

SPEECHES OF LORD HARDINGE



His Excellency The Right Hon'ble
BARON HARDINGE OF PENSURST,
G.C.B., G.M.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.M.I.E., G.C.V.O., I.S.O., C.V.O.,
Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

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Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

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H. E. Lady HARDINGE, c.1.

CONTENTS.

Introductory Note	... VIII
Lord Hardinge—An Appreciation	... XIII
Speech at the Farewell Banquet by Kent	... 1
" at the Harrovians' Farewell Dinner	... 13
Reply to the Bombay Corporation	... 21
" " Bombay Moslem League	... 26
" " Bombay Native Chamber of Commerce...	... 28
" " Bombay Chamber of Commerce	... 31
" " Calcutta Corporation	... 35
" " Talukdars of Oudh	... 39
" " Imperial League	... 41
" " British Indian Association	... 43
" " Bengal Land Holders' Association	... 46
" " Calcutta Corporation Deputation	... 48
" " The Bengal National Chamber	... 51
Speech at The Imperial Legislative Council	... 54
Reply to the Indian National Congress Deputation	... 56
The Seditious Meetings Bill	... 59
The Budget Debate of 1911	... 67
Reply to the Lahore Municipality	... 79
" " Panjab Moslem League	... 83
" " Sikh Community	... 87
" " Panjab P'ndu Sabha	... 90
" " Retired Indian Military Veterans	... 92
" " Panjab Chiefs' Association	... 94
" " Rajahs and Chiefs of the Panjab	... 97
" " Quetta Municipality	... 103
" " Chiefs and Sirdars of Baluchistan	... 107
" " Karachi Municipality	... 116

CONTENTS.

Reply to the Karachi Chamber of Commerce	... 120
" " Karachi Mahomedan Community	... 126
" " Sind Hindu Sabha	... 130
Laying the foundation stone of Dharampur King Edward Consumptive Hospital	... 137
Reply to the Simla Municipal Address	... 141
Laying the foundation stone of Hardinge Hospital for Consumptives	... 144
Speech at the Hyderabad State Banquet	... 148
Laying the Memorial stone of All India King Edward Memorial	... 153
Speech at the Mining Institute	... 155
Reply to the Naraingunge Chamber of Commerce	... 165
" " Dacca Municipality	... 169
" " Dacca Public Bodies' Addresses	... 172
" " Dacca University Deputation	... 179
" " Benares Dist. and Municipal Boards	... 192
Speech at Benares State Banquet	... 195
Reply to the Lucknow Municipal Address	... 198
" " Oudh ex-Royal family	... 202
" " Talukdars of Oudh	... 205
Tribute to the Late Sir John Jenkins	... 209
Speech at the Calcutta Club Banquet	... 212
The Calcutta University Convocation Address	... 215
Budget Debate of 1912	... 230
Unveiling Sir Andrew Fraser's Statue	... 250
Reply to the Peshawar Municipality	... 253
Opening of the Upper Chenab Canal	... 257
Speech at the Patiala State Banquet	... 261
Reply to the Rawalpindi Public Bodies' Address	... 266
Speech at the Kashmir State Banquet	... 270
Reply to the District Board, Quetta	... 278
Speech at the Daly College	... 283
Speech at the Indore State Banquet	... 289
Opening of H. H. the Rajah of Dhar's Hospital	... 295

CONTENTS.

Speech at the Udaipur State Banquet	... 299
Reply to the Ajmere Municipality	... 306
Reply to the Istamrardars of Ajmere	... 309
The King Edward VII Memorial, Ajmere	... 312
Speech at the Mayo Hall, Ajmere	... 315
The King Edward VII Memorial, Jaipur	... 324
Speech at the Jaipur State Banquet	... 326
Reply to H. H. the Nawab of Tonk	... 334
Opening of a People's Park at Bikanir	... 336
Speech at the Bikanir State Banquet	... 338
Opening of the Hamidia Library at Bhopal	... 351
Speech at the Bhopal State Banquet	... 354
Speech at the Bhopal Military School	... 361
Reply to the Nagpur Municipality	... 363
Laying the foundation stone of the New Council Chamber at Nagpore	... 366
Reply to the Address of the Jubbulpore Public	... 379
Speech at the Bharatpur State Banquet	... 381
Reply to the Delhi Municipality	... 385
Speech at Diwan-i-Am	... 388
Reply to the Non-Official Members' Address	... 400
Speech at the Imperial Legislative Council, Delhi	... 402
The Coronation Reforms	... 410

APPENDIX.

The Royal Boons	... 439
The views of Lord Curzon, Lord Morley, Lord Minto and Lord Crewe on the change of Capital to Delhi	... 443

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

“WHO is the Happy Warrior whom every man in arms should wish to be?” This question was asked by the poet at a time when men’s thoughts and energies were occupied with war and the overthrow of a man whom they had identified with the enemy of civilization, and answered by the poet in a matchless delineation of an ideal hero. There is equal need at the present moment in India for the picture of a calm and self-balanced Administrator, such as every man in authority should wish to be, who would by sheer moral force lay the monster of misunderstanding and hatred and rear up in this land a system of government in which the will of the rulers and the ruled shall more and more approximate. For such a portrait the original is supplied by the Ruler of India whose speeches are herein brought together. These form a lucid exposition of his spirit and aims. There is about them none of the glint and glitter of heartless oratory. They are as closely wedded to

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

honest purpose as to clear-headed action. Springing out of the one they lead naturally to the other. Will, word and work are but points in a straight line.

These speeches serve one great purpose. They help the people to enter with sympathy and understanding into the workings of the Vice-regal mind. The revelation of the Royal mind and character has gone a great way towards convincing the Indian people that England means the best by them. In the revelation of the Vice-regal mind of Lord Hardinge is to be seen the heart of England in its daily strivings with the complicated and multitudinous problems which have to be solved before India can be said to be fairly started on her course of progressive political, social and industrial life. These speeches are like a crystal dome covering a piece of clock-work, revealing the movement of every wheel, great and small, in the wonderful mechanism within. They reveal a personality at once tactful and transparent, polite and bold, sympathetic and cleared-eyed and firm-willed. The more the character of Lord Hardinge is understood, the more easy will the work of governing India become.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

Attempts are made all over the country to infuse into the mind of young India the spirit of loyalty and devotion to the British Government. Loyalty cannot, in our opinion, be effectually taught in the abstract, nor can it be inculcated by recounting past services. Gratitude is too slender a virtue to withstand the strain of present grievance. Loyalty is best created by the presentation of a personality in action which means well and strives to do good. 'He went about doing good.' This appeals to the human heart more than elaborate disquisitions about virtue. It is in pursuance of this method of creating love for the Government that these 'noble breathings of the Vice-regal mind' are presented to the public, and we feel confident that they will result in a rich harvest of peace and good-will throughout the land.

For Wisdom dealt with mortal powers,
Where truth in closest words shall fail,
When truth embodied in a tale
Shall enter in at lowly doors.

And so the Word had breath, and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds
In loveliness of perfect deeds
More strong than all poetic thought ;

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

Which he may read who binds the sheaf,
Or builds the house, or digs the grave,
And those wild eyes that watch the wave
In roarings round the coral reef.

MADRAS, } O. K. C.
20th February, 1913. }

APPENDIX.

THE ROYAL BOONS.

The announcements made at His Majesty's command by the Governor-General were as follow :—

“To all to whom these presents may come, by the command of His Most Excellent Majesty George the Fifth, by the grace of God, King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India.

“I, His Governor-General, do hereby declare and notify the grants, concessions, reliefs and benefactions which His Imperial Majesty has been graciously pleased to bestow upon this glorious and memorable occasion :—

“Humbly and dutifully submissive to His Most Gracious Majesty's will and pleasure the Government of India have resolved, with the approval of His Imperial Majesty's Secretary of State, to acknowledge the predominant claims of educational advancement on the resources of the Indian Empire, and have decided in recognition of a very commendable demand to act themselves to making education in India as accessible and wide as possible. With this purpose they propose to devote at once fifty lakhs to the promotion of truly popular education, and it is the firm intention of Government to add to the grant now announced further grants in future years on a generous scale.

APPENDIX.

“Graciously recognising the signal and faithful services of his forces by land and seas the King-Emperor has charged me to announce the award of half a month's pay of rank to all non-commissioned officers and men and reservists both of His British Army in India and His Indian Army, to the equivalent ranks of the Royal Indian Marine, and to all permanent employees of departmental or non-combatant establishments paid from the Military Estimates whose pay may not exceed the sum of Rs. 50 monthly.

“Furthermore, His Imperial Majesty has been graciously pleased to ordain that from henceforth the loyal Native Officers and men and reservists of His Indian Army shall be eligible for the grant of the Victoria Cross for valour; that membership of the Order of British India shall be increased during the decade following His Imperial Majesty's Coronation Durbar by fifty-two appointments in the first class, and that in mark of these historic ceremonies fifteen new appointments in the first class and nineteen new appointments in the second class shall forthwith be made; that from henceforth Indian officers of the Frontier Militia Corps and the Military Police shall be deemed eligible for admission to the aforesaid order; that special grants of land or assignments or remissions of land revenue as the case may be shall now be conferred on certain Native officers of His Imperial Majesty's Indian Army who may be distinguished for long and honourable service; and that the special allowances now assigned for three years only to the widows of deceased members of the Indian Order of Merit shall with effect from the date of this Durbar hereafter be continued to all such widows until death or marriage.

APPENDIX.

"Graciously appreciating the devoted and successful labours of his Civil Service, His Imperial Majesty has commanded me to declare the grant of half a month's pay to all permanent servants in the Civil employ of Government whose pay may not exceed the sum of fifty rupees monthly.

"Further it is His Imperial Majesty's gracious behest that all persons to whom may have been, or hereafter may be, granted the titles of Dewan Bahadur, Sardar, Khan Bahadur, Rai Bahadur, Khan Sahib, Rai Sahib, or Rao Sahib, shall receive distinctive badges as a symbol of respect and honour, and that on all holders present or to come of the venerable titles of Mahamahodayhya and Sham-ul-Ulema shall be conferred some annual pension for the good report of the ancient learning of India.

"Moreover in commemoration of his Durbar and as a reward for conspicuous public service certain grants of land free of revenue tenable for the life of the grantee or in the discretion of the local administration for one further life shall be bestowed or restored in the North Western Frontier Province and in Baluchistan.

"In his gracious solicitude for the welfare of His Royal Indian Princes His Imperial Majesty has commanded me to proclaim that from henceforth no *Nazerana* payment shall be made upon succession to their States, and sundry debts owing to the Government by the non-jurisdictional States in Kathiawar and Gujerat and also by the Kudumia Chiefs of Mewar will be cancelled and remitted in whole or in part under the orders of the Government of India.

"In token of his appreciation of the Imperial

APPENDIX.

Service Troops certain supernumerary appointments in the Order of British India will be made.

“In the exercise of His Royal and Imperial clemency and compassion His Most Excellent Majesty has been graciously pleased to ordain that certain prisoners now suffering the penalty of the law for crimes and misdemeanours shall be released from imprisonment, and that all those Civil debtors now in prison whose debts may be small and due not to fraud but to real poverty shall be discharged, and that their debts shall be paid. The persons by whom and the terms and conditions on which these grants, concessions, and benefactions shall be enjoyed will be hereafter declared.

“God Save The King Emperor.”

The following telegram, dated 4th February, has been sent from His Excellency the Viceroy to the Secretary of State for India :—

The Ruling Princes and Chiefs of India, on the one hand, and the non-official Members of my Legislative Council, acting on behalf of the people of British India on the other, desire that I should forward to the Prime Minister the following message from the Princes and people of India to the people of Great Britain and Ireland. Telegrams from the leading Ruling Princes and Chiefs signifying this desire have been received, and the non-official Members of my Council have acted on the authorities of public meetings held at important centres in the different Provinces, at which resolutions, expressing the sentiments embodied in the message, have been adopted.

