

THE INDIAN LIBERAL CLUB.

PAMPHLET No. 2.

RATIONALE OF SELF-GOVERNMENT.



PAPER READ BY

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*Late of Baroda Civil Service.*

*August 1917.*



BOMBAY. ]

[ Price—As. 8

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## LIST OF BOOKS AND ARTICLES CONSULTED.

- 
- Morley ... Indian Speeches.
- A. C. Mazumdar ... Indian National Evolution, 1915.
- G. K. Gokhale ... Presidential Address, Benares, 1905.
- Mrs. Besant ... How India Wrought for Freedom, 1915.
- Roberts ... Historical Geography of India, 1916.
- ..... The Empire and the Future.
- (A series of Imperial Studies Lectures Delivered in the University of London King's College 1916.)
- Hansard ... Parliamentary Debates, 1857-58. Third Series Vol. CXLVIII.
- Dadabhai Naoroji ... Essays, Speeches and Writings Ed. C. L. Parikh, 1887.
- Rivett-Carnac ... "Many Memories." 1910.
- Chaubal ... Minute of Dissent-Report of the Public Services Commission.
- Alfred Lyall ... "The Land of Regrets."
- Graham Wallas ... The Great Society, 1915.
- L. H. Bailey ... The State and the Farmer.
- ..... Royal Colonial Institute Journal "United Empire"
- ..... Report of the Progress Agriculture in India 1915-16.

- ..... Finance and Revenue Accounts  
of the Govt. of India 1915-16.
- "Home Counties"... A Free Farmer in a Free State.
- ..... Report of the Committee on  
Corporation in India, 1915.
- John Matthai ... Village Government in British  
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- Gourlay ... Diaries of tours.
- Augustine Birrell ... Obiter Dicta-Carlyle, 1902.
- H. N. Brailsford ... The Commonweal-The English  
Woman's Vote, 3rd August 1917.
- Bernard Mallet ... British Budgets, 1887-1913. (1913)
- Woodrow Wilson ... The State. 1900.
- J. S. Mill ... Representative Government.
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Preface. Procedure of the House  
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- Vinogradoff ... Self-Government in Russia, 1915.
- Bannerjee ... Public Administration in Ancient  
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## RATIONALE OF SELF-GOVERNMENT.\*

### Angle of Vision.

In undertaking to read a paper on the Rationale of Self-government, it may appear as if I am labouring to prove the obvious, especially as no responsible person wants to dispute the statement that the *ultimate* goal for India is the attainment of self-government within the Empire. But while this is true enough, it is instructive to compare what Mr. Morley, as he then was, said in his first speech on the Indian Budget in August 1906, with what Lord Ronaldshay stated in his reply to the addresses presented to him at Dacca only a few weeks ago. Mr. Morley concluded his speech as follows:—

"I do not know if there is any case in history of an autocratic, personal, or absolute, Government co-existing with free speech and free right of meeting. For as long a time as my poor imagination can pierce through, for so long a time our Government in India must partake, and in no small degree, of the personal and absolute element. But that is no reason why we should not try this great experiment of showing that you can have a strong and effective administration along with free speech and free institutions. (Cheers). That policy is a noble one to think of, but the task is arduous; and because it is noble and because it is arduous, I recommend the policy of which I have only

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\* Paper read before the Indian Liberal Club on 29th and 21st of Aug. 1917.

given a broad outline, to the adoption of the House."  
(Cheers.)

Lord Ronaldshay observed as follows—"I should indeed be a false friend to you if I were ever to seem to give consent by my silence to the belief which some of you express, that this aspiration can possibly be realised within the brief period of my rule. Those who seriously hold such belief—if indeed there be such—can have given no thought at all to the immense practical difficulties which stand in the way. I would recommend to their attention the informed and considered opinion of the President of the National Congress held in Bombay two years ago, that the path is long and devious and that we shall have to tread weary steps before we get to the promised land. Self-government within the Empire will some day be achieved, but it will come as the crown of much patient and sustained endeavour and by no conceivable possibility can it be brought about by a mere stroke of the pen. That is not to say that steady advance towards the goal will not be made. I hope, nay, I am sure, that it will; but I am firmly convinced that no jerry-built edifice will stand and that what is required is a solid structure, raised with thought and care upon a firm and well-laid foundation. In all efforts towards that end, you may count upon my warm encouragement and my sympathetic support."

