

period, when we thought about nothing but competitive examinations and degrees, and payment by results, and all the rest of it, where we never sought, even at home, to form character, to develop aptitude or to make our younger generation into really good citizens. That is one of the great difficulties we have in starting a new system of reform, that we have never laid the real foundation that would have enabled popular interest in politics, and the development of the representative system, by a well conceived system of education. That is the one great failure in our Indian administration, and we have paid a very heavy penalty for it.

Now we come to the suggestion as to the shape which reforms should take. We all agree, as I have said, that some reform is necessary, that reform must be generous, that it must carry out, not only the words but the spirit of the declaration of 20th August and, further, it must be prompt, for the matter brooks no delay. My right hon Friend referred to one very interesting and very able precursor of this system of reform, and I am glad to join in the compliments paid to our mutual friend, Mr Lionel Curtis, who belong to a very active, and a very important body of young men, whom I should be the last to criticise. I am proud to know him, and to pay that respect to him due from age to youth. He and others have been doing good work, and part of that good work has been done in India. But we must remember, much as we owe to the proposals made by Mr. Lionel Curtis, yet they have been set aside. I do not think my right hon. Friend found it possible to adopt these proposals in their integrity. He found certain great difficulties. These proposals—to describe them in a single word—were to the effect that independent Government to a certain extent should be assigned to the small States within the provinces under the tutelage of the British Government. The difficulty was in the tutelage, for it was anticipated that very soon there might be a collision between these small States independent in certain aspects and the wider Government. That, then, was set aside.

Now we come to the proposals of the right hon Gentleman. In regard to certain things he is perfectly right in saying there is common agreement. We are all agreed as to the need for decentralisation. We are all agreed that the present system of representation is absurd, and that if you give representation at all it must be a responsible representation. The right hon Gentleman, the Member for Peebles (Sir D Maclean) said that 5,000,000 was a very small number out of all the millions of India. Yet 5,000,000 is a very considerable advance upon a very few thousands. We all agree in the matter of decentralisation. The difficulty arises when you come to the detailed proposals of the diarchic

Government, or by whatever name you choose to call it, by which there are to be reserved and transferred subjects, and in which these subjects are to be handed over to the Government to be administered by Ministers chosen and responsible to the legislative Councils, and very much independent of the Governor and his executive. I am sure the right hon. Gentleman must, as well as anyone, admit that there are very serious difficulties in this. I am not giving here a final opinion, but this, after all, should be the most feasible, workable, and practicable scheme of all the reforms. My right hon. Friend, I am certain, will agree that there are certain self-evident difficulties about it. That is admitted in more than one statement that has appeared, above his own name or written by his own hand. All that is said may be perfectly true, that of the competing scheme this is the better, because its advantages outweigh its manifest disadvantages. There is the alternative scheme of the four Provincial Governments, but this my right hon. Friend criticised very severely and with great skill. I admit that in the alternative scheme there would be no division between transferred and reserved subjects, that there should be an increase in the native elements in the Executive Council, and that that increase should bring with it responsibilities and perhaps open the door hereafter to still further increase. I am quite aware of the difficulties. They might create discontent amongst these and those they represent, and perhaps upset the Government. On the other hand the thing might incidentally, under such strain, develop into greater power. It is quite true that this alternative scheme may be open to objection. The right hon. Gentleman has so stated. On the other hand, he must remember that his own scheme has been very severely criticised. Lord Ronaldshay and the Government of Bengal have refused to join in that alternative Government. My right hon. Friend will agree that Lord Ronaldshay and the Government of Bengal did not agree with the alternative system proposed, yet it would rather strain the words of the despatch of Lord Ronaldshay to say that they evinced entire agreement with the proposals of the Report. My right hon. Friend will agree that the despatch does not necessarily argue support on the part of Lord Ronaldshay.

I feel sure the House will reserve its judgment. We are quite ready to go a little further. What our duty is in conjunction and collaboration with the right hon. Gentleman to try to find out what is best to devise, what will best do that which we ought to do. I say very humbly that I think I see the danger. I distrust, and very strongly distrust, some of the recent experiments. I have doubts as to the practicability of some of the proposals. I cordially agree that settlement, and some quick settlement is desirable, and that we must not always be guided by mere abstract constitutional principle. I am very glad the right hon. Gentleman has—and he will correct

me if I am wrong—adopted as a practical measure—though I think really it is capable of no constitutional defence—a system of communal representation. Anyone who knows cannot but feel that communal representation is really not consistent with any broad principle of constitutional government. All the same, the right hon. Gentleman would say that, in the circumstances, and as things stand now, it is necessary in India.

Colonel Wedgwood. I think it may be necessary to let the Muhammadans and Hindus arrange the matter themselves.

Sir H. Craik: I think the words of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State are the more practical form.

Colonel Wedgwood. I thought you were against it all.

Sir H. Craik. I want just to put forward, as one essential element in your procedure, to keep a fair and just attitude towards the Civil Service. Trust its members. Do not despise their rights. My right hon. Friend himself has experienced something of the spirit in which they are ready to approach this question. I think we will deal with it. I think he has received—in fact, I need not make any mystery of it, because, I myself have passed on to him documents from the Civil servants. I think he will agree that these show the same spirit of loyalty in their views on the proposals now made that have been traditional in their profession. The right hon. Gentleman compared the position of the Civil servants with that of the English service. The analogy is not complete. The Indian Civil Service is a service that has far more responsibility, far more initiative, and I as a man of the home service am proud to acknowledge it. It has been the duty of the Indian Civil Service to form opinions upon the larger question and to give those opinions. They were completely different from the home service, who merely administer and whose business it is not to form opinions upon the great questions. I trust my right hon. Friend will remember that the position, even financially, of the Civil Service is very serious. It has been brought before successive Governments since 1911. In 1912 a Commission was appointed. It reported in 1915, but not the slightest action has been taken towards improving the position of the Civil servants. Their leave has gone. Their work has enormously increased. Their liberty is diminished. The expense of the journey home has enormously increased, and made it almost impossible for the Civil servants with reduced pay and increased expenses to come home, except at long intervals. Their wives and children are separated from them. The least that can be done is to give some attention to the needs and just claims of that profession.

Let me in conclusion, read only a few words from the paper which I placed in the hands of my right hon. Friend.

"We have examined——"

say the Civil servants—

"these proposed constitutional reforms from the standpoint of men who will be asked to put them into execution. We desire to lay emphasis on this point, for throughout this Report its authors presume, and rightly, that the members of all services will do their loyal utmost to make this or any other similar scheme a complete success; the tradition of giving their best to the country under all and any circumstances will, so far as present members of the services are concerned, be maintained to the end of their service, to the exclusion of the wishes and opinions of the individual. Our attitude, therefore, is not that of the destructive critic, it is that of the man who desires to perfect and improve details only, and we would ask that the opinions given be interpreted strictly in the spirit in which they are offered."

"We are strongly convinced that the success of this scheme, or of any other, depends entirely, not on our efforts, but on the attitude adopted, and the part played by the responsible educated Indian. In past years such men have not accepted to the full their duty in connection with the political progress of their country; many have, it is true, asked and occasionally agitated openly, for reform and advance, but others—we believe the great majority—have been content with our own guidance, that is either with things as they were, or with any reforms which their rulers (for there is no escaping the word) thought fit to introduce. On our part, speaking as officials, we feel, and for years have felt, that our own official policy has been too slow and circumspect, Government has hesitated, deliberated—and then pigeon-holed—when it should have gone boldly forward."

That is a spirit different to that which has sometimes been attributed to the Civil servant in India. I am certain that the right hon. Gentleman will carry out his reforms best if in a generous spirit he listens to and accepts the co-operation of these people in the future.

Mr. Bennet.—The hon. Member for the Scottish Universities who has just sat down has spoken with his usual diffidence as a cold weather visitor to India. There is much in his statement with which I agree, but perhaps he will allow me to say that on one or two points I differ from his conclusions. In the first place, I think that the Morley-Minto reforms have not been the entire failure he has taken them to be. I think he somewhat underestimates the use that local administration has been in India. I do not think that the educational system has been the entire failure it has been represented to be. No one will claim that it has been a success, but any one who has had any large acquaintance with the Indian members of the various local administrations, or with the subordinate members of

the judiciary and members of the legal and medical profession in India who have had their training and their teaching entirely in Indian universities, will say that they have been a complete failure. I do not pretend that they have been a success. We have had a very searching and critical account given by the hon. Member who went out to India as a member of the Industrial Commission. We are aware of the defects of that system, and there is no doubt it will in time undergo the reform that it needs.

I think most of us will follow the example of the Secretary of State for India in restraining from criticisms, or attempting to deal with the details of the great measure he has laid before the House to-day. We shall find in them our best criterion by asking two questions: (1) Are the political confessions made in the Bill honest and genuine, and (2) are the executive safe-guards which it offers sufficient? I think that the Bill will pass safely through an examination in the light of those two principles. The right hon. Gentleman admits that under the scheme referred to a good deal of the effect which would have resulted has been nullified by Regulations. It is, however, reassuring to see how fully alive he is to the danger of that policy if repeated, and it will be a satisfaction for the House to know that under the new scheme the Regulations which will be prepared will be somewhat of a statutory nature, that is to say, they will be subject to the approval of the House and to any criticisms which may be offered in this House.

We have also a great and valuable innovation in the instrument of Instructions to the Government. No one can read over the Act itself without seeing how much of the operation of that Act will depend upon the Instructions, and I hope the House will give the most careful consideration to these instructions, because very much will depend upon them. We have been told, because five of the provincial Governments in India differ from the principle of dualism, that we ought to postpone the consideration of this Bill. I agree with the right hon. Gentlemen in the arguments which he puts forward in defence of the scheme of the Government of India against that of the provincial Governments, because I cannot see in the scheme put forward by the provincial Governments anything like an open way to the development of popular responsibility. Although it takes some courage to stand up against the advice of five provincial Administrations in India, at the same time I think the right hon. Gentleman is justified in the scheme he has chosen as against that of five provincial Governments.

This House and the opinion of this country, in looking at this scheme, will have to abandon certain conventional ideas. In this city there must be a good many examples of ancient wisdom in the old ideas and conventionalities in regard to the relations between

England and India which have to be abandoned. For instance, there is the old saying that in the East you must be either the hammer or the anvil. We ought to look at this great problem without thinking which is the hammer and which is the anvil. We are not going to hammer the disaffected of India into loyalty for us and our government, and we must find some other method of doing it. Again, there is the old conventionality that we won India by the sword and we can only keep it by the sword. That is rather defective history and bad policy. I should take no pride in India and in my position as a citizen of this Empire if I felt that India was to be kept only by the sword, and I believe that view prevails in all parts of the House.

There are difficulties which have been put forward, and which, in my opinion, have been made more of than they are entitled to. You hear of lions in the path, and you can always see that if your imagination tends that way. One lion in the path is the religious difficulty in India. We all know that there is such a difficulty, but it is possible to exaggerate that even in India, and those who press that difficulty upon the notice of the people in England forget to tell us how many States there are in India in which Mahomedan rulers peacefully exercise sway over the Hindu population. Many of us who have been in India must have had some experience of those political conditions. I know in one State of a very influential Mahomedan Nawab who governs through a Hindu Minister, and one never hears of any differences between that ruler and his people. Then, again, we hear of insuperable obstacles to the establishment of anything like modern constitutional government in India. Here, again, one does not underestimate the obstinacy of certain sections of the community, but we are conscious that that problem is to some extent solving itself, and that at all events the predominance of the past is not as uncompromising and absolute as it used to be.

In regard to that matter there are signs which I regard as most encouraging. We have the attitude of the Brahmins. The Brahmin has been held up rather as a somewhat dangerous, grasping and unsatisfactory person, but I do not think he has been quite fairly treated. The Brahmin is to some extent by prescription a privileged person, but in the practical affairs of life one does not see much exercise of that privilege, and at any rate, the Brahmins are taking their part in a way most creditable to them in the uplifting of the oppressed classes in India. We hear of the many millions of oppressed people and movements have been put for raising the oppressed classes. To whom we should give credit for originating that, I am not quite sure, but I think the Christian missionaries have had something to do with it. The point I want to make is that the most efficient measures that have been taken in India for the social amelioration

ration and the education of the oppressed classes have been taken by the educated Brahmins. They are a class of people who are held up to prejudice and distrust by a privileged oligarchy : but they have done more than any others in India to raise the depressed classes. Only the other day I heard of an organisation which deserves to be known and to be respected wherever it is known, called the Servants of India Society. This society organised, in connection with one of the great religious fairs in the United Provinces, a medical and nursing service for the benefit of all who might be taken sick or who might be in need of help amongst the hundreds of worshippers who assembled at that religious fair. Cholera broke out, and the Servants of India Society took the lead in organising measures dealing with the cholera. I am speaking of these people because the Brahmins have been held up as real obstacles to the setting up of anything like democratic institutions in India. I plead for a fair judgment even upon them.

We are told that it is hopeless and dangerous to put more power into the hands of the people of India, because the certain result of doing that would be to decrease the efficiency of the administration. There have been times in recent years in which thoughtful Indians have had some reason for asking whether British administration at all points was any more efficient than it ought to be. Let us at all events realise this, that we may pay a little too dearly for absolute efficiency, and it may pay us in certain circumstances to be content with something short of perfection. Lord Cromer, whom I can scarcely regard as a dangerous adviser in matters of this kind, always acted upon the principle that he would employ the natives of India where it was at all possible, in spite of the fact that the native was comparatively inefficient. "This is a point," he said, "on which the Government of India has always gone wrong. You lose more by the effect upon popular content than you gain by having the work better done." At a congress I attended two and a half years ago I was struck by the fact that all over the huge building there were mottoes, and I think the most predominant motto there was "Efficient government no substitute for self-government." I think the idea was Mazzini's. It was recognised by the Italian population of Lombardy under Austrian domination. They fully recognised that the Austrians were efficient governors, but they did not love them any the more for that, and were very glad to get rid of them. You may pay too much for your efficiency. We frankly recognise that there will be a danger of a certain falling off in the efficiency of the administration while the new methods and the new regime is acquiring strength and getting into operation, but we ought to be prepared for that if, on the other hand, we get an increasing con-

ment amongst the people of India, and a satisfaction with the rule which England has imposed upon them.

When an attempt is made to put the situation in India before us, it is sometimes put in a way which cannot fail to alarm us. Most of us have had a pamphlet sent to us which was intended to prepare us, I suppose, for the decision that we are to come to to-day. That pamphlet, I think, is the product of the Indo-British Association to which the Secretary of State has referred. I do not want to answer that pamphlet, but I think it might very fairly be described 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 in the political phenomena of which there is nothing worth attention beyond the ravings of an hysterical woman and the plottings of a disloyal minority. That is not the India with which we have to deal. We have to deal with a very different India, so long as we are sure that the executive are armed with sufficient powers to control it, and we can find in the difficulties and even the dangers which confront the Administration in India no reason for denying the opportunities of progress and self-development. I think the attitude of mind of men who, on the eve of decision being taken on a question fraught with the greatest importance to the development of the Empire, can do nothing better to enlighten us than to send a scare-crow pamphlet, for it is nothing better, show a deplorable want of statesmanship and of good faith.

The hon. Baronet (Sir H. Craik) spoke of the grave and serious occurrences in India during the last three years, and I do not think I am misrepresenting or exaggerating his argument when I say that he looks upon recent occurrences as a reason why we should be very careful and very cautious in the measures that we adopt in India. That is a very fair and reasonable argument, but it is not a reason for timidity. Timidity may produce greater danger than a bold and resolute policy.

Sir H. Craik : I said that this is not a time for timidity nor for delay.

Mr. Bennett We are glad to have those two points put by the hon. Baronet. We have two good examples which we can follow. We have the example of Canning who had to deal with far more serious troubles and problems than even the Government of India has had to deal with in recent years, and the fact that he did not regard that as a reason why he should withhold from the people of India the benefits of university education. It was the crowning point of Canning's policy of clemency to give to India those

university institutions of which we have heard to night. The other example is that of a recent Viceroy who, notwithstanding the attempts upon his life, and notwithstanding that he suffered and is suffering, said that it would not deter him from going on with the liberal policy which he contemplated. I am sure those are examples which should help and encourage us. We have to go forward. I might quote a passage from a contemporary historian whose work has already become classic when speaking of the measures adopted by the Emperor Theodosius. He speaks of Theodosius as "The far-seeing statesman who, seeing the tide of democracy setting in, goes boldly forth to meet it, and with liberal hand extends the privileges of citizenship to the worthiest of those who have been outside the pale, and from the enemies of the constitution turns them into its staunchest defenders." That is the policy which the Secretary of State for India has taken in hand. He courageously goes forward to meet the rising tide of democracy in India, and he may count upon converting a good many of those which at this time are hostile to British rule or, at all events, are not helping us as they ought to do. He may, and we hope he will, convert them into helpers and loyal subjects of the Crown. We or others will spend a good deal of time upon the details and machinery of this Bill, and in regard to that may I remind the House of what Lord Morley has written regarding the second-rate importance of the machinery of political institutions? He recommends us to engrave in letters of gold on the portals of the great offices of State at Whitehall Matthew Arnold's words; "When shall we learn that what attaches people to us is the spirit we are of, and not the machinery we employ?" We may have doubts and difficulties as to the machinery and as to matters of detail, but if we are right "in the spirit we are of" I have no fear of the consequences.

Colonel Yate. I think the House may congratulate the hon. Member who has just spoken on his very interesting address, and I am sure we all join with him in hoping that the Bill we are now considering will have the result that he hopes for in converting the present agitators into our good and useful colleagues in the Government of India in the future. One word in regard to the Indian Civil Service, which was dealt with by the hon'ble Baronet (Sir H. Craik). I confess I was disappointed at the expressions used by Secretary of State regarding the Civil Service of India. If I remember aright he said, he was sending out a representative from this country to bring the Indian Civil Service down to its proper position; to put it into its proper position, and to put it more into the position of the Indian Civil Service at home than of the Indian Civil Service in India. We must all remember that the Indian Civil Service was the greatest ambition of many people in this

country and one of the greatest examinations in our universities was that for the Indian Civil Service. It is also the greatest ambition of Indians when they come here to be trained to pass for the Indian Civil Service. The Indian Civil Service occupies a very unique position in the world, and I do not want to see it brought down to any lower level than it occupies at the present time. Therefore, I hope, my right hon. Friend will not maintain the position he took up when he spoke about it.

