volume the end kept in view has been to present to the public the various political problems which are exercising the minds of the people and of the Government at the present moment. There has been unfortunately a conflict of opinion on some important matters, due partly to misunderstanding and partly to the fact that usually a one-sided view has been taken to suit the preconceived ideas of the classes that were appealed to. In every progressive country the existence of a diversity of interests is inevitable, and it is especially so in India which is ruled by a foreign nation. It has been the fashion to believe that the interests of the rulers and the ruled can never be reconciled, than which there can be no greater blunder. India is about to enter a new phase of existence, when for the first time in its history the people will be allowed a voice in the administration of its affairs. There is happily no disagreement as to the goal it is one day destined to reach, which it can

only do it during the intervening period, the Government and the English nation on the one hand and the people of India on the other hand are willing to discard all misunderstandings and sink all differences and to co-operate heartily for the promotion of the moral and material welfare of the country.

DEHRA DUN
March 1920.

ALFRED NUNDY.

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POLITICAL PROBLEMS.

CHAPTER I.

THE AWAKENING OF INDIA.

Lord Curzon in moving in the House of Lords the appointment of the Joint Committee on Indian Reforms stated that 'India is spinning very fast'. The least observant amongst us cannot help noticing the process. The fact of a national upheaval which no power can restrain receives general assent, and it is transforming India beyond the power of recognition. What was said about it yesterday lacks in accuracy to-day. Expression is given one day to aims and aspirations, which are startling enough, but they are decried a few days later for their falling short of the ideal that has been set up. Demands are made, under this new impulse which by the time an effort is made to meet them are considered to be out of date. There can be no question the European war has had a wonderfully stimulating effect. Self-preservation has always been reckoned the first law of nature, but the recent war has emphasized the fact that self-preservation is dependent on self-determination. The spirit of liberty is abroad, and India could not help being affected by it. It is eager to enlarge its outlook and to burst the chains which fetter its movement. The conviction that the time has arrived for it to emerge from a state of tutelage is so strong that in some quarters there is to be found a peculiar indifference as to the methods by which this is to

be achieved so long as the desired end is attained. What the future has in store for us he would be a bold man who can hazard a prediction in the face of the hostile forces that are at work, the one impelling a forward advance at a headlong pace, the other putting on a curb which would impede all progress, even at the risk of a catastrophe. This is indeed a critical period in the history of India, and the rocks that are ahead can only be avoided by an accurate knowledge of the scope of the new spirit of nationality, which has given birth to a political consciousness demanding the removal of certain disabilities, the liberalising of existing institutions and the appropriation of a large share of appointments in the public services. Never was the call for the exercise of mutual toleration so imperative as it is at present, as also for the display of a large-hearted sympathy on the part of our rulers, in whose hands the destinies of the people have for the time being been placed. That there has not been a superfluity of this sentiment on their part in the past has been admitted by the authors of the Reforms Report when they said: 'We imply no criticism upon the Government of the time when we say that in the light of subsequent events we are constrained to wonder whether a bolder policy from the outset of the war and a franker inviting of India's co-operation in all forms of war effort might not have done much to steady men's minds.'

It will serve no good purpose to go over ground that has already been traversed. In the Reforms Report we have a compendium of the political history of India and of the causes and the circumstances which have contributed towards an awakening of the people to seek for higher ideals and to be eager to undertake responsibilities

which forced the necessity for a new handling of the situation thus created. We must concede that a task so immense and complex was accomplished by the Secretary of State and the Viceroy with boldness and a sympathy for the people of India, without which it was impossible to formulate the measures which aimed at a gradual transfer of responsibility for the government of the country from the Civil Service to the people. It was an honest attempt to redeem the promise made by his Majesty's Government on the 20th August 1917 to initiate a new policy which, if carried out, both in the letter and the spirit, should secure the redemption of India. Whether the proposed measures are 'disappointing' and 'unacceptable' as maintained by some critics or they are 'dangerous' and 'revolutionary' as insisted upon by others we need not pause to enquire, for what we are concerned with is the consideration of the question whether the situation now is the same as it was some fifteen months ago, when the Reforms Report saw the light of day. Is it not that in the process of 'spinning fast' the situation has so changed that it has to be looked at from another angle of vision? The effect this should have on the measures that have been designed to usher in the new order of things is a matter quite apart, but it can hardly be seriously contested that the India of to-day is not the India for whose benefit certain reforms in the government of the country were proposed. In the ideals that are now expressed there is as striking a change as there is in the views and in the policy of the Indian bureaucracy. Communities which were inert and silent then are now asserting their claims with no uncertain voice. We see before us a phenomenon which is certainly curious in the somewhat sudden coalition in the assertion

of the political rights of the various communities which make up the Indian population, and which had hitherto believed they had no interests in common. Home rule, provincial autonomy, and fiscal autonomy, which once bore a flexible interpretation, have now acquired a definite meaning and are points on which the political controversy of the future is likely to be centred. Both the advanced party in India and the official reactionaries are furbishing their arms, and unless wiser counsels prevail the prospect before us is not very reassuring.

To deal first with the reactionaries, it is a matter of regret that the Viceroy will have to be placed in the forefront. The Reforms Report is signed by Lord Chelmsford who, since the 22nd April, 1918, the date borne by this document, has so largely modified his views as to transform the identity of the scheme for which jointly with the Secretary of State he had made himself responsible. It is not only in respect to the position and the privileges assigned to the members of the Civil Service that there has been a reversal of the policy which had been formulated in all seriousness and solemnity, but taking it generally the memorandum submitted by the Government of India, dated the 5th March, 1919, puts forward certain proposals the effect of which will be to take away even the semblance of responsibility with which the representatives of the people were to be invested when the new order of things was to be put in operation. The Minister is divested of all power and of taking the initiative in measures calculated to benefit the people. He is reduced to the position of an agent of the Governor, and in matters of taxation the provincial councils have nothing to differentiate them from advisory bodies. As an annexure

to the Reforms Report is to be found a despatch from the Government of India to the Secretary of State in which the signatories desire to record the fact that the Report on constitutional reforms 'was framed after prolonged discussion with us', and they go on to add that 'we wish to convey our cordial support to the general policy which it embodies.' The complete somersault now taken by the executive members of the Council of the Government of India, with the exception of Sir Sankaran Nair, is significant of the sign of the times when hostile forces are at work pulling in opposite directions. From the reference made in the Report to the heads of Provincial Governments, who it is alleged were fully and freely consulted, the inference was natural that these exalted officials were in close agreement with the views that find expression in this document, but the proposals now adumbrated by them not only show a great variance from the original scheme but undermine the very foundation on which it is based by repudiating the principle of diarchy, by which certain departments were to be transferred to the Minister to be administered by him according to the will of the representatives of the people. As a matter of fact their scheme is so reactionary that we would not be far wrong in crediting them with presenting a rehash of the Morley-Minto reforms, with certain ingredients thrown in to which the name of responsible government is euphemistically given.