There is not much evidence, here, of a change in the "angle of vision" of which we have been hearing so much. The angle remains the same, narrow as ever,



but the vision is clearer than before. Otherwise there is such a close and striking resemblance in these two utterances, that it is difficult to realise that they are separated by an interval of almost 11 years. The influence of the war is perceptible only in one particular, namely, that while Mr. Morley could see only a personal and absolute Government for India, tempered by free speech and free institutions, for as a long time as his "poor imagination" could pierce through, Lord Ronaldshay with his imagination stimulated by the exigencies of the world-wide conflict was able to descry Self-government within the Empire, in the distance, as the "crown of much patient and sustained endeavour." There is thus more a change of phraseology than of intention or method. While there is tolerable agreement about the goal in view between the people and the Government, there is acute difference about the the time necessary to attain it. The divergence of views on this point is fundamental and there is a demonstrable need for analysis and comprehension. For this purpose an insight into the growth of the demand for Self-government is indispensable. How, and under what circumstances was this demand formulated? The history of political agitation will furnish the reply.

### **History of Political Agitation.**

The demand for Self-government came rather late in the history of political agitation. "Prior to 1880 even the semblance of a political status the people had none, while their economic condition was becoming

more and more straitened every day. Indian wants and grievances were accumulating with the rapidly changing conditions of the country, education was expanding Indian views and aspirations, and Indian thought from various causes had been for a long time in a state of ferment, vainly seeking for some sort of palliatives for the complicated diseases from which the country had been helplessly suffering in almost every direction." The Indian National Congress held its first sitting in Bombay in December 1885. Its aims and objects were authoritatively stated by the late Mr. Gokhale in his Presidential address to the Congress held at Benares in 1905. He said:—

"When the movement was first inaugurated, we were under the influence of that remarkable outburst of enthusiasm for British Rule, which had been evoked in the country by the great Viceroyalty of the Marquis of Ripon.....

.....  
 Lord Ripon's noblest service to this country was that he greatly quickened the processes by which the consciousness of a national purpose comes to establish itself in the minds of the people. The congress movement was the direct and immediate outcome of this realization. It was started to focus and organise the patriotic forces that were working independently of one another in different parts of the country so as to invest their work with a national character and to increase their general effectiveness. Hope at that

time was warm and faith shone bright, largely as a result of Lord Ripon's Vice-royalty, and those who started the congress believed that by offering their criticisms, urging their demands from a national platform where they could speak in the name of all India, they would be able to secure a continuous improvement of the administration and steady advance in the direction of the political emancipation of the people. Twenty years have since elapsed, and during the time much has happened to chill that hope and dim that faith but there can be no doubt that work of great value in our national life has already been accomplished.....

Our record of political concessions won is, no doubt, very meagre, but those that have been secured are of considerable value. Some retrogression has been prevented, and if latterly we have been unable to stem the tide of reaction, the resistance we have offered though it has failed of its avowed purpose, has substantially strengthened our public life.....