Mr. Montagu Sir Llewellyn Smith is going out to India for no other purpose than to collaborate with the Indian Civil Service in advising the Viceroy and the Government as to the reorganisation of the Secretariat of the Indian Government Departments. I agree with every word the hon. and gallant Gentleman says as to the Indian Civil Service. My only argument was that when the time comes they would lose their responsibility for the initiation of policy but would carry out the policy which was dictated to them when it was transferred from this House to the people of India.

Colonel Yate :—I hope the Indian Civil Service will never lose its initiative. It is to its initiative that we owe a great deal. It has maintained our Government in India for a century. I do not want to touch on any details of the Bill under discussion. We acknowledge that nobody understands it, for nobody has had time to study it. The right hon. Gentleman told us that he had flooded the House with literature. Look at the quantity we have had within the last week or two. It has been impossible for anyone to study it. I do not know why these voluminous Blue Books were kept back. I do not know why these Reports were not published at the time they were received. I must leave it to the Secretary of State to explain the reason for the delay. It is a great pity we did not have them months ago. The only really important question at this important stage of the Bill is whether self-government in India is to be founded on unity of administration, or whether what the right hon. Gentleman calls the principle of diarchy is to obtain. Diarchy is a system of dual Government. The right hon. Gentleman is responsible for the word. There is no word in any language in any part of the world like it, and the very fact that no word exists anywhere for such a system of government is proof that there has been no one irresponsible enough to suggest such a system before this. It is an absolutely unknown system.

What is the proposal? It is that in each Province in India—we ought rather to say in each country in India, for if you compare the Continents of India and of Europe without Russia, you will see they very nearly coincide, the population of India 315,000,000 and that of Europe without Russia is 312,000,000, India represents, like Europe, many countries with divergent conditions, but those

divergent conditions are far greater in India than in Europe, the difference between the Bengali on the East of India and the Baluchi on the West is far greater than the difference between the Bulgarian on the East and the Britisher on the West. When one thinks how absolutely impossible it is to introduce one franchise and one system of government for the whole of Europe and for the various countries constituting Europe without Russia, we can easily understand the difficulty of introducing one franchise and one system of Government for all the varieties of race, language, and creed that exist in India. It may be asked What is the meaning of this system of diarchy? It is that in every province of India, however different the creeds and languages may be, you are to have two executive councils, one composed of British official members and the other of Indian unofficial members. These two exclusive councils are to be opposed to each other and to fight each other on questions affecting the Budget, the allotment of funds, and everything else.

The danger is this, that these questions will be fought out under the pressure of the Indian Press. The virulence of criticism and gross misrepresentation indulged in lately by the Indian Press has been so marked that I recently put a question to the Secretary of State as to what was being done to stop it. The right hon. Gentleman, wrongly as I think, put the onus of protecting the servants of the Government of India not on the shoulders of the Government of India or himself but on the Provincial Governments. I think he is wrong. It is the duty of the Government of India and of the Secretary of State to defend their own servants from the gross attacks made upon them of late months by the Indian Press. Under the system of diarchy this abuse of the British side of the Government will be increased and will tend to make the Government of India impossible, as it is trying to do now. That is the danger we must think of. Remember that under this system of diarchy accusations will be levelled day after day against the British Government for allotting too much money for the preservation of law and order, too much money for the reserve services, and not enough money for the transferred services. There will be continually increasing friction. The Viceroy claims that the Bill will prevent that. But we must remember that the fate of the unofficial members of India will depend on the manner in which they oppose the official members.

The alternative scheme which is proposed by the great majority of the Provincial Governments of India, by men who really know what Government in India is, would give us a unified system of Government. I know well the value of the Indian mind to the British mind and of the British mind to the Indian mind. I know there could be no better thing for India than to have them all

sitting together round the table in equal numbers, acting together and sending their decrees forth as from one unified whole—one united Government which you cannot divide. We have got a Coalition Ministry in this country. Could we have the same in India ?

Colonel Wedgwood.—Responsible to an elected Chamber ?

Colonel Yate.—What should we do if we had two Cabinets in this country, one on the Government side and the other on the Opposition side both under the same Prime Minister, Would it work ? Would they not fight against each other ? The thing is impossible. The Government could not go on for a day. Yet that is what the Secretary of State is trying to impose on India. The real point before us now is whether self-government in India is to be founded on unity or on disunity. We are to have a Joint Committee of both Houses set up to inquire into that. I confess I was afraid when this Bill was first brought forward that it might be said that if the Bill were read a second time it would establish the principle of diarchy and no amendment should be moved. I put a question to the Leader of the House yesterday, and he assured me that that was not the case. The question I put was as to whether it would be within our power, after the Second Reading of the Bill, to introduce amendments to give effect to the alternative proposals submitted by the majority of the Provincial Governments in India to the system of diarchy embodied in the Bill. The Leader of the House replied that it was certainly the intention that it should be within the competence of the Committee and the Bill has been drafted accordingly.

We all wish that this Bill should now go forward as quickly as possible. But one very important point is as to the composition of this Committee. Yesterday I asked the Leader of the House if he could tell us who was to be on this Committee, and he replied that it would not be appointed until after the Second Reading of the Bill. I am sorry for that. I believe there are precedents in existence in which Committees have been appointed before the Second Reading and the names given to the House for approval. I wish that had been done in the present case. There are many Members of this House who have no knowledge whatever of the technicalities of the Government of India. To them the details of this Bill must be absolutely unintelligible, as they are no doubt to the majority of the people in this country. But on the results of the findings of the Joint Committee you must remember the peace and welfare of India for generations to come will depend. The Committee has the most serious inquiry before it. We do not know what their report may be. It may throw India back into chaos, into the state of trouble which existed sixty years ago. We know about the riots

and risings in India during the last few months. We have seen agitations carried on there in support of anarchy which have shown how easily the whole population of India may be led, and it proves more than ever how extremely careful we must be before making any great changes in the Government of India. The Joint Committee of both Houses might cause endless trouble, and I would therefore appeal to the Leader of the House to see that on this Joint Committee all views are impartially represented, and that all parties may have an equal chance of giving evidence before it, especially those Members of Provincial Governments of India who have experience and knowledge of the Government of India, and whose representations will be of such great value.

Colonel Wedgwood If the hon. and gallant Member for Melton (Colonel Yate) had read these Blue Books with which he has been overwhelmed, and which came out three weeks ago—

Sir H. Craik : No !

Colonel Wedgwood Yes, the Blue Books came out about three weeks ago, before the last Indian Debate.

Colonel Yate The Secretary of State told me that they were published on 28th May.

Colonel Wedgwood That was the subsequent ones published since the Blue Books. The Blue Books were out before the last Indian Debate, because I read them before it.

Sir H. Craik : You have not read them all.

Colonel Wedgwood I have read the Southborough and Feetham Reports.

Sir H. Craik : There have been others since then.

Colonel Wedgwood : There have been two others since then, but they have been White Papers. It would be difficult to take part in this Debate unless one had studied those Reports.

Sir H. Craik The letter from the Government of India dated 5th March, 1919, was only issued about five days ago.

Colonel Wedgwood But the Feetham report on the diarchical system of government proposed by the Secretary of State has been in your hands for three weeks. That apparently, was not read by the hon. and gallant Member for Melton before he made his speech to day. If he had read it, he would have appreciated the difficulties of the situation, if you try to give responsible government to India and at the same time try to safeguard the present bureaucratic government in that country. It is a wonderful experiment that is being made at the present time. This is, perhaps, the most important Bill that has been introduced

into this House since the days of the great Reform bill of 1832. Indeed, when we consider that it affects 315,000,000 people, against the 31,000,000 affected by the great Reform Bill, it might be said to be the most important Bill ever adopted in the House of Commons. It is a constitutional measure of the very first importance, quite incomparable with the Morley-minto reforms or the reforms of earlier date. This is the birth of India as one of the self-governing Dominions of the British Empire. We are only shown in this measure the outline of the first stage of that great development, but every one who votes for this Bill to day is voting definitely for the placing of India in years to come in exactly the same position as Canada, Australia or South Africa inside the British Empire. That amounts to a complete change in the present system of Government in India. You cannot have bureaucracy and democracy running side by side. All that can be done is to make the change from pure bureaucracy to democracy gradual. That is what the right hon. Gentleman has attempted to do, both in his Report and in this Bill.

I am in a rather difficult position as regards this Bill, because I think it would have been wiser to have been more courageous. This Bill, if passed, will not end agitation in India. Directly this Bill is passed I hope that agitation will transfer itself from outside, from violent methods and from passive resistance to those councils when they are formed, but I hope that agitation will continue, because, unless it continues on sound constitutional lines in these new Parliaments just as agitation continued in our Parliament after the Reform Bill of 1832, we shall not see India achieve a reasonable and satisfactory form of government. Inasmuch as this Bill is not proposing a satisfactory form of government The dyarchy can be excused or justified as a transition measure, but only as a transition measure. We might have started India further ahead in the stream of time. All Governments every where depend upon the command of the power of the purse. It has taken us 700 years in this Parliament to acquire to command of the power of the purse. During those 700 years kings have lost their crowns and their heads, Parliaments have been smashed up, and civil war after civil war has rent the country.

Brigadier-General Croft : And now we have lost that power.

Colonel Wedgwood :—I want to avoid starting India in the thirteenth century when we might start her in the twentieth century. I want to prevent in that country all the agitation which the command of the purse involves, and all the bitter feeling which must arise between Indians and ourselves until we do relax the power of the purse by a generous measure of reform immediately, and trusting to the, innate sense that every civilised people has, and

which I think the Indians have from what I know of them, that the safest way of conducting your country is to look to and carry on internal reforms, progressively developing the industries, sanitation, health, education and what I might call the mental development of the country. We should rely upon the natural tendency to use the weapons which we put into their hands for progressive development rather than confine them, as we do during the next ten years, to a perpetual constitutional struggle between the grantors of the constitution and those to whom it is granted, which will mean bad blood rather than good blood between us and India. That is particularly to be deplored just now, when we owe such a deep debt of gratitude to that country for so loyally supporting us in the War.

The power of the purse is the keynote. In this Bill that power is practically retained entirely in the hands of the bureaucracy. If you take the Indian Legislative Assembly—may I thank the right hon. Gentleman, or whoever drafted this Bill, for calling it the Indian Legislative Assembly and not the Imperial Legislative Assembly, because this is the first realisation in an Act of Parliament of that nationhood of India which we want to stimulate and encourage so long as there is true national spirit and not a factious national spirit—in that Indian Legislative Assembly that there is going to be an elective majority. But that elective majority has, in fact, no control over finance, because the Council of State, which is above it, has power to override it, as I read the Bill, on matters of finance. I would draw the attention of the House to Clause 20, Sub-section (4), which says

“Where the Governor-General in Council certifies that it is essential for the safety, tranquility, or interests of British India, or any part thereof . . . that any law shall be passed, the Council of State shall have power to pass that law without the assent of the Legislative Assembly”

So that the Budget Resolutions as I read the Bill can be passed over the head of the Legislative Assembly by the Council of State. Therefore, so far as control over the power of the purse is concerned, in that Legislative Assembly it does not exist at the present time, but is reserved entirely for the bureaucracy. That is one of the safeguards which my right hon. Friend opposite (Sir H. Craik) may think necessary. It may be necessary, but it is regrettable, and it should be changed at the earliest possible movement in order to avoid friction. Then take the Local Legislative Councils, which, as I read the Bill, will grow in importance and strength and gradually sap the strength of the Central Council in Delhi. In the Local Legislative Council there is again a majority of elected members, but again a second substitute for our House of Lords has been invented, with powers far wider than those of our

House of Lords, the substitute in this case being an extremely new invention called the Grand Committee. That presents itself to the minds of hon. Members here as a place where we write our letters while other members are snoring. That it is not a Grand Committee intended by this Bill. It is a very carefully picked body selected from the local Legislative Council. It is picked by the Governor, and will consist of men who can be trusted to vote as he wants them to vote. These men are set up in Grand Committees whenever the Legislative Council proves refractory, and, as in the Council of State at Delhi, its legislation supersedes the legislation passed by the merely local Legislative Council. There again the power of the purse is hamstrung by the decision of the Grand Committees. More than that, in regard to the subjects reserved to be dealt with by the bureaucracy as opposed to the transferred subjects like education and sanitation, which are transferred to Indian self-government, all the finance required for the reserved subjects is specially excluded from the purview of the elected Legislative Council. Worse than that, if the demands for these reserved subjects, for instance, the demand of money for the police force increases—that is to say, if the bureaucracy thinks the wages of the police are too low or the force is too small in number they can increase the pay and number of the force, they can double the annual items for the police, and they may make a demand upon the elected Legislative Council to make good the deficit.

If the local Legislative Council tap new sources of revenue for education as they undoubtedly will do, under this Bill they have no sort of security, if once they find a new source of taxation that that money will not be filched from them by the demands of the reserve services. For instance, if they raise, £1,000,000 in Bombay for education the demands for money for police or public works will come along, which will swallow that increase, and they will get all the unpopularity of having raised the new tax without satisfaction of being able of seeing it spent according to their own wishes. The refore the control of the purse is very small indeed. They have the right to raise money as they like for the transferred subjects to increase taxation for them, but they are always subject to a first charge on their revenues for the central Government at Delhi and also to a second charge on their revenue for the reserved subjects. That puts the power of the purse very low indeed and gives you a representative Government which is almost devoid of any responsibility for finance, while as we know, finance is the keystone of the whole thing. The power of the purse is one point of view from which I look at this new constitutional proposal, but even more important than that—after all, almost automatically, and

indeed certainly when the ten-year provision comes along, the powers over finance will have to go—is the basis upon which your representation has to stand. The character of your Legislature will depend almost entirely upon the franchise which fixes the voters for that Legislature—the franchise and also the system under which members are elected to that Legislature.

As a basis upon which to build in future years, I think the franchise suggested in this Bill and in the Report of Lord Southborough is indeed a very poor one. For the Indian Legislative Assembly the franchise is indirect. I think it is 631 electors who elect the seventy members of that Council. Indirect election is unknown in English history. It was resorted to in Russia for the Duma, and it was resorted to, I think, in Germany in certain cases but in English history we have never had indirect election at all, and certainly any Legislature which is based upon indirect election will carry very little weight and will not have that firm root that we are accustomed to see in all the British Empire. [An Hon. Member : "America !"] That is not for electing the House of Representatives or anything of that sort. It is merely a question of the primaries, and even in America they are working round to the direct primaries for the nomination of the President. I am more surprised at this indirect election for the Indian Legislative Assembly because in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report direct election was recommended. Why has it not been adopted? The reason given to me, and it seems to me to be probably a reason which will carry much weight in this House, is that the constituencies will be too large, that if the franchise had been a very high property franchise for the Indian Legislative Assembly it would have been possible to direct election, but directly you have 5,000,000 electors, as is proposed, for the local Legislative Councils it becomes unwieldy if there are only going to be seventy elected members in the Indian Legislative Assembly at Delhi. The constituencies would be too enormous—7,000,000 of population to a constituency and perhaps 100,000 voters, because out of seventy elected members of the Indian Legislative Council some thirty or forty are communal members representing districts, so that the proper members of that Parliament would be perhaps only forty, and the constituencies would be enormous and the electorate very large.

That criticism is quite true, but the cure for it, of course, is to make the Indian Legislative Assembly of a respectable size. Instead of having seventy elected members there ought to be many times that number. There is no country of the size of France or England which has not got a House far larger in proportion to population than you are proposing to give to this great central Assembly at Delhi. We have 700 Members of this House and it is not easy

even here to pick men of brains and character and ability sufficient to fill the front Government bench. When you are dealing with an absolutely new country like India you should surely provide a sufficient field for political education in your central Assembly rather than restrict it to this narrow number, and thereby provide an excuse for having indirect election. Although I have never been in India I have seen so many Indians of the extremest political sort that I think I can speak for them perhaps as well as any other Member of the House. The Indians look upon this indirect election for the Indian Legislative Assembly and the small number of the members of it, as an insidious attack upon Indian nationalism. They want to see the central Legislative Assembly develop its function and become a Parliament such as ours. They do not want to see India split up into seven provinces being increased in number indefinitely. They do not want to see India divided up. They want to see a national consciousness, which we all know at bottom is an extremely good thing. They may differ between the North and South of India as much as the Norwegian differs from the Greek. But given united institutions and united aspirations and loyalty to the same throne, there you have bounds which in time will mould that people together. We want them welded together. We do not want to go on any longer with that absurd idea of "divide et impera." We do not want to rule by trickery or division. We want to rule by the love of the people in their hearts for the country which has been the mother and father of all free self-governing institutions.

I said the chief bolt is the indirect election for the central assembly. When you get even to the local provincial councils you find there, too, that evil forces have been at work to spoil the scheme as originally proposed. There, too, you find a franchise based on property. That franchise rules out 5,000,000 people classed as literate in the census. It also rules out all the soldiers who have fought for us in the War. Only the officers and non-commissioned officers get votes under this Bill. Many of these people are literate because the Army in itself is an education in many ways. It rules out all women. It rules out, in fact, some five or six million people classed as literates. I do not say their status as literate is a very high one, but people who do not read and write often have a very acute perception as to their rights and wrongs and interests which people who spend their money and time on reading magazines do not always possess. These people are ruled out owing to the property qualification. They are ruled out particularly in the towns. The ryot is not excluded from the franchise to anything like the same degree as the populations of Cawnpore and Calcutta—who are in the same stage

that industrial people were in a hundred years ago or more in this country. They are crowded together, with scandalous wages, under conditions in which we do not keep cattle in this country. These people are all deprived of the vote owing to this property qualification. It might be possible, when the Bill is going through without really injuring those safeguards about which so many hon. Members are so anxious, to extend the franchise by giving the option to any one who is literate to claim a vote. Then you would be certain you were not forcing votes upon people who did not want them. To make a claim for a vote in writing would be proof not only that a man was sufficiently literate to have a vote, but that he had a desire for a vote and a desire to take part in the Government of his own country. I beg that something of that sort be done for those who have fought for us and that they be not excluded from the gift of the franchise to the people of India.