The Indian Civil Service which was credited with the desire to welcome the new policy with a good grace and with the determination to carry it out loyally has, as a matter of fact, been so alarmed at the proposed curtailment of their power and privileges that Associations which had become moribund have been resuscitated for

resisting the attack they consider is being wantonly made on their very existence. Some are even prepared to sever their connection with a service in which they will no longer be masters directing the policy in which the administration of the country is to be carried on, but would be reduced to instruments for translating into action the will of those whom they had hitherto looked upon with a certain amount of contempt. The non-official Europeans have had their lofty indifference rudely shaken and are strenuously urging that the time has not arrived for the grant of responsible government to India and that barring a microscopic minority the bulk of the people have neither made a demand for self-government nor are they capable of undertaking this task. Any departure that is made should, they say, be evolutionary and not revolutionary, and they would prefer the grant of representative government to be postponed to the Greek Calends. All the same they would bow to the inevitable and in the new councils they desire to be largely represented, as on the strength of the doctrine of heredity they consider they are the most competent persons to foster and advance the cause of popular assemblies. The domiciled Anglo-Indians are in a dilemma. As a body they scattered, disunited, uneducated, bursting with pride in an inverse proportion to the amount of foreign blood in their veins and repudiating any interest in the land of their birth. Their inclinations would lead them to fraternize with the English population, which however receives their advances with coldness and indifference. Some few amongst them possessing robust minds are beginning to realize that their moral and material welfare is closely connected with the land wherein they have to live and to

die, and that unless they bestir themselves they will lag behind while other communities will be making rapid advances in securing political power and privileges. The new awakening has not left them untouched and they have now arrived at the stage of asking for communal representation in the various councils, but it will take them some decades to realize fully the idea of citizenship and patriotism with which their personal interests are so closely associated.

The Indian Christians were disposed of in a few lines in the Reforms Report as one of the minor communities whose interests could best be served by nomination to the councils. But they have been affected by the spirit of the times and have asserted themselves to such an extent that the Franchise Committee was obliged to recommend communal representation for them, so far as the Madras Presidency is concerned. There can be no question that Indian Christians, with some rare exceptions amongst them, have kept themselves studiously aloof from political agitation, due mainly to the position of splendid isolation to which they have been reduced by the force of circumstances, some of which were beyond their control. But there is a decided change of attitude perceptible now, and the likelihood is that in future they will constitute a factor which will have to be reckoned with. They are just emerging from their chrysalis and it is too early to give a decided opinion whether they will make common cause with the non-Christians in all respects or merely join them in demanding certain rights and privileges which they think the people are entitled to, and as regards which they speak in no hesitating terms. But of all communities those grouped under the heading of depressed

classes in the Madras Presidency have exhibited a most marvellous awakening since the publication of the Reforms Report. The question has been raised there in an acute form of the classes as against the masses, of the *intelligentia* as opposed to the illiterate outcastes, of the Brahmins as against the non-Brahmins, of the rural population as against the urban. There is much reason for the belief commonly entertained that a good deal of the agitation is artificially manufactured. The real quarrel is not between the Brahman and the outcastes but between the Brahman and the non-Brahman, who is very much in caste and is most sensitive to the pollution caused by the touch of a Pariah or a Panchamma, whose interests he is now advocating. This new departure on his part is not free from the suspicion that in so doing he has his own axe to grind, just as much as the European Association in India and the Indo-British Association in England have theirs to grind in taking both the non-Brahman and outcastes under their protection and in playing with them for what they are worth in resisting the proposals for constitutional reform. The refusal of the non-Brahmins to urge their cause before the Franchise Committee was a tactical blunder on their part, though it by no means follows that if they had acted otherwise the decision arrived at by the Committee would have been different to what it is, in that their claim to communal representation has been disallowed. The masses in other parts of India, who have been described by the opponents of reform as 'voiceless' and 'inarticulate' are furnishing a practical refutation of the assertion that only a microscopic minority of the Indian population takes an interest in political questions. The agitation in connection with the Rowlatt

Act, accompanied as it was by mass meetings, has brought into relief some very significant facts. The definition given in the Reforms Report of the 'politically-minded classes' will have to be considerably modified and enlarged. The limitations that have been put to the combination of the people in a common cause by reason of diversity of race, of caste, of religion and of education do not seem to hold good now. And whatever truth there may have been in the past in the theory that the masses looked upon the rulers as their protectors and the interpreters of their wants, there is a decided tendency noticeable in these days on their part to transfer the desire for protection and guidance to the educated classes, who are being looked upon as their natural leaders and whose behests they are willing to carry out. The authors of the Reforms Report, desired to make the franchise as popular and as broad as possible, but are silent as regards its extension to women, as there was no general demand for it. But Lord Southborough, during his peregrinations through the country, found in certain parts of India claims being put forward on behalf of the softer sex which could not be ignored. With advocates like Mrs. Besant, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mrs. Tata and Miss Tata an adventitious importance is being given to the question; nevertheless it is significant that the circle of those affected or supposed to be affected by the new awakening is being gradually enlarged and may be taken to include the Indian princes, some of whom have made pronouncements that are very significant.

While the ranks of those who have been described as 'politically-minded' are receiving fresh accessions, there has been a split amongst the leaders of the national movement

and their immediate following, which has culminated in the formation of two distinct parties—the moderates and the extremists. With the advent of democratic institutions this was perhaps inevitable, following the analogy of western nations. We need not pause here to discuss the question whether the interests of India will be furthered or prejudiced thereby, but the fact cannot be ignored that, as time goes by, the advanced party is formulating fresh demands and enlarging the scope of its immediate ideals. The moderates have accepted the Reforms Scheme as a substantial instalment of responsible government, though they urge the necessity for certain modifications and improvements. The extremists were at first for rejecting it altogether but after some temporising they passed a resolution at the Special Congress held at Bombay stigmatising it as disappointing and unsatisfactory and demanded full responsible government in the whole of India within a period not exceeding fifteen years and in the provinces in a period not exceeding six years. In the National Congress held a few months later the time limit of six years was dropped and a demand was made for the immediate grant of provincial autonomy. In both these assemblies the moderates were conspicuous by their absence but gave expression to their views in a Conference held at Bombay, thus putting a seal on the disruption that had taken place. But the experience of the extremists as a happy family was short-lived, for within a few months three Home Rule parties came into existence and thus it happens to advocate a common cause there were half a dozen deputations sent to England, seemingly to impress the people there with the effect of the new feeling of nationality as evidenced by

the existence of divergent parties, each with its own axe to grind. Efforts were made for a united stand on the common question of constitutional reform, but they failed because preference was given either to matters of subsidiary importance or to giving utterance to extreme views. The bureaucracy have no doubt given legitimate grounds for the shafts of Indian politicians to be levelled against them, but it shows how rapidly India is spinning along when a suggestion is seriously made for their total extinction. The problems awaiting solution are many and varied, but in these days, when political divergence is so pronounced, no critic can expect to find his views receiving general acceptance. It is to be hoped that credit will be given to the writer for making an honest attempt to take a dispassionate and unprejudiced view of the situation in this and in subsequent articles.