The goal of the Congress is that India should be governed in the interests of the Indians themselves and that in course of time a form of Government should be attained in this country similar to what exists in the Self-governing Colonies of the British Empire. For better, or for worse our destinies are linked with those of England and the Congress freely recognises that whatever advance we seek must be within the Empire itself. That advance, moreover,

can only be gradual, as at each stage of the progress it may be necessary for us to pass through a brief course of apprenticeship before we are enabled to go to the next one; for it is a reasonable proposition that the sense of responsibility, required for the proper exercise of the political institutions of the West, can be acquired by an Eastern people through practical training and experiment only. To admit this is not to express any agreement with those who oppose all attempts at reform on the plea that the people are not ready for it. "It is liberty alone" says Mr. Gladstone in words of profound wisdom, "which fits men for liberty." This proposition like every other in politics has its bounds but it is far safer than the counter doctrine, "wait till they are fit." While, therefore, we are prepared to allow that an advance towards our goal may be only by reasonably cautious steps, what we emphatically insist on is that the resources of the country should be primarily devoted to the work of qualifying people by means of education and in other ways for such advance.....

.....  
 Now the Congress wants that all this (India?) should be governed, first and foremost in the interests of the Indians themselves. This result will be achieved only in proportion as we obtain more and more voice in the government of our country."

### **The demand for Self-government.**

In the following year in his Presidential address to the Congress held at Calcutta, Mr. Dadabhai

Naoroji, disappointed, perhaps even disgusted, with the dogmatic and doctrinaire utterances of Mr. John Morley in his first speech on the Indian Budget in August 1906, quoted at the beginning of this paper, formulated the demand for Self-government on Colonial lines as the only means for national salvation. He sketched the goal in bold and clear lines. He did not point to Self-government in the hazy distance, but maintained that "not only has the time fully arrived, but had arrived long past" He concluded his address thus—

"Self government is the only and chief remedy. In Self-government lie over hope, strength and greatness.....I do not know what good fortune may be in store for me during the short period that may be left to me and if I can leave a word of affection and devotion for my country and countrymen I say:— Be united, persevere and achieve Self-government so that the millions now perishing by poverty, famine and plague and the scores of millions that are starving on scanty subsistence may be saved, and India may once more occupy her proud position of yore among the greatest and civilised Nations of the West "

It must be admitted that in this explicit formulation of the demand for Self-Government the G. O. M. of India was in advance of the times and his address took a large section of the Congress entirely-unawares. It had scarcely accustomed itself to look without blinking at the goal in the long distance, sketched by

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1 (Quoted in "How India Wrought for Freedom." p. 447.)

Mr. Gokhale in the previous year and it felt overpowered and confused by its close proximity as advocated by Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji with unerring prescience. The inevitable followed. Differences arose among the followers of the Congress and developed into a split at Surat in 1907. In 1908 the Congress, shaken out of its complacency, framed a constitution and adopted a creed. The first article of the constitution laid down as follows :—

“The objects of the Indian National Congress are the attainment by the people of India of a system of Government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing members of the British Empire and a participation by them in the rights and responsibilities of the Empire on equal terms with those members. These objects are to be achieved by constitutional means by bringing about a steady reform of the existing system of administration and by promotion of national unity, fostering public spirit and developing and organising the intellectual, moral, economic and industrial resources of the country.” In 1909 the Morley-Minto Reforms from which much was expected were introduced. The actual working out of these reforms was, however, left to the Government of India. The franchise, the constituencies and the rules for the conduct of business adopted for giving effect to the Reforms rendered them innocuous and even illusory. This was soon realised owing, especially, to the fate of Resolutions calculated to benefit the masses. The attitude of the Government towards the Resolution on Elementary Education moved by

Mr. Gokhale in March 1910, and its opposition to the introduction of the Bill to make better provision for the extension of Elementary education in the following year, made it clear that nothing was to be expected from the officials and that co-operation by the non-officials was only possible by always consenting to what the Government proposed. The Bureaucracy, like the Bourbons, was found to be unteachable and the conviction began to grow that the "steady reform of the existing system of administration" aimed at by the Congress was impossible so long as the people had no effective voice in the government of the country. A revision of the creed became imperative and it was undertaken. The Congress in 1915 appointed a committee to draw up a scheme of reforms for submission in the year following. In October 1916 nineteen non-official members of the Imperial Legislative Council drew up a Memorandum of reforms and submitted it to the Secretary of State through the Viceroy. This Memorandum anticipated the main proposals of the scheme adopted by the Congress a few months afterwards. It was drawn up because the Government of India had secretly prepared and sent a despatch to the Secretary of State embodying its proposals for post-war reforms. At Lucknow in December 1916, the Congress adopted a scheme of Reforms as a definite step towards Self-government at an early date, demanding above all things an effective voice in the administration of the country. The lesson had been thoroughly learnt, and the aim of "a steady reform of the existing system of administration"