But there is more than that about this Indian franchise. The real complaint I have to make against this Bill, as whittled down from the Montagu-Chelmsford Report, is the enormous increase in communal and interested representation. Communal representation means that if in a mixed population of Mahomedans and Hindus the Hindus outnumber the Mahomedans by ten to one there be should special representation given to the Mahomedan minority.

(An Hon. Member:—Quite right, too.)

Colonel Wedgwood.—It may be necessary but it cannot be quite right, if you really want to get responsible and representative Government. Any people who are elected by a special class confine themselves to looking after the interest of that class and do not look after the interests of the country as a whole. We often complain about Labour Members of Parliament. We say they represent the narrow point of view of their own trade unions, and it is exactly the same with communal representation. What we want is that every Member elected, whether for this House or for any Indian Legislature, should try to look at all subjects from the point of view first of the country, and not merely from the point of view of one class. That is a fundamental doctrine when you are considering the setting up of a constitution. You do not want to have sectional interests, you want to have people who will look at all sides of a questions, and try to make up their mind what is in the interest of the whole community. There is another real objection to communal representation, even from the point of view of the special community represented, whether it be Mahomedan or Sikh, or Christian Indian, or Eurasian, or whatever it is. Directly your Christian Indians have their own representatives they no longer have votes for the general representation, so that the ordinary Indian representative, having not a single

Christian Indian voting for him, takes no account whatever of the interests of that particular section of the electorate. Their interests are looked after by one or two Members in the House who can easily be got round. But for the 98 per cent of the members of the Council, the Christian Indians, or it may be the Sikhs or Mahomedans, are a matter of no interest whatever. They have no vote. We are discussing this Bill now, and we are more influenced by the retired Anglo-Indians who have votes in our constituencies than we are by the interests of the whole of India

[Hon. Members "No, no"] Human nature being what it is it must be so

[Hon. Members "No"] You cannot look at things entirely from an impersonal point of view. I defy you in any parliament to find people who look after the interests of those who have not got votes in the same way that they look after the interests of people who have got votes. I can give you two examples which are most opposite from the British Empire itself. In Cape Colony the blacks have votes on a property qualification. There are, generally speaking, not more than a hundred such black votes in any constituency but whether the representative of that constituency is a Nationalist or a Unionist or a Bothaite, whatever his qualifications may be, he considers the interests of the blacks because those hundred men may hold the casting votes between him and the partisan of the other side. So in Cape Colony you have the interests of the blacks looked after because although they have no special representation the very fact that they have votes makes their members look after their interests. If you go to New Zealand you see exactly the other thing. You see the communal representation that I deplore. The Maoris have no votes for any white representative in that country at all

Lieut-Colonel Meysey-Thompson They have their own representatives.

Colonel Wedgwood. Exactly. They cannot vote for a white man, but they have three or four Maori representatives who are supposed to look after their interests. The whites do not care in the least about the interests of a few Maoris.

Lieut.-Colonel Mysey-Thompson oh! no.

Colonel Wedgwood They do not look after their interests as they would if the Maoris had votes in their constituencies. On the other hand, the Maori representatives are of very little use in the Legislative Council because they are few and they can easily be got round—easily corrupted. There you have two examples of communal and general representation, in both cases looking after the interests of small minorities. It is obvious that where you have

general representation the interests of the minority are far better looked after than with communal representation. That is the broad ground upon which, in the interests both of the general legislation of the country and of the small community desiring special representation, it is advisable to have the firm foundation of a universal franchise, rather than these fancy franchises giving representation to small minorities. There are also special members given to the chambers of commerce, special members to the European community, special members to the universities. In this Bill there are stacks of special representation, which is entirely undesirable.

Colonel Yate They would not be elected at all without it.

Colonel Wedgwood . Does my hon. and gallant Friend think that a member of the University of Bengal, for instance, has a better title to representation than the ordinary ryot? It is perfectly obvious that educated people in India have very good chances of being on the local councils and in the Indian Legislative Assembly. They have a far better chance than the educated classes in this country get at the present time. There are plenty of opportunities for your Tilaks, Ghandis, and so forth, to sit on the councils in India, because they would be elected by the people. I may point out that they would sooner be elected by 10,000 than by 1,000 people. In this House one feels much more satisfied at being returned by a large electorate, rather than for one of the small rotten boroughs we used to have in the old days. One's position is enormously strengthened by the strong electorate behind one. I am quite aware that there is a large anti-Indian feeling which seeks to decry the beginnings of responsible Government in India, but that is not the way to look at this scheme. We should encourage it forward and not hamper its efforts to get responsible Government in that country. The franchise upon which the whole of this scheme depends is bad, and I hope it will be amended as the Bill goes through. In any case, I hope that the people of India, when they see this Bill before them, will direct their attention and attacks particularly against the franchise, and deal with the higher question of the relation of reserved and transferred subjects as of less importance than getting a fair and universal franchise in India, which shall give votes, not only to property, but to those who can read and write, to women and to soldiers who have returned from the War. Although we talk about the Montagu—Chemsford Report and the Southborough Report, we can from the Bill itself get no idea as to what the representation is to be, what the constituencies are to be. We have only been told that one of the transferred subjects is to be education. I do not know what the others be certainly transferred will be. We do not know exactly what the

reserved subjects are to be though we have been told that police is to be one. The whole of the 'guts' of the measure is reserved for rules and regulations over which this House has practically no control. It is as though we had passed the great Reform Bill of 1832 without the famous Schedules as to who should be disfranchised, what places were to lose one Member, and what places should be enfranchised. It is as though we had passed it without any reference to the forty shilling freeholder but had left it to the Government to decide when the Bill had passed into law. Everything is left to rule and regulation, and these are to be made by the local Governments. The local Governments in India have already shown clearly enough by the Paper they have issued to us within the last two or three days, what their views on these reforms are. They and they alone, as is obvious on reading Lord Southborough's Report, have whittled down the Montagu-Chelmsford Report till we get the Southborough Report. They and they alone, have now issued this new declaration as to what they regard as carrying out the promise of the 20th August, 1917. A more fraudulent carrying out of that promise would never have been put before any intelligent community. These people are to have the framing of the rules and regulations. I do not think the House need be surprised if Indians themselves have not the slightest faith in any rules and regulations which may be framed in that way. Fortunately, it is obvious in the Bill that these rules and regulations have to be approved of by the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman's speech to-day, and his whole conduct in connection with India, leaves one confident that the rules and regulations of which he of his own initiative would approve would be liberal and sound enough. But we know how strong the permanent officials are, we know how strong is the bureaucracy in India, we know how well supported they are even in the Indian Council and even among the intimates of the right hon. Gentleman; and I cannot but be afraid of what will happen when these rules and regulations come to be part of the Act of Parliament, rules defining what the qualifications shall be for a man to be ejected, what the procedure in the various Chambers shall be, what subjects shall be reserved, what subjects shall be transferred, what powers the Governor shall have in overruling his Legislature, what powers the Government shall have in nominating and fixing the responsibility of Ministers. When all these powers are left to the people who have to suffer by the change, to the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy, who naturally regard any change as deplorable from their point of view, I think the people of India are rightly suspicious of this gift horse, and will look at it anxiously in the mouth.

Mr. Montagu—I am sorry to interrupt the hon. and gallant Gentleman, but I would point out that the rules and regulations

or at least the policy to be embodied, will, according to the pledge made on the part of the Government to-night, be considered by the same Joint Committee that considers the Bill. The hon. and gallant Member or anybody else will have the opportunity of putting evidence before them and of suggesting amendments either in the Southborough Report or in the Feetham Report. The policy of the rules is to come before this House through the medium of the Joint Committee.

Colonel Wedgwood. I am very much obliged to the right hon. Gentlemen. That is what I wanted. I was afraid that these rules and regulations would not be ready in time to be considered by that Joint Committee. If they consider them, I think we shall be able, I will not say to give satisfaction to opinion in India, but at any rate to let people in India see that these rules and regulations are not the "ipse dixit" of the bureaucracy, but are indeed the work of this House and of the House of Lords. The position of the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy will indeed be very difficult when this bill becomes law. The position of the bureaucrat has got to be changed insensibly somehow into the position of the constitutional sovereign. The Governor of a province is, under this Bill, partly constitutional King and partly Prime Minister. He has got, before these reforms come to an end, to be a wholly constitutional King whose Ministers are responsible to him and whose Ministers are supported by the chamber. He has got to drop the idea that he is the Prime Minister responsible for initiating the actions of the Government. That is what my right hon. Friend meant when he said that initiation would cease. The initiation must in future come from the Ministers responsible to elective assemblies, and the greatest difficulty will be to make that quite clear to the bureaucracy. The position of the Governor in future is to be that of a man who acts on the advice of his Ministers. It is an entirely different position from that which he at present enjoys, and the change which has to come during the next ten years will be very difficult. I think we might get some guidance from the success of men like Lord Ronaldshay and others who have been trained in constitutional positions, and have not been bureaucrats, and have gone out to India in responsible positions as Governors. They have got on much better than bureaucrats who have simply passed to the position of Governor on promotion. Their outlook on life is different; their sense of responsibility is different. The role of Governor in India in future is going to be, perhaps, the one requiring the most fact, the most scrupulous attention to constitutional practice and the widest interests of any post in the service of the British Empire. It will be much more difficult than the position of Governor of one of the Australian States or even of the Governor-

General of one of our great Dominions, because the Governor will have to tide over the interval between British rule and Self-rule.

The President of the Board of Education (Mr. Fisher) said : The problem of Indian Government is so vast and complex, so remote from the ordinary day to day occupations of a member of Parliament, and the human factor is so difficult to assess, that however careful may be our plans, and however confident we may be that those plans are the best which we can devise, we cannot help having a feeling that, perhaps, in some respects, results may ensue which we cannot foresee and which will be undesirable. But I think that my right hon. Friend may be satisfied with the course which the Debate has taken. From all sides of the House we see general agreement that it is no longer possible for the Government of India to adopt a perfectly negative non-possumus attitude towards the great intellectual movements which are sweeping the continent from end to end. We see general recognition of the fact that speed is half the battle, and that, accordingly, as the old Latin proverb goes, "He who gives swiftly gives twice," and to that position we have, I think, added the statesmanlike quality which has always characterised Englishmen.

The right hon. Baronet, the Member for the Scottish Universities (Sir H. Craik), expressed some hesitation with respect to the Bill on the ground that it was advocated by so small a fraction of the vast Indian population. I think that we are apt to underestimate the power actually exercised by the intellectual classes in India. It may be, indeed it is, true that the politically-minded class in India is a small class when we compare it with the great mass of the Indian people, but every day it is gaining power and influence. I will give the House a few illustrations which came to my personal knowledge. I was in India when I was a member of the Public Service Commission for two years preceding the War, and I remember being advised to consult a young Englishman who was teaching in a missionary college in the Punjab as to the state of feeling of the students in his charge. I asked him whether the students were interested in politics. He answered me : "They talk of nothing else." The other day I was speaking to a friend who had recently arrived from India, and he told me that he was visiting a girls' school in Madras, and he found them holding a debate. He was asked to act as Chairman. The subject of the debate was whether it was expedient that Indian education should remain under Western control. A third instance is a young Indian, who had received an education at Oxford, told me that when he returned to his little village in the United Provinces, after three years absence, he found himself plunged in a different world. He had left a village belonging, so far as its ideas and civilisation went, to the time of Abraham—

a village of peasants with no cares except the ordinary humdrum cares of ordinary rural Indian life—and he came back to find a flaming political people listening with avidity to the vernacular newspapers that were read out to them, talking about politics, thinking about politics, and aspiring to take their own part in political life.

These are circumstances which must emphatically affect our view of Indian life. The old image of India as being silent, stationary, unperplexed, and unvexed by all the agitators of political life, if it was ever true, has now long ceased to correspond with the realities of today. The Indian population, it is true, is a population of dreamers and visionaries, occupied far more than we Englishmen ever realise with the problems of the other world. Nevertheless, politics are coming to India, and they are coming to India to stay. Ought we to be sorry, to be ashamed, to attribute this growth of political spirit in India to any mismanagement on our part? I notice that the right hon. Member for the Scottish Universities passed a very severe censure upon Indian education. He thought that it had been mismanaged, and he described it in no unmeasured terms as a disaster. I do not share that view. I think that if we Englishmen were to render ourselves responsible for conducting the Government of India we were bound in honour to give the Indians all that was best in our civilisation. I think that Lord Morley was perfectly right when he took the momentous decision to educate the Indian mind upon Western lines. After all, how can you give an honest education to a race if you do not believe it? And it is greatly to our credit that we have succeeded, through our system of education being introduced into India, in bringing about those aspirations, those hopes and those sentiments which we now as statesmen have seriously to consider.

I remember, a long time ago, having a conversation with a great historian, Sir William Hunter. He was speaking of the influence of the English missionary in India, and he said to me that he thought that English Missionary enterprise in India was of special value, because it brought before the Indian mind the disinterested element in English life. Our system of education also has brought before the Indian mind the disinterested element in English life, and so far from bringing about disaster, I think that it has conferred conspicuous practical services upon India. When I was examining into the conditions of the Indian Public Service I found everywhere most remarkable testimony to the loyal, devoted, intelligent services rendered by the Provincial Service in India, a body of men, over a million in number, serving the British Government, using the English language, educated in our schools, and co-operating with our officials in England in carrying out our great civilising work. Where would

that great-body of officials be but for the system of education in India? I was struck also with the universal testimony as to the admirable work rendered by the Judicial Service in India. Some years ago the lowest judge in the judicial hierarchy of India was the subject of general criticism. It was said that he was dishonest, and that his judgments could not be relied on. There is nothing of that kind now.

I notice that some little criticism was passed upon my right hon. Friend for having, as it were, deluged the House at the last moment before the introduction of this Bill with Blue Books, which Hon. members had no time to sift. It was, I think, an inference that my right hon. Friend was censured as having desired to rush this Bill through before it had time to receive adequate consideration. The fact is that this Bill is drawn to supplement the policy contained in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report. That Report has been in the hands of Hon. Members for something like a year. There is nothing in this Bill which is not contained in that Report. That Report is not only a very able and eloquent State Paper, but it is also one of the greatest State Papers which have been produced in Anglo-Indian history, and it is an open-minded, candid State Paper, a State Paper which does not ignore or gloss over the points of criticism which have since been elaborated in the voluminous documents which have been submitted to us since then. And my right hon. Friend not only has given us this great State Paper which we have had ample time to digest, but he has also published every document which has come from India as soon as he possibly could. There has been no intention on his part, or on the part of the Government, to withhold any information from the purview of the House. The hon. and gallant Member for Melton (Colonel Yate) passed some criticisms upon one of the salient features of this measure. He was very severe upon my right hon. Friend's proposal for dual government in the provinces. That, of course, is only a part of a large scheme of reform, but since criticism has been chiefly centered upon this kind of dual government, I should like to say a few words upon it. The hon. and gallant Member's criticism was upon this thesis. He maintained that if you divided the portfolios in the provinces into two Departments you would inevitably get a great increase of hostile criticism directed against the allocation of finance. But we have this criticism already; we have had it for many years. One of the cardinal points of criticism in India is the allocation of finance between what may be called the security services on the one hand and the educational and social services on the other. My lamented friend Mr. Gokhale, one of the greatest and purest characters I have known, and a great statesman and parliamentarian, was constantly insisting upon this point. When

I was in India, the papers were full of criticisms, pointed, bitter and severe, upon the assumed extravagance of the Indian Government upon the Army and the Police. I do not think there is anything at all in my hon. Friend's criticism upon this point.

The Diarchy

As to the system generally, the diarchical system, I confess that when I first came to study it I was very sceptical but the more I thought over the problem, the more I went into the difficulties, the more I have studied the alternative plans proposed, the more clear I am that it is the only solution which will really be found practicable. After all, what is it that we intend? We intend gradually to introduce the Indian people to Responsible Government. We wish the stages by which that introduction is to be effected to be gradual, to be tested. We wish to know whether in effect our experiment is succeeding. How are we to know that, unless we adopt some such plan as that suggested in the Bill? Let us suppose that we take the alternative which has been offered by the local Governments. You would have a portfolio of education going now to an Indian, then to an Englishman, and then again to an Indian. When the time for review comes, who will be able to say whether the department of Education, has or has not furnished adequate evidence of Indian administrative faculty? Your test is obscure, your test is made of no worth whatever, unless you make your Indian Ministers carry out a concerted policy over a number of years—a policy capable of being tested, something in the nature of a political experiment. Apart from that, if you adopt the unity system, will you really help your Government? Will you be simplifying, as is imagined, the problems as presented to the Government? The more I think upon these problems the more I am convinced that the answer to all those questions will be in the negative, that it will be far easier to have harmony in your Government if your Indian Ministers are allowed a pretty free hand in the management of their own Department, if they are recognised and clearly recognised to be responsible to their Legislatures.

This Bill not only proposes gradually to introduce a system of responsible Government into India. It has another object. It proposes to increase decentralisation in India. That is a very old problem. Some years ago there was an important Royal Commission on Decentralisation which made a number of fruitful and useful suggestions, some of which have been carried into effect. Proposals are contained in the Bill for devolving authority from the Secretary of State to the Government of India, and from the Government of India

to the provincial Governments. That can be accomplished in two ways. My right hon. Friend in his lucid speech referred in detail to this matter. At the present moment over-centralisation in India is due to the fact that in the last resort this Parliament has the right to criticise the administration. Therefore, the Secretary of State cannot relax his authority and the Viceroy of India cannot relax his authority. In the first Clause of the Bill provision is taken for the allocation of powers as between the central authority and the provincial authority, and that is to be done under rules. This Bill does not propose to define what functions are provincial and what are central in any way comparable to what was done in the Dominion of Canada Act, when the functions of the federal and provincial authorities were accurately and, as was thought then, exhaustively defined. We are leaving this allocation of functions to be determined by rules in the light of experience, and that I think is a thoroughly wise decision. Furthermore, whereas in federal constitutions disputes with respects to the functions of provincial and central Governments would be brought into the Law Courts, it is expressly provided by Clause 13 of the Bill that the Law Courts shall have no cognisance of such questions. That, again, appears to me to be a singularly wise decision. The time undoubtedly will come when the pressure of public opinion will demand a more accurate allocation of powers, and the time will probably come when the pressure of public opinion will require that all disputes in respect to the functions of central and provincial Governments shall go to the Law Courts. I am profoundly of opinion that the framers of this Bill have been wisely inspired in the course which they have chosen to take with respect to this very important matter. We cannot at the present moment make up our minds once and for all as to what parts of our highly-centralised system it would be safe to devolve, and we must leave that to careful experiment. Reference has been made to caste distinctions and in the peculiar circumstances of Indian civilisation that is a matter which calls for caution.