The Princes and People of India desire to take

APPENDIX.

the opportunity afforded by the conclusion of the Royal visit to convey to the great English nation an expression of their cordial good will and fellowship; also an assurance of their warm attachment to the world-wide Empire of which they form part, and with which their destinies are now indissolubly linked.

Their Imperial Majesties' visit to India, so happily conceived and so successfully completed, has produced a profound and ineffaceable impression throughout the country. Their Imperial Majesties, by their gracious demeanour, their unfailing sympathy, and their deep solicitude for the welfare of all classes, have drawn closer the bonds that unite England and India, and have deepened and intensified the traditional feeling of loyalty and devotion to the Throne and person of the Sovereign which has always characterised the Indian people. Conscious of the many blessings which India has derived from her connection with England, the Princes and people rejoiced to tender in person their loyal and loving homage to Their Imperial Majesties. They are confident that this great and historic event marks the beginning of a new era, ensuring greater happiness, prosperity and progress to the people of India, under the aegis of the Crown.

LORD CURZON ON THE CHANGE OF CAPITAL.

In the House of Lords, Earl Curzon of Kedleston rose to call attention to the policy of His Majesty's Government with regard to the removal of the capital of India to Delhi, and other connected matters; and to move for papers. He said:

APPENDIX.

It is not possible to deal briefly with every aspect of this great case. The decision taken is by far the most important decision that has been taken with reference to the Government of India since the Government of India was taken over by the Crown. It is not merely a question of moving the capital from Calcutta to Delhi, nor merely a question of re-distributing boundaries or provinces containing nearly 100 millions of people in the Eastern parts of India; it is a question raising great issues which must profoundly affect your rule in India for all time. It was on December 12 last that Lord Morley told us in this House of the new and far-reaching steps which had been announced that morning at Delhi by the King, and commended them to the consideration of this House. We were all taken by surprise. Lord Landsdowne and myself had only heard this fact a few hours in advance, and though he and I had been jointly responsible for the Government of India for a period of 12 years, though there were other ex-Viceroy's in this country who had been similarly responsible for another ten years, I believe not one of us had been consulted or had the slightest inkling of what was going to be done. I make no complaint of that. His Majesty's Government are entitled to consult or not to consult whomever they please. But I think it should be known that this step was taken on the initiative of a Viceroy who had only been in India a few months, and a Secretary of State who had not long enjoyed his great position. Lord Landsdowne then said that we ought not hurriedly to pass judgment on the change, but that we retained our right of free criticism at a later date.

APPENDIX.

Since then neither he nor I have said ~~one word~~ ^{two words} in public about this matter. While the King was in India it appeared unbecoming to us that any note of discord should mar the triumphant effect of His Majesty's progress.

I believe no British Sovereign ever rendered a greater service to India or any part of his dominions than did His Majesty by his conception and execution of this tour. I say by his conception, because everybody knows the idea was His Majesty's own, to which he adhered in spite of the advice given him by many well qualified to advise; and I say execution, because although the fullest credit ought to be given to those in India who were responsible for the details of the ceremonial, yet it is indisputable that the main success was due to the personality of Their Majesties themselves, who succeeded in persuading the Princes and peoples of India that they were not only paying their homage to, their Sovereigns in a great and stately ceremonial, but meeting those who had for them a sincere and profound regard. If there is one point in His Majesty's tour which I would beg to call attention to it is the utterances of His Majesty. I do not believe a series of speeches was ever made by a monarch or by any British public man which was characterised by a deeper insight, a more balanced and felicitous choice of words, or a more profound and genuine feeling. When His Majesty ended by that message of hope which he gave to the peoples of India as a watchword for their future progress, he struck a note which vibrated in the heart of every man, not merely who heard it but who read it in any part of the Empire, and he expressed an aspiration that every one of our deep

APPENDIX.

trusts will be realised. Anything I say this afternoon will not in the least degree affect my profound and respectful recognition of the service His Majesty rendered in India to India and the Empire.

The question, however, may be raised whether, the action of the Sovereign, irrevocable as we have been told it is, should be barred from any criticism. I am as alive as any man to the value of imagination in Eastern politics, but it would not be right that even in India the personal authority of the Sovereign should be engaged to relieve his Ministers of the responsibility which is theirs, to supersede Parliament, which is the governing authority as regards India and every portion of His Majesty's Dominions, or to shut the mouths of public men. It is clear that if you once accept the principle that great political and administrative changes can be introduced in India by the fiat of a Sovereign, even on the occasion of his Coronation, without challenge, you impair the Constitutional machinery we have set up in this country and regard as the guarantee of our liberties. You set up an autocracy which is not the more tolerable, but the less tolerable because the Ministers who really exercise it shelter themselves behind the person of the Sovereign, and you establish a precedent which might in the future be followed on occasions other than the Coronation. You might, for instance, tempt succeeding Sovereigns to go one better than their predecessors, or in the inverse case you might compel the Sovereign to desist from going to India to celebrate his Coronation at all because he had no dramatic boon to give. These results, I think, might ensue from our silent acceptance of what has been done. Nothing that will be said here will be in any degree disres-

APPENDIX.

pectful to the action of the Sovereign. It is the advice of Ministers to the Sovereign that we impugn.

What is the gravamen of our charge against Ministers? For the moment I say nothing above the policy itself, and speak only of its manner. They decided upon a course the importance of which they would be the last to deny. It was a course involving the upheaval of traditions in India which had existed for 150 years, not merely the shifting of a capital, but the creation of a new capital, the reversal either entire or partial of a great administrative act of their predecessors, and the carving about of great provinces. All these steps had been decided on in secret without consultation with those whom you ordinarily consult, without any intimation to representative bodies or persons, without any consultation of public opinion, behind the back of Parliament. Then you give finality to this procedure, you invest it with a sacrosanct character by putting it into the mouth of the Sovereign. Is it possible to imagine a procedure more contrary to the established usage of our Constitution, less consonant with our democratic practice? Look at the results of your action. You use your advantage to relieve yourselves of all opposition till it would be too late, and of all criticism until it would be ineffective. You institute what is a new procedure in the history of British rule in India. Hitherto no great change has taken place in the Government of India, without full discussion in Parliament and the sanction of both Houses. This was the case in regard to all measures of importance relating to India. Every one of those measures was debated at length in both Houses

APPENDIX.

of Parliament. Some of us are old enough to remember that the party opposite distinguished themselves by their hostility to Mr. Disraeli's far-sighted measure giving Queen Victoria the title of Empress of India. But Mr. Disraeli, although he was an Imperial Statesman, was also a Constitutional Minister. He did not make the announcement at the Durbar, although Lord Lytton, the then Viceroy, was commanded to hold a Durbar on that occasion. Even his Oriental imagination shrank from anything so daring, and he followed the procedure of asking the sanction of Parliament. Now, for the first time, a great change is introduced into the Government of India which, whether for good or bad, is without the hall-mark of the approval and sanction of the representatives of the people. The case is in one respect rendered worse, because you have utilised the authority of the Sovereign to settle in your way an issue of the most acutely controversial character. I allude of course to the Partition of Bengal, upon which parties both in India and in this country are, and have been, sharply divided. This is, indeed, a very dangerous precedent, for if the King may be brought in to upset the decision of one party he may equally be brought in to upset the policy of another. There is one more insidious danger. If the policy which you have put into the mouth of the Sovereign is a popular and successful policy—as we all hope it may be—then the credit will attach, in a large measure, to the Sovereign. But supposing your policy is not so fortunate in its results? Then some portion of the blame can hardly fail to fall on the innocent shoulders of the Sovereign himself.

These are some of the main reasons why we

APPENDIX.

regard your conduct as somewhat unconstitutional. When I say "unconstitutional" I mean that it is contrary to the settled practice and established usage of our Constitution. You have done in India what no British Government has done there before. You have done what you would not have dared to attempt in England, what, if we had attempted to do either here or in India, you would have made the heavens ring with your denunciations, and you have done it in a manner that saves you from retribution and screens you from attack. Lord Crewe may say he could not have done it in any other way. If that were so it ought not to have been done at all. If your policy were so controversial that you could not put it to the judgment of the public, then you ought not to have taken this means of carrying it through. On the other hand, if it were reasonable and popular, then there ought to have been no hesitation in submitting it to public opinion in advance.

There is one defence which I hope Lord Crewe will not make. It is contained in an astonishing sentence in the speech of the Prime Minister the other evening in the House of Commons. The right hon. gentleman argued that the two policies of the partition of Bengal and the transfer of the capital of India were on all fours, because in the one case the policy was pronounced by the King and in the other case by Lord Curzon. Surely this is the flimsiest and most transparent of fallacies! In the one case, when the decision was announced in my time it had been discussed in every Government and every newspaper in India, and after a Blue-book full of information had been for months in the possession of Parliament and public at home,

APPENDIX.

whereas your policy was announced without consulting anybody. In the second place, my policy could be reversed, as you have reversed it. Your policy cannot. Then there is the extreme secrecy and almost indecent haste of your procedure. The Government of India has many virtues and I have no doubt some failings, but I have always thought its most admirable feature to be the great deliberation with which it prepares its cases and the frankness with which it takes the public into its counsels. No Government lives so much in an atmosphere of public criticism as the Government of India. Before any new policy can be adopted there it is examined by the Local Governments, referred to and afterwards reported upon by local representative bodies and discussed in the Press. Only after it has gone through this ordeal is it sent home to the Secretary of State. Your policy was not referred to a single Local Government; not a single Lieutenant-Governor was consulted. Even the Lieutenant-Governor of the province concerned only learnt of it the night before it was announced at Delhi. You cannot quote a single opinion of a representative body in India in favour of your policy. Only three years ago in this House was set up, on the initiative of Lord Morley, a great scheme of Legislative Councils in India, Imperial and Provincial, and the noble Viscount was most eloquent about the manner in which those bodies would focus the intelligence, the sentiments, the aspirations of the Indian people. They were to constitute a sort of bridge between the Government and the people. Did you consult them as to the question of the Capital of India? You may say that your policy was approved by the

APPENDIX.

Viceroy in Council. I cannot, of course, comment upon the conditions under which the Viceroy in Council gave his assent in India. But I do know that the Council is less experienced than any Council in India before. If the Secretary of State goes on to tell me that his policy was approved by the Council at home, I should be greatly surprised if those gentlemen were consulted under conditions that rendered independent examination and criticism, much less refusal, on their part at all possible.

I pass from the manner and mode of your policy to its concrete form. I have to deal with it in relation to six matters. One, the removal of the capital from Calcutta; two, reversal of the partition of Bengal; three, revival of the Chief Commissionership of Assam; four, the creation of the new Province of Bengal; five, the placing of the capital at Delhi; and six, the question of finance. As to removal of the capital, it was argued that geographically Calcutta was ill-adapted to be the capital, being in a corner of India. Capitals are seldom chosen for their central position. Railway facilities are so great that geographical difficulties are overcome. There is the other extraordinary argument that it is a serious anomaly that the two Governments, Imperial and Local, should exist side by side in the same city, that the Governor-General thereby became saddled with the responsibility of the Bengal Government, and that the Local Government suffered from the loss of a sense of responsibility. In my experience the most friendly relations prevailed between the two Governments. Then the biggest anomaly has been left untouched. For seven months of the year Imperial and Local Governments exist side by side on the narrow ridge of Simla, a

APPENDIX.

much more anomalous and difficult position than their existence side by side for the remainder of the year in Calcutta. I invite the noble marquis to say, as he has turned the Governor of India out of Calcutta, whether he is going to turn it out of Simla too.