as a means to attain its object was given up as futile. The demand for Self-government within the Empire and the demand for post-war reforms as a definite step towards that goal, made by the Indian people in 1916 differed from that made a decade ago under the guidance of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji in one important particular. As soon as the demand for Self-government found unmistakable utterance in 1906, it was pronounced a chimera by the opponents of political progress. The Mahomedans were supposed to be entirely against it. But the developments, during the decade that elapsed, were swift and rather disconcerting to political prophets. What was a chimera in 1906 became a question of practical politics in 1916. The Mahomedans had no political organisation in 1906 but they had since organised an All-India Moslem League and established its branches all over the country. The educative effect of their political activities was marvellous and confounded the expectations of the opponents of political reform. The Mahomedans and the Hindus having been both organised discovered their fundamental unity of interest. The All-India Moslem League fell into line with the Indian National Congress in 1913<sup>1</sup>, and in 1915 appointed a committee to draft a scheme of reforms jointly with the Congress. Accordingly an identical scheme of Reforms was adopted by the two bodies in their session at Lucknow in 1916. The Scheme of Reforms, therefore, represents the united demands of the Hindus and the Mahomedans. It is a demand of the people of India

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<sup>1</sup> ( Vide—Resolution IV The Twenty-Eighth Congress. )



and is put forward by their natural leaders, namely, the educated classes of the country.

### **Occasion for the Demand.**

In this genesis of the demand for Self-government the most noteworthy feature is the time and the occasion for the demand.

The longing for Self-government became observable for the first time in the Presidential address of Mr. Lalmohan Ghose at Madras in 1903. In 1904 Sir Henry Cotton, presiding over the Congress at Bombay, "bade his hearers avoid depression, and not to submit with resignation to the policy of the Government, and he held up, as the ideal, India taking rank as a Nation among the Nations of the East. Autonomy is the keynote of England's true relations with her Colonies and "the key-note also of India's destiny". "Complete autonomous States which are federated together and attached by common motives and self-interest to a Central Power" such was "the tendency of Empire." The ideal for India was "a Federation of free and separate States, the United States of India"

In 1905 Mr. Gokhale pointed to Self-government in the distance as the goal for the Congress. In 1906 Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji solemnly asserted that "Self-government is the only and chief remedy. In Self-government lie over hope, strength and greatness."

It is thus clear that the demand for Self-government arose during, and as a consequence of the bitter experiences of the Indians under the administration of Lord Curzon. It took definite shape after the failure of Mr. John Morley to understand Indian aspirations and after his unfortunate and unnecessary role of a political sooth-sayer. This has a deep significance, because Lord Curzon's administration marked the culmination of the tendencies which had been developing in the official world ever since the transfer of Government of India from the Company to the Crown. And Mr. Morley's performance as a prophet meant a surrender to the Bureaucracy.

### India under the Crown.

"The assumption of the Government of India by the Crown was indeed, as Sir H. S. Cunningham wrote "rather a formal than a substantial change." All real power had long passed to the President of the Board of Control and the Directors had been for some time in the position of an advisory council though with considerable powers of initiative. The last Charter Act of 1853 by throwing open the civil service had deprived the Directors of their most valued privilege, the patronage of India; it had also reduced their numbers from twenty-four to eighteen and made six of them nominees of the Crown. This enabled the Government to appoint to the Court retired servants of the Company, men who had little chance of being elected under the old system and thus to leaven the directorate with first hand Indian experience. The