The hon. and gallant Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme (Colonel Wedgwood) criticised this Bill on the ground of its insufficiency, but I think that he was doing something less than justice to its authors in that criticism. This is a great Bill. The hon. and gallant Member did not exaggerate when he described it as one of the most important measures that has ever been brought before the consideration of this House. It is a measure, the effects of which, if it is passed, as I trust it will be felt for generations to come. It opens a new era in Indian public life, and it offers new hope to Indian political aspirations. It promises to add to the cause of good and progressive and enlightened Government all those

moderate forces of Indian political opinion which might be alienated by procrastination. It is a most important Bill, and for that very reason it is necessary that it should be accompanied, in the interests of Indians themselves, by safeguards which will enable the experiment to be tried with the greatest prospect of brilliant success. I know that the measure of my right hon. Friend has attracted some criticism on the ground that it does not go far enough. Criticism has been passed upon the restrictions of Ministers in provincial Governments in the discharge of the functions entrusted to them, and it is said : why could you not give the Minister in a provincial Parliament a perfectly free hand with respect to the Government there ? The answer is surely simple. Let us suppose he is dealing with Excise and with the liquor trade of his province. Can he take a step which does not have some effect upon that which belongs to the reserved functions ? The same applies with regard to estimates and finance, and obviously there must be some correspondence between the two offices of Government otherwise the machine would not work. It is, in other words, an essential condition of the mixed form of Government, of the transition form of Government which is being set up, and which I believe will be carefully worked, that there should be checks and safeguards.

I think we are sometimes inclined, when we are examining measures for the development of popular liberties in India, to be guided by a standard which perhaps may be sometimes over austere. Much has been said but none too much in praise of the incomparable work of the Indian Civil Service in India—that great service which has conferred shining benefits upon the civilisation of India, that great service which exists, so far as I know, no where else in the world, a body of men living in a country where they have no family interests to serve, where they are under no temptation to do jobs for their friends and their relations, a body of men animated by the pure spirit of disinterested endeavour for the good of the populations entrusted to their charge. Where is there such a Government as this anywhere else on the face of the globe ? Our Government here sometimes falls under the suspicions of being guided by motives less austere. We had the other day a Debate upon party funds and party honours, and it was said that the pure stream of Ministerial patronage was sometimes polluted. I am not concerned to argue that question but in India you have a body of men dedicated to the public service freed from all embarrassing ties, and holding to a standard of efficiency and austere virtue which cannot be matched in any country in the world. Is it not natural that when an Indian civilian comes to criticise a scheme which will have the effect of transferring, perhaps at some distant day, large blocks of

administrative work and administrative responsibility to Indians, he should fear that the standard of austere efficiency will be probably relaxed? That may be so. I am not prepared to say that this experiment may not be attended by some relaxation of efficiency. But after all, let us remember that our system in India is an English system, and that an English system is difficult to work by those who are not bred up in the English tradition. I think there may be some relaxation of efficiency, but I say that that relaxation in efficiency, if such there be, will be purchased over and over again by the confidence and support which the Government will receive from the co-operation of these electoral classes in India.

I have only one word more to add. Almost every speaker who has addressed the House on this subject has emphasised the necessity of swift progress. We are all conscious that if we do not carry this Bill through we may miss an opportunity such as will never recur. I believe that from the bottom of my heart. I believe that, unless we seize this opportunity, unless we pass this Bill, unless we see to it that this Bill is not whittled away in any serious particular, we shall be confronted with a grave situation in India. I cannot forget the fate which befell the Report of the Indian Public Service Commission which I had a humble share in framing. There was a Commission which travelled over India, working for three years upon the problem of the Indian public administration. Indian public opinion was greatly excited, discussions were held from end to end of India, the public Press was full of the proceedings of the Commission, violent antagonisms were excited, political opinion was worked up to a high pitch of excitement, and the Commission produced a Report. I have every reason to believe that that Report, if it could have been acted on at once, would have satisfied reasonable opinion, or the great bulk of reasonable opinion, in India. But what happened? The War came, and the Government found it impossible to act upon the Report. The Report was shelved. Nothing has been done, and I believe there is hardly any recommendation in the Report which has yet been carried into effect. The result is that concessions which would have been satisfactory three or four years ago are flouted now as utterly insufficient to meet the political demands of the people. Do not let us repeat that. It may be said we have many excuses for delay. I know, indeed, that the political landscape in India is troubled and stormy. There is the deep-seated anxiety of the moslem population with respect to the fate of the Turkish Empire; there is the reaction after the strain of war; there are the high prices; there is general distress, there is agitation on the Rowlatt Bills; there are sedition mongers going about the villages saying that the Sirkar proposes to take half the dowry of the

women, half the earnings of the men, and half the sum which is set aside for marriage settlements. These flying rumours among the villages in India may give cause for legitimate anxiety, quite apart from the clouds on the Afghan frontier. My right hon. Friend has been wisely advised in going on with this great measure. He knows, and the Government know, that to recede at this moment from the solemn pledge which has been given to the people of India by the Declaration of 20th August would fatally and justly undermine our character for fair dealing and justice and would alienate, and justly alienate, the good will and the patriotism of the loyal population of India.

Mr. Spoor.—In rising to take part in this Debate on behalf of the Labour party, I would like to say that we do not at all events give a qualified approval to the Bill that has been introduced this afternoon. I believe that every member of the party realises what has been urged already to-night, that this is one of the most important measures that have ever been submitted to the British Parliament. We feel with regard to it that it is a partial measure of justice, and we support it because of that and because we believe that, as has been indicated here to-night, it is possible that the weak points in the Bill may be considerably strengthened when the Bill is thoroughly gone into in Committee. It is a Bill which, although unsatisfactory in itself, does seem to contain immense possibilities, and it does not point, we believe, in the right direction. If I may be permitted, I would like to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary of State, upon having at last broken from the traditions, and the policy, or want of policy, that have characterised our rule in that country for far too long. The whole problem of India is a gigantic one. Apart from the many vast religious and racial problems that exist, there are very serious economic complexities, and it is to that side of the question which, so far, has been hardly touched upon in the course of the Debate to-night, that I would for a moment or two like to address myself. We have to remember that Britain is responsible in India for one-fifth of the total population of the world—a population that has at present no effective voice in the direction of its own destiny. We have to remember that the difficulties to which I have already referred that concern our Government of the country, are complicated at the present moment, because we have just emerged from the very terrible struggle of the last four and a half years.

We are glad that the Government have declared their policy. We are glad that that policy, summed up in two words, is Home Rule for India. What one feels, to be quite fair about the whole question, is that we owe to that great country a debt of reparation.

Though India may be, as has been said again and again, the brightest jewel in Britain's crown, we have got to remember that there are certain aspects of our misgovernment in that country, certain aspects of our commercial exploitation of that country, that will be perhaps the blackest pages in British history. We have to remember, too, that we went to India for commercial purposes, we have remained there for commercial purposes, and we have persistently exploited the Indian people from the earliest days by our control in that country. Reference has been made to-day in the course of the Debate to the latter days of the 18th century and the early days of the 19th century, when India was looked upon as a veritable El Dorado for the British investor, and the whole record going through the whole of the last century tells the same story. Methods were adopted which can only be characterised as ruthless in order to prevent or limit Indian competition with British manufacturers, and there has been for a fairly long period a very considerable decline in Indian industries with all the consequent suffering that that decline involves. The first quarter of the last century, from 1800 to 1825, there were five famines in India; in the next quarter there were two; in the third quarter six; and, in the last quarter, 1875 to 1900, there were eighteen famines. I know it is very difficult to interpret these cold figures in human terms, but the Labour party always endeavours to do that, and we try to realise what this enormous loss of millions of lives really meant to that country, and how far the unrest that exists at this moment in India is due to the ruthless, and sometimes reckless, commercial exploitation of that land.

We cannot escape the truth that the people of Britain have grown rich out of the slaves of India, and, judging by our present position, judging by what is happening there at this moment, it does look as though we have not profited by our experience or gained much in our humanity. Indeed, a day or two ago a question was asked in this House with regard to the wages in the textile mills of Bombay at the present time, and the answer given is one that should really give pause to all who have any feelings of humanity left in them, and who take in India a self-righteous pride regarding our capacity to govern millions of subject-people. Men are working twelve hours a day, women eleven, and children six, and adults are working for eight rupees a month, which is equal to about 3s. a week. Reference has been made to-night by one who spoke in the Debate to the insanitary hovels, to the congested areas, to those awful housing conditions that intensify plague, and make the ravages of disease still more terrible. When we remember that in the great city of Bombay there were, accordingly to the last returns, nearly 750,000 people living in one room tenements, when we re-

member, according to the last returns, the infantile death-rate in the great city of Calcutta in 1915 was 540 per 1,000, and in 1916 it was 675, we cannot but feel there has been something seriously wrong with the method of Government. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Education tried to paint a rather brighter picture of educational activity in India. I was very glad to hear him say some of the things he did, but one cannot forget that the teachers in the Government schools of India are receiving something like 5s. 6d. a week for salary, and when one remembers that, side by side with that, rent and living have enormously advanced during the last thirty years, we are able, I think, to visualise the terrible economic problem that faces the great majority of the Indian people.

Let us turn to the other side of the picture. I have here returns taken from newspapers of recent date, showing the dividends that British-controlled companies are paying, and have been paying recently over there. Dividends ran up to 300 per cent. and 400 per cent., while India's teeming millions are still working under conditions of slave labour. Only a week or two ago in this House, in the last Debate, reference was made to the Bengal Iron Company, whose shares before the War stood at something like 5s. and which to-day stand at £5 10s. What can one expect when the Indians see that glaring disparity? Can we anticipate or hope for anything else but very, very serious dissection and trouble? There is industrial conflict going on in India similar to that in almost every other country in the world. It is more intensified there because the conditions are even more extreme and severe. There are many elements of a very complex character which enter into the situation, but one cannot but feel that that situation is enormously aggravated on its economic side in the fact that work is done by slave labour to-day, in this twentieth century, under the British flag which is a disgrace to civilisation. I feel quite sure that the right hon. Gentleman who has introduced this Bill with a sincere desire to achieve real improvement and real reform will agree with me when I say that. For far too long some of the unimaginative profiteers of this country have run India, and have run it badly. I submit we are under such a debt to India that we need to pay back at the very earliest possible moment.

The Bill that has been introduced this afternoon and the speech that accompanies its introduction shows that the Secretary of State fully recognises the difficulties of the case. The measure is one that shows imagination. It realises that the protest which for long has been inarticulate in India has at last found expression, and political expression, and that public opinion has so increased in volume

there and in direction and intensity that action is being compelled. The passing of the Kowlat Acts that we debated a week ago is in itself a sufficient indication of the extremely grave character of the existing situation. What is it the Indian people ask for? Really, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, I must confess to a certain amount of amazement to-night when I heard an hon. Gentleman on the opposite side of the House urging a more conservative policy, and urging that whatever we did we should be careful not to move too rapidly. We had, he said, to go very very cautiously. What does Indians ask for? India does not ask to be separated from the British Empire. But India wants what we ourselves have always said we believed in for all parts of our possessions—responsible self-government. It is a very significant thing that the only country where religious differences have cut so deeply—it is, I say, a remarkable thing—that these gulfs have been bridged in a way that would have been thought altogether impossible a few years ago.

The intensity of that wave of nationalism, the reality of it, is perhaps better seen in the fact that Moslem and Hindu have come together than in anything else. What is it this Bill gives? It certainly does give, as has been claimed by the Secretary for India, a certain limited measure of responsible Government in the provinces, but the central Government there retains complete autocratic power. The vast majority of the people of India remain voteless. All the women remain voteless. I am rather surprised seeing that we in Britain have definitely admitted the right of women to vote on equal terms with men, that the right hon. Gentleman is not prepared to carry that particular principle into operation in the Bill that he has introduced. I hope it will be possible even in Committee to effect that reform. The limited scope of the Bill, the fact that it gives so little in comparison with what the people have asked and are asking, of course means that the people of India will be very, very disappointed. I was much interested in the speech that was made by the Education Minister. It does appear to me that it is just there one comes right up against the real solution, not only of the Indian difficulty but of most of the difficulties existing at present in the different countries of the world.

The Labour party regrets that in this measure education is only given a secondary place instead of a primary place. We say that if you will give to India compulsory education, the day is not far distant—it may be very, very much nearer than people sometimes imagine—when India will be fully competent to govern herself. When one thinks that education in India costs to-day, I believe, about three-half pence a head, one realises the immense amount of arrears that have to be overtaken before anything like a satisfactory

system can be secured. In thinking of India one cannot but think of her great past. As I said a week or two ago, it is a surprising thing that so many British people seem to be blind to the fact that we are dealing with one of the greatest civilisations so far as age is concerned, so far as its contribution to the world's common stock of ideas is concerned, of which we have record in human history. People talk about India and India's illiteracy. That is an appalling comment upon our Government during the last two generations; for, after all, it was India who gave to the world one of the most wonderful religions that the world has ever had, a religion that, to quote the words of Sir Edwin Arnold.

"Kept Asia sweet and clean for twenty centuries."

It may be that that religion has largely left India now. It has travelled North and East, but it still exerts enormous influence over countless millions of the people who inhabit this globe. I have been thinking as I have been sitting here to-night of one well-known figure of the Labour movement, well-known a few years ago, and unhappily not with us now. I have been thinking how the man who was much misunderstood, much misrepresented, much undervalued by the people who did not know him, James Keir Hardie, of how Hardie again and again raised his voice and used his pen in the interests of India. I know there are those, perhaps in this House, and certainly among Anglo-Indians, who looked upon Keir Hardie as nothing else but a seditious malcontent. Well, if to stand for the rights of the people against the power of the oppressor, to stand for truth and cleanness and honour against untruth and dishonour—if this be the mark of the seditious malcontent, then I imagine—and I hope—that there are many such in this House to-night, and that not the least of these is the right hon. Gentleman whose measure we are discussing. I quote Keir Hardie's words because it has some bearing upon the speech we have just heard from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Education. Speaking of the Indian people he said

"Their ability is not open to question. A great intellectual awakening is shaking this ancient Empire to its foundation. A sympathetic interpretation of the facts will bind the people more closely to us and lead to their becoming a loyal self-governing part of the Empire. Repression will only intensify their determination to secure self-Government and may lead finally to the loss of what has been described as the brightest jewel in the British crown. It is for statesmen to choose which path they will follow."

We are glad to believe that the Secretary for India has chosen the right path by this Bill, although we also believe that he travels along it with undue caution. At all events, this Bill must not either

now or in Committee be weakened in any essential particular or else it may mean that we shall have trouble of a much more serious character than we have had in India as yet. Only a few hours ago, I heard one of the most distinguished Indians living in this country say, in reference to this measure, that it is the irreducible minimum. If it is in any way lessened in its effectiveness and power the Indian people will not accept a continuance of the existing state of affairs. He said to me :

"You may bring your machine guns ; you may bring your aeroplanes and you may bomb us from the skies, but you will have to exterminate the whole of the Indian people, rather than we will submit to conditions which are tyrannical, cruel and unfair."

Everybody who thinks of the immense seriousness of the situation now, when the whole world is in a state of uncertainty and the whole of Europe is involved in a conflict of ideas that many of us cannot see our way through, and one realises if ever the time is ripe for certain action with regard to India, that time is the present. If we fail now, we may have a revolution there, and if we do, God only knows what the result will be. If, on the other hand, we succeed, and if this Bill becomes a Statute, much strengthened and improved and in a much more democratic form, if we succeed in this we shall establish the beginnings of a partnership on terms of mutual confidence and good-will between India and the rest of the Empire, a partnership that will not only benefit those who at present live under the British flag, but one which, we believe, will hasten the cause of liberty, right, and of human progress throughout the entire world.

Sir J. D. Rees : The tributes which have been paid in the House to the merits of the Indian Civil Service are pleasant hearing to the only member of that Service in this House, and I wish to thank the Secretary of State, whose speech I did not misunderstand, because he made a most handsome acknowledgment of the position of the Civil Service, and I should like, on behalf of the Indian Civil Service, to thank him and the President of the Board of Education, and the others who have testified to the work which that Service has done in India. This Debate is now taking a certain character. It seems to me that all the criticisms that have been levied against the Bill were based upon two misunderstandings. In the first place, hon. Members criticised the Bill adversely, and they wanted to go faster.

My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Newcastle under-Lyme (Col.onel Wedgwood) complained that universal suffrage was not admitted at once, and the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down complained that female suffrage had not been given to India. May I point out that those reforms were never recommended, and

they certainly seemed to me to totally overlook the portions of the policy with which we are dealing, and to which I have just called attention.

Another error which vitiates all the criticisms I have heard to-night is this : I do not think any of those I have heard speak to-night, and I do not think officers serving in India, realise to what extent the Government of India is the Government of all India. It has been spoken of to-night as if it was a separate organisation unconnected or only loosely connected with the local Governments, and upon that was founded the objection that there was no real advance towards responsibility in regard to the central Government, and that what was done was only done for the local Governments. If the House once realises that the central Government is the Government of all India, and that local Governments are only its agents, with very restricted powers, they will realise that once a great advance has been made with local administration it is also an advance in the central administration, and that all the democratic advances which are made in this measure are advances in the Government of the whole of India, and not solely in the Governments of the provinces.