The third reason given in the Despatch is, I venture to say, the real one, though it is wrapped up in somewhat euphemistic language. The Government of India say that they desired to withdraw the Government of India from its present provincial environment and from the influence of local opinion. I am indeed amused at a Liberal Government desiring to withdraw its representatives from contact with local opinion. How often did Lord Morley reproach me in the old days with having carried my partition of Bengal without sufficient reference to local opinion? Well, I have no doubt that this represents the real feeling and desire of the Government of India. They desire to escape the somewhat heated atmosphere of Bengal and to say good-bye to the Bengali friends for whom they have just done so much. I have some sympathy for that feeling, but do not let us be hypocritical about it; if that is the reason why you are leaving Calcutta, do not attempt to assign other reasons which are of greatly inferior importance. As to the future of Calcutta, I am not one of those who think that the removal from Calcutta will seriously and detrimentally affect it. The importance of Calcutta results from its position on the sea, from its proximity to the great sources of supply of jute and coal and tea, and from the enterprise of its merchants. I dare say there will be some displacement of trade, some depreciation of property, I dare say some loss of

APPENDIX.

money to individual firms ; but I have little doubt that the mercantile community in Calcutta will bend their backs to win for their city as great and famous a place as it has had in the past. Personally I think the removal of the Government from Calcutta is much more injurious to the Government than it will be to Calcutta. Of course, this displacement will be welcomed elsewhere in India. I have never been able to understand why it is that rival cities regard each other with a jealousy to which rival lovers and even rival politicians seldom attain. But so it is. Glasgow and Edinburgh, Manchester and Liverpool, Milan and Turin, Petersburg and Moscow—in none of these cases is there any great warmth of affection between the two cities or their inhabitants. And it is quite true that the supremacy of Calcutta has always excited very poignant emotions in the breasts of Madras and Bombay.

But you have not merely dethroned Calcutta, you have accompanied that act with the reversal of the so-called partition of Bengal. It is 6½ years since that measure was carried. I used the phrase "partition" for brevity's sake ; I do not think it at all describes the fact. During that time I have seen the most extraordinary descriptions of the object of the Government of India, which made me sometimes rub my eyes. Every one knows that that was an administrative measure which had been called for years. I was not the man to start it. It had been discussed for twenty years before my day. I took it up because half-way through my time in India I became acquainted with the scandalous mal-administration which was going on in the Eastern province of Bengal, and the shocking neglect of

APPENDIX.

education and public works and all that goes to make a contented life of the people and with the oppression of the Mahomedans by their neighbours. That was not due to the Government of India, but to the fact that you were trying to administer the affairs of 80 millions of people through one Government and one man, and the only way to remedy it was to divide the province into two. What was the particular line to be drawn was not a matter for the Viceroy. The line was settled by consultation and discussion between the Local Governments and officials, representative bodies, and so on. They agreed upon a line, and that line was based upon ethnical and geographical considerations, the importance of which will not be denied. I gladly accepted it. I knew the obloquy with which I should be overwhelmed, because I was aware that the line of division would run counter to the personal interests of journalists, landlords, and others in certain quarters in Calcutta. But I was willing to run the risk. I decided to bear the brunt because I believed the decision to be right, and because I was certain that in the long run (I hoped in the short run) the truth would prevail. The partition was promulgated in October, 1905, and the Liberal Government came into office in December. They might have disowned my act, and I should not have complained if they had done so. But no, they accepted it. Lord Morley will bear me out that never on a single occasion, public or private, did I ever put any pressure upon him. I do not think I ever mentioned it. They decided on their own initiative to carry on that policy. The noble Viscount said in this House and elsewhere that he regarded it as a settled fact. That reply

APPENDIX.

was repeated over and over again by your officials in India. What happened as time went on? The Bengalis began to realise that the agitation was futile. The fruits of partition became manifest.

The new Province advanced in education, in good government, in every mark of prosperity. Your officers over and over again, acting on your instructions, repeated the assurance that this was a settled fact and that the faith of the British Government was pledged. It is true that outside a fitful and spluttering agitation was kept up by the Bengali community, but that was done more for form than for any thing else, and there was neither substance nor life in the agitation. Your Lordships may think I am an interested party. Let me therefore give you the opinions, not of myself, but of important natives of India. There is a well-known Bengali writer, Mr. Mitra, who wrote a book called "Indian Problems," and who said: "The cut-and-dried phrases of the professional agitator should not confuse the British public. It is clear that the partition does not make the Bengali a farthing the worse in person, reputation, or pocket. It was an admirable move, calculated to benefit millions." Then there was a discussion in the Imperial Legislative Council. One of the most conspicuous Congress representatives had repeated the familiar charges against the partition, and a member for the Province—(Lord MacDonnell; What was his name?)—Mr. Mazhar-ul-Huq—got up and asserted that if the Government meddled with this beneficent measures it would be committing an act of supreme folly. I should also like to quote the authority of the distinguished correspondent of the *Times*, whose book on India attracted

APPENDIX.

so much attention a year ago. I quote this authority because the *Times*, is, as I gather, one of the leading supporters of His Majesty's Government in this case, and it is interesting therefore to know what their correspondent said when he was in India three years ago—I speak of Sir Valentine Chirol. He wrote:—"The agitation against partition is dying, even in Bengal, and is almost unregarded in the other Provinces. The authorities are too firmly convinced of the administrative value of the division to attempt any modification now, and there is the further fact that any reversal of policy might have dangerous results. The 18 millions of Mahomedans would bitterly resent any suggestion of the repeal of partition. It stands in no need of renewed vindication, for it has been entirely justified by results." The second passage is even stronger:—"I have yet to meet anybody, English or Indian, who can tell me in what respect the partition has injured a single living soul, while one has only to visit the Province, invigorated with new life and inspired by new aspirations, to realise the benefits which the severance has conferred upon millions of people. To alter or to modify it now would be suicidal folly. It would be worse, for it would be a criminal blunder." That is very strong language, and I leave His Majesty's Government to dispose of it as best they can. This is the moment when the spurious and vexatious agitation has died down, and the benefits of partition conclusively vindicated, when everything is going well in the new Province, that a new Viceroy appears on the scene and in a few weeks is enabled to inform the world that all that has been entirely wrong. The

APPENDIX.

Government of India say in their Despatch that the bitterness of feeling engendered by the partition of Bengal is very widespread, that the resentment among the Bengalis is as strong as ever and the Government of India make the astonishing discovery that the partition has been responsible for the growing estrangement in many parts of the country between Mahomedans and Hindus. Finally, comes the Secretary of State, also new to his office, and he tells us that the Viceroy has depicted the consequences of partition with accuracy and fairness. I deny every one of those consequences and I challenge the noble marquess to produce any competent or reliable evidence in support of the assertions which he contends are characterised by accuracy and fairness. I think I can quote the highest authority of all, and that is the Secretary of State himself. If you look at the White Paper you will see that on November 1 the Secretary of State put his signature to the Despatch in which he congratulates the Government of India on the accuracy and fairness of their statements. But on November 2 we had a debate in this House about some Indian matters, and the Secretary of State then used a different line of argument. He wanted to show how well things were going on, and he said there was nothing now in the general temper, not merely of the people of India as a whole, but of any race or section of the people of India which ought to cause anything which could be described by the word "anxiety" (Cheers). When the Secretary of State made that remark, which I believe to be true, I loudly cheered and I should have cheered all the more after I knew that he had so effectually demolished his own case.

APPENDIX.

I dare say the Secretary of State will try to console me by saying that partition has not been revoked—that he has divided Bengal into three, and that therefore he is carrying further the principle which I adopted. In fact that is true. There is no reversion to the *status quo ante*. Nobody would be foolish or insane enough to propose such a thing. But to all intents and purposes the old partition has been reversed. Perhaps the best judges whether partition is reversed or not will be found in India herself. Directly after the announcement was made at Delhi the Congress Committee met and passed a vote of thanks to the Government for the fulfilment of the political aspirations; and subsequently, at the meeting of the Congress, the President spoke of the annulment of partition as a triumph in the most momentous Constitutional struggle in modern times. Nor in any part of India is there any doubt that agitation has won the day. You may disclaim that that was your intention, but so it is universally regarded and if so no one is really responsible but yourselves. If you declare a measure to be a settled fact and instruct your officials so to inform the people, and if they, six years later, throw to the winds what you have said, can you be surprised that this is regarded as an exhibition of weakness or that it is thought and said that agitation has won the day? The position of Mahomedans in Eastern Bengal is one of the saddest features of the present situation. For six years or more they have held aloof from agitation and have occupied themselves with building up their Province. No wonder they feel bitter! I speak from a knowledge of resolutions which have been passed in all their cities. It is a matter of common knowledge

APPENDIX.

that their leading nobleman, when he was decorated the other day at Delhi, said. "The ribbon which you hang round my neck is a halter with which I am to hang myself."

The Marquess of Crewe : May I ask the authority for that statement.

Earl Curzon : I can give the noble Marquess the authority. All these resolutions speak of the Government having gone back on its word. It is a bad thing for the Government of India when its word is broken. It is a bad thing for the prestige of Government. It is a bad thing for your officers too. I wonder how you paused to think what are the sentiments of your officials in this Province who for years past have been assuring the people that you would be true to your word, and who now see—I will not say their work thrown away, because good work is never thrown away but see the pledges they have given with your authority broken. In their despatch the Government of India say that the numbers of the Mahomedans will be about equal to those of the Bengalis and they will have special representation in the Council. I do not think there is much comfort to be derived from that. The Mahomedans in India know they cannot compete with the Bengalis' organisation. Influence in India is not a question of numbers ; it is a question of ability and character and organisation. Whereas the Mahomedans of Eastern Bengal were the dominant element in the province, now the balance has swung round.

The Government of India in their despatch say that the new Governor of Bengal is to reside at Dacca from time to time, and the Secretary of State

APPENDIX.

goes rather further and says that the Governor should regard Dacca as a second capital, with a claim on his attention and residence for an appreciable part of the year. What does that mean? Is residence at Dacca to be optional? I do not think the assurances in the despatch are enough. There is a strong feeling in India that it will be well to place some statutory obligation upon the Governor of Bengal to spend a certain amount of the year at Dacca. I do not give any opinion on that point, but I do say we ought to instruct him to spend at least two months in the year in Dacca, and if possible to take with him the Council and the whole machinery of Government. There are two features of your policy to which I can only allude in passing. The first is this. You are setting up Government by a Governor-in-Council in Bengal. That is an old and much debated question. The weight of authority has always been against the suggestion. Personally I am against Government by a Governor-in-Council for Bengal. I do not think the situation in Bengal is likely best to be dealt with by a Governor from home, necessarily ignorant of India and likely to be in many cases a party politician. I have always held that the Province of Bengal demanded the very best man the service of India can produce. I wonder if there is a single Lieutenant-Governor or ex-Lieutenant-Governor who shares your feelings. I rather think Lord MacDonnell does.

Lord MacDonnell: In the new state of things—yes.

Earl Curzon: I have been brought in contact with four or five, and I have not found one. The

APPENDIX.

second feature to which I must allude in passing is this, that the first price you have to pay for your reconstituted Bengal is the discontent of the Service. You know that Bengal will not possess a single healthy district, and it is not surprising, therefore, that the Civil Service should have unanimously petitioned to be transferred elsewhere. This is not a selfish or unreasonable attitude on their part. You cannot expect men to go on toiling in that climate from year's end to year's end without sometimes having a change from an unhealthy to a healthy district. You want your Service in Bengal to be the most efficient that India can provide, but if every one shirks Bengal the province will obtain not the best but the worst. If you look at the scheme in the manner in which it affects Bengal, there is not much cause for satisfaction. You have yielded to a dying and, as I think, factious agitation; you have bitterly offended the Mahomedans and taught them to doubt the word on the British Raj; you have set up a province which will be the most unpopular in India, and have instituted a form of government which, in my judgment, will be unsuitable. So much for Bengal.