Act was obviously preparing the way for the assumption by the Crown of the government of India in name as well as in fact, for it gave no definite renewal of the charter for a term of years, as former measures had done, but merely provided that the Indian territories should remain under the administration of the Company in trust for the Crown until Parliament should determine otherwise. The Act of 1858 completed the process thus begun. A Secretary of State for India was to take the place of the President of the Board of Control. He was to be advised by a Council—".<sup>1</sup>

But while this change from the Company to the Crown appeared to be rather formal than substantial, as far as the machinery of administration was concerned, it was in fact a fundamental one, so far as the interests of the people were concerned. The administration of the Company had to remain in constant fear of exciting the cupidity, the jealousy and the wrath of people adversely affected by its doings. Besides, at the periodical renewal of its Charter, the Company had to face the ordeal of a searching examination before a Select Committee of Parliament. Its sense of responsibility used to be thus kept alive. But the Charter Act of 1853 had thrown open the Civil Service to competition and the Government of India Act of 1858 rendered it practically independent and irresponsible. The Government of India was in effect transferred from the Board of Control advised by the Court of Directors, to a Secretary of State controlled by a Council composed

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<sup>1</sup> ( Roberts—Historical Geography of India pp. 382-3 ).

of members of the Civil Service. The responsibility to Parliament became nominal or shadowy at its best. The civil servants, secured in their tenure by a covenant, assured of a monopoly of most of the lucrative posts in the administration, and practically immune from the consequences of incompetence, were quick to grasp the advantages of their position and developed into a body with formidable vested interests. Nowhere else in the whole world can a body of public servants be found so well-paid and so free from control. In countries which are autocratically governed the public servants are responsible to the King or the Emperor as the case may be, and they are liable to be called to account for their actions, whether a failure of duty, or excess of zeal. But the King-Emperor not only does not govern in the United Kingdom, but does not govern in India either. He only reigns and the consequences are far-reaching. Let us see. "Administrations, fall in the main," says Dr. Fisher "into two types, those which are and those which are not, responsible to immediate parliamentary control. For the purposes of clearness, though the phraseology is far from being accurate, we will designate them as responsible and irresponsible administrations."

### **Bureaucracy-Colonial and British.**

"The Civil Services of Canada and Australia are responsible because they are under the immediate eye of a democratic Parliament. The Civil Service of India is irresponsible because, although ultimately subject to the Parliament of Great Britain, it is exempt from

interference from any popularly constituted body in India and possesses therefore a liberty of action considerably in excess of that enjoyed by the administrative agents in our self-governing dominions.".....

The powerful and permanent bureaucracy in Great Britain "functions under a quadruple safeguard." "The Civil Service of Great Britain is never permitted to forget that it is in a true and literal sense a body of servants whose work is liable at any moment to be brought under the master's eye. That it has escaped or can entirely escape the characteristic vice of all bureaucracies cannot perhaps be confidently affirmed, but if it is comparatively free from that senseless surplusage of reglementation which is common in autocratic countries, the cause is to be found in.....the parliamentary critic in the House and the parliamentary chief in the office. In other words, administrative questions cannot be considered in a purely dry light; they must be viewed in a political light. And it is an essential part of the skill of an experienced civil servant to feel how a measure will present itself to the vision of Parliament and with what modifications it may be made acceptable. The machine is continually up against the living forces of opinion, which, despite all party discipline, make themselves felt in the House of Commons, and since the members of the Civil Service are obliged to furnish answers for parliamentary questions and apologies for departmental action to their parliamentary chiefs, they acquire a wide kind of political education, tending perhaps towards a certain spirit of caution or even

timidity, but based upon a close appreciation of the views, prejudices and aspirations of the country."<sup>1</sup>

But compare with this the position of the Civil Service in India. Dr. Fisher, the present Minister of Education in England goes on to describe the Civil Service in India, in the same discourse. It is worth while to quote the remarks of such a high authority at length. Dr. Fisher, it will be remembered, was one of the members of the Public Services Commission and is not a witness, hostile to the bureaucracy. He continues—