Since the above lines were written, the Reform Bill has been successfully steered through both Houses of Parliament, much to the credit of Mr. Montague and Lord Sinha, to whom we owe a deep debt of gratitude. But it is to be regretted that the two parties in India have not been able to patch up their differences, so that the one is holding a Congress in Amritsar and the other a Conference in Calcutta. This frittering of forces cannot but be detrimental to the interests of the country.

CHAPTER II.

INDIA'S AWAKENING AN INCENTIVE TO LOYALTY.

The previous article may fairly be credited with having established the fact that there is an awakening in India which has more or less affected all classes and communities. It is not a sudden and unlooked for outburst, but is the result of a process of gradual evolution. Its advent was inevitable as the natural result of British rule, with its adjuncts of peace, security of life and property, education of a high standard and a familiarity with European civilization and culture. The responsibility for this awakening, therefore, rests to a large extent on the English nation which had it within its power so to govern India as would strangle any desire for or any effort towards securing political emancipation. For, in the various stages of British rule, there have been individuals who advanced the theory, to quote the words of Lord Ellenborough, one of its exponents, that 'we had won the empire of India by the sword, and we must preserve it by the same means—and the continuance of British rule in India depended upon the exclusion of the natives from military and political power in the country.' The commercial instinct has ever been strongly pronounced with the English people. They came to India influenced by no philanthropic motives, but to exploit the country for what it was worth. With this in view, the permanence of their rule was looked upon at first as the primary consideration and anything calculated to impair it was seriously deprecated. But be it said to the

credit of the English nation that it soon came to recognize the paramount moral obligations placed on it to govern India in the interests of the people. Thus was laid the foundation of a train of causes which have operated insensibly but surely and have brought about the fruition of that political phenomenon which Lord Macaulay foreshadowed in the following terms : — 'It may be that the public mind of India may expand under our system till it has outgrown that system ; that by good government we may educate our subjects into a capacity for better government, that having become instructed in European knowledge they may in some future age demand European institutions.'

This demand is now being urged firmly and insistently. It has received a favourable response in some quarters, while in others it has been stigmatised as an indication of diminishing loyalty and as the first step taken by the educated classes towards subverting British rule in India. This, it is alleged, is the real aim of political agitation, as is evidenced by its occasional development into open rebellion. The seriousness of such a charge has not prevented its being advanced by a good many Anglo-Indians, official and non-official, by their agents in the press, by some retired bureaucrats and by a stray English journal or periodical, misled by garbled accounts of the newly aroused political consciousness of India or acting under the inspiration of British capitalists who apprehend that India reformed would cease to be the dumping ground for their manufactures. English statesmen and English people generally discountenance this charge of growing disloyalty and on the whole have sympathized with an awakened India desirous of securing liberal

institutions wherein they can take a part in the administration of the affairs of the country.

In the Reforms Report we find it stated that 'it is due to the traditions of the Civil Service, dating from days when it had no vocal criticism to meet, which impose silence on the individual officer while the order of things that he represents is attacked and calumniated'. This is true so far that English officials do not appear on public platforms to discuss political questions or to reply to attacks that are very often levelled against them, and may be sometimes very unfairly and unjustly. But nevertheless they carry on a political propaganda as steadily and as relentlessly as do their *bete noir*, the educated classes of India. This is done through the Anglo-Indian journals which usually reflect the views of those who mainly support them and often privately contribute to their columns. Those who pay the piper can call for the tune and thus it is that hymns are religiously chanted in praise of the bureaucracy whereas to decry the educated classes as political agitators is looked upon as a pastime not only legitimate but creditable. That some Indian journals indulge in these same pleasantries at the expense of Government and its agents furnishes no excuse whatever to the English publicist who, with his superior education and culture and a more correct conception of what is right and proper, is expected to set a higher standard of journalistic duty. The general attitude of the Civil Service towards the awakening of India finds a fair exponent in Sir Verney Lovett who was their spokesman before the Reforms Committee. In reply to Mr. Montagu as to the fact of a considerable development in the interest taken in politics by the masses, all he could say was that 'the

chief sign of such a development was increased hostility to Government'. And a similar sentiment, but in an exaggerated form, finds expression in a recent issue of the *Englishman*, which writes : 'If the Indian press accurately reflected Indian opinion then one would have to say that at the present moment the whole of India was so bitterly hostile to British rule that the country was on the verge of revolt.' The non-official Europeans if not affected by the official views would perhaps not be hostile to the political advancement of India, though through their accredited agent in England they have given expression to the opinion that the people are not yet ripe for representative government ; and Sir Henry Stephen, the second in command of the Indo-British Association, went a step further and delivered himself of the dictum that self-government in India is not conceivable now and would not be conceivable within any time we can contemplate, and he therefore disapproved of the principle of the Announcement of August 1917, utterly ignoring the fact that the India of to-day is not the India he was familiar with twelve or fifteen years ago.

Of much greater consequence are the views of English publicists, who do lead public opinion in England. The *Spectator* repudiates the assertion that the Government pledged itself by any announcement to carry out any plan of democratic reform, and in no measured terms condemns the scheme for which it holds Mr. Montagu responsible. Mr. E. Barnes Mitford, writing in the *Fortnightly Review*, concedes the fact that there has been no awakening like unto the present, but by a curious process of reasoning arrives at the conclusion that the politically-minded people are resolved to subvert British rule in India and that the

Home Rule movement assiduously preaches the doctrine that there can be no salvation for India till it has rid itself of the tyrannical alien rule. The trump card in the hands of these critics is the idea which they exploit for what it is worth, that old feuds and differences in India have not disappeared and the influence of caste is as strong as ever. This they say stands in the way of a growth of nationality, in curious contradiction to the views of Sir James Meston, who represented the Government of India, and stated that 'the spirit of nationalism is a very real influence in the life of India of to-day...which inevitably leads to a very rapid development of political consciousness'. But the underlying reason of the hostility to Indian reforms is the apprehension that it may be utilized by disaffected persons, in which category all those engaged in political agitation are placed, to subvert British rule. For having the temerity to give expression to this view the Indo-British Association drew upon itself a severe castigation from the Secretary of State for India, while Mr. Bennett, who having a personal knowledge of Indian affairs can speak with authority, followed it up by stigmatizing a pamphlet distributed to the members of Parliament by this Association as a 'caricature of recent events and movements in India. It puts everything out of perspective and everything out of proportion and presents India to the English public merely as a hotbed of sedition.' But is it so?