Why, Sir, the Governments of the provinces have exceedingly restricted powers. They cannot create an appointment at the most paltry salary. They have sitting amongst them, but not of them, an officer of the central Government called the Accountant-General, who is not only not under their orders, but whose business it is to see that they do not spend a single rupee without sanction, and he keeps them down under the Government of India all the time. That is what it is now proposed to alter. If it is realised that the central Government is the Government of all India it will be realised that the advances made in the local Governments are advances in all India, and that Government is immensely democratised by the measures before the House, and that the features of this Bill in that respect are not open to the criticisms which have been made. The hon. and gallant Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme repeated, with variations, a speech he made the other day, and I much regret it. Somebody has said that there were fifty languages in India, but I have had to do duty as interpreter in five of these languages in the South of India, where it was part of my duty to report and examine the native Press and the Indian newspapers, and report to the Government what was in them. I learned this, that anything that is said in the House of Commons about India travels to an extent which is by no means realised, and a special responsibility attaches to every utterances of a Member of Parliament concerning Indian affairs. The people in India who read extracts from speeches made

by my hon. and gallant Friend Colonel Wedgwood, such as the one he has made to-night, do not know that since he took the Bolsheviks under his comprehensive umbrella that he is in the habit of running amok down the floor of the House and assaulting all and sundry who come in his way. They will say, "He is a Member of Parliament. He must be a serious man. What he says must be entitled to attention." Therefore, it is a deplorable thing that the hon. and gallant Member—of whom I am a personal friend, and whose eccentricities I bore until he took up the Bolsheviks—should have spoken as he did to-night. It is a deplorable exhibition he has given to-night, and it is most regrettable that he should have allowed himself to say what he did. Amongst other things, he complained of the indirect franchise for election to the central Government. Lord Southborough's Committee admitted that they would have liked a direct franchise; but they are not ready on the spot with a direct franchise. They are not ready, like the hon. Member who has just sat down, to demand the immediate introduction, by order, into an Asiatic country of a complete democratic system which has taken us hundreds of years to develop in our own country.

The hon. and gallant Member also complained that there was no franchise for the literate. Therefore, he said that the franchise was a bad franchise. I am heartily glad that literature or literateness, or whatever may be the right expression, forms no part of this franchise. Nothing more liberal or more unfortunate from a democratic point of view could be imagined than that suggestion, made in good faith but in complete ignorance. The masses of the people of India are small cultivators. They pay most of the revenue. They are not literary but they are the backbone of India. They are the chief tax-payers. They are remarkably sensible, courteous, polite, highly civilised, gentleman-like people in all their ways and habits. They are perfectly capable of understanding what we want, and of giving a vote for the member they want, and to think that they should be excluded from the new franchise because they cannot read and write is an absolutely absurd thing and shows how prejudice, when it seizes a man or a Member of Parliament, deprives him of the power of understanding the beggarly elements of the issues which he is attempting to debate. I do not apologise, since it is in order, for dealing with this matter, because it is an exceedingly serious thing that on the Second Reading of the most important Bill regarding India that has ever come before this House, the word "fraudulent" should be used, the words "evasion of pledges" should be used, other charges totally unsupportable should be made, and the intentions of the Government and of this House should be misrepresented. The hon. Member repeated to-night a great many

things he said the other day. He scoffed at an electorate of 5,000,000. Is it not a very big thing to make an electorate of 5,000,000 by way of a beginning. It is more than the population of this country when it began to have responsible Government.

He complained that members are to be elected not upon an education but on a property franchise. A property franchise is extremely useful in India. The property franchise only died here the day before yesterday, so to speak. It enables you, by giving you the names of people who are taxpayers, to form some sort of electorate. The honorable and gallant Member also spoke about the working classes in Bombay, Cawnpore, Calcutta, and their franchise. I do not know what he means by the working-classes in India. I object to that phrase, in this country or elsewhere. What does he mean by the working-classes? The people I have described are the working-classes. The small cultivator works very hard, and he certainly belongs to the working-classes. Cannot we get this cant out of the discussion, and really deal with the vital issue. Then he complained of the representation of the Chambers of Commerce. Would he leave out of account commerce in India? If Lord Southborough's Committee had not recommended, and if the Secretary of State had not adopted the suggestion that Chambers of Commerce should be represented, what then? Commerce in India represents in imports and exports hundreds of millions to this country. Are they to have no representation in the new Parliament in India? It is not only the Chambers of Commerce representing European commerce—though I think that is a noble thing and worthy of all representation, and I deeply deplore the remarks which my hon. Friends made on that subject—but the Chamber of Commerce of the Indian merchants are equally represented in this new system.

The honorable and gallant Member went on to talk about giving votes to the plutocracy. Does the House realise that the inhabitants of the East are poorer than the inhabitants of the West? Their income is very much less, their wages are very much lower, and if we did not need very much in the way of housing, hardly anything in the way of clothes, and if our food cost next to nothing we should be very much better off than we are to-day on one-tenth of the wages we get. It is despairing to hear an honorable Member like the honorable Member for Bishop Auckland (Mr. Spoor) complaining about the wages in India evidently comparing them with British trade-union rates. His complaint really is not against the British in India but against the Almighty, who made the East quite different from the West in climate and population and in all its other conditions. I suppose it is the popular thing to say, "Let us double the wages in the East like we have doubled them in the West." We have doubling

them in the East since we went to India. Wages all round have doubled. But if you want to double them again, are you going to tax these people who you say are so bitterly poor in order to pay these higher wages to the working classes? Heaven knows who are the working classes. Are you going to put taxes on them for the purpose of giving trade union rate of wages to some people who have never heard of trade unionism, and would never understand what you meant. The honorable Member referred to the franchise recommended by Lord Southborough's Committee. That is plutocracy: putting the vote into the hands of the landlord class. These cultivators of a few acres are landlords, with an emphasis on the lord. I have been a Member of this House for thirteen or fourteen years, and when a subject comes to be discussed ones ears are often offended by the arrant nonsense which is talked.

The honorable Gentleman who has just addressed us said some things with which I heartily agree. He spoke of the high civilisation of the people of the East. There I am with him, indeed, I am not sure it is not a higher civilisation than our own. Ours is a high standard of wants and theirs is a lower standard of wants and that kind of tranquill which obtains there may be of a higher class than our own. But when the honorable Member went on to talk about our exploiting India I came to the conclusion to ask him before he next speaks to read the Report on the Moral and Material Progress of India. He will then see how much better off are all the inhabitants of India than they were before we went there, and only because there has been peace and prosperity and that British trade for which the honorable Member expressed such profound contempt, but which is the real basis of the whole British Empire. He talked about exploitation and the need for reparation. But it is known to anyone who, like myself, has lived in India for a quarter of a century that what has really happened there has not been the production of famine, but its prevention, for since we made the railways we have been able to correct the deficiency of corn in one area by bringing it from another. The only famine India is the famine of money, and not having enough money to pay prices when they rise above a certain level, and to meet this we have introduced a system of gratuitous relief on which the people live until prices fall again. This magnificent achievement has practically abolished those famines from which people died in their millions before our time, and to describe that as a black feature in the history of our country is totally at variance with the real facts of the case. I am, indeed, glad to leave the speech of the honorable Member, and I would only add, in regard to the speech of my honorable and gallant Friend the Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme, that I really think he must know

better ; therefore it is perfectly inexcusable for him to repeat statements totally unworthy of him and of the British Parliament.

I do not pretend to have studied the Blue Books which have been presented to us of late. If any man told me that he had mastered those books since we have received them, I should think he was either a superman or that he was qualified to be placed in a very select category along with Ananias and Sapphira. The mass of material in these books is enormous. It covers the whole field of the British administration and it is with a feeling of despair that one gets up in this House and endeavours to pick out the eyes of such a mass of material. When a Bill of this importance comes before the House of Commons there is always some compelling cause behind. During the years I have been here I have seen extraordinary changes take place. I remember the Prime Minister, who is now, I think, the greatest bulwark against Bolshevism, and I follow him heart and soul on that account—I remember when he was regarded as a rash reformer, to put it very mildly. I have seen that great change. But there has been such a development of democratic feeling since I have been in this House—and its rapid rush has been accelerated by the war into an absolute cyclone of progress—that such have been the changes that if there is any man here who is so much a compound of privilege and prejudice that he cannot realise what has occurred, then I say such a man is perfectly incapable of understanding the situation or of offering criticism on this Bill. The underlying fact is this, that the House of Commons is determined that it will not stand in future the application of widely differing or, indeed, different principles of government to the Asiatic parts of the Empire from those which it is demanding for itself at home. I believe that to be the case. I believe this Bill gives expression to that decision. One may like it or not—that has really nothing to do with it—but the point is this. Will the House of Commons suffer a Government to deport those who are obnoxious to the Government? Will it stand a pure bureaucracy or autocracy any more? I do not think it will. Therefore I say we have to consider this Bill and do the best we can to carry out its principles. I believe it does carry this out. I am glad its reception has been uniformly favourable, the opposition only having come from quarters which I may say are distinguished more for eccentricity than for sanity of judgment.

I saw the other day there was published a manifesto by certain distinguished gentlemen of the Indo-British Association. There seems to be some magic virtue in the number "seven." The Government of India consists of seven. Seven senior statesmen of the Indo-British Association signed their Manifesto to the "Times".

They remind me of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus. They commit themselves to this extraordinary transparently self-destructive proposition. They say, "We are opposing this Bill because we receive touching and frantic appeals from the oppressed classes in India, and, therefore, we are impelled to oppose the passage of the Bill." But their whole case is this, that these classes are not capable of formulating complaints or of giving expression to them. It is no wonder that the printer when he was faced with a communication of this sort said, "This is too much for me," and struck out the word "communal," substituting for it "commercial." It was not, perhaps, appropriate to the context, but it was really not so absolutely transparently self-destructive as the word these gentlemen had themselves put in. I really feel, as an Indian Civil Servant—as a member of the Madras Civil Service which has rather distinguished itself by its obscurantism—that I started life with a double dose of original sin, and nothing has saved me but a daily bath in the democratic waters of the House of Commons. Had these seven gentlemen of the Indo British Association, who are opposing this measure, been exposed to the same influences as I have been, they would be supporting this measure to-day instead of wondering at me as a man who is not standing up for the Civil Service to which he belonged. Why are none of these gentlemen who are opposing the Bill, why are not each of the 'seven sleepers', members of this House? It is because they cannot get in on that ticket. Not even if they accompanied their oriental tickets, as I suppose they would, with an English ticket, professing great love for democratic institutions, do I think they would face the electors of the present day. Therefore they are content to stay outside and complain of what they cannot get here to oppose.

I have read great portions of these Reports. I think I have read all of them, and have only broken down when at the end of each Report I found a dissenting minute, a merciless minute of equal length to the Report, by Sir Sankaran Nair. If it were in order on the Second Reading, I should like to move an Amendment providing that anybody who writes a minute equal in length to the Report made by the whole of his colleagues, should be rendered incapable of ever holding office again. I have tried, out of respect to the House, to pick out, if not all the eyes of these Reports, some few of the points on which, as an old Indian Civil servant—I suppose this is a kind of a swan song of the Civil servant—perhaps I may be allowed to make a few remarks. One very extraordinary feature of these Reports is the increased influence and importance of the Governors of our Indian Provinces. There is no harm in that. The people of India do not object to a Governor 'qua' Governor ;

they dislike the Governor 'qua' Civil servant. The Civil servant knows too much and is probably a fine old crusted specimen of what used to be called in my time the Anglo-Indian. However that may be, I should like to point out to this House how successful the Secretary of State has been in the appointments he has made to Governorships since he has been in office. For him to have been able to induce Lord Willingdon, a most admirable Governor, to remove from Bombay to Madras—where I know, although I was there myself, they want a little waking up and a little new blood—and to enter upon another term of office, is extremely satisfactory. The right hon. Gentleman recommended to His Majesty the appointment of Sir George Lloyd, whom we here all knew well. Sir George has proved a signal success since he arrived in Bombay. As my hon. Friend the Member for Sevenoaks (Mr. Bennett) pointed out the other day, he arrived in circumstances of the extremest difficulty. He deported a person who most richly deserved it very soon after his arrival. I sincerely hope that the House in all quarters will support the Governor of Bombay in the action he has taken. He was right not to prosecute this man, who showed the most malignant hatred of his fellow countrymen and who, I know, does not retain the confidence of those who formerly backed him. I hope that Sir George Lloyd's action in deporting him will be supported as a courageous act. The office of Governor in an Indian province now is going to be one of extreme difficulty. Up till now the Governor has had to do this and do that, and was always in the picture. Now along comes the Governor with the Ministers, and there will be no close time for the Governor in this preserve. I hope the House of Commons will realise the exceedingly great difficulty in which these high officers will be placed, and will give them strong support in all their acts. The Secretary of State, I understand, has arrived at the conclusion that for these offices men in the flower of their mental and physical vigour alone should be appointed. I applaud that decision on his part, although, as one who is on the threshold of middle age himself, it might condemn me to inactivity.

The Secretary of State made one remark which I did not quite follow. In referring to the transferred subjects I understood him to say that these would be made over to Ministers, and that we should have no more to do with them. I understand that the Governor will in certain contingencies have to come in, and will be practically responsible for the transferred subjects being properly carried on. If that is the case, that will bring in the Government of India and the Secretary of State himself. At any rate, whether or not I am right in this, the position of the Governor will be a very different one from what it was when I used to be private secretary to several of them. I

do not mean to say that they did not work hard then. They did. I have the profoundest regard and respect for those who were my chiefs. There was a very humorous writer about forty or fifty years ago who drew pictures of all the chief characters in India, which were none the worse for being humorous. He said that a Governor might be a decayed noble man, but he must be plump, and be able to wear a white waistcoat and the Ribbon of the Star of India. A Governor now requires a much greater equipment than before. I was private secretary to three Governors and in the secretariat I have served with many more Governors and Viceroys, and on their Councils. I hope that this House, when the Bill comes into force, will give the most generous and complete support of their officers.

I am glad that this Bill has been introduced, and I hope it will be put through without waiting for it to be made perfect. We prefer a steady peace, to a perfect peace indeed, we know nothing about a perfect peace except by hearsay. Just as we prefer it at once to having it perfect, so we want to have this reforms brought in at once, rather than wait until they can be made absolutely perfect and watertight in every direction. My own advices from India confirm me in this opinion, that among moderate thinking men in that country there is not a consensus of opinion but at any rate a very largely held opinion, that the democratic advance is real though safeguarded, that to the electorate is real responsibility conceded, while, above all, what is of the utmost importance, that the supremacy of parliament is not at all impaired.

I said just now that the Government of India has concurrent jurisdiction right through the Provinces, and anything that is done in the provinces is done in the Government of India. The House of Commons must deal with all the Governments of India as one, and it must acknowledge the advances made. I remember once, when I was a member myself of the Government of Madras on the Governor-General's Council, complaining about the amount of the revenues of Madras which were taken by the Government of India for the general purposes of the year, and I said, "You might really think the revenues belonged to them." The Finance Minister immediately took me up, and said, "They do, the whole of the revenues of India belong to the Government of India, and the Government of Madras which would represent, perhaps, 40,000,000 inhabitants, has no right to one rupee." The whole of the revenues of India are the revenues of the central Government of India. I remember that at the moment, and I am not sorry I repeat it, because I think the want of knowledge on this point has vitiated every criticism I have heard against the Bill. I am sorry, though, that Madras

continues to be a sort of milch cow, and I hope the arrangements calling for a more equitable contribution from the Provinces which are contemplated, will be made. I describe Madras as the milch cow of India, and, as I say that it reminds me of that celestial animal which, having supplied milk, butter, cream and cheese to the whole Indian Pantheon, mildly asked when they were going to begin to milk it. That is not the attitude of Madras. It does not supply all these delicacies to the whole of India and wonder when they are going to begin milking. It is milked freely, and I hope something will be done to equalise the burden.

I must say a word about the question of caste. I come from Madras, and it is the Madras Government which has raised the chief difficulties about the caste business. They say that the Brahmins—that means the Brahmins and the upper castes—are an intellectual aristocracy. They are an aristocracy of birth too, but they are even more an aristocracy of intellect. They are fit for government. I am sorry to say the Madras Government—I believe they are totally wrong—has given way to the outcry against the upper castes, which I feel convinced has been organised for the purpose of putting up opposition to these reforms. Suppose the right hon. Gentleman was to say when the Reform Bill came in the other day, "Very well, you may have your reforms, but you must cut out anyone who has been to a university. He must not have a vote, or any man who has been to a public school, or any one who belongs to the intellectual, educated classes, is not to have a vote or is not to have an appointment, and is to be cut out of the whole scheme." That is what is practically proposed by the Madras Government. They want to provide that half the seats which are provided are to be ticketed and docketed and earmarked and set aside for those who do not belong to the upper classes. Call them Brahmins if you like. It is a very good expression for the upper castes, but that is what it really means. That is really a most extraordinary proposition to come from a Government, and it really surprises me that they do not see that it really is the result of an organisation that these so-called lower castes—they are not low castes at all—are being put up on this sham fear of an oligarchy in order to fight my right hon. Friend and his reform proposals. Of course it may be that these high castes, the educated and intellectual men, hang together. Such things have happened in our democracy, which was not born yesterday. It is very extraordinary if something which, you may call an oligarchy if you like, though it is not an oligarchy, shows somewhat similar tendencies. But do not support action which would be very much like laying it down that, out of 700 candidates for Parliament, 350 must be persons of little or no education, lest the others should get the best

of them on all occasions, which they probably would do. It would be very desirable to let a little fresh air into this subject and clear it of all cant. The fact is that, as the Chinaman is chiefly disliked for his industry, the Brahman is envied and feared for his brains. The President of Board of Education referred to education in India. Although my right hon. Friend behind me (Sir H. Craik) represents a university, I am so bold as to think that he was not right in what he said to-night about education and as the President of the Board of Education also represents university, I throw my lot in with him, and declare that our education in India has not been a complete failure, but on the contrary has raised the character of the public service and has conferred many other benefits in other directions. Of course we may not have reached that stage at which we are always told that everybody should aim, when education is run solely for its own sake without any regard to the material advantages resulting from it. Personally, that seems to me to be an unpardonable platitude, I believe that in this country education is chiefly valued for its material advantages, and I do not suppose that many students at universities or public schools go about singing to themselves how charming is the life of a philosopher. The Indians in this respect are not very different from ourselves, and if we apply to them the standards that we apply to ourselves in this respect we shall have a much nearer understanding of them. In regard to the franchise, Lord Southborough's Committee are blamed for making the franchise too rural, and not sufficiently urban. To save time, I may explain that an Indian town in nothing more than a large village.