### **The Indian Bureaucracy.**

"In the Crown Colonies and more particularly in India, the spirit of the administration is entirely different. Here the administration is the Government and nothing else particularly matters. Questions, indeed, may be asked in London about Indian affairs, but nobody is particularly interested in them and the Indian Budget night is notoriously regarded as one of the least interesting occasions of the session. The affairs of India are in the hands of the Government of India; they are managed by the Viceroy and his Council and by Governors and Lieutenant Governors, of the several provinces acting through the various branches of the Indian Public Services. Proposals may come from the Indian Government to London and be vetoed by the Imperial Government. The large lines of Indian policy may be shaped by a Secretary of State

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<sup>1</sup> H. A. L. Fisher, "Imperial Administration" pp. 43-52. "The Empire and the Future."

in the India Office; a powerful Secretary of State may make his influence felt very strongly on the direction of Indian affairs, if he encounters no serious opposition from the Government of India. But, in reality, the last word lies with Indian official opinion, in the sense that a measure would not be forced upon India against the united opposition of the Indian bureaucracy, the Indian Viceroy or the Indian Governors and Lieutenant Governors. The Secretary of State exercises, a useful and important function. He supervises, he suggests, he sometimes initiates. He is the most important conduit through which English parliamentary opinion reaches and affects the Government of India; and for every change which needs an Act of Parliament, he must be consulted and his consent secured. But the work of administering India is not done in London. It is done in India itself. It is for this reason that the organisation of the Public Services of India is a matter of such importance.....

.....

The Indian Councils cannot turn out a Government and cannot make a Government. The Indian Civil Service is the Government. It may accept amendments, it may withdraw a measure in face of criticism which it judges to be well-founded, it may profit by the suggestions of non-official members, but it is master in its own house. Cabinet Councils, Government majorities, diplomatic agencies in the Native States, administrative agencies in British India—all are provided by the Indian Civil Service, that wonderful bureaucracy recruited by a competitive examination in

London, which is expected to turn out judges, revenue officers, heads of administrative departments, pro-consuls, legislators, political officers or diplomatists, and under the new regime parliamentarians as well.

“The supremacy of the Indian Civil Service among the public services of India is one of the leading facts which every student of Indian administration has to take into account. The Civil Service is the governing service of the country. The members draw larger salaries and higher pensions than the members of any other branch of the public service. In the Table of Precedence, an Indian civilian will always rank above a member of any other Indian service of similar age and standing. The other services are excrescences, later developments due to the increase of specialisation, grafts upon the parent tree, which is the Civil Service of John Company now for many years taken over by the Imperial Government.....  
 .....  
 .....

“This pre-eminence enjoyed by the Indian Civil Service in India is perhaps most clearly illustrated by the position of the Secretariat. In view of the fact that parliamentary government does not exist in India, it might have been expected that the Governor or Lieutenant Governor of an Indian province would rule with the assistance of a Cabinet composed of the administrative heads of the different departments, that the Education Service would supply him with a Minister of Education, the Public Works Department with a Minister of Public Works, the Forest or Agriculture.



Department with a Minister of Agriculture. This; however, is not the case. These departments indeed do possess official heads, but they are not part of the Provincial Government. Their work comes up, in the first place, before a Secretary to Government, who is always a Member of the Indian Civil Service, and no large proposal can be carried into effect without the imprimatur of the premier service. Some day, with the growth of specialisation and complexity, this hegemony may be broken down. At present it is practically unimpared.....

One of the necessary features of British administration in the tropics is that it is difficult to get any public work performed except upon the service system.....

.....It is on this system that the Government of India obtains its doctors, its college teachers, its bacteriologists, its forest officers. If a new branch of public work is opened, the first ambition of the officers employed is to be formed into a regular service, with fixed expectations of emolument and recognised place in the Official Table of Precedence.