Here is a charge to be met, the seriousness of which cannot be minimised. It is repudiated with as much warmth as is displayed by those who bring it. On the one hand, a lack of sincerity and the indulgence of prejudice are attributed even to those who, influenced by

honest convictions, are apprehensive of a growing tendency towards disaffection; on the other hand, the protestations of loyalty on the part of men who are interested in public affairs from patriotic motives, are received with a smile of incredulity. If there was a closer association between men holding divergent views many misunderstandings would be avoided and there would be a greater disposition for the exercise of that charity which thinketh no evil of others. It is significant that no imputations are made against the people at large. These are officially described as being peaceful and contented and devoted to the rulers who are looked upon by them as their benefactors and the interpreters of their wants. It is the educated classes who are reproached with being needlessly restive and discontented, and such of them as take a part in political agitation are accused of carrying on a disloyal propaganda. Now if the political agitator must needs become disloyal and if the inevitable result of education is to produce political agitators, the logical conclusion is that education being responsible for the trouble and turmoil we see around us, should either be discontinued or restricted; but no one dare assert this for fear of doubts being entertained about his sanity. It was about a century ago the battle over education in India was fought and the question being considered in all its aspects, it was decided to give the people the benefits arising from it, with a full knowledge of the consequences that would arise therefrom. They have arisen and it is too late to retrace the step that was once deliberately taken. And it is gratifying to find the Secretary of State and the Viceroy recording their opinion that 'there can be no question of going back or withholding the education in which we ourselves believe.'

The awakening of India from being the effect will now become a potent factor in the progress of education, and the circle of those who are politically-minded will in a corresponding measure be necessarily enlarged.

The fallacy seems to lie in the proposition which finds favour with some persons that education and political agitation must in the long run lead to disaffection and rebellion. As a matter of fact it is education and the incentive it affords to partake in political agitation, which restrain the tendency and the temptation to indulge in disaffection. It would be futile to deny that for a variety of reasons a considerable amount of discontent pervades through all classes and communities in India. It is discontent which produces disaffection, leading on sometimes to sedition and disloyalty, unless there is some influence which can exercise a counteracting effect. The ignorant man smarting under the irritation of causes which have given rise to discontent and having no outlet for the expression of his feelings translates these into action by indulging in outrages and in open defiance of the laws which regulate and keep together society. He knows of no other method whereby he can relieve his overcharged feelings or obtain redress for the wrongs to which he is subjected by what he believes is the wanton tyranny of the rulers. What is the Bolshevism of to-day but the revolt of the ignorant and half-educated masses against the authority by which they had been subjected to gross indignities and oppression? Are not the ranks of the anarchists recruited mostly from a class of men destitute of education as they are of the material things of the world? Has not the populace been responsible for revolutions which have upset powerful monarchies, and caused

the streets to flow with blood? The principles and actions of an educated man are entirely different. He may be discontented, but he has a safety-valve in political agitation, which he believes if well directed will generally achieve the end he has in view. His superior intelligence and his experience warn him of the fatal consequences of interfering with the settled order of things; for a well-disciplined mind realises that revolutionary crimes, anarchical outrages, apart from inflicting a serious injury on society, do not as a rule secure political salvation. The remedy they provide is often far worse than the disease.

With an educated man discontent develops into disaffection only when he has failed to obtain redress by a resort to legitimate means afforded by an agitation in public meetings and in the press. But there is a great gap between discontent and disaffection, and as great a gap between the latter and disloyalty, the necessary consequence of which is the subversion of the existing rule. The educated classes of India repudiate the charge of being disaffected, for they do not accept the judicial definition of disaffection, namely, 'the absence of affection.' They admit they are not overflowing with affection for the bureaucracy, but for that reason to charge them with disaffection towards the Government that rules over them is an absolute departure from the truth. Mr. Madhava Rao in his evidence before the Joint Committee of Reforms stated the time has arrived for the English Civil Service to be dispensed with, which certainly does not indicate any great affection on his part for its members. He merely made a statement of fact from a utilitarian point of view and there is no reason to doubt the sincerity of his statement that he was thoroughly loyal to English

rule in India. On the other hand there are many who controvert his statement that the Civil Service can be dispensed with at present, from which it would be equally incorrect to draw the inference that they have any great affection for the bureaucracy. Then again disaffection and disloyalty are by no means convertible terms. The one is more in the nature of a sentiment, the other is sentiment translated into action. The one is a passive state of mind and no overt act need be committed to give evidence of it, the other implies that acts have been committed in breach of the allegiance due to constituted authority. But the transition from disaffection to disloyalty may not be a long or a difficult process unless prevented by a timely remedy. An English political writer says : 'Representative institutions, petitions, public meetings, a free press are various means through which the people can assert itself. When refused these means and when yet sufficiently vigorous to use them, it will assert itself by armed rebellion or, if that is not possible, by secret conspiracies and assassinations.... A wise statesman will make revolution impossible by making it unnecessary, or certain of failure, because not supported by the General Will.'

Those who bring the charge against the educated classes of being disaffected or disloyal ignore the fact that the reasonableness of the demands made by them is practically admitted. It is not a question of principle that is now at issue ; it is more in the matter of details that a controversy is maintained. The removal of racial and other disabilities, the grant of liberal institutions, the larger employment of Indians in the public services, the industrial development of the country—these have all been promised and in due course it is to be hoped

effect will be given to the proposed reforms. Why then should any class of persons be disaffected or disloyal? If the answer be that in asking for self-government the idea underlying it is that at some future period it will lead to the assertion of independence, all that can be said is that some people allow their suspicions and their apprehensions to get the better of their judgment. They fail to realize the necessity of British rule in India. It is not a trifle that can be dispensed with at pleasure or with safety. It protects the country from foreign aggression and from internal dissensions. If England goes, some other foreign power must take its place and Englishmen do themselves little credit if they imagine any other nation is likely to be preferred, and they ignore the fact that the educated classes have everything to lose and nothing to gain by the overthrow of the present Government. But it will be said that suggestions are being made as to the immediate elimination of the English element in the administration of Indian affairs. The idea is so preposterous that none but extreme faddists, of which happily there are not many, will be found to entertain it. Even when self-government is attained, it is to be hoped in the interests of the country the best men will be engaged in the various services without any racial question being brought in, while at present to a certain extent the English element is indispensable. But the Civil Service as a ruling caste, as it is in these days, is an object of special antipathy and is bound to go when the new order of things comes into operation. This was made quite plain by Mr. Montagu when he said: 'The Announcement of the 20th August 1917 promised the transfer of responsibility. From whom to whom? To the people of India

from the Civil Service of India. If we say to the Civil Service to-day that their political position will be the same in the future as it has been in the past, the announcement of his Majesty's Government becomes meaningless.'

There is another aspect of the question which is entitled to consideration. That England was in great straits when the European war was in progress there can be no question, and that was an ideal opportunity for the disaffected to create trouble. But we find that from the King-Emperor downwards there has been a full and unqualified recognition of the loyalty of all classes and communities in India. Are we to understand that utterance was being given to sentiments that were not sincere? The loyalty of the people is as genuine as is the acknowledgment it has received at the hands of the English nation. Even the Government of India in its Moral and Material Report for 1917-18 have put on record the fact that 'as to the general solidarity and determination of educated India to support Government at this juncture, there can be no possibility of doubt.' And one other matter in this connection need only be referred to. If we look back to the political history of India during the last three decades in which the activities of the educated classes have been most pronounced it will be found that beyond the use on occasions of violent language whether on the platform or in the press in their quest for reforms there has been no concerted action on their part betraying a hostile attitude towards Government, such as may be expected from persons that were disaffected. Neither the revolutionary party in Bengal nor the promoters of the Ghadar movement in the Punjab had their sympathy or support. The non-official members of the Legislative

Council helped the Government to pass the Defence of India Act as they had done previously when the necessity arose for legislation in connection with the press. And as to the so-called 'open rebellion' in the Punjab, the less said about it here the better, for it is one of the points the Disorder's Inquiry Committee has to decide. The recent occurrences there were rightly characterised by Government as local disturbances when a reference was made to them by the Amir of Kabul's agents, a clear indication that this unfortunate episode is now being looked at in its proper perspective and proportion.