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Captain Ormsby-Gore : I am one of those who sincerely welcome this Bill, and do not share the views put forward by the hon and gallant member for Newcastle under Lyme (Colonel Wedgwood) when he said there will be no gratitude for this Bill in India. I think he absolutely misinterpreted the feelings of the great majority of his Majesty's loyal subjects in the Indian Empire. Of the men who fought in the War, and have taken part in public life in India, I believe the vast majority welcome this Bill, and are anxious to take this opportunity and realise that the work put in by the Secretary of State and his visiting Commission and later on by Lord Southborough and his Committee has been solid work, well thought out and wisely constructed, and that the scheme that is now brought is a generous scheme put forward by and on behalf of the British people, not as a result of agitation or demand, but as a measure which we feel to be just and right at this juncture in the history of the Empire. The important thing to go forward from this House to-night is that, whatever delegation of power we are now giving for the first time to the people of India, we give with a whole heart, and

I believe that it will be received in a good spirit. That is what I hope will characterise the proceedings in both Houses of Parliament in the Joint Committee. After all, the British Cabinet in August 1917, made a promise to the people of India, which was fully understood, and we must do nothing to whittle down or go back on that promise. It is perfectly futile, in dealing with anybody, to make promises and not to fulfil them, or, if we fulfil them, to fulfil them in a grudging spirit. I hope that this Bill will go on the Statute Book very much in the form in which it is to-day, and I hope that, when it comes to be worked in India, it will secure the co-operation in the gigantic task of increasing the material, moral, and intellectual prosperity and progress of India, of large masses of the people of India who hitherto have not taken any share in its public life. I rejoice that the franchise is wide. It is no use pretending that it is not. It enfranchises 5,500,000 of people who have never exercised the vote before, and that is a big step when you are taking an initial step.

This Bill has two main features. In the first place, it proposes to devolve certain powers now exercised by the central government of India to provincial governments, and at the same time, though it has not been sufficiently mentioned in this Debate, it devolves powers which are exercised by Whitehall on to the government of India. I am certain that that is quite as important as the devolving of powers from the central government of India to the provincial governments. In regard to that devolution from the central government, I hope that Hon. Members will not press for too wide a measure of devolution, because, to my mind, the one thing at which we must aim at securing in India, and which is of supreme importance to India is the conception of India as one country from the Himalayas to the most southern end of that great country. That is the conception which we want to give to India—above all to weld all these races and languages into a single national consciousness. That is the great task before us, a task which it is going to take many years before it is accomplished. And I hope that the devolution from the Central Governments to the Provincial Governments will not create or foment local differences but will insure that the best public men in India, whatever provinces they come from, may seek to serve in the provincial Government of India and in the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State. Those are the classes whom we want to see there. We want to see the best products of public life in India taking up that part of national life which is concerned with government.

The other part of the Bill is the reform scheme, and the House may congratulate Lord Southborough and his colleagues on a well reasoned

practical scheme which does not do what my hon. and gallant Friend the member for Newcastle under Lyme (Colonel Wedgwood) is always longing to do—get hold of a doctrine and run it to its logical conclusion irrespective of realities. We want to get away from doctrinaire applications. One of the causes of what an Hon. Member from the Labour Benches deplored this evening—the poverty of industry in India—has been the maintenance of Free Trade in India against the wishes of its people. Let us see henceforth that the people of India should determine their fiscal system and whether they want to adopt high Protection, moderate Protection, or even Free Trade, which I think would be folly in the case of India, let them adopt it. It is for them to work out their own salvation. We have forced this, to my mind, absolutely indefensible system on the people of India and they should be able to stop it. My sole idea in this Debate is to help forward this Bill, and to make it, if possible, a better Bill and I hope that I shall not be deemed guilty of destructive criticism if I refer to what I consider the weak point of the scheme. The weak point seems to be in the system which I regard as quite inapplicable, of division of subjects. You have at the present moment too large a category of reserved subjects.

The functions of government in India are going to be divided by this Bill into three. There are All Indian subjects which are administered by the Government as agents of the Central Government of India. In the second category are provincial reserved subjects, and in the third are provincial transferred subjects, which are handed over completely to Ministers responsible to the Indian electors. Everything, to my mind, is to be gained by making the middle category, the category of reserved provincial subjects, as small as possible. That is to say, the greater number of subjects, if you feel that you cannot transfer them to the Minister and the popular assembly, should be retained as all India subjects. Very little advantage will be got out of devolution, except devolution of those subjects which you can transfer to popular control, and the main reason why I say that is because I think it absolutely essential that if those local electorates and legislatures and those provincial Ministers are to become really responsible and learn for the first time in the history of India the difficult tasks of Parliamentary government control and responsibility, they should have responsibility in regard to finance. It is only when the action of a Minister touches the Indian taxpayer, only when the Indian Ministers have to bear the full responsibility for any mistakes they may make, that benefit can result. Unless mistakes can be brought home to them by the people of India, and there is no effort, I hope there will be no effort, of British officials or of the British Governor

to protect Ministers from the Legislative Assembly, or from the electors, the benefit will be lost.

The responsibility delegated, wherever it is must be really delegated it must be made absolute, and the Governor must stand aside and see made what he knows to be mistakes in order that the lessons of self-government, and the duties and difficulties of self-government, may be learned from the start. Democracy is the best form of government because, as Aristotle says, it soon proves its own corrective. If a lot of Ministers make a mess of things they are turned out of office very soon. That is why I hope that the category of reserved provincial subjects will be as small as possible. There are several of them in the list, as submitted by Mr. Feetham's Committee, which I feel perfectly confident ought to have been retained as all India subjects, and several which I think might be transferred to popular control forthwith. That category looking at it from an outside point of view as one who has studied these Blue Books, is the weak point of the scheme. The other thing is the position, the personal position, of your eight Governors. Your eight Governors have indeed a task which, as it stands now, only eight supermen can do. That task is going to be gigantic. They will require to be not only administrators, but also politicians of quick sympathy, untiring energy and perpetual tact. It is very hard to combine administrative experience with the political play which a Governor will have to perform in India in these days. I do hope it may be possible to devolve from the Governors to the provinces a vast amount of the administrative work they have to do now to some Deputy-Governor or subordinate who is an administrator—an experienced administrator working under a political chief. Your Governors in future, I maintain, will have to be political chiefs with a first rate administrator always at their hands to carry on the administrative work. There is one other thing in regard to this devolutionary system that I feel I must say something about, although it may perhaps, be anticipating the Report of Lord Crewe's Committee.

I feel it ought to go forth from this Debate to the Joint Committee that we cannot maintain, and ought not to maintain, along with this reform scheme the same meticulous control by the India Office over the central Government of India. Although it has been rather overlooked in the Debate, we are making big changes in the position of the Government of India in its relation to the Legislative Assembly of India. You are giving a big majority of non-official elected members in the Legislative Assembly. I do not care whether you leave to the Viceroy the right to withdraw members and safeguarding procedure of that kind, but once you have set

up that Legislative Assembly with a large elected majority, the Government will have to pay attention to the Assembly. From the first day it meets, and every day it continues to meet, that Assembly will grow in power and authority, just as when you give a Minister an Advisory Committee or Council; if it is there he has to consult it. It is the way a constitutional Government works out. By the fact that you are evolutionising the constitution and character of the Legislative Assembly and the Central Government of India, you are putting that Government into a position in which it is bound in practice to be more and more responsive to that Assembly and to the electors whom that assembly represents. When you are doing that you cannot, unless you are going to put the Government of India into an impossible position, at the same time keep the control that has gone on through the Council of India in Whitehall in the past on every little item of expenditure, and all the personal cases with all the elaborate machinery of the biggest office in Whitehall as regards the building. I am more and more convinced that the Secretary of State, while he remains responsible to Parliament for the peace and order and good Government of India, will have to be prepared forthwith not merely to give fiscal autonomy, but also to delegate very largely the control of the work which is carried on by Whitehall over the Government of India. I want the Government of India to be strong in prestige and increasingly sensitive to the opinion of its Legislative Assemblies. I want to see a united and progressive India and I want to see the experience learned by Indian administrators from the Government in the local Legislatures applied at the earliest possible moment to the central Government of India. That is what I wish.

Let me repeat what I have said about the attitude of this House. I hope the right hon. Gentlemen will not attempt to set up a Select Committee on Indian affairs in this House because I believe it will merely mean that only the Members of that Select Committee will take an interest in Indian affairs. What I want to ensure is this; That his salary is placed on the Estimates so that it can be brought on in Committee of Supply any time, and if possible, two or three times in the Session. We want to secure more interest from the great body of the Members of this House in Indian Imperial affairs and the Secretary of State and the Members to realise the gigantic responsibility of the people of these islands who have acted for the last hundred years as trustees for the people of India, now that we are starting the people on the course towards self-government to take a deeper interest and have a fuller realisation of what India is. That it is a vast Continent, one-sixth of the human race, stretching from the snows of the Himalayas across the Valley of the Jamna and Ganges, rolling its waters down to the burning plains

of Bengal. There, in that vast continent, with its vast aggregation of people, who have become almost by accident of history mixed up in their destinies, with the destinies of the people of this country and this Empire we have a great opportunity of leading them forward and assisting them to build up institutions of freedom such as we know and cherish in this country, and above all, we have at this moment an idealistic movement, and let us give them what they gave our fore-fathers centuries ago, some of our ideals not only of current progress, but in raising level of culture and knowledge of the vast masses of population, so that they may give forth to the world a similar contribution to civilisation such as they gave centuries ago. We know India chiefly for the work of the writers of the Vedas and of its early philosophers. We know her great literature of the past and the magnificent monument of architecture she has given. We have given her good government for a century. I do not believe we have been the oppressors of India as the hon. and gallant member said. We came and found India oppressed by a declining dynasty. We have given and are now giving a singular proof of our good intentions and of the object which followed the linking up of British and Indian civilisation, and my profound hope is, that this marriage of civilisation, this effort of this House today to send on its way with real good will and real godspeed the first measure of self-government to a new Dominion—I say that we look to that Dominion to rise once more to the heights of old and give us signal contributions to philosophy, literature, science, art and progress, in order that humanity may be made the richer throughout the world.

[Then followed Brigadier-General Croft, a Sydenhamite, who denounced the Bill and attacked Mr. Montagu. We omit his speech as it is not of any value.—*Editor.*]

Mr. Neil Maclean: I have listened with some surprise to the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Croft)—especially to that portion in which he referred to this Bill as a revolutionary measure. In the opinion of those who sit on these benches it is by no means revolutionary, it is not even an advanced measure; it is not even Liberalism gone mad, it is not even Liberalism at all.

When the hon. and gallant Gentleman tries to draw an analogy between India as an illiterate country and Russia as an illiterate country, pointing out that the disturbances in Russia exist because of her illiterate population having political rights and that the same thing is likely to happen in India because of the illiteracy of the people there, he is going off at a tangent. There were corruption, murder and atrocities in Russia before the present Government took charge, and the people were just as illiterate then; therefore, it is not the illiterate politicians who have control of Russia who are responsible, as the hon. and gallant Gentleman assumes, for those murders and atrocities, any more than it was the illiteracy of the people under the Czarist regime that was responsible for the atrocities committed then. There is something deeper, which I am afraid the hon. and gallant Gentleman has not yet realised, because, I will not say of his inability to understand, but because, he does not study the conditions that led to these matters he has been quoting to the House to-night.

I agree with him in one respect, that is with regard to the education of the people of India. I feel with him that the education of the people of India, as of the people everywhere, is the one thing that is going to lift them out of the rut into which so many of the people have fallen. I would say to the hon. and gallant Gentleman that the illiteracy of the people of India is not their fault. It is the fault of Hon. Members sitting in this House, of those who have been in the Government of this country for ages past, who have denied education to the people of India and consequently have left them in the illiterate state they are in to-day. If we examine the figures we find how great is the responsibility that rests upon us and how we have failed to meet that responsibility in the past. We find that in 1882 the population of British India was 208,000,000 yet only £240,000 was spent on education, a sum equivalent to one farthing per head of the population. In 1910, almost a generation later, with the population increased to 237,000,000, we were spending only £630,000 on education, equivalent to three farthings per head of the population. It is rather significant that in 1917 the right hon. Gentlemen the President of the

Board of Education, suggested that the expenditure on education in this country should be increased by £3,829,000, while in the same year the sum proposed to be spent in the whole of India among all these hundreds of millions of people was £3, 623,000, or less than was proposed as the increase for British schools. I studied political affairs for some time before I came into this House. The hon. and gallant Gentleman did not protest then against lack of education and illiteracy, and it is no use protesting now that because Indians are illiterate we ought not to give them this Bill. The vocation which the hon. and gallant Gentleman has so gallantly followed takes away a considerable amount more money for its upkeep and maintenance than education. The increase of education amounted to £3,830,000, while the increase for military purpose amounted to £8,600,000. One is almost justified in assuming that instead of being a democratic country ruled by people who believe in democratic institutions, this is really a militarist country forcing India at the point of the bayonet.* It was said in reply to a question in the Bombay Legislative Council in December, 1917, that there were in Bombay 21,356 villages with populations over 250, and 17,493 of them had no schools whatever. This left 8,763 villages which were supplied with schools. The whole of Bombay came under British rule in 1818, and some hon. Members think we are giving too much in these hundred years to India in the shape of this Bill. In Baroda, where they are not under the same control as in Bombay, we are told the enlightened ruler in 1893 began experimenting in the matter of introducing compulsory free education in ten villages. In 1906 primary education was made free and compulsory. In 1909 only 8.6 per cent of the total population was at school, as against 1.9 per cent in British India. At the end of 1914-15, each town or village had at least one institution and 100 per cent of the boys and 81.6 per cent, of the girls of school-going age are under instruction. In 1909 Baroda was spending 6d. per head of the population on education, whereas in other parts of India we were only spending something like ½d.

I have a fault to find with the Bill in so far as it is not going to give to responsible Ministers in the Provincial Legislatures control over the financial aspects of education. So far as the allocation of the funds is concerned, all other things are to be of a secondary nature to what the Governor of the Council considers to be a primary or first charge upon the revenue. I am not altogether in favour of the Bill. I mean in its details. I welcome the measure as a skeleton, but I hope flesh and blood is going to clothe the bones of the skeleton before the Bill leaves the Committee. I do not see that you are going to give Indians a very large measure of Self-Government where you allow a Governor to have the power

of vetoing any measure which he considers or which is considered under rules to be something which ought not to be passed. That, to my mind, savours too much of autocracy. I do not consider that a Council in which the majority are to be nominated is really a democratic body. This Bill is packed from the first Clause to the last with what in this country the electors, and even the most conservative statesmen, would consider to be undemocratic proposals for the people of this country. With regard to the Grand Committees, if any measure comes before any of the Provincial Councils, the Governor may pass it on to a Grand Committee, which has powers to pass or reject it also without the assent of the council. In another place we are told that the Governor himself has power to put certain questions or recommend certain measure which shall be discussed by those whom they affect in the local legislature. So far as they affect the government of the people in the provinces and do not affect the unity of India they ought to be taken out of the hands of a Governor or of a Grand Committee, and placed under the control of the elected representatives of the people of that particular place. That is the same with regard to finance. We have in this country a Minister who can state the amount of money he requires for the particular Department, and who knows that when that money has been raised by taxation it is going to be spent by his Department for the purposes for which his department stands. But in these proposals we find that instead of department being allowed to budget for its needs the tax comes into a central fund, and the Department receives an allocation according to the Governor's idea. If something arises which the Governor believes is imperilling the peacefulness of the particular province in question, he can take a proper measure of financial support out of that common fund, and take a large sum of money from the educational or any of the other Departments which should be drawing that money.

Therefore I see in the measure as it stands faults which I hope will be removed in the Grand Committee so that there will not be autocratic power left to one or two individuals who are Governors or to Committees which may be nominated by these Governors. The whole future of India is wrapped up in the amount of education you can give to the people of India. Let us give the people of India a form of education that will enable them to be educated along lines of their own philosophy, their own art, with all their national ideals kept constantly before them. Give them that power and I am confident that if it permits all those possibilities for the Indian people you will have steadily growing up one of the strongest supports that can be given you by a people who will stand by you in any time of peril that may be before you.

Mr. Montagu's Reply.

Mr. Montagu :—By leave of the House, I may say a word in reply to my hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Wedgwood). Assuming that this House, as nearly as every speaker has admitted has accepted the announcement of 20th August, 1917—never mind if it was obtained in a way to which my hon. and gallant Friend objects—then every single point that has been raised in the Debate, to the whole of which I have listened, is a Committee point. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Melton (Colonel Yate) condemned in strong terms the plan which I prefer, which I think essential just as he prefers that of the local Governments. That is a question which can only be settled by discussion before the Joint Committee and I give the assurance that this Committee will not only be perfectly free, but I will do my best to supply all evidence that they can possibly want. There are deputations of Indians and Europeans in this country who have arrived specially for this purpose. Sir James Meston, the financial Member of the Government of India, is on his way home to express the views of the Government of India. We shall also have in this country very shortly Sir Michael O'Dwyer and others who will present the views of some of the local Governments who differ from us. We cannot really get on with these matters until this kind of evidence is before the Joint Committee. I never meant to question the great Indian experience of many members of the Indo British Association. They include among their number a man who stands out as the most eminent of Indian Civil servants of his time, Sir John Hewett. What I did say was that by their interpretation of the pronouncement of the 20th August, 1917, in my opinion they had done great harm by putting before the world a policy which do not accord with that announcement. I do venture to say that I have as much right to rely for advice upon those devoted Civil servants still in the service who have helped the Governors up to this time as I have to rely on those whose chief claim is that they have ceased to be Civil servants. Lord Morley is reported to have said

“It cannot be easy for any man to wake up to new times after a generation of good, honest labour in old times.”