I must, at the risk of wearying your lordships say a word about two other auxiliary arrangements which you contemplate in that part of India. The first of these is with regard to Assam. It is part of your plan that Assam should revert to Government by a Chief Commissioner, and the reasons given in the despatch for so doing are, first, it is a frontier province which ought to be under the direct control of the Government of India; secondly, it is a backward province; and thirdly, that no one is very likely to object. I venture to say that these are

APPENDIX.

very weak reasons. They are afterthoughts intended to justify the decision arrived at on other grounds. There is no analogy whatever between the North-East and North-West Frontiers of India. On the Assam frontier you deal with hill tribes armed with bows and arrows; on the North-West you are confronted with the formidable Pathan organisation. You say that Assam is a backward province. So it has been, and you are going to stereotype it in its backwardness. It was because it was backward that we took it up and made it part of a larger province in order to bring it into line with the best conditions of Indian rule. Another defect that you will reproduce is that being a small province Assam has no Service or Commission of its own. It has had to borrow its officers from Bengal, and to take of course what Bengal chose to give it, and Assam being backward and unpopular Bengal did not give the best, and at the end of five years when those officers had a right to revert, the best of them went back. The consequence was that at each stage Assam got the worst of the bargain and the administration suffered all round. When we brought Assam into the heart of a bigger province these conditions were removed and Assam got its chance. All these considerations are sacrificed by the proposal, and in their despatch the Government of India do not seem aware of their existence. Assam is treated as a petty pawn on the board to be moved about as desired.

A word about the new province of Behar. It is made up of the non-Bengali leavings on the west of your new Bengal, and it is justified on the grounds that the Beharis do not like the Bengalis and would welcome separation. Very

APPENDIX.

likely that is true. They say it is in accordance with popular sentiment in Orissa, which certainly it is not, and will be welcomed in Behar as giving Behar a seacoast. Of course, that is absolute nonsense. Calcutta is, and always must remain, the seaport of Behar, to which it is linked by two railways. What is the good of holding out the attraction to Behar of the possession of a sea coast with which there is no railway connexion whatever and where there is no seaport? You might just as well tell colliery proprietors in Staffordshire that you propose to deprive them of their facilities for despatching coal to London and offer them a rival port on the Yorkshire coast. This province of yours has been drawn up without the slightest regard to the interests or views of the inhabitants. Take the Uriyas. No one has paused to think what they want. They could not know because of your secrecy and because you consulted nobody in advance. They want the re-union of the Orissan-speaking people. They want to remain with Calcutta. What is the good of Orissa being tied to the tail of Behar, where there is no affinity of language or race? They are separated from them by a great belt of mountains and rivers over which we have never been able to carry a railway. I venture to prophesy that that is a blunder that cannot stand permanent. This new province of yours is a bundle of odds and ends thrown together because you did not know what else to do with them. In Bengal you have United Bengalis, because they are all of the same race and language, but when you come to these other provinces you force into an unnatural union three peoples of different race and language. I shall

APPENDIX.

pursue this aspect of the case no further, but I can truthfully say that none of my criticisms, though they may appear strong, are captious. They all rest upon information and, if I may say so, personal experience; and they are put forward, not with the least view of embarrassing his Majesty's Government, but of showing the results of their secrecy and of calling their attention to errors that must be put right before a settlement is made final.

Perhaps it may be said that all these anomalies, if they exist, are compensated for by the transfer of the capital to Delhi, and we may be asked, "Is not this a great Imperial scheme?" I suppose all of us who have served in India have thought a great deal about Delhi. I had to decide whether to hold the Durbar at Delhi, and I decided unhesitatingly in the affirmative. I had to decide whether the site of the Victoria Memorial Hall should be at Delhi, and I decided in the negative. I had not considered the question of the capital at Delhi, although it was often in my mind. There are eloquent passages in these despatches about the historical associations of Delhi, and the Secretary of State, in particular, has rather given rein to his poetical imagination in talking about the old time drama of Hindu history and satisfying the historical sense of millions. I do not deny the glamour of the name of Delhi or the stories that cling about its dead and forgotten cities. But I venture to say this, that if we want to draw happy omens for the future the less we say about the history of Delhi the better. Modern Delhi is only 250 years old. It was only the capital of the Moghuls in the expiring years of their regime, and it was only the capital

APPENDIX.

of their effective rule for little more than 100 years. Of course there were capitals there before it, but all have perished, one after another. We know that the whole environment of Delhi is a mass of deserted ruins and graves, and they present to the visitor, I think, the most solemn picture you can conceive of the mutability of human greatness. You may say that the fate of India has been decided three times outside Delhi. So it has, and on each occasion it is the defenders who have been defeated. I venture to say that the less you say about the history of Delhi the better, and his Majesty's Government will be on much surer ground if instead of saying anything about the dead capitals of the past, they try to create a living capital in the future. (Hear, hear.)

What is the case they have made for the choice of Delhi as a capital? The points they name are that its situation is central, that it is the meeting place of many railways, that it is reasonably near to Simla, and that, therefore, there will be a saving in the cost of the annual migration, and that it is in close proximity to some at any rate of the great Provinces of India. I desire to allow full value to these considerations for what they may be worth, although none of them appears to be vital. While, for instance, Delhi is more central to Bombay, it is much less central to Burma or Madras, than that great city, or to Mysore or Hyderabad, the principalities of great Princes. Again, if it is so close to Simla why is it necessary to have two capitals with all their officers and paraphernalia within 12 hours of each other? When you refer to the loyalty of the Princes, which is one of the most splendid assets of India, I am not sure that it is

APPENDIX.

at all desirable that they should be brought up from their States in constant residence at the capital of the Government. These may be on the whole minor points, but I would press four major points. First, as to the healthiness of Delhi; second, as to its strategical position; third, as to the accessibility of the Government and the capital to public opinion. Above all, I desire to ask the effect the institution of your capital at Delhi will have on India and British rule in India in the times that lie before us. These are real factors which no historical associations, no amount of sentimental glamour ought to be allowed to override. As to the healthiness of Delhi, the despatch says that it possesses a good climate for seven months, and that the Government will live there from October 1 to May 1. Are you quite sure of that? I have been in Delhi in October and in May several times, and I know those are months of the year in which there is a good deal of fever and malaria there, particularly after the rains. In former days the water supply of Delhi was very bad, but now it is got by filtered water from the river. Have you satisfied yourselves that you can from that or from other sources derive a water supply for a great capital city?

Take the question of site. The Government of India were in such haste that we are told in the papers they settled on the site of the Durbar camps and they even invited His Majesty to lay the foundation-stone. May I tell your lordships a little story? When I was in India I too held a Durbar on the same site, and when that Durbar was over, feeling that in some way or other the site which had witnessed the Proclamation of Queen Victoria's

APPENDIX.

Imperial Title and also the Proclamation of the Coronation of the late King Edward the Seventh ought to be commemorated, I set about endeavouring to convert the arena and its surroundings into a beautiful and orderly garden and to create a memorial that should be worthy of those great events. Lord Minto will bear in mind what I am going to refer to. These attempts went on for two years, and at the end of that time it was found that the soil was so impregnated with alkalis that nothing would grow. After the rains the whole expanse was inundated and was converted into a great marsh, the waters of which, when they receded, killed everything in the soil. There is only one village on the site, and that village is surrounded by tall walls of mud in order to keep out the inundations which prevail for months every year. I have been informed that the Government of India have already abandoned the first site they selected and are looking for something else. I do not want to put any difficulties in the way of getting a site—how could I? I only want the Secretary of State to recognise that the question of site is of great importance, and it would, indeed, be a calamitous thing if you planted down your capital on a site where, in the future, you found Englishmen could not live.

I take the second point, a point with which it is rather difficult to deal, but on which I must say a word—that is, the security of the position of Delhi. I dare say noble lords are familiar with the famous pronouncement of the Duke of Wellington. It is contained in Lord Stanhope's "Notes of Conversations with the Duke of Wellington at Welmer Castle" in 1844: "I talked to the Duke on India. He has, I find, strong opinion, against the idea of

APPENDIX.

transferring the seat of Government from Calcutta to one of the cities higher up the country, as Agra. It is indispensable, he thinks, to the maintenance of our Indian Empire that our Indian capital should be in some situation where our naval superiority may, if necessary, be brought into play." I am far from saying that the strategical position in India is the same now as in the days of the Duke of Wellington. India has been absolutely transformed since then. The strength of British power is immeasurably greater than it was; railway communication has spread everywhere throughout the country; fire arms alone are entirely different from what they were in those days. But the physical facts of India are unalterable; they remain exactly the same. Look at it in this way. If the Government of India had been in Delhi at the time of the Mutiny, would you have been satisfied with your position. I know many good authorities in India, not at all unprepared to accept the change of capital to Delhi, who are by no means convinced of the desirability of placing the seat of Government and the residence of the Viceroy in so advanced a position. (Hear, hear.) And I know, further, that what I am saying at this table is the view of the most competent military opinion and military authorities in India. I am not competent to offer an opinion on the matter myself. I will only say this, that while I shall welcome any indication from the noble marquess that the matter has been carefully considered by those who are qualified to advise, the situation, so far as I understand it, is one that must cause him some degree of anxiety.

Suppose all these doubts to be resolved. Suppose you get your site and drain it, and get your water

APPENDIX.

supply, and you are perfectly satisfied as to the strategical security of your position, and I hope all that may be the case. When you have built your capital will it be a source of influence and of strength to your Government? Will it enable them better to understand the heart of India, and grasp its problems? That is the real issue we ought to bear in mind. What is the great danger that attends the Government of India? It is this, and it is responsible for the agitation which has gone for years against the movement to the hills. It is the danger that the Government of India may become aloof from public opinion, that it may be shut off from the main currents of public life, that it may become immersed in a sort of bureaucratic self satisfaction. There was no fear of that when you went down to Calcutta. At Calcutta you were in the surge and movement of life. There was a mixed society there. You heard opinions of every variety of form—opinions of merchants, bankers, traders, business men of every sort. There was the society of judges and lawyers, both European and Native. There were the officials of local Government, there was a regular stream of travellers and visitors coming into the country from all parts of the world. It was life, and when, after my long residence at Simla, I went, on my tours in the country to Calcutta I felt once again life and movement throbbing around me I say distinctly that our time at Calcutta was of enormous value to the Government. It brightened our minds, it widened our outlook, it brought us into the main stream of national life. There is serious danger that, when you have built your capital at Delhi, Government will become more isolated,

APPENDIX.

more bureaucratic, less in touch with public opinion than it is now. You are going to create a territorial enclave; you are going to run the risk that your Government will become a political enclave. Delhi cannot be either a manufacturing city or a distributing centre, for the trade of India must exist on the sea. There can be no trading community there on a large scale. There is to be no High Court there. There will be the people who will come up to do business with the Government from time to time; there will be nobody else. Your new city is to be placed outside the walls of a quite small native town of 200,000 people, and there the Government will live shut off, as I think, from the rest of India. If that be at all a correct anticipation, and I hope it may not be, do believe me that the isolation of your Government will have this effect. In the first place, it will diminish its prestige; in the second place, it will re-act upon the efficiency of administration; and in the third place, it will shorten your rule in India. So strongly do you feel on that point that in one despatch the Government of India or the Secretary of State speaks of the removal to Delhi as a proof of the unalterable determination to maintain British rule in India. Why it should be necessary to give any demonstration of that principle I do not know. (Hear, hear.) I should have thought it was the basic principle of British rule, and how the shifting of the capital from the English city with which it has been associated for 140 years to the dead capital of Mahomedan kings can indicate a fixed determination to maintain your rule in India I cannot tell. (Hear, hear.) And if you re-assert your determination to do so at the same time that

APPENDIX.

you weaken the supports on which that determination rests you will not be better off, but worse off.