Since the above appeared in the Leader, the Inquiry Committee has recorded the statements of a number of official witnesses, with the result that disclosures have been made of certain acts done by the civil and military authorities, characterised with such cruelty and inhumanity that they have aroused universal horror and indignation, just as much in England as in India. It is on occasions like these that the loyalty of a people is put to the test. This stands firm, mainly due to the belief that they will receive full justice at the hands of the English nation, which is most sensitive as to its reputation for justice and humanity.

CHAPTER III.

THE CAUSE OF INDIAN DISCONTENT.

In the previous article ample material is to be found to convince even a hostile critic of the educated classes that the charge of being disaffected which is brought against them rests on a very slender basis. It would be futile to ignore the fact that some of them on occasions have been intemperate in their speeches and in their writings or may be in their conduct, but the number of these is a negligible quantity. Then, again, if we look at the reasons by which they were actuated and the objects and ends they had in view it will be found that they were voicing the general discontent that prevails in the land and were desirous of having certain grievances removed which were producing needless irritation. There was nothing inconsistent in this with a whole-hearted loyalty to constituted authority. The achievements of British rule in India in promoting the well-being of the people have been shortly referred to in the previous articles and need not be recounted here, for they receive full recognition without any reserve whatever. But a curious problem is presented to us for solution in that notwithstanding all the English nation has done to benefit India the people are discontented and very much so, in spite of what hangers on at the gates of officials or some title-holders *in esse*, or *in posse* may have to say to the contrary. The agents of the British rule in India solve the problem in the drastic method usually adopted by them in dealing with unpleasant truths.

The existence of any actual discontent is denied by some or by others is put down to the mischievous activities of professional agitators. Their own responsibility in this matter is entirely ignored.

Education and contact with European civilization and culture which have given birth to the political consciousness of India may be credited to a certain extent with the present unrest, for longings and aspirations have been aroused which not being satisfied have produced irritation and consequent discontent. This has been aggravated by the discouraging and halting attitude of the rulers. Their professions have been profuse, their promises legion in number. The desire to deal fairly and justly with India has been strong, but it has been subject to certain well-defined limitations. In some instances it would seem no effect was intended to be given to the promises that were made; in others those who were charged with giving effect to them refused to do so, and sometimes a policy of self-interest was pursued at the instance of England's capitalists, which has prejudiced the industrial welfare of the people of India. But the lofty aloofness and reserve that has been adopted is perhaps responsible more than anything else for the estrangement of the educated classes.

'The Government of India is too wooden, too iron, too anti-diluvian to be of any use for the modern purposes we have in view. I do not believe anybody could ever support the Government of India from the point of view of modern requirements.' This was said on the floor of the House of Commons and is of course open to the charge of irresponsibility attaching to an opinion expressed by a private member. But Mr. Montagu has the courage of his convictions, and as Secretary of State he, with the added

sanction of the Viceroy, repeated this in the Reforms Report in the following terms. 'It is evident that the present machinery of Government no longer meets the needs of the times; it works slowly and it produces irritation; there is a widespread demand on the part of educated Indian opinion for its alteration; and the need for advance is recognized by official opinion also.' Yes, educated India more than three decades ago began to make this demand at the meetings of the National Congress by pointing out in what respects the administration was defective and could be improved upon. Thus it was that the political agitator emerged into existence. He was harassed and vilified, and placed under a ban. In fact, the Hindu community as a whole was discredited, while the Mahomedans who stood aloof were patted on the back and were the recipients of official favours. The Government from being autocratic had assumed the character of a benevolent despotism, professedly working in the interests of the people. To mollify the resentment of educated India promises were made and efforts were put forward to mitigate the rigour of this despotism by deferring to their views when its own interests were not likely to be prejudiced. But with the best of intentions no appreciable good was achieved. The foundation of local self-government was laid by Lord Ripon in 1881 and municipalities and district boards were brought into existence, but in 1918 we have Lord Chelmsford admitting that the hopes entertained of these bodies have not been fulfilled, 'as the presence of an official element on the boards has been prolonged up to a point at which it has impeded the growth of initiative and responsibility.'

But it is in the higher domain of politics that the failure has been most pronounced. Since 1885 the cry of the National Congress has been that the people should be allowed some voice in the administration of the affairs of the country. The response made was so inadequate and the consequent resentment so great that in 1907 the Morley-Minto scheme was introduced which gave promise to usher in a new millennium wherein the lion and the lamb were to amicably discuss their common affairs, but the Secretary of State made it clearly understood that from this amicable confabulation no inference was to be drawn that it was in any sense a step towards parliamentary government. We are still under the regime of the hybrid institution that was brought into existence and which is neither fish nor fowl nor good red herring. Speeches, sometimes by the yard, are made by the non-official members and are either treated with lofty indifference or are responded to with frowns of displeasure. The lion is unable to divest himself of the advantages he has been favoured with by nature and circumstances. The utmost condescension and consideration he can shew is to dictate a speech for his jackals who ostensibly represent a community, but whom no community with any self-respect would select as their spokesmen, considering they lack the disinterestedness and the talent which are usually requisite for this position. The mutual accommodation of the lion and the jackal is a prominent feature of the public life in India of to-day. If men like Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Mazharul Haque decline to be identified with such an assembly and have severed their connection from it, the country is so much the poorer thereby, for though we may have no sympathy with some

of their views, they are living examples of the self-respect and self-esteem which, even the opponents of constitutional reform admit, is the result of the awakening of India to political consciousness. They may be wrong-headed, but they will never betray the interests of their country to bask in the sunshine of official smiles. Disappointment and resentment at the failure to secure some response to their demands, the legitimacy of which is now officially admitted, is undoubtedly responsible to a great extent for the discontent of the educated classes and for their estrangement from the rulers of the land.