This is really what seems to me to be the matter with those to whom I have referred. It is not their experience exactly; it is that they have a natural prejudice for the institution under which they have won their spurs and the gratitude of the whole Empire. As to what my hon. Friend (Mr N. Maclean) said, he also raises Committee points. There is the question of transferred and reserved subjects. That is a Committee point.

I must add a few final words in replying to other criticisms. I can assure hon. Members—I am surprised that the hon. and

gallant Member for Melton fathered the ridiculous story—that there has not been any attempt to prevent the presentation to this House at the earliest possible moment of papers and documents. The dates on which these papers appeared were of vital interest because I wanted to get this Bill forward and I was pledged not to proceed until I had got the papers. As soon as I could get the papers printed I placed them before the House.

Again, I beseech the House to let us have the Second ¹Reading. I should not, however, be doing my duty if I sat down without a word in reply to the hon. Member for Bishop Auckland (Mr. Spoor) who is a new comer in Debates on Indian affairs. In the discharge of my duty as the representative of the Government of India and of those public-spirited Englishmen who are working to-day in India, I must enter the strongest possible protest against his description of the past and the present in India. We are not exchanging a regime of tyranny at all. We have given to India the best government for one hundred years past and more, which devoted Englishmen in the most selfless task in the history of the world could give to that country. We are engaged now merely on the higher task of substituting for good government self-government. That does not mean any stigma on Government methods in the past in India.

Motion for Adjournment

Lieut.-Colonel Meysey-Thompson I think we ought to have an opportunity of expressing our views on this subject, and I do not know if I should be in order in moving the Adjournment. That is a matter of vast importance to India and the British Empire, and I do not think it ought to be put without the very fullest discussion by all those who have any claim to any knowledge of the Government of India and its institutions. I will be guided by the right hon. Gentleman as to whether he prefers that I should say tonight what I have to say or to give another day for discussion. [HON. MEMBERS "Divide" and "Agreed"]

Mr. Montagu I am very grateful to the hon. and gallant Member. I am quite sure we shall get on better by proceeding with the Second Reading to-night, and, therefore, would beg of him to say what he wants to say on the Second Reading now, and let us have a decision on the Second Reading. I am very sorry that when I got up I did not notice the hon. and gallant Member rising. I waited before I did so and I think he is very nearly the last hon. Member who wants to speak.

Lieut.-Colonel Archer-Shee May I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to let us have the Adjournment to night, because this is a matter which concerns not only a new Constitution but really an Empire of 300,000,000 of people? There has never been any question of this sort.

Mr. Deputy-speaker (Mr. Whitley) The hon. and gallant Member for Handsworth is in possession.

Lieut.-Colonel Archer-Shee On the point of Order. May I ask the right hon. Gentleman to move the Adjournment?

Mr. Deputy-speaker Do I understand the hon. and gallant Member for Handsworth to give way?

Lieut.-Colonel Meysey-Thompson I beg to move "That the Debate be now adjourned."

Lieut.-Colonel Archer-Shee I beg to second the Motion.

We have had only one day for the Second Reading of this Bill, which is of the highest importance not only to India but to the whole British Empire. The Bill was only delivered within the last few days, and only yesterday did we receive the India Act with the

Amendments proposed by this Bill. The House is going on Recess to-morrow, and a great many Members have left, while the House in the afternoon has been three quarters empty. I think it would be an absolute scandal to have a measure of this kind allowed to go through without further discussion on the Second Reading, and surely the occasion demands that we should give it proper consideration and that Members should have proper time to study the enormous number of publications put before us as to this most important matter. Here is a Bill which affects the lives and the future of the whole of the British Empire, and we ought to have at least two days on the Second Reading.

Mr. Fisher : May I make an appeal to the two hon. Members who are anxious to adjourn? I quite appreciate the force of all they have said. It is a most important measure, the importance of which well deserves an extended Debate but on the other hand there is one consideration, which, perhaps, has not occurred to them. This Debate and our procedure are being watched by the whole of India, and I think it is possible that if the Adjournment were accepted and the consideration of the Second Reading were held over until after the Whitsunide Recess, an erroneous interpretation might be placed upon the action of this House. I think it might be thought that this measure was being obstructed in the House of Commons. We know that that is not so. We know that that is not the intention of the hon. Members, but I think that that construction might be placed upon the Adjournment if it were carried, and in these circumstances I do appeal to the two hon. Members to reconsider their Motion.

Lieut.-Colonel Meysey-Thompson With all due respect to the right hon. Gentleman, I do not think, that such a construction would be put upon the adjournment. I think, on the contrary, that the whole of India would take it as a compliment if an additional day was given to the discussion. I suggest to the Secretary of State that, as certain gentlemen are coming home from India who are competent to advise on this, it would be all the better if the discussion were postponed over the Recess, so that we might get further information and study further this great question, which is of such vital importance to the Empire.

Mr. Tyson Wilson : May I join in the appeal which has been made to the two hon. Gentlemen to withdraw the Motion for the Adjournment? Almost every view and opinion held by Members of this House has been expressed, and I feel quite satisfied, so far as Labour in this country are concerned, that they would raise no objection to the Second Reading being taken to-night. I believe that if the Bill is postponed till after Whitsunide it will have an extremely bad effect in India. I am almost certain of it. We are all getting letters appealing to this House to do something to

improve the Government of India. I am quite satisfied, in my own mind, that anyone who objects to the Second Reading of the Bill being taken to-night will be doing a bad service not only to this country but to India as well, and we wish to do what we can under the special circumstances, to try to appease people.

Mr. G. Thorne : I rose a moment ago to join in the same appeal that was made by my right hon. Friend opposite. The objection raised by my hon. Friend below the gangway that many Members are absent does not seem to me to be a good reason for the Adjournment. Those Members might have been present, surely just as much as those of us who are here, and, as has already been stated there has been a full evening's Debate, and everything that has been urged as to the importance of the measure seems to me to indicate the absolute and imperative necessity of carrying the Second Reading now, so that it may go immediately to this Joint Committee, and have that full and detailed consideration that is so earnestly required. I, therefore, urge my hon. Friends not to press the Motion.

Lieut. Colonel Archer-Shee : May I say one word in explanation? Even if we pass the Second Reading to-night, the measure will not go to the Committee until after the Recess, and surely no time will be lost by giving another day after the Recess.

Captain Ormsby Gore . I do appeal to my two hon. Friends not to persist in this Motion, it really will have the worst possible effect. Here is a Bill to give effect to a promise made nearly two years ago. This Report has been published for months, and we have had people working on it for months. The Eleven o' clock Rule has been suspended and if any hon. Member wants to say anything, let him say it now, and let us get the Second Reading, and show India that we are in earnest about this. The right hon. Gentleman has been all too patient in waiting for the publication of documents with which we have been inundated. This House and country want to go ahead, and do not want any obstruction.

Brigadier-General Croft . May I point out that earlier in the evening some hon. Members felt strongly about this as they could not possibly be here this evening, having long ago made arrangements to go away—[Hon. Members: "Holidays!"]—as is usually the case before an Adjournment, and no important measure is usually taken the day before an Adjournment. They drew up a signed request to the Leader of the House that he should give a second day, and it was only because he could not be found anywhere that the paper was not placed in his hands.

Colonel Greton : It is really the fault of the Government that they are driven into this corner. They always treat Indian questions as if they should come forward at the last moment before the Ad-

jourment. It has been the practice for years to endeavour to keep Indian questions out of sight of this House by putting them down, at the eleventh hour or before some Adjournment. I suggest that there is nothing to be lost if this Bill is thoroughly thrashed out before the Second Reading is given. The Government have nothing to lose by it, and if the measure is right they are going to get rid of opposition which might appear in a drastic form in the Committee stage. I must confess I am not impressed by the right hon. Gentleman's argument, which is used by any Minister who wants to get the Second Reading of a Bill. It is part of the trade. It may seem to the Minister, though not to those who take an independent view, that the matter is one of such vital importance that it ought not to be left to the Committee to decide. In spite of the enthusiasm of some hon. Members to get this Bill to-night, I hope the House will not be persuaded to hurry over the measure. We might easily lose the Empire by making a mistake now. The matter is one that requires further and thorough discussion.

Mr Sturrock I desire to repudiate with all the strength at my command the arguments put forward by hon. Gentlemen opposite in defence of the slackers. Every Member of the House knew perfectly well that this Bill was coming up for decision, and those who have gone off this afternoon to the country and have extended their holiday beyond what they were legitimately entitled to do, went away with an easy conscience, quite convinced that the Bill would get a Second Reading. I know something of India, though I have not taken part in the Debate, and I protest that this great measure has an interest, not only for this country, but that the decision of the House is awaited in India, and indeed all over the Empire, with the utmost anxiety. That that decision should be held back for weeks, to please certain obstructionists who do not like the measure, and who are simply out to delay its progress, I for one protest against.

Mr. Stewart Only one hon. Member rose to continue the discussion, and I think if the Secretary of State had seen him, he would have given way. But I do think we have a right to protest against the Government of India Bill being put before the House in this way. We have had two days academic discussion on Home Rule and federation which might have been deferred to the adjournment. I think the Government are very much to blame, but, under the circumstances, I think my hon. Friends would be well advised to let the Government have the Second Reading.

Motion, by leave withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Lieut-Colonel Meysey-Thompson—I am rather surprised at the right hon. Gentleman for I should have thought, with several

speakers on hand, that at this late hour he would have agreed to postpone further discussion. My right hon. Friend appeals to me saying it might be misunderstood in India, but I do not agree under those circumstances I think I ought to give way, and I will content myself with making one or two remarks. I am sorry to see that the hon. Member for Newcastle under Tyne (Colonel Wedgwood) is not in his place, because he made a statement in which he said that in New Zealand the Maoris had been badly treated. I think that is an absolute misrepresentation of the facts for I happen to know that the Maoris have been treated better than any other Colony with which we have to deal.

We protected them because we found that certain profiteers were buying up their land and stocks, and we gave them representation in both Houses of Parliament. We brought in legislation dealing with this subject, and they are now actually increasing instead of diminishing, therefore on this point the hon. and gallant Member's statement is absolutely reckless, as his statements generally are. The hon. Member who spoke from the Front Bench stated that England is responsible for the want of education in India, and that therefore we cannot blame the Indians for a want of education, and at the same time refuse to give them a large measure of representation. We have been doing our best to educate the Indians, and we very wisely began by educating those who were most fit to receive it. That is the correct method, and I think it should be done by degrees. I do not think the hon. Member opposite ought to say that we are responsible for the want of education in India when we have done our best to give education there. With regard to the charge that our policy in India is one of militarism, I think India is one of the least militarist countries in the world.

Mr. N Maclean : I did not say they were militarist, but what I said was that the amount of money spent for maintaining the troops in India, as compared with the small increase we were spending on education, would lead one to assume that they were a militarist nation.

Lieu-Colonel Meysey-Thomson : I accept that explanation and am sorry that I misunderstood the Hon. Member. Of course we are all anxious for the best government of India, and the whole question is how are we to get it. That is the only point on which we differ. We are as keen on this side for the best government of India as the right hon. Gentleman himself is. I understood the right hon. Gentleman to sum up his point of view and that of the Government by the statement that we were more responsible for giving progressive government than good government. There I join issue with him. The most important thing is to get good

government and that applies to India as to everywhere else. I do not care a bit as to the form of the government in comparison with efficient government. A great deal has been said with regard to the Civil Service. I look upon our Civil Service in India as the finest service in the world. I know of no body of men more self sacrificing, more conscientious, or more hard-working than the Civil servants in India. I have never heard from anyone, either English or Indian, who was a responsible person—of course, there are irresponsible statements made by people from time to time—who did not agree as to the absolute integrity of the Indian Civil servants as a whole, and their duties well. With regard to the question of devolution, I should like to see a large measure of devolution from the Central Government in India to the Governments of the Provinces, but not quite on the lines suggested by the right hon. Gentleman. I think the Department Commissioners and the local Governments have been hampered in the execution of their office by the Central Government at Calcutta, and also by the Secretary of State at home, and I do think that those who were there and knew the requirements of the Province should be given as free a hand as possible. I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that he is advocating a very different system, and that was to have a very large representation of the people in those Provinces, and to devolve power from the Central Government in India to the Councils. We must move cautiously, and be sure that we are not making a grave mistake which may have most serious consequences to the Government of India and the safety of the Empire.

We wish to progress and advance as much as any one here, but we do say this be sure of each step before you make an irrevocable move. My right hon. Friend has referred to the pledges given in August, 1917, but let me point out that they were his own pledges. Before he went to India he announced that he was going out to inquire into the condition of things there and to formulate a policy. He also made a statement as to what he wished to do, and therefore his position was prejudiced before he arrived. He led the people of India to think that they were going to get certain reforms if they asked for them, and the consequence was that they did demand them. The danger is in taking any step which will disappoint the people. But there is another and a bigger danger, and that is to lead the people to suppose that they are getting these reforms because of their agitation. They must not be allowed to feel that. It is somewhat analogous to the position of a coach drawn by high spirited horses. If you give the animals their own way they may smash up the coach and kill all the passengers, and if you give way with regard to the 350,000,000 inhabitants of India you may bring about consequences which cannot be foreseen. A great deal too little is said in criticism of the

Indian Government with regard to the benefits we have conferred upon that country. We hear a great deal about the shortcomings of the Government; but cast your minds back for a short period and see what we have done. Thuggee and Dacoity, plague and famine, were rampant in the land. Millions of people perished therefrom until the British Raj came and made provision against famine each time it was threatened. We thereby prevented famine and all its horrors, and we also put down Dacoity and Thuggee, thus giving security to life, a security which India had never, in all the thousands of years of her history, enjoyed. She was never so prosperous as at the present time. Let us, therefore, pay a just tribute to the work which the British have done in India, and not waste so much time in criticising the details of government. With regard to this Bill it is admitted that we are taking a leap in the dark. We have been warned by the right hon. Gentleman of various results which might ensue and which might be more or less disastrous. I do therefore suggest we should exercise great caution in making this advance and whatever we do let us not sacrifice the cause of good government and of progress. This is too serious a question to be played with. If we allow disorder to rule in India the consequences may be terrible not only to the white people, but to natives themselves. It may be the beginning of the break-up of the British Empire which will be bad for Indians, for us, and for the Empire as a whole. I should like to have had a further day for the discussion of the Bill, because all these points require very careful consideration. I speak absolutely without any prejudice of party or of race, but in what I believe, from my knowledge of India, to be the interests of Indians themselves and of the British Raj.

Question put, and agreed to

Bill accordingly read a second time

Resolved,

That it is expedient that the Bill be committed to Joint Select Committee of Lords and Commons — (Mr Montagu.)

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.

The Government of India Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed.—"That the Government of India Bill be committed to Select Committee of Seven members to join with a Committee to be appointed by the Lords."
—(Lord E. Talbot).

Colonel Yate :—I rise to object on behalf of the Provincial Governors of India. When the Bill was first brought in by the Secretary of State for India, I put a question to the Prime Minister as to whether it would be within the powers of the joint Committee of both House on the Government of India Bill, after the Second Reading, to introduce an Amendment to give effect to the alternative proposals submitted by the majority of the Provincial Governors in India in opposition to the system of diarchy embodied in this Bill. The answer was, "It is certainly our intention that this should be within the competence of the Committee," and the Bill has been drafted with this in view. As the House will remember, the majority of the Provincial Governors have objected to the principle of diarchy advanced by the Secretary of State and have made an alternative proposal, and I feared that that alternative proposal might not get a proper hearing before the Committee. The Leader of the house, however, reassured me, and I mentioned this when the Bill came before the House on the next day. I stated that I was satisfied with assurance given me by the Leader of the House, and in the Debate on the Second Reading of the Government of India Bill would now go forward as quickly as possible, that we all wished to see this Bill brought forward on the basis of the announcement of August, 1919. I emphasised further to the Leader of the House the great importance of the Joint Committee had to thresh out the Bill. I pointed out that the Committee had a most serious enquiry to undertake. I said

"We do not know what their report may be, It may throw back India into chaos"

The Governors of Provinces in India are the men who have the real experience of what India requires. The Secretary of State as we know, has only the experience of two cold-weather tours in India. I was a Governor of a Province in India myself, and I am the only one here who is able to speak a word on their behalf. I openly supported their view in opposition to the system of diarchy introduced by the Secretary of State, a system never heard of in the world before, and which almost all these experienced men have decided against. I would ask the Leader to consider what chance these Governors of Province have, of getting their opinions adequately dealt with in the Committee that it is now proposed to set up?

In the Debate on the Second reading of the Bill, with the excep-

tion of the Secretary of State and one other Minister, I think there were ten hon. Members who spoke. I myself, I think, was the only one who spoke in favour of the alternative system proposed by the Provincial Governors. One other or two others committed themselves in no way. The remaining speakers committed themselves definitely in favour of the proposal of the Secretary of State. Of the seven to be appointed to this Committee, six are professed supporters of the Secretary of State in this principle of diarchy. They cannot give an impartial opinion on this matter because they have already stated that they are in favour of the Bill's proposal. I and possibly one other Member spoke against the proposal but I and that other Member have been deliberately left out of this Committee, and the Secretary of State has selected six men who are absolutely pledged to support him in it. Then, finally, he has gone and put himself on it. I wish to bring to the notice of the Prime Minister that, so far as I am aware, it is an unheard of thing for a Secretary of State to appoint himself to a Committee of his own Secretaries of State and their assistants have been present and watched their Bills, but they were not members of Committees and they did not vote. Here is a Committee which is to be, in fact, a Judicial Committee, deciding on evidence that it is to come before it, and the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State is not only the advocate, but the judge and jury and all. Can any one of the Provincial Governors in India consider that the proposal he supports has had a fair hearing, when he has been appointed to go before a Committee of, which out of seven members are pledged to vote against him? It is an impossibility. So far as impartiality is concerned, the nomination of this Committee is a mere farce. We have heard of packed juries. We have here a packed advocate, a packed judge, and a packed jury as well. I therefore, lodge my protest against it, and ask the Prime Minister definitely to reconsider this matter, and to appoint a Committee of men who are not pledged to vote one way or the other but who will hear the evidence in an impartial spirit and will give their judgement accordingly.