There only remains the question of finance and the question of finance is in a sense the most important of all. What will this cost? The Government of India say:—"The cost of the transfer will be considerable, but we cannot conceive that a larger sum than £4,000,000 will be necessary, including the three years' interest on capital, while the works and buildings are being completed." And against this must be set the rise in the value of Government land in Delhi, the sale of Government lands and buildings at Calcutta, and the utilisation of Durbar works at Delhi. I ask is it conceivable that these works can be completed in three years? I tell you they will not be done in ten years. At Dacca, where we had to create a provincial capital, it is six years since we began the Government buildings and offices, and they are not complete yet. You are going to build, not a provincial capital, but a great capital for all India in three years. The idea is ridiculous. Is it conceivable that your expenditure can be confined within £ 4,000,000? Just look at the items that have to be considered. In the first place there is the cost of the purchase of land. You will take that compulsorily and, therefore, no doubt, you will only pay the market value. Then there is the cost of the buildings you are going to place upon it the new Government House, the new Council Chamber, the new Secretariat, new offices for every department, or, at any rate, for a majority of the departments of one of the most complex and elaborate systems of Government in the world. It is not merely the

APPENDIX.

cost of the land, but the cost of reclaiming and draining it, and of providing a water supply. Then there is the cost of the extra garrison which you must have to protect your Viceroy when you set him and the Government of India in the plains of Delhi. I pass to Behar and the new Province there. There is cost of the new capital at Patna, the cost of the new summer station for that Province, and of the new High Court at Patna, for which there is already agitation. All these are initial charges only, but when they are satisfied there will be very heavy recurring charges. Then, I think, any accountant will tell you that you ought to include in the prime cost the loss on the official structures and buildings which you have set up in such profusion in Calcutta, and which will either remain un-occupied or, if parted with, will only be parted with at a loss. Since that estimate was made, I have consulted many authorities much better able to give an opinion than I am, and have not found a single one who has estimated the total cost of these proceedings at less than £8,000,000. The majority estimate the cost at £10,000,000 while there are others, to whom I myself belong, who say that the cost will not be less than £12,000,000. And what is the moment at which you propose to place this charge on the revenues of India? You are confronted now with the imminent loss of your opium revenue to the extent of some millions per annum. Your Finance Minister of India has, in two successive years in his Budget speech, repeated these words:—

“I am sure it is absolutely essential to introduce great sobriety in our public expenditure if we are to avoid deficit, and consequently, enhanced taxation.”

APPENDIX.

It was only three months ago that we were discussing in this House the proposed abolition by the Government of India of a few administrative offices, saving a few thousands of rupees a year, and advocated by them mainly on the score of economy. Even now, almost immediately, you are going to send out a Commission in order to discuss whether you cannot, with a view to greater economy, reduce your Native Army. Money is everywhere wanted in India at this moment for railways, irrigation, education, public works, and social reform. This is the moment at which you propose to place on the Indian taxpayers this great burden. Without further explanation this seems one of the most rash ventures which His Majesty's Government have yet taken in hand.

There is one paragraph in the despatch of the Government of India which has attracted little attention in this country, but which seems to me to be in a sense the most significant of all. It says:—
“The only possible solution of the difficulty would be gradually giving the Provinces a larger measure of self Government until at last India would consist of a number of administrations autonomous in all provincial affairs, with the Government of India above them all and possessing power to interfere in case of misgovernment, but ordinarily restricting their functions to matters of Imperial concern.” By Imperial matters are meant, I suppose, the frontier and the Army. Such a federation of self-governing, quasi-independent States—whether good or bad, and in my view it is bad—represents a scheme of Indian Government wholly different from that which has hitherto prevailed. It is not by dividing governments

APPENDIX.

that India has been built up but by the existence of a strong central authority, controlling and supervising all, which you have persuaded in times past the best of your statesmen and administrators to take up. It is true that as time as gone on there has been a delegation of powers to local governments—an inevitable and proper process of which we have not yet reached the end. But if you are going to contemplate, as this despatch indicates, a policy of separate States in India, a sort of Home Rule all round—Mr. John Bright's idea of an India divided into separate States, with separate Governments, separate armies, and so on—if you are going to abandon that uniformity in the main principles of Government in the guiding principles of your administration which you have hitherto observed, the result can only lead through disruption to disaster. That is my fear. My fear about this establishment of the capital at Delhi is that your Central Government, instead of becoming stronger, will become weaker. My view is that you will become dissociated from the life of India, and that gradually, as Provinces follow the line you have laid down, your Viceroy in Delhi will become a sort of puppet like the Mogals at the end of their regime. When trouble comes it will not be by separate Provinces acting on their own account that India will be saved, but by a strong Central Government exercising sufficient control over all. I wish I could have accepted the decision of his Majesty's Government in absolute silence but this House would be of little use and those of us who have served in India would be of little use in the discharge of our duties, if on an occasion of such tremendous consequence as this we did

APPENDIX.

not fearlessly state what we believe to be true.
(Cheers.)

LORD CREWE'S REPLY.

I did not expect that any of the five noble lords, members of this House who have held the office of Viceroy of India would be likely to start with any bias in favour of the proposals which His Majesty's Government and the Government of India have put forward. It is not human nature for any man who has done the work of such an office, with distinction to suppose that the same work will be as adequately done by another man in an entirely different position. The noble earl has recollections of great public events, *quorum pars magna fui*, when the Government of India was carried on at Calcutta and he possesses many delightful and some sacred recollections of his own life there. It is inconceivable, therefore, that either he or any other noble lord who has filled the same office can start with a bias in favour of so large a change. But that does not mean that all these five noble lords share the whole of the objections which the noble lord has stated to our policy, both as a whole and in its details, and that some of them may not have found reason when they have examined more closely into the matter to modify the objections which I admit they at first were naturally likely to entertain. If I have anything to complain of in the speech of Lord Curzon it would be that throughout his tone was that of prosecuting counsel. I do not think he has said one word in favour of any detail of any one of our suggestions and I could not help observing continual instances of the well-disciplined exaggeration of the practised

APPENDIX.

advocate, who knows how to add a little colour at some points and deepen shades at other points.

The earlier part of Lord Curzon's speech dealt not so much with the general merits or details of our plan as with the mode and time of its announcement. Like some other critics he described our action as unconstitutional, using thereby a very hard and sometimes ill-used word which seems almost to have degenerated into the condition of a term of a general vituperation to which no special meaning may necessarily attach. In this case, however, the noble earl did attach something of a definition to his use of the word, because he said that we had violated the settled practice of the Constitution and had screened ourselves from attack by the course we took. As I listened to him I could not help congratulating ourselves that we had screened ourselves from attack, because I do not know what his method of criticism would have been if we had not taken that particular precaution. There are two sets of arguments upon which it is possible to accuse us of unconstitutional action. One is that before framing, and certainly before carrying out, this policy we ought to have obtained the sanction of Parliament and the other is that if it be granted that this action of ours is so purely executive that it was not necessary for us to obtain the previous sanction of Parliament, even then, that it was an improper thing that the announcement should have been made by His Majesty at the Durbar at Delhi. Of course, if the first of these charges could be sustained the second would be also sustained. Because if it had been necessary for us to obtain previous Parliamentary sanction either to the removal of the seat of Government from Calcutta to Delhi, or

APPENDIX.

to the creation of the new Province, it is obvious there would have been public discussion, and therefore there would have been no possibility of its being announced for the first time at the Durbar.

There seems to be some misapprehension as to the origin of our policy. I have seen it spoken of as though it had been imposed upon the Government of India from here by His Majesty's Government in obedience to certain abstract principles which are believed to be those of the Liberal Party. That is, of course, altogether untrue. The whole policy was worked out step by step between the Government of India and ourselves here, as a series of Acts of Administration, in some degree interdependent but distinct and separate in themselves. The noble earl reminded us that even Lord Beaconsfield, with all the gorgeousness of his Oriental Imagination, did not attempt to carry out the assumption of the title of Empress of India by Queen Victoria without applying to Parliament. That is perfectly true. But then, the change in the Royal style was a matter which affected this country as much as it did India. I am disposed to agree with the noble lord that certain members of the party to which I belong then took a mistaken line in objecting to the assumption of the Imperial title, because events have proved that it was not merely harmless but was in itself desirable. But I would remind him that the backbone of the protest which Liberals then made against the assumption of the Imperial title was the belief that the imagination of Lord Beaconsfield would cause that title to be generally used here in substitution of the ancient style of King of England. Then the noble earl went on to deal

APPENDIX.

with what is called the partition of Bengal. In speaking of the various circumstances connected with that partition rather than the partition itself, the noble earl used a tone which I did not quite recognise remembering as I did the debate of June 13, 1908. To-day the noble earl told us that in bringing about that partition he knew what the criticism of the Opposition would be and that he decided to bear the brunt of it. But my recollection of the former debate is that the various noble lords, including the noble earl, who were, or might have been, concerned in that partition, were almost tumbling over each other in their readiness to deny that what they called the credit of it ought to be claimed by them. But at this moment we are mainly concerned with a comparison of the manner in which that great administrative change, was brought about and that in which the re-partition of Bengal has been brought about by us. I think it is a fair comment that the partition of Bengal was treated by the Government of India and the Secretary of State as an administrative Act, not only requiring the sanction of Parliament, but one of which Parliament need not be informed. When Viscount Midleton who was then Secretary for India, made his speech on the Indian Budget in the House of Commons that year he never alluded to the subject of the partition of Bengal, although that is an occasion upon which all matters of importance to India are discussed. Therefore I think we can claim that the action of the then Government of India and Secretary of State was a precedent for not consulting Parliament previously upon these proposals of ours. Of course the ultimate control of Parliament over Indian

APPENDIX.

affairs cannot be restricted, and lies in the fact that it can, at any time, get rid of those who are responsible for the conduct of Indian affairs. But Parliament has not sought to discuss the details of the administrative Acts of the Indian Government beforehand though it reserves to itself the right of saying that those who carry out administrative Acts, which they are entitled by law to carry out, must be subject to any penalty it may think fit to inflict upon them if these Acts are disapproved. I confess that it seems to me that, in taking the line he did on that particular point, the noble earl was walking on somewhat thin ice, because he spoke almost as though India had a Parliamentary system. He spoke without reserve or explanation of the representative bodies whose approval ought to have been sought beforehand, and he seemed to take up a position in that regard which some of those who are called in India very advanced politicians would, I think, hesitate to take up. It is, after all, idle to pretend that there is anything resembling a Parliamentary system in India.

Earl Curzon: When I talked about consulting representative bodies in India I was not alluding to Legislative Councils; I was alluding to the Chambers of Commerce and various associations in the country who have always been consulted by the Government whenever any decisive change was contemplated.

The Marquess of Crewe: I am very glad to have that explanation, and it will be useful because I am afraid that others might have fallen into the same error as I did. Apparently the noble earl was using the word "representative" in its purely descriptive sense. But of course the charge may

APPENDIX.

still be levelled against us that, though we did not come to Parliament or bring the line of our policy before any official bodies in India, we ought to have thrown it on the table to the world at large for public discussion. To turn for one moment to the partition of Bengal. It is quite true that that was in some degree discussed. If I remember aright, in the spring of 1904 the noble earl himself attended some meetings in Eastern Bengal—that is to say, in that part of the province in which the change was likely to be particularly acceptable, in which he foreshadowed the wider scheme and the possible creation of a Lieutenant-Governor.