So far back as 1833, when the East India Company's Charter was renewed by 34 William IV., c. 85, the Court of Directors thus unfolded their views in respect to this enactment:—'The Court conceive this section to mean that there shall be no governing caste in British India; that whatever other tests of qualification may be adopted, distinctions of race or religion shall not be of the number; that no subject of the King, whether of Indian, British or mixed descent, shall be excluded from the posts usually conferred on uncovenanted servants in India or from the covenanted service itself provided he be otherwise eligible.' But a caste was created, proud, exclusive and so jealous of its rights that John Bright stated in the House of Commons that:—'The statute of 1833 made the natives of India eligible to all offices under the Company. But during the twenty years that have since elapsed not one of the natives has been appointed to any office except such as they were eligible to before the statute.' And then followed the Queen's proclamation which is recognized by Indians as their great Charter of Liberty. And oft and on other promises and assurances have been given, but with

what result? By instituting a competitive examination in England the Indians were practically excluded from the higher appointments and in 1860 a committee, composed of the members of the Secretary of State's Council, recognized this and advised the holding of a simultaneous examination in India so as to refute the charge of 'making promises to the ear and breaking it to the hope'. Was this done? Then came the lowering of the age of the candidates, the real object of which was to keep out Indian competitors. As a sop the Statutory Civil Service was sanctioned, to be recruited in India on a smaller scale of pay, but even to this a half-hearted effect was given, and in a few years it came to a premature and inglorious end. In 1878 a proposal was seriously made by the Government of India to close the Covenanted Civil Service to Indians, but Lord Cranbrook, then Secretary of State for India, declined to entertain it, stating that no scheme would have a chance of being sanctioned by Parliament which included a repeal of the clause in the Act of 1833 investing Indians with certain rights of employment. This drew from Lord Lytton the famous minute which speaks for itself:—'We all know that these claims and expectations never can or will be fulfilled. We have had to choose between prohibiting them and cheating them and we have chosen the least straightforward course. The application to natives of the competitive examination system as conducted in England and the recent reduction in the age at which candidates can compete are all so many deliberate and transparent subterfuges for stultifying the Act and reducing it to a dead letter. Since I am writing confidentially I do not hesitate to say that both the Governments of England and of India appear to me, up to the present

moment, unable to answer satisfactorily the charge of having taken every means in their power of breaking to the heart the words of promise they had uttered to the ear.'

India is a poor country. Whether it is poorer now than it was when it came under British rule is a controversial point and need not be discussed here. At one time it was self-contained and provided the necessities of an immense population and even its luxuries. 'From the times of the Romans to our own times', writes Sir Alfred Lyall, 'Indian trade has drained the gold and silver of Europe.' What has become of this trade? Silk and cotton fabrics were the chief articles of export, but England excluded these not merely by fiscal duties but by actual prohibition without which, says Mill in his History of India, 'the mills of Manchester and Paisley would have stopped at the outset, and could scarcely have been set in motion by steam'. British goods were forced on India without paying any duty and the foreign manufacturer employed the arm of political injustice to keep down and ultimately strangle a competitor with whom he could not have contended on equal terms.' And further to stimulate these manufactures an excise duty was imposed on locally manufactured goods in spite of the remonstrances of the Government of India. The vast supply of stores needed for the administration of the country was indented for from England, though many of the articles could have been locally obtained. The Industrial Commission appointed by Government was constrained to remark that though India is a country rich in raw materials and in industrial possibilities, 'the manufacturing capacity of the country has been far from being sufficiently utilized by Government departments in the

past.' The result has been that the industrial population has been thrown back on agriculture for a living, and India has to supply raw material to other countries for, whose manufactures it has become the dumping ground. Industrial reform has been an important plank in the political agitation of the past, but it has been a cry in the wilderness. The Swadeshi movement was the positive and boycott the negative form in which expression was given to the discontent that was aroused and we have the Secretary of State and the Viceroy admitting that the economic factor has entered largely in the political situation in India and that it is partly responsible for the existing unrest. The European war further emphasized the military importance of industrial development. Hence the conclusion has been arrived at that 'both on economic and military grounds Imperial interests also demand that the natural resources of India should henceforth be better utilized.'

This will relieve the economic situation to some extent, but no appreciable benefit will be obtained till some measures are devised to stem the enormous drain in the shape of Home charges, which the Duke of Argyle, once Secretary of State for India, characterised as 'the unjust and illegal tribute to England.' So far back as 1790 Lord Cornwallis wrote in a despatch 'that the heavy drain of wealth by the Company, with the addition of remittances of private fortunes, was severely felt in the languor thrown upon the cultivation and the commerce of the country'; and there has been since then a continuous rise in this drain. That some of it, and may be most of it, is unavoidable in the case of a country subject to foreign rule may be true enough, but certain charges

imposed on the Government of India are unjust and with reference to these Lord Cross, another Secretary of State for India, stated that 'I am certain that in the course of a few years the Indian people will force us to do justice.' Apart from the nature of these charges it is an indisputable fact that they are partly responsible for the heavy taxation which presses mostly on the masses who in the Moral and Material Report of India, which has just been issued by Government, are described as 'engrossed in agriculture winning a bare subsistence from the soil.' Their wants are few, but if even these are not satisfied discontent is aroused and the fact that they are 'slow to complain and prefer to suffer rather than to have the trouble of resisting' would explain this ordinary quiescence, which sometimes finds relief in a sudden outburst, much to the consternation of the officials, who put in motion all the resources of civilization to suppress what is modestly termed an 'open rebellion.'

A reform in the administration of criminal justice is another matter which for years past the National Congress has pressed upon the Government. The separation of judicial and executive functions has been advocated by a good many fair-minded English judges and administrators, for the position is certainly anomalous that the same man should try a case who has previously hunted the criminal as head of the police, has ordered his prosecution as head of the executive, is actively discharging in court the functions of a prosecuting counsel, and is then called upon to pronounce an unbiassed judgment on the guilt of the accused. It cannot for a moment be supposed that the executive are indifferent to the the pure administration of justice, and if to that be added the fact that the

existing system is productive of a vast amount of discontent, the wonder is that the much desired reform is not gradually introduced. Cognate with this question is that of the police. It is a historical fact that when there was no police there was less crime, but now the variety in the grades of policemen is equalled by the extent and variety of crime, whether actual or occasionally manufactured by those whose living depends on it. If, as in olden times, the king were to try to ingratiate his subjects by promising to grant any boon asked by them, they would with a united voice cry out 'abolish the police.' The masses if they were not 'inarticulate' would stigmatise the assertion that the country is governed by Englishmen as pure fiction, for they believe it is ruled by the police with whom they come into contact and whose activities they have reason to recollect, whereas the rulers they have hardly ever seen, much less given any ground for them to pose as their protectors. If the existence of the C. I. D. is indispensable it affords a significant commentary on British rule in India, in that it has so demoralized the people that their every day movements need to be watched. The alleged corruption of the subordinate police has no doubt attained an unenviable notoriety, but it would seem that the subordinates in all departments have reduced to a fine art the extracting of illegal gratifications. A possible remedy is the formation of a public opinion that will resist these exactions, which are certainly productive of much discontent, but it would be unfair to place the burden of this on the English officials.