The Secretary of State for India—(Mr Montagu). I think I can lay before my hon. and gallant Friend a certain number of arguments which may at least modify his feelings. This Committee was not nominated by me; it is brought before the House on the authority of my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House. Our desire was to get a Committee as representative as possible of the House on this particular subject. It is quite true that the majority of the representatives from the House of Commons expressed a preference for one sort of scheme in the Debate, and just because the Debate was an indication of the feeling of the house so it seemed that those responsible for the nomination of the Committee found that in order to represent the House they had to

appoint a majority of the same colour as those who expressed their views on Second Reading. The Committee represents all parties. The Leaders of the parties in Opposition nominated or suggested their own members. That accounts for two out of the seven members. My hon. and learned Friend expressed a strong preference on Second Reading against diarchy. He was chosen because he had always taken a great interest in Indian affairs in this House. That accounts for three members. As to the others, they all took a part in the Debate. They all have studied the subject. Two of them have spent long years in India, and one is the only representative of Civil Service of India in this House. Therefore they seemed to those responsible to be entitled to nomination. In regard to myself, I can assure my hon. and Gallant Friend that he is quite wrong. In every precedent that I can find, with one exception, on a Bill going to a Select Committee, the Member of the House in charge of that Bill was a member of the Committee.

Since the Bill was read a second time I have received suggestions for amendments in it. Before the Committee I want to move Amendments to the Bill, and it seems to me that I could be of great service if the House will agree to my nomination, for the simple reason that I can be a link between the Committee and the Government of India. I can see that their views are considered. I am the representative by my office not only of the Government of India, but of the local Governments. Nobody is pledged to any system. I have stated over and over again that I am guided by a whole hearted desire to get a Bill which will be sound. I have stated that I do not think we ought to do less than is proposed in the Bill, but any alternative method will be equally welcome, both to the Viceroy and myself, if it carries out the pledges which I think we have made in the past. The hon. Member asks, "What about the local Governors, where are they?" I would remind him that the seven gentlemen nominated from this House are to sit with seven representatives of the House of Lords. I do not know whether the hon. and Gallant Gentleman has noticed their names. We have Lord Selborne, Lord Midleton, Lord Sydenham, and Lord Crewe, all of them, I think, with experience of Indian affairs, and certainly not *parti pris* in favour of this Bill. In the proposed Joint Committee we have submitted to the House names which are not unrepresentative of the two Houses and of the feeling in the two Houses. There are two Liberals, one Labour representative, and five Conservatives. Looked at from that point of view it cannot be said that any influence that I have had to bring to bear has been weighted in favour of my own party. Looked at from the standpoint of the views of the House on Indian affairs I do not think it can be said that they

are not represented proportionately. May I add for my hon. and Gallant Friend's satisfaction that there is in this country to day probably the most eminent of all the five local Governors, Sir Michael O'Dwyer? He has come home opportunely at the conclusion of his term of office, and I can assure my hon. and Gallant Friend that as the local Governments are not represented in either House except by the Secretary of State, and as the local Governments are not represented on the Committee any more than the Government of India, care will be taken that their views are represented before the Committee. The Government of India is not in agreement. It has suggested modifications which with great respect I and my advisers have received. The local Governments, if they had been asked, could not have suggested a better witness from their point of view than Sir Michael O'Dwyer.

Therefore there is no possible chance that the Committee, which I can assure my hon. and Gallant Friend has been chosen with care, will not represent all points of view from both Houses, and there will be every opportunity of receiving the views of all parties.

Question put :—

"That the Government of India Bill be committed to a Select Committee of Seven Members to join with a Committee to be appointed by the Lords."

The House divided : Ayes, 336, Noes, 23.

International Labour Conference

WASHINGTON, U.S.A.

At the plenary session of the Peace Conference held on the 11th April 1919 under the Presidency of M. Clemenceau (French Premier) and attended by the Peace Delegates including Lord (then Sir S. P.) Sinha and Maharaja Bikaner, it was settled that an International Labour Organisation was to be introduced into the Scheme of the Peace Treaty and of the League of Nations, and that the first International Labour Conference was to be held at Washington (U.S.A.) on the invitation of President Wilson of America (for further account see the Indian Annual Register, 1919, Sec. *India Abroad*, p. 100). It was also settled that the Conference would consist of 4 members for each State, 2 being Government representatives, 1 for workers and 1 for the employers. Messrs. Joshi and B. P. Wadia were the representatives of the People.

Messrs. Kershaw and A. C. Chatterji represented the Government of India. Mrs. Athavale represented Indian Women at the non official women's International conference, she was working on behalf of Prof. Karve's women's University in India. Mr. W. B. Wilson, secretary of U. S. A. Department of Labour, was elected chairman.

Various questions concerning Labour were discussed in successive sittings. On the 19th November, 1919, the conference met at 2-45 P.M. to consider the report of the committee for the Employment of Children.

Sir Malcolm Debgigue (Great Britain), chairman of the committee in presenting the report and moving for its adoption said that the committees unanimously recommended that 14 years be fixed as the minimum age for the employment of child Labour in industrial matters as distinguished from agriculture or commerce. He then said :—

I now come to two matters which caused the commission considerable difficulty and on which it was not able to reach unanimous conclusion.

The first of these was the question of allowing some exception through the transitional period in the case of those countries where the age of leaving school under the educational law has not been fixed at as high an age as 14. It was represented to the

commission that in those countries the immediate adoption of the proposal of the commission would leave a gap between the time at which the children would leave school and the time at which they would be admitted to employment, which otherwise could not be filled, and that it would not be possible, within the limit of time allowed by the draft convention, to make the educational arrangements which would be necessary to fill that gap by a continuance of the child's education. The commission recognised that this was a serious difficulty, but they came to the conclusion, by a majority vote, that the date fixed in the draft convention—that is, the 1st of January, 1922, two years from the present time, should stand. The Conference will no doubt hear from the representatives of those countries to whom the question is of especial importance their view of this aspect of the question.

The other matter was the question of the modifications, if any, to be allowed in the case of those countries with special climatic or industrial conditions. A sub committee was appointed by the commission to consider the matter, and that sub committee made a thorough examination of the question, and we have the advantage of hearing the views of the representatives—Government employers, and workers' delegates of the countries affected.

The countries fell into two groups, on one side was Japan, on the other side were the other oriental countries, India, China, Persia, and Siam. The Japanese Government delegate submitted proposals on behalf of his Government and after considerable discussion they were accepted with a certain qualification which the Japanese delegate was able to accept. I desire on behalf of the commission to recognise the spirit in which we were met by the Japanese delegates.

As regards the other group, the commission was placed at a considerable difficulty by not having any materials before it on which to come to a satisfactory conclusion. So far as India was concerned—and India, of course, was the principal country in this group—the Indian delegates were in the unfortunate position that the proposal of the organising committee had not reached India at the time when the delegation started on their way. It was represented to the commission that the Indian Government had the matter under consideration at the present moment in connection with the question of the introduction of an educational system and that decision had not yet been arrived at.

Two proposals were submitted to the commission. One proposal was that the commission should fix a limit of age for adoption by this group of countries, if they saw fit, and that limit of age was fixed, for certain specified industries, at 12. The other suggestion

was that, without coming to a decision one way or the other, they should recommend that the matter be brought up again at next year's conference, by which time it is hoped that the proposals of the Indian Government would have been received and that then a definite convention supplementary to the present convention might be framed.

"The commission had to decide between these two proposals, to make up their minds under which of the two best results would be secured. On the one hand, the adoption by the commission of a definite limit of age which might not be approved by the Indian Government would leave the question exactly where it is at present, and no advance would have been achieved. On the other hand, the proposal to defer the matter for one year in order that the proposals of the Indian Government might be received would, at any rate, secure a further consideration of the matter, and the possibility—the probability, perhaps—that a supplemental convention could be secured. The commission would, I think, have preferred the former course, if they had felt that a definite result would have been obtained by it. But after hearing the representatives of India, the government delegates and the employers' delegates, they felt that the weight, the balance of advantage lay with the second proposals, and it was finally carried by a considerable majority; that is, the proposal which is embodied in the commission report. I regret that on these two points, question of the period of transition and the question of the application of the convention to this group of tropical countries, the commission was not able to arrive at an unanimous decision, but we hope that it will not prevent the adoption of the general proposals which they have put forward.

"It is not necessary, I think, to say much about the remaining provisions of the draft convention. A new text was adopted by the committee in place of article 2, with the consent of the representatives of the French Government, at whose instance the provision was originally inserted and if the conference desire further explanation of the provision no doubt the delegates from France will be happy to give it.

"If these proposals which are submitted by the commission are adopted they will, under the terms of the standing orders, be referred to the drafting committee and will be brought up in the shape of a definite convention for decision by the Conference at a later stage.

In moving that this course be adopted, that the proposals be approved and referred to the drafting committee, I desire again to emphasise the spirit of conciliation which animated the com-

mission throughout its proceedings. I can testify that there was a single-minded desire to achieve definite results, and we venture to ask for the favourable consideration of the Conference, and we shall be proud if the Conference, by adopting our proposals, have allowed us to lay the first stone in the edifice of labour legislation which the International Labour Conferences are going to erect. (Applause.)

The President.—Miss Margaret Bondfield of the British delegation.

Miss Margaret Bondfield (Great Britain) —On behalf of the British workers' delegation, I beg to move the amendment printed on the order of the day circulated this morning, to add to the convention a new clause, No 5.

"In the application of the convention to India the following modifications may take effect —

"Children under 12 should not be employed. —(a) In factories working with power employing more than 10 persons, (b) in mines and quarries; (c) on railroads, (d) on docks

"The reason why we move this amendment is because we feel that there has not been presented to us any reasons which seem sufficient to omit India entirely from the provision of this convention. We understand that the main argument which has been very forcibly and ably put by the Indian Government representatives is that the Indian Government had no time to consider this matter. That may be an explanation entirely justified by the delegates who are here, but personally I think it is no excuse for the Indian Government. This question of child-labour has been discussed by the whole world, and we do not think the Indian Government should be so detached from world discussions as not to be prepared with recommendations on this subject in 1919.

"With regard to one of the other main objections, namely, the nature of the Indian industries, we have carefully drafted this amendment to exclude all those industries that could be considered purely native industries or that are small industries. It is specially drafted only to refer to those industries which are being modelled on western ideas, which are to some extent under control of factory legislation, and which are—I think, probably will be right in saying—mainly supervised by western people, by Englishmen, by Scotchmen, by Irishmen, by Welshmen, and so on and so forth. Our main point is that in textiles, in engineering, in all those great industries where a factory act has already been applied, it should be quite possible to have the western safeguards; and it is that point that we particularly wish to impress upon the Indian Government.

"I would repeat, that where western methods of industry are being introduced into an eastern country they should be simultaneously accompanied by western safeguards.

"With regard to the question of mines, railways, and docks, the nature of the employment, it seems to us, will be a sufficient reason for safeguarding the employment of children on those properties. Another strong reason used is that there would be so much objection on the part of Indian parents if anything is done to prevent the employment of children. We have all had to fight that in our respective countries. I perfectly well remember being mobbed in my own country when I advocated the abolition of half-time in the textile mills. The parents, they said, would never consent to being deprived of the right to work their children whenever they chose. We don't think that is a purely eastern argument ; we have met it in the West. We have conquered it in the West by educational methods and organisation and we do not admit that as a sound and valid reason. I recognise there is a very serious objection, and that is the fact that in India the educational machinery is so entirely defective. That, of course, is another grave responsibility of the Indian Government, but I venture to suggest that one of the quickest way of securing the speeding up of educational provision in India is by the prohibition of child labour. And it is not sufficient to let the children be taken underground out of sight or into the factories, out of sight, in order to dispose of that problem.

"We want very earnestly to urge that one of the quickest ways of expediting the provision of educational facilities is by the prohibition of child labour below the age of 12. I don't want to lengthen out the argument. We submit this amendment in all seriousness. We recognise that, just as the main convention would have to be considered by the Indian Government and would probably be turned down, it is quite possible that the Indian Government will consider this if you embody it in the convention and will turn it down. There is nothing to prevent them from turning it down. There is nothing to prevent them, if this is carried to-day, from bringing forward their own proposals at the next convention alternative to this proposal. But what I feel might be accomplished by carrying this proposal in the open Conference is that it might give the Indian Government some idea of the world opinion on this matter, which would help them to make up their minds to really do something in time for the next Conference. I beg to move the amendment.

The President : The question is on the amendment to the draft proposed by the commission and moved by Miss Bondfield. Is there further discussion ;

Mr. Atul Chandra Chatterjee (India) : Mr. President : I wish to assure the Conference at the outset that it is a far from pleasant duty to oppose this amendment. I appreciate to the full the generous and the humanitarian sentiments that have prompted this amendment moved by Miss Bondfield. I can assure her, on behalf of myself as well as of my colleague, Mr. Kershaw, the other Government delegate from India, that we have both the same object at heart as Miss Bondfield has, only we differ about the method that should be adopted.

"No one is more anxious than I am personally to see a steady betterment in industrial and social conditions among my countrymen, for I feel very deeply that on such gradual and progressive development the entire future of India depends. I hope fervently that the recommendation and deliberations of this Conference will give a powerful impetus to social improvement in India, but because I feel that we should do something practical, and that the recommendation should lead to immediate practical effects in India, I feel compelled to oppose this amendment.

"I shall not weary you with any discussion on the merits of the case. Miss Bondfield has urged that the usual argument that the people of India themselves do not want any improvement is no especially oriental argument ; that she has met with the same conditions in Europe. But I do not know if Miss Bondfield realises that in India even the parents have at present, in the vast majority of cases, no education at all, and it takes a much longer time to accomplish the same object of educating public opinion in India in these matters than it took even Miss Bondfield, with her fellows and numerous co-workers, in England. I can tell you as an Indian that amongst the educated classes in India there is an earnest desire for the introduction of compulsory education in India. I have myself, as a private individual and as a Government Officer, had much to do in establishing schools and persuading the people to send their children to school, and I can tell you that I have had the greatest difficulty in this respect amongst what are known as the lower castes in our country. We are all doing our best, but we cannot accomplish wonders without some lapse of time, and we only ask for a little time.

"It is not quite correct to say that we have stood absolutely still in the matter of introducing compulsory education in India. During the last year or two very definite progressive steps have

been taken in the matter. The different provincial legislatures in India have passed measures enabling local authorities to adopt compulsory education in their areas. And to my knowledge various towns are now arranging for the introduction of schemes. But time is required by them, not only for making arrangements with regard to finances, but also in order to secure teachers, in order to secure buildings, and in order to get equipment. Until there are adequate educational facilities available for children in India, and until such children can be compelled to avail themselves of the facilities, the raising of the age of employment will only throw such children on the street. In a country where children develop much earlier than in the north or in the west, and where the customs of the country do not enable the mothers to look after their children with the same freedom and capacity as they could do in the west, the result would be more disastrous to the children than otherwise.

"I wish again to refer to what Sir Malcolm Delevingue has mentioned with regard to the special disadvantages which the Government of India and the delegates from India have experienced during the present session of the Conference. The questionnaire sent out by the organising committee did not reach India until very late. The draft conventions and recommendations which have been put forward by the organising committee did not reach India even when the delegation left the country.

"The Conference will realise how difficult it has been for the Government of India to give any consideration to such recommendations or reports as to give any instructions to the delegates; but as I have already said, question has received the earnest attention of both the Government and the public in India, and all that the Government of India want is that they should have time to gauge and to influence public opinion.

"I must state that the number of children employed in factories in India is a very small fraction of the total industrial population of India, and these children are all employed on light and subsidiary occupations and are all half-timer. The Government of India is not, therefore, likely to be influenced in the discussion of the matter by any consideration that any raising of the age limit will affect the economic conditions or the industrial development of the country.

"Miss Bondfield has suggested that where western methods of industry are introduced in India, western factory legislation should also be adopted. I can assure Miss Bondfield and also the Conference that the whole history of factory legislation in India shows that

that has been the sole object of the Government as well as of the legislators in India.

"I wish the members of the Conference to realise that in discussing this amendment they are not discussing what the exact age for employment in India should be, but rather what the procedure should be in getting a definite age fixed for India. The commission in their report have recommended that the Government of India should be asked to put forward their own proposals at the Conference next year. I submit that this delay of only one year will not prejudice the settlement of the question. In fact, it will probably insure a speedier and more satisfactory settlement than if the amendment is accepted, and this Conference should make cut and dried proposals to India without a full examination of all the special needs and circumstances of India and I wish to say that the Government of India is anxious to consider any proposal in the most sympathetic spirit, and I venture to hope that this Conference will deem it only fair that the Government of India should be given an opportunity to put forward their considered proposals.

The President : Mr. Warrington Smyth, of South Africa.

Mr. Warrington Smyth (South Africa). Mr President, I should like, on behalf of the members of the Commission, which studies this question, explain in a few words why we adopted the course that we did in regard to our recommendations for India. Now, Mr President, in discussing the question of India it is, I think, essential for us to remember the conditions which exist in that great country. You have there an enormous population of 300,000,000 of people. You must imagine to yourself an enormous country extending over tropical countries, and deserts, mountain snows; and in all those climates and over all that country are the great population of India, varying as much in their characteristics, in their national development, in their civilisation, and in their traditions as the climate of the countries in which they live. In fact, the astonishing thing to anybody travelling in India is the large number of languages, the large number of separate castes and traditions. Now, Mr. President, those very facts—that this enormous country is split up into so many languages, so many castes and so many traditions and religions—those very facts make it impossible to adopt at short notice any system of compulsory education for children. You can see for yourselves that the problem is an immense one. Not only must you consider the different religions, but the caste question almost lies at the bottom of the whole of the Indian difficulties. That one caste will not mix with another; that one