Let me ask you to consider for a moment what would have been the result if we had adopted the course of throwing our scheme on the table for discussions in the Press. We could foresee, and I do not think we should have been wrong, who would be the particular parties who would take exception to the particular parts of our scheme, the reasons for which they would take those objections, and the manner in which they would take them. It is as we hold, one of the merits of the scheme that it does not represent the triumph of any one particular party or creed among the different parties and creeds involved, and there are therefore some features of it which almost any party of section, if they could get the rest of the scheme, would wish to see away. For instance, I have no doubt that a great many of the inhabitants of Bengal would have thought the scheme an infinitely better one if the Presidency of Bengal had been constituted just as we constituted it, but if at the same time Calcutta was left as the capital. They would undoubtedly have preferred that. On the other hand,

APPENDIX.

the Mahomedan population of Eastern Bengal, speaking generally, would have preferred to maintain the great numerical preponderance which they were given under the noble earl's scheme in Eastern Bengal. If they could have kept that, they would have welcomed on several different grounds the transference of capital from Calcutta to Delhi. Suppose, therefore, for the sake of argument we had made this question a subject of pointed controversy in this country, announcing that it was an administrative act that we intend to carry out, but that we should be glad to hear what various people had to say upon it. There would undoubtedly have been a marked and lively agitation in Calcutta among the English residents there. I dare say the noble earl would have led part of the agitation which was going to be carried on in this country. It would have been, I think, a regrettable agitation. It might have led—and I myself should greatly have regretted the circumstances but I should in no way have shrunk from it—it might have led to the application to some of the English papers in Calcutta of the more extreme rigours of the Press Act, which, of course, might be applied to them as much as to the vernacular Press. There would also, no doubt, have been a certain degree of agitation on the lines mentioned by the noble earl among the Mahomedans of Eastern Bengal. Apart from those two communities, I do not hesitate to say that all the rest of India would have supported us on the general merits of the scheme as a whole just as they are supporting us now. I do not think the agitation would have produced the immediate disappearance from the scene of the Viceroy and myself. But it would have been an agitation of some violence, possibly of some length, and it

APPENDIX.

would have left a great deal of ill-feeling behind it. And I ask—What would have been gained by it? Why was it necessary to embark on a Press agitation or an agitation by public meeting upon this series of purely administrative acts?

I come to the next half of the charge of unconstitutional action—namely, that the announcement should not have been made by His Majesty in person. I do not draw any distinction, I do not think it is possible to draw any, between any announcement made on such an occasion by His Majesty's own lips or made on his behalf and at his command by the Viceroy in his presence. So far as the effect of those two announcements is concerned, the former of course weighs more in grandeur and solemnity, but as regards the absolute necessity of carrying out the announcement thus made, it applies not less to an announcement made at His Majesty's command. It seems to come to this, that the opinion of the noble earl and those who agree with him is that no announcement ought to be made at Delhi by or on behalf of His Majesty which would cause any difference of opinion in India. If that is so, it seems to me to come very near to saying that no announcement should be made at the Durbar at all. You can hardly suggest any form of announcement which could be made at the Durbar which might not be a subject of dispute and even of discontent to a certain number of people in India. Even the most crude and Oriental form of announcement, that of mere largess, is open to the possible objection that its distribution may cause discontent. The same would apply even more strongly to the remission of any tax because the remission of one

APPENDIX.

tax may easily cause at least as much discontent as the imposition of another. The answer, I think, to the objection that it was not wise for this announcement to be made by His Majesty at the Durbar is the general gratification which was caused all over India by the fact that this important and, in some points of view, solemn announcement was made on the most solemn occasion that has occurred in the recent history of India. I am convinced that there would have been a feeling all over India of bitter disappointment if it had turned out that the Durbar was merely an occasion for the spectacle of pageantry, however unexampled and however magnificent, and that no serious meaning was to be attached to the unique event of the King-Emperor's visit. In our view the occasion and the subject, especially, of course, that of the transfer of the Capital, were absolutely wedded together, and to have attempted to shirk the responsibility of making this announcement on the particular occasion of the Durbar would simply have shown a mere timidity on our part—a timidity of which I think we should have been fairly and justly accused if within a year or the period which might have been thought a proper interval, we had introduced this policy simply as part of our ordinary administration and government of India.

In one sense, of course, there is no such place as the Capital of India, because the seat of government in India is the place in which the Viceroy summons his Council together. But we have always spoken of Calcutta as the capital, and I am not going to say a word in depreciation of the merits or historical associations of Calcutta. Still, to anyone

APPENDIX.

who looks at the map of India, it does seem a somewhat singular and remarkable fact that the Government of India should be carried on for a short period of the year at Calcutta and for the rest of the year at Simla. If one might venture to make a fanciful historical parallel it is rather as though, during the great days of the Holy Roman Empire, the government of all Europe has been carried on about three months in Barcelona, and for the rest of year at St. Moritz or some other village in the higher Alps. The arrangement is in itself a most singular one, and I think it cannot be disputed that in minds of the great many educated Indians there has been a growing feeling that the stay in the hills has become not merely a question of hot weather migration, but a regular settlement, and does more to impress on the mind that British rule is an alien rule than almost any other feature connected with our Government in India. The noble earl has given us to understand that in making the change the same objection which has been advanced in some quarters to the long stay of the Government at Simla—namely, its isolation—will apply still. I can quite understand that that danger is one which ought to be guarded against, but after all Delhi is not Simla. It is a large city, it is a great emporium of trade, and it is the most important railway junction in India. It is therefore hardly fair, I think, to compare it for this purpose with the charming but isolated settlement in the hills. It is quite true that it will become the duty of the Government of India, particularly of the department of commerce and industry, to keep in close touch with the main current of Indian opinion, and in some respects it will be in a better

APPENDIX.

position to do what it has been in the past. I cannot believe for a moment that the commercial interests of Calcutta will suffer in any way by the change, and I believe that is the sound opinion of Calcutta itself. There is an opinion that her influence will be more marked, that she will be able to put her case more forcibly, and that as the tendency to bigger provincial independence of which the noble earl spoke grows, her independence must in some degree grow with it.

The noble earl went on to speak of Delhi as the new seat of government. He described, he will forgive me for saying, in rather appalling terms the position of Delhi as a city of tombs in view of its past history. The only other important transfer of a capital that has taken place in the memory of anybody now alive was also one from a modern city to what may be described as a city of tombs in quite as full a sense as Delhi. Up to 1864 Turin was the capital of the House of Savoy and the State of Piedmont. In that year the transfer of the capital was made to Florence, and by general admission that was a step towards making Rome the capital whenever that was possible. Six years later it did become possible, and Rome, the city of the dead, strewn with relics of decay, became the centre of all Italy and remains, and we hope always will remain, the capital of Italy. When the Government of Italy moved to Florence there was great agitation. There was even some violence, and some loss of life took place. Then one of the most brilliant heroes of the Italian renovation appealed to his countrymen not to set town against town in rivalry but to think of the interests of Italy as a whole. The tone of that speech was very different

APPENDIX.

from that adopted by a great many of the advocates of Calcutta as the perpetual British capital of India, though I am glad to think that the occurrences that followed in Turin have not followed in Calcutta. The noble earl very fairly and properly drew attention to the care that will have to be taken in planning the new portions of Delhi in regard to sanitation. I can assure him that we are most desirous to obtain the best possible advice, and shall not move in too great a hurry, although I hope that we shall not waste any time, and that certainly we shall not run any risks of setting apart for the new capital any part of the environment of Delhi which cannot be thoroughly drained or is liable to floods, or is otherwise objectionable on sanitary grounds. I have great hopes of securing for the purposes of advice some of the best opinion to be found on the question of town engineering and planning, and we shall be able to have these opinions before us before we take any steps of an irrevocable kind towards starting our new buildings. I can assure the noble earl that there is no doubt whatever that a copious and good water supply will be certainly obtained for the new portion of Delhi.

I do not desire to dwell on the point touched upon by the noble earl as to the strategical questions raised by the transfer. As he frankly admitted, the case is much altered since the Duke of Wellington spoke, and when it had to be frankly admitted even by that heroic personage that it was necessary for the seat of your Government to be somewhere quite close to the coast in order, if the worst came to the worst, that the Viceroy and all his surroundings might be safely packed on board a man-of-war. We are a long way from that state of

APPENDIX.

things, and I do not believe that the fears expressed by the noble earl as to the risks to the Government of India by being so far inland are well grounded. When all is said and done the noble earl will remember that supposing a state of things were to arise in some form of an emeute or some military difficulties might threaten the Government of India, our position at Simla would not be very strong, though, of course, we should be both at Simla and at Delhi in the immediate neighbourhood of a strong force, supposing it was necessary to employ force at all.

I pass on to the strictures of the noble earl upon the separation of the Government of India from the Government of Bengal. He seemed to think that of the various reasons given in the published despatches for desiring to divorce these two Governments, there was only one of real meaning and substance—namely, that it was thought desirable to get the Government of India away from Bengali influence. He somewhat challenged me on that particular point that it was a desirable thing, and alleged that it was bad for the Government of India and the Government of Bengal. I take up that challenge, and do so quite deliberately, because of these proposals there was not one that had more influence on my mind than the importance of breaking the association between the two Governments. It happens that I have had official opportunity of watching the working of a great many different systems of government in the British Empire, ranging from the purely responsible government of a self-governing Dominion to the purely despotic forms of government. I can say without hesitation that in no part of the world I can think of, do I know of a system that seems to me so badly adapted

APPENDIX.

to stand the stress of a difficult period as the relations existing between the Government of India and of Bengal, I say that without the slightest imputation of a personal character. When times are difficult there is no fault you can suggest in a system of government so dangerous as ill defined responsibility, which is exactly what has occurred in this case. The noble earl stated that he himself did not experience any inconvenience of that kind, but then I think I am right in saying that during the whole period he was in relations with Calcutta a peaceful state of things existed, and that the great difficulties in the state of Bengal had not occurred. In this connection I may quote from a Calcutta newspaper, which seems to me to put this part of the case as clearly as one could desire. I quote from the "Statesman" one of the principal Calcutta organs, which did not take a favourable view of our proposals, but which after consideration modified its view, at any rate to some extent :—

"There are very strong arguments in favour of the change, as we pointed out in dealing with the question a fortnight ago. One of those arguments is the increasing difficulty under present day conditions of maintaining Calcutta as the headquarters both of the Imperial and of a great Provincial Government. Such an arrangement is bad for both parties. . . . So long as there is dual control provincial autonomy is impossible."

The House will see, therefore, that the Viceroy and I are by no means alone in the opinions we held, as the noble earl seemed to think.

I will only deal very briefly with the question of the probable cost of these changes because it is a

APPENDIX.

matter on which, of course, everybody is entitled to form his own opinion. When the noble earl tells us that the calculations of costs, instead of being £4,000,000, may rise to £10,000,000, and even up to £12,000,000, which I understand, is the noble earl's own figure, unless one could see a thoroughly detailed account of how these estimates have been reached it is very difficult to argue about them. It is only fair to point out that it would not be wise to treat these estimates in the manner which noble lords opposite from their long experience would naturally be tempted to treat estimates of the kind made by Departments in India. It was of course true that the practice of estimating in India has been, and probably remains to some extent, open to a good deal of criticism. The vice of under-estimation has, no doubt, been very common, but these matters will not be subject to ordinary departmental control. The Government of India are quite determined to devote, not merely special initial attention, but special continuous control, to the care of the great works which will have to be carried out; and the whole of the work will, I hope, be so completely carried out in the light of day that the danger of under-estimation, or of any flagrant excess of cost during the process of construction will be as far as possible avoided. As the noble earl pointed out, the taking of land is in itself but a very small part of the process. The Government of India have announced their intention of taking a very large amount of land, and, owing to the provisions of the land laws of India, that land can be obtained for public purposes without any reference to the possible enhancement of value by reason of the uses to which it may be put. The estimates of the Govern-

APPENDIX.

ment of India do not profess to be exhaustive for reasons which your Lordships well know, and you are entitled to put this down as a further indictment against the secrecy with which the proceedings were conducted. But I should venture to express the hope—it is difficult to speak with certainty—that, though much may be done in three years—it is impossible to suppose that all the works in connection with the new capital will be completed in three years—the total result may not largely exceed the sum suggested by the Government of India.