Perhaps the most potent cause of discontent, which at the same time is the most irritating and humiliating, is racial

distinction. It affects a large number of persons, for its influence is felt in every sphere of life, it has made impossible any social relations between Europeans and Indians and hampers the display of mutual good feeling. To it may be attributed the inequality of treatment in matters affecting the ordinary rights of citizens. The restriction against Indians entering some of the services in the highest grade or being enrolled as volunteers or holding a commission in the army or possessing arms without a license is galling in the extreme and produces much bitterness of feeling. Wherever an Indian goes the spectre of racial distinction shadows him. In public and private places, in travelling by railways or in steam boats and even in courts of justice, where special rights are reserved for the accused who are British born subjects, a differential treatment is accorded to Europeans and Anglo-Indians. A man's colour or his coat is taken as a criterion of respectability rather than his position or character. The authors of the Reforms Report only partially realized the extent of the evil when they wrote :— ' If there are Indians who really desire to see India leave the Empire, to get rid of English officers and English commerce, we believe that among their springs of action will be found the bitterness of feeling that has been nurtured out of some manifestation that the Englishman does not think the Indian an equal.' In seeking for a remedy, they admit the difficulties of the problem, which no state help can solve, and with the best of intentions they can only suggest an improvement in the social relations of the two classes. The absence of these relations is not the cause of the estrangement, but is in itself the effect of certain well-defined feelings, the existence of which is

much to be deplored. It is too large a subject to be dealt with here, and may be reserved for separate consideration.

Since the above lines were written the Government of India Reforms Bill having passed both Houses of Parliament has received the King's assent. On the 23rd December, 1919, was issued a royal proclamation profoundly sympathetic to the people of India and calculated to mitigate the various causes of discontent. It has no doubt created a good impression, which would have been deeper and more wide-spread, but for the lamentable disclosures made as to the excesses committed by the authorities, civil and military, in connection with the Punjab disorders. These have had a most irritating effect and it will be some time before this irritation may be expected to subside.

CHAPTER IV.

RESPONSE TO INDIA'S AWAKENING.

A passing allusion has been made to the fact that to start with British rule in India was autocratic, savouring of the nature of a military despotism. The primary consideration then was the preservation of this rule, the character of which later on was somewhat modified to assume the form of what was called a benevolent despotism, wherein another consideration was allowed to creep in, and that was a regard for the welfare of the people. As to the methods by which this was to be achieved, the rulers reserved to themselves the right to be the sole judges, to the entire exclusion of the views of those immediately concerned. For it is one of the peculiarities of autocracy, under whatever name it sails, that the autocrat not only considers himself infallible, but takes any disagreement with his views as a personal affront. Up to a certain point this led to no serious inconvenience. But in course of time by a process of gradual evolution a certain class of persons came into existence who have been termed politically-minded and who consider they are entitled to form and to formulate an opinion as to what is conducive to their interests and to that of the people at large. During the last thirty years a prominent feature of British rule in India has been, on the one hand, the demand on the part of such persons of certain privileges and of a reform in the administration of the country, and, on the

other hand, a denial on the part of Government of the right of those who were reckoned to be upstarts to interpret the views of others beyond their circumscribed group, as also of the necessity for and the reasonableness of the demands made by them. Any disagreement with the official view was at once stigmatized as hostility towards the rulers, to suppress which the strong arm of the legislature was utilized to pass repressive measures. When Sir Verney Lovett told the Joint Committee on Indian Reforms that the only sign that the masses in India were taking an interest in political matters was an increased hostility to Government, there spoke the autocrat, and when Mr. Montagu retorted that he had a similar experience in his own constituency there spoke the democrat. India is at present at the parting of the ways, dominated by two contradictory influences; autocracy fighting tooth and nail for its life, backed up by traditions of a century and a half, and democracy slowly and steadily advancing, swayed by a wave of nationalism which is pervading the whole world.

It is more than probable that before long the citadel of autocracy will have to surrender. It received its first shock in 1885, when a small body of men, 72 in number, at the first meeting of the National Congress in Bombay, made a few modest suggestions pointing out the defects of the administration very much in the attitude of suppliants. Since then a series of onslaughts have been levelled against it, characterized by the growing intensity of the force with which it was assailed. Each year added to the boldness of the resolutions, to the spirit with which they were discussed and to the scope of the matters that were criticized. There was a decided change in the

attitude of the educated classes and the language used by them. From opinions and suggestions they proceeded to express 'a firm conviction' and to make 'emphatic protests', to 'urge' the expediency of certain acts and to condemn others as 'retrograde, arbitrary and mischievous.' Autocracy was disconcerted and embarrassed at the growing dissatisfaction and discontent and tried to propitiate its assailants by concessions which by the time they were put into operation were considered by the recipients to be out of date. In the meantime the political education of the *intelligentsia* was slowly and steadily advancing and in 1906 the flag of Swaraj was unfurled by Lord Salisbury's 'black man', Dadabhai Naoroji, who at his advanced age came to preside over the National Congress meeting at Calcutta. That Swaraj is now designated self-government or Home Rule, and the position taken up at present is that of claiming certain privileges and reforms as a matter of right and making demands the extent and scope of which exceed by far those advanced even a decade ago. They are to be found crystallized in the Congress-League Scheme which embodies the views of all communities and all parties. It received the formal sanction of the Congress and Muslim League of 1916 and recited that 'the time has come when his Majesty the King-Emperor should be pleased to issue a proclamation announcing that it is the aim and intention of British policy to confer self-government on India at an early date, and that India shall be lifted from the position of a dependency to that of an equal partner in the Empire with the self-governing dominions.' How this was to be carried into effect is given in a plan which is somewhat elaborate in its details.

RESPONSE TO INDIA'S AWAKENING.

Considering only a few years before India had received the benefits, somewhat dubious though they were, of the Morley-Minto reforms, the adequacy of which Lord Morley tersely summed up by the remark that he could not give us the moon, it was hardly to be expected that any heed would be paid to the demands of men whom Government persisted in stigmatising as professional agitators, utterly destitute of any sense of responsibility. The European war engrossed the attention of the Governments both in England and in India and the discussion of controversial matters was earnestly deprecated. But events were moving fast. India came out with such a voluntary and unexpected demonstration of loyalty that it extorted from the *Times* the remark that 'on our part when we have settled accounts with the enemy, India must be allowed a more ample place in the councils of the Empire.' Mr. C. H. Roberts, then under-secretary for India, characterised this loyalty as a 'reasoned sentiment based upon considerations of enlightened self-interest,' and asked the British public to alter the angle of vision in their perspective of the Indian problem. The English Cabinet was most sympathetic to the aspirations of educated India, though Mr. Bonar Law expressed the view that nothing practical could be done 'while the metal was still glowing red-hot from the furnace of the war.' But even he had to succumb to the march of events. England was fighting, with the hearty co-operation of India, for the rights of the smaller nations in Europe, so as to preserve their entity. The gospel of democracy, equality, self-determination and freedom was a favourite theme all over the world and English statesmen were foremost amongst the preachers. Gigantic

operations were in progress to give by force of arms this gospel a practical effect. Though the problem of Ireland was bristling with controversy, yet an attempt was being made to solve it. The war had given India a new sense of self-esteem and self-respect and a growing consciousness of nationality had brought together the Hindus and Mahomedans to take concerted action. A natural impatience was evinced at the delay on the part of Government to make a full and frank declaration of its policy towards India. The necessity for this had become all the more urgent as there were clear indications of a desire on the part of the Government in India to put down the Home Rule propaganda by means of repressive measures such as the internments of Mrs. Besant and Messrs Arundale and Wadia, which aroused universal indignation. As a counter-blast the idea of practising passive resistance was seriously entertained. It would be as incorrect to say that educated India had any desire to embarrass England or to take advantage of its serious and urgent preoccupations as it would be far from the truth to assert that British statesmen were influenced by motives and considerations other than a realization of the fact that India had attained its manhood during the war and could be released from tutelage and the genuine belief that the conferring on it a boon to which it had shown itself entitled would cement the bonds of union between a dominant country and one which was heretofore looked upon as a dependency.