I will deal briefly with the other points raised by the noble earl. He is one of those, I gather, who think there is something in the constitution of Bengal or the Bengalis which causes it to differ from other parts of India, at any rate from Bombay and Madras, and makes it desirable therefore that the Bengalis should be ruled by Civil servants and not by a Governor in Council. I do not entirely follow that belief. I quite see it is impossible not to see the force of the argument that when the Viceroy was at Calcutta it would have been an exceedingly difficult thing to place also in Calcutta another Englishman of general experience to carry on a sort of rival Government. With regard to Eastern Bengal, I cannot help thinking that the noble earl laid on his colours rather too thickly. It is quite clear that the Mahomedan populations of Eastern Bengal cannot like the diminution of the enormous numerical proportion which they possessed in the province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. It has been suggested that a number of elaborate special arrangements ought to be made by which they would secure power in various bodies throughout the Presidency and secure a distinct por-

APPENDIX.

tion of public offices. It seems to me that the best way to correct the balance against the Mahomedans in any part of India is to give them, even though it may mean considerable expenditure, a chance of improving their position on equal terms with their Hindu fellow subjects. That is best done, I believe, by increasing their facilities for education. It is one of the most gratifying facts with regard to the Mahomedan population of India that so many of them are becoming alive to the advantages of increased educational facilities and it would certainly be our earnest desire to bring those facilities within the reach of as many Mahomedans as we possibly can. As regards the particular repartition of Bengal, the Mahomedan community seems to me to have shown remarkable sense and remarkable self-restraint in the way in which they have taken it. We foresaw that they would not like it, but a great many of them—the most representative of them—have refused to join in anything in the nature of an agitation hostile to the Government. The noble earl claims apparently that the institution of the new Lieutenant Governorship of Eastern Bengal and Assam has been a complete and unqualified success. I should like to give the utmost credit to the able officers concerned, but it seems to me impossible to describe the province as in itself constituting a great success. The combination of Assam and Eastern Bengal has never been liked by Assam. Assam, I think, began to feel to an increasing extent that it was overshadowed by Eastern Bengal, and its identity to some extent obscured. I believe, therefore, that the re-erection of Assam into an independent Chief Commissionership will be thoroughly popular in

APPENDIX.

Assam itself. As regards the residence of the Governor of Bengal I do not think it would be possible to place a statutory obligation upon him to spend a certain time of the year at Dacca. I am certain that both the new Governor-in-Council of Bengal and the Viceroy with whom he will no doubt discuss the question will be convinced that it will be necessary in order to hold the proper balance between the different parts of the Province and to avoid slipping back into the unfortunate state of things before the partition, to spend a certain part of the year at that place.

In considering the merits or demerits of the scheme it is necessary to regard it as a whole and to consider the balance of the different parts. The noble earl seemed to give colour to the belief that the whole matter has been carried out in the spirit of hurry, which he truly pointed out is foreign both to the Government of India and to the India Office. As a matter of fact, the consideration of the question began more than a year ago, and since then it was the subject of close thought and of the freest consideration within the limited area of discussion to which it was necessarily kept. The main question we had to ask, particularly when the discussion reached the point at which it became likely that we should suggest the announcement at the Delhi Durbar—was whether there were people whose interests and welfare were likely to be in any degree compromised or injured by the new policy. It was quite possible that the injury inflicted upon some class of persons might be so grave as in the opinion of impartial observers to outweigh any benefits which could be obtained from the change. That I gather to be the opinion

APPENDIX.

of the noble earl. But I honestly believe he will find himself a member of a very small minority, even in this country: and in India he will find himself a member of an almost infinitesimal minority, for the general reasons which are given in the two despatches of the Government of India are considered by public opinion in India as conclusively showing that the benefits to be obtained from the change are greater than any damage of substance or of sentiment which could be sustained by any class of the community.

I therefore say without hesitation that, in spite of the most powerful and well-directed attack of the noble earl, I remain entirely unrepentant both as to the general features of the scheme and also as to the fact that the policy had the honour of being announced by the King in Durbar at Delhi. After all the opinion of India is what really matters. I should like to remind the House of the very remarkable message which was sent from India after His Majesty had left and was published in the newspapers on the day he reached England. It was unique and unprecedented in the respect that it represented the spontaneous and joint action of the Indian Princes and those who in one way or another are entitled to speak the educated opinion of British India. It was organised by some of the most powerful representatives and also some of the most conservative among Indian rulers; and it was also authorised by some of those who are spoken of as the most representative of the advanced politicians in India. I do not think it attracted the attention it should have in this country, because, naturally and properly, it was sent through the Viceroy, and it was supposed on that account to

APPENDIX.

possess something of an official character. As a matter of fact it had nothing whatever to do with the Viceroy or the Government of India; and the Viceroy did not even know of the intentions of the writers until the whole matter was settled. I think one is entitled to take that message as expressing what I believe and what I know is the general opinion of all classes in India, namely, that the making of this announcement by His Majesty at Delhi was one of the great and most notable features of the occasion: and that the kind of criticism which has been suggested by the noble lord and by some others, namely, that in offering our advice to His Majesty to make this announcement on that occasion we were committing a breach of propriety, and indeed doing whatever may be meant by that somewhat vague word unconstitutional, has not entered the mind of the Indian people as a whole or of those who either in British India or in the Native States are entitled to speak as their representatives.

The Earl of Minto, said that this was the first occasion on which he had had the honour of addressing their lordships since his return from India, and he confessed that in many ways he would have preferred not to take part in the debate. He wished that for many reasons patent to their lordships it might have been possible to avoid altogether the discussion of the points raised yesterday by Earl Curzon, but at the same time he felt very strongly that it would be impossible to refrain from a discussion of the policy of his Majesty's Government, effecting vast changes of momentous Imperial importance. As the last member of that House who had had the honour to hold the high position of Viceroy of India and as having lately

APPENDIX.

been intimately connected with its public affairs he felt that he was not entitled to keep silence.

Unfortunately, any criticism of the policy they were considering, which was quite unknown until it was divulged in his Majesty's pronouncement at the Durbar at Delhi, ran the risk of being mistaken in India as a criticism of his Majesty's personal action, and indirectly of their Majesties' visit to India, than which nothing could be further from their lordships' intention. Therefore the position was a very delicate one. His Majesty's Government were answerable for it, and he thought that it ought never to have arisen. It would be a calamity if anything said in that House should in the slightest degree mar the magnificent results of their Majesties' visit to India. The greatness of the Imperial idea that prompted that visit, the determination with which the King persisted in it in the face of great difficulties, the courage with which their Majesties faced much hard work and exertion and not a little personal risk, had certainly won their admiration, while the magnificent reception they met with from their Indian subjects of every nationality, religion and caste bore great testimony to the loyal devotion of India to the Throne which their Majesties' sympathetic personality had done so much to confirm. It was his lot to serve for five anxious years in India: years of political unrest, when the political atmosphere was dangerously heated. Lord Morley knew well the stress of those times, and he would always be grateful to the noble viscount for the spirited support that he was always ready to give him. Before he sailed for home great administrative reforms had been introduced and many of the just claims of India had been recognised. These

APPENDIX.

had already done a very great deal to restore confidence in the justice of British rule, and a dangerous smouldering discontent had everywhere given way to a much more friendly feeling. But something more was wanted, something that would impress upon the people of India that they, together with their British fellow-subjects, owed allegiance to the same great King, that they were together secure of his constant sympathy, and that they together shared in the interests of the Empire; and he earnestly hoped that their Majesties' visit to India had stamped the relations of British and Indian populations with the seal of a lasting friendship. In *The Times* of February 5 there was published a "Message from the Princes and People of India to the People of Great Britain and Ireland," which would seem to him scarcely to have attracted the notice it deserved, and which after conveying "to the great English nation an expression of their cordial good-will and fellowship," continued: "Their Imperial Majesties, by their gracious demeanour, their unfailing sympathy, and their deep solicitude for the welfare of all classes, have drawn closer the bonds that unite England and India and have deepened and intensified the traditional feeling of loyalty and devotion to the Throne and Person of the Sovereign which has always characterized the Indian people." And the message concluded with these weighty words:—"They are confident that this great and historic event marks the beginning of a new era ensuring greater happiness, prosperity, and progress to the people of India under the aegis of the Crown."

In the face of the welcome evidence of so much good work one could not be too careful to avoid in any way marrying its future results; one could only

APPENDIX.

approach with the greatest caution the consideration of the policy of his Majesty's Government contained in the King's pronouncement at Delhi. He had no intention of attempting to deal in detail with the points under discussion. He would rather confine himself to a very few remarks as to the manner in which any previous knowledge of these great changes had been withheld from the British and Indian public until they were announced as an accepted policy which, without any opportunity whatever of considering it they were expected to approve. He readily admitted that there was much that was attractive in the move to Delhi, the capital of the old Mogul Empire. He had often, whilst in India, talked over such a possibility. He was well aware of the warm approval such a suggestion would meet with from the great Chiefs of Central India and Rajputana, whilst the advantages of removing the enlarged Legislative Councils from the political surroundings of Calcutta could not be lost sight of. But on the other hand the interests of Calcutta could not with justice be ignored—the interests of great mercantile houses and of tradesmen. The expense, too, of the move was bound to be enormous, for he altogether disregarded the Government of India's estimate of four millions; and there were strategical considerations as to the best locality for the capital from a military point of view, as to which the best military advice was an Imperial necessity whilst surely the fact that Calcutta had been the capital of our Eastern Empire for over 150 years, that from the days of Clive and Warren Hastings her history had been associated with many glorious deeds and the names of many great administrators, entitled her case to serious

APPENDIX.

public consideration. His Majesty's Government appeared to be ready enough to recognize the sentimental arguments of Bengal. Surely British sentiment had a claim not less than they had to be regarded. Throughout the meagre correspondence which had so far been submitted to them between the Government of India and his Majesty's Government he found very little trace of a due appreciation of the grave issues involved in any removal of the seat of Government.

The same secrecy had been maintained in respect to the reorganization of the Province of Bengal. Lord Curzon's partition of Bengal had become law before he arrived in India, and he was not called upon to deal with its merits or demerits. He listened yesterday with the greatest interest to what the noble earl told their lordships of the careful study which preceded the introduction of the partition legislation, of the thought that was devoted to that legislation, and of the apprehensions in regard to the future as to the results of a reconsideration of that partition and he shared with him in the apprehensions that he expressed. But, though he had nothing to do with the legislations effecting partition, he saw a great deal of the aftermath—the aftermath of unrest, of a dangerous unrest—that followed. And during those years of unrest he had, naturally, peculiar opportunities of knowing what was going on behind the scenes and of forming some judgment as to the genuineness of the so-called national agitation which was in many ways encouraged to rally to the cry of partition, and, notwithstanding the extraordinary and belated discovery of the Government of India as to the resentment

APPENDIX.

which they told them was still as strong as ever in both the Bengals, he unhesitatingly asserted that there was scarcely any genuine national feeling at all in the Bengal agitation against partition. The original agitation in Bengal was really in close touch with the subterranean and dangerous agitation which had been going on for some years in India, and which had not had the opportunity of showing itself above ground before Lord Curzon's partition legislation was introduced.

Lord Mac Donnell asked if the noble lord would give the date of this subterranean agitation.

The Earl of Minto replied that roughly it was three or four years before the partition, which became a useful peg upon which political agitators could hang their grievances. He could assure their lordships that when he left India the agitation against partition was stone dead. He felt bound, in justice to what he knew of Lord Curzon's partition, to say what he had.

Throughout his term of office the Government of India warmly supported Lord Curzon's policy in the Bengals. They were told from home that "partition" was a "settled fact." They over and over again asserted that it must continue to be so. They assured the Mahomedan population of Eastern Bengal of their appreciation of their loyalty and our determination to safeguard their interests. He should think there was scarcely a Civil servant in India who had not declared that it would be impossible for any British Government to reverse the decision it had come to. Only last summer during the Coronation festivities he was approached by a distinguished Bengali leader, who asked if, in view of the King's visit to India, there

APPENDIX.

was no possibility of a reversal of Lord Curzon's partition, and he told him that no Government of India could possibly entertain the idea of such a thing. And now the declarations of the Government of India, repeated over and over again since 1905, had been disowned, with no opportunity for any expression of opinion from the public in India or at home. Such a policy could but depreciate the reputation of British rule in India.

Referring to the gift of Presidency government to Bengal, he said it was a form of government of which he was not enamoured. He had always disliked the power that existed of direct communication with the Secretary of State, which he did not think conducive to the authority of the paramount power in India. Bengal was full of advanced political thought and of political ramifications which the greatest Indian expert would find difficulty in unravelling. Owing to the great increase of postal and telegraph communication, it had now become possible for correspondence to be carried on between Bengal politicians and politicians in this country. In the anxious times with which he had had to deal this correspondence was one of the greatest difficulties with which he had to deal. If an English statesman with no knowledge of Indian affairs were sent to Bengal, however high or broad-minded he might be, with the power of corresponding directly with the Secretary of State, he apprehended that as years went on and with the communication between political parties in Bengal and this country, the result would be administration of Bengal from home instead of by the Viceroy and the Government of India, than which he could not conceive any greater danger. He could find only one

APPENDIX.

explanation for what had been done. A sop had been given to a certain faction in Bengal as a recompense for the removal of the capital from Calcutta to Delhi.

The key to the position created by his Majesty's Government appeared to be contained in a few lines of paragraph 24 in the Government of India's despatch of August 25, They said:—"In the event of these far-reaching proposals being sanctioned by his Majesty's Government, as we trust may be the case, we are of opinion that the presence of his Majesty the King-Emperor at Delhi would offer a unique opportunity for a pronouncement of one of the most weighty decisions ever taken since the establishment of British rule in India." One of the most weighty decisions since the establishment of British rule in India was to be taken without consultation with a single soul in India outside the Viceroy's Council, and without the advice of a single public man in this country, no matter how specially qualified he might be to give it. For the sake of a unique opportunity the Government of India and His Majesty's Government decided to ignore their responsibility to the public in India and at home. That was the position His Majesty's Government appear to him so unfortunately to have brought about. He had not attempted to deal in any detail with their scheme. He had endeavoured to limit himself to a criticism of the secrecy—the unconstitutional secrecy—with which they had withheld from the public all possible consideration of it. Much as he regretted the necessity for this debate, he could not see how on public grounds their Lordships could justifiably have refrained from any discussion of such momentous decisions affecting our Indian Empire.

APPENDIX.

LORD MORLEY.

The noble lord who has just sat down said truly that the discussion would be ineffectual, as the motion to the noble earl could produce no result in the way of a change of policy. At the same time, the Government do not for a moment deny that the matters involved in the two policies are fairly topics for Parliamentary debate. I am bound to say I think that some parts of the noble earl's speech last night were not all that could have been desired from a man of his authority and antecedents in Indian policy and history. For example, I think we were all rather surprised, and some of us shocked, that he should have thought it worth while to bring up that story about the Indian who had been invested with a ribbon and made an offensive remark. It is satisfactory to us to be able to say that that story was completely unfounded. The noble earl has been misinformed. It is untrue, and even if true, I cannot but think that it is the kind of thing that on reflection the noble earl had better have omitted.

The debate this afternoon has in no way helped the object of the noble earl. We have had speaker after speaker, four of them, all adverse to his views and propositions. The speeches of Lord MacDonnell, a man of special competence on this subject of Lord Harris, Lord Reay, and now Lord Amptill, all deprecated the line taken by the noble earl, and all approved almost without reservation of the new policy. There was one exception which was particularly disagreeable to me, the speech of Lord Minto. It was particularly disagreeable to me

APPENDIX.

because for five years he and I were good comrades in a rather stormy voyage. It was good of him to say something about me, and I can cordially say the same of him. He dwells upon the point of what he calls secrecy. He thinks there ought to have been a much more ample discussion before those resolutions were finally adopted. Now what does he exactly mean? He says "Oh there were Indian authorities in England who ought to have been consulted; there were lieutenant-governors in India who ought to have been consulted." What would have been gained by asking their opinion upon a point which depended, not upon old history, not upon old arguments threshed out but upon the present actual situation? How does my noble friend suppose that any of the noble lords who have been Viceroys of India or Governors of Presidencies could have given point to questions like the transfer of the capital from Calcutta to Delhi, which have been before the people of India officials and others, for generation after generation. As for consulting lieutenant-governors I do not wish to say any thing disrespectful of them, but looking back upon co-operation with my noble friend I am not sure that I can recall any particular reverence that was paid to them by my noble friend or myself. Therefore I think that is rather a fictitious point. Then my noble friend expressed a very adverse opinion, indeed, to Presidency government, and he made a point that Bengal is the worst place in which to have a government of that kind, and he implied among other reasons because there was communication with people in England. My noble friend and I used to differ sometimes. He attached a good deal more importance to the communications

APPENDIX.

with gentlemen in the House of Commons and newspaper editors and so on than I ever did; and I suffered from them much more than my noble friend did, because the result of those communications was a shower of questions to me in the House of Commons.

As for partition, there was never, so far as I recollect, any single atom of dissension between my noble friend and myself. I used to be questioned and blamed very much by Lord MacDonnell, for example, for not reversing the partition right away. It is said I did not like the method in which partition was carried, but there were other reasons, and what were they? My noble friend was made Viceroy in November, I became Secretary of State in December. We were therefore a new Government. I am sure the noble earl (Lord Minto) would be the first person to admit that a great party sweep having taken place in Great Britain, and a Government of a different tone and complexion having come into power, it was all important that nothing should be done to lead people in India to suppose for a moment that there was going to be any great sweep or reversal of policy. There was another reason—namely that it would be wrong, partition having only been in operation for six months or less—wrong and rash for us at once to reverse an operation the effects of which we had had no opportunity of forming a judgment upon. There was a third reason. My noble friend and I were engaged upon a project of Council reform. That was a project which was regarded by a great many people as dangerous as, hazardous in the extreme as opening the door to all kinds of mischief. It was a reform for the successful

APPENDIX.

carrying out of which we were bound to have with us as far as ever we could, the good opinion and the friendly aid of the Indian Civil Service and of Anglo-Indian public opinion. If they had seen that we were going to reverse Lord Curzon's policy, that we were then going to launch out on this difficult and arduous voyage, we should have run the risk of having our whole course and prospects seriously damaged. Friends of my own were very angry with me for many months for not taking immediate steps for reversing that policy. That, if you like, would have been a concession to clamour, if we had reversed partition in December, 1905. There was a well known member of Parliament who wrote a letter and said that if they would be tenacious in keeping up the clamour they would squeeze me into advising my noble friend opposite to give up. That is the story of the failure to reverse, and if there is any charge of inconsistency in abstaining from reversing partition in 1906, 1907, and onwards, and now accepting the policy, which is not a reversal but a modification of the policy of partition, my withers are at all events completely unprung.

I am only going to make one or two remarks more upon the Constitutional point; What is exactly the Constitutional point? Lord Salisbury said, "I hold that the Monarchy should seem to be as little Constitutional as possible." I think I understand what he meant, but it is a doubtful proposition. But it is true that we are now dealing with what is undoubtedly delicate Constitutional ground. A very admirable Constitutional writer once said. "It would create great surprise if people were told how many things a Sovereign could do without consulting Parliament," The Indian system

APPENDIX.

of government is a written Constitution resting on statutes and instruments, warrants and the like which are as good as statutes. The ultimate responsibility India Government shares beyond all questions with the Imperial Government represented by a Secretary of State and in the last resort, therefore, through the Secretary of State by Parliament. The Cabinet of the day, through a Secretary of State, has an indefeasible right, within limits laid down by law to dictate policy, to initiate instructions, to reject proposals, to have the last word in every question that arises and the first word in every question that in their view they think ought to arise. There cannot be any doubt in the mind of any noble lord that that is the final doctrine. It has been accepted by everybody, and how can you suppose that we should have tendered any advice to the Sovereign which would in any way have impaired that doctrine? What is the Government of India to do? The Government of India and the Home Government have to regard two sets of public opinion obviously—public opinion in India and public opinion here. Is it not clear that we have satisfied opinion in India? We do know that the step itself and the policy, including the making of the announcement by the King, have been received with warm approval in India both by the Anglo-Indian officials and by the Indian population. Here is the announcement of the Majesty:—"We are pleased to announce to our people that upon the advice of our Ministers and after consultation with our Governor-General in Council we have decided," and so on. Is not that exactly what the Constitution demands? There has been a prediction. The noble earl has predicted,

APPENDIX.

among other things that the finance will be nearer £12,000,000 than £4,000,000. I care as much about finance as I do about any Department in the Government of India. I think half of my time was spent in remonstrating about discrepancies between estimates sent from India and the actual expenditure when the bills came to be paid. But what my noble friend said last night ought I think to reassure all those who had nervous misgivings which I confess in the early stage of these proceedings I myself had. The policy of the Indian Councils Bill has proved an extraordinary success and had more than realized the hopes of my noble friend and myself, and I hope that as the predictions with regard to the policy of 1909 have been realized the misgivings that the noble earl opposite gave utterance to last night will prove to be unfounded.

Earl Curzon.—May I say one word in reply to the noble Viscount, who rebuked me for having told a story yesterday? Perhaps it was rather a trivial one and perhaps unworthy of being mentioned here. But with regard to my authority for it, since the noble viscount asked for it explicitly, I may say that I told the story on high authority, and not upon gossip, but with permission to use it in this House and the assurance that it was absolutely true.

The Marquess of Crewe.—Still, on the point of this rather unfortunate story, may I say that I am informed that the story as told by the noble earl has been telegraphed to India in this form, that the personage whom he reported as having received a high decoration said that it must be

APPENDIX.

regarded as a rope on which to hang himself. The story has gone out in this form as if the personage in question was actually invested with the decoration and made the observation at the time. As told by the noble lord, the story, I suppose, is susceptible of that interpretation although I am quite certain it was not the story the noble earl intended to tell. I am very sorry that he thought his story worth telling at all, but as told in that form it would mean that an insult of a most offensive kind was inflicted by this Indian gentleman with respect to an Order conferred by His Majesty, and naturally that such a story should be believed in India would be most unfortunate from every point of view, and would be a grievous injury to the very loyal gentleman who has most obviously pointed out in the anecdote by the noble earl. My noble friend, therefore, drew attention to the fact in order to state that the story in the form in which it has been repeated is not a true one. It can very easily be shown that it is impossible that the story could be true, because the particular gentleman in question although at Delhi, was ill, and was never invested with a decoration. (Laughter.) Therefore the story must obviously be untrue. As I said yesterday, I do not know on what authority a casual remark supposed to have been made by this gentleman became the basis for this story, but it is of the first importance to contradict absolutely the form in which it has been conveyed to India through the public Press; and I have no doubt that the noble earl will be grateful to me for doing so.

Earl Curzon.—I am not responsible for the form in which it was sent to India. That is really most unfair. The story as sent out to India is mutilated,

APPENDIX.

erroneous, and offensive, but I have really no responsibility for that. I regret, of course, that I ever told it, but for the consequences I am not responsible.

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