It was under these conflicting circumstances, for they were exhilarating from one point of view and depressing from another point of view, that the announcement of the 20th August, 1917, was made by Mr. Montagu in the House of Commons on behalf of the English Government.

It no doubt eased the situation in India, where it was looked upon by the people as a Charter of Liberty which put a seal on their sense of nationality. Later on doubts were sometimes expressed mainly by interested parties as to how far individual members of the Cabinet stood committed to the policy underlying this announcement and the extent to which Parliament would be prepared to recognize its validity. Up till recently Lord Curzon was considered a dark horse, and his attitude towards the Montagu-Chelmsford Report afforded matter for considerable speculation, but in moving in the House of Lords the reference of the Government of India Reforms Bill to a Joint Committee he removed all doubts by pleading earnestly for the sanctity of the declaration, on the full significance of which he placed no limitations whatever. In spite of some discordant notes, the sense of the House was decidedly in harmony with this view. Equally gratifying was the debate in the House of Commons on a similar motion made by Mr. Montagu, for it evinced a complete unanimity as to the necessity and urgency of redeeming in full the promise made, presumably after due deliberation, on the part of Government, by the Secretary of State for India. The discomfiture of Lord Sydenham and other reactionaries, the number of whom happily is not large, was complete. Now this Announcement contains certain salient features which deserve a somewhat detailed analysis. (a) Both the Government in England and India are committed to a particular policy, (b) that policy is defined as the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions, (c) the end kept in view is the realization

of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire, (d) the progress in this policy is to be by successive stages, (e) the Government reserves to itself the right to be judges of the time and measure of each advance.

This is England's response to India's awakening and to the various demands that are being made on its behalf, and we have to consider whether this is an adequate response. In the ordinary affairs of human life the decision of such a question usually rests on the person who is most interested, and he is undoubtedly the individual who formulates the demand. For if he is not satisfied the result is discontent on his part and a persistence in urging his demand. And more so would this principle apply to a country, which is in subjection to a nation more powerful than itself. Past experience has shown that the action of those who devise remedies by which they are not personally affected and which are super-imposed for the benefit of others is more or less perfunctory in its nature and in the long run the relief afforded is next to useless. Such indeed was the value of the Morley-Minto reforms, though they for the first time provided for an Indian taking part in the administration of the country, but so far as the representatives of the people were concerned they were left as before in the position of irresponsible critics. Leaving aside details, a person taking a calm and dispassionate view will find that the vital principle underlying the Announcement of the 20th August, 1917, and the Congress League Scheme is common to both. The home-rulers asked that some step towards self-government be taken, and that is precisely what the declaration proposes to do. The desire

is expressed that India should be lifted from the position of a dependency—well, that will be the practical result when full effect is given to the terms of the Announcement. That more than a fair start has been made in this direction by the admission of India to the Imperial War Conference and the Imperial Cabinet and by its representatives being allowed to sit on equal terms with those of the self-governing Dominions at the Peace Conference, none but the most prejudiced will deny. Nor can we ignore or minimise the significance of the removal of certain racial disabilities and of some standing grievances, or of the proposals for a larger employment of Indians in the public services and for the industrial development of the country or of the acceptance by the representatives of the Dominions of the principle of reciprocity of treatment. It will therefore have to be admitted that the response given by the Announcement of the Secretary of State to India's newly awakened sense of nationality and to the demands that are the consequence thereof is adequate and satisfactory on the whole, but of course how far the Bill now before Parliament gives effect to it is another matter and is outside the scope of this article.

Objection has been taken in some quarters to the last two clauses of the Announcement reciting that the progress of the policy outlined therein is to be by successive stages and that the Government reserves to itself the right to be the judges of the time and measure of this advance. A time limit is sought to be imposed within which self-government to the fullest extent is to become an accomplished fact. The first point to be considered is why Government has placed certain restrictions on the boon that it was granting. The reasons given are that

on the rulers rests the welfare and advancement of the various sections of the Indian population and that the changes that are to be introduced are in the nature of an experiment and time alone can prove whether it proves a success, which will greatly depend on the manner in which the people have been found to discharge the responsibilities conferred on them. It can not be said that this is under the circumstances in which we stand at present an unreasonable position to take up, though it would be idle to disguise the fact that there is a certain amount of risk that is being run in dependence being placed on some unknown authority to concede what in the future we might in the light of proved experience be justly entitled to. Then again as regards the demand made in this connection there is an absence of unanimity. It is only one section of the politically-minded people who have given their adhesion to it, and the Congress at which this claim was advanced was rendered conspicuous by the absence of what is known as the moderate party in India. The Congress-League Scheme, which was subscribed to by the parties, does not support this view, for in the presidential address delivered at the Congress where it was formally adopted, I find the Honourable Mr. Ambica Charan Mozumdar stating, 'We do not fix a time limit, for the duration of the war is uncertain and there must be a transitory period through which the process must pass.' And the Hon'ble Mr. Jinnah, as the president of the All-India Muslim League, emphasized the fact 'that it should be made clear by the Government in an authoritative manner that self-government is not a mere distant goal that may be attained at some future indefinite time, but that self-government for India is the

definite aim and object of the Government to be given to the people 'within a reasonable time.' Now, what is a reasonable time? The answer is obvious—when during the period of transition the people have given satisfactory evidence of their fitness to take over fully the task of self-government. Indeed, this may happen to be sooner or it may be later than any period we may now arbitrarily fix. And as to Government reserving the right to be judges of the time and measure of each advance, this may technically place our future progress in the hands of others than ourselves, but as a matter of fact our progress will depend entirely on ourselves by giving evidence of our fitness for fresh responsibilities being entrusted to us. The people that have been able to insist on the principle of self-government being conceded to them need not fear that any obstacles placed in the way of the full enjoyment of the privilege will be so great that they cannot be surmounted.

Distrust begets distrust. It is hardly wise on our part to start the new life we are about to enter, as participants in the administration of the country, by being suspicious of the good-will or the good faith of the English nation. It would be most ungenerous on our part to ignore the cordial expressions of the sympathy of English statesmen towards the newly awakened spirit of nationality in India and of their resolve to see justice done to it. As to the English people there is reliable evidence that they are disposed, as a result of the educative process brought about by recent events, to take a new interest in the affairs of this far off country, which to the bulk of them is an unknown land. Thanks to the unwearied exertions of the deputations that went from India to give evidence