“The critics have not been slow to descry the dangers, temptations and anomalies incidental to the working of this highly disciplined professional hierarchy. If a professor of history goes on leave from a Government college, the State may name a Professor of Mathematics belonging to the Imperial Branch of the Educational service to officiate in his place, and the same Professor of Mathematics may shortly after be transferred elsewhere to teach Geography or English

Literature almost irrespective of his qualifications. Again the system has developed a very close and jealously guarded doctrine of vested interests—the higher post in each service being regarded as the perquisite of the service, as a prize against which recruitment has been made and consequently not to be abolished until the vested interests of every person recruited against them have been satisfied. *Esprit de corps* is no doubt a valuable feature of public life, and there is no *esprit de corps* so strong as that of the Indian Public Services. The Indians themselves not unnaturally regard these services as manifestations of the European spirit of caste!.”

Thus it will appear that whereas in other countries bureaucracy is only an approved mode of administration, in India alone it has grown into a form of government. It is a sinister extension of personal autocracy. An autocrat is a human being subject to all the impulses noble and otherwise of an individual. But a Bureaucracy is a corporation entrenched behind its power and prestige. Like a corporation it never dies, and has no soul either to be saved or lost. It is irresponsible. The interest of Parliament in Indian affairs is desultory at best. The Secretary of State is a party politician not ordinarily distinguished for his knowledge or sympathy with India. Besides, he is usually more engrossed with the exigencies of parliamentary tactics and convenience, and more mindful of the clamant interests at home in, and outside, the Parlia-

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1. (Ibid pp. 52-58).

ment, than anxious or able to carry out the pious declarations of British aims and objects concerning the destinies of India. The India Council which controls the Secretary of State is dominated by the Indian Civil Service and is often in the position of sitting in judgment over its own confrères on the spot in India. The Indian people are thus without any means of obtaining sure redress of their grievances.

This strange development of a Bureaucracy from a mere method of administration into a form of government did not remain without detection. The late Mr. W. C. Bannerji in his speech at Croydon in 1898. put his audience and himself the following question. Is the Government of India responsible, and if so to whom? After an elaborate discussion he arrived at the conclusion that the Government of India was responsible to the Civil Servants, and they were responsible to no one but themselves. It is remarkable that this speech was delivered before Lord Curzon landed in India and was based on an examination of the policy of Indian administration in the deportation of Natu Brothers, the extension of the law of sedition and the repressive measures taken during the panic created by the outbreak of plague in India. The virtual irresponsibility of the Government of India thus once exposed found convincing illustrations year by year during the régime of Lord Curzon in the notorious "labours" of his administration. The Partition of Bengal, especially the hatching of it and the manner of carrying it out, furnished the crowning example of official irresponsibility.

### Lord Curzon's administration.

The late Mr. Gokhale described Lord Curzon's administration as follows—

“.....I think even the most devoted admirer of Lord Curzon cannot claim that he has strengthened the foundations of British rule in India.” He was lacking in “sympathetic imagination.”.....“and it is sad truth that at the end of his administration Lord Curzon did not really understand the people of India. This was at the root of his many inconsistencies and made him a perpetual puzzle to most men.....

.....  
 “The fact is that Lord Curzon came to India with certain fixed ideas. To him India was a country where the Englishman was to monopolize for all times all power and talk all the while of duty. The Indian's only business was to be governed, and it was a sacrilege on his part to have any other aspiration. In his scheme of things there was no room for the educated classes of the country; and having failed to amuse them for any length of time by an empty show of taking them into his confidence he proceeded in the end to repress them. Even in his last farewell speech at the Byculla Club in Bombay, India exists only as a scene of the Englishman's labours, with the toiling millions of the country—eighty percent of the population—in the background. The remaining twenty percent, for aught they are worth, might as well be swept into the sea.....

.....

.....  
 Lord Curzon's highest ideal of statesmanship is efficiency of administration. He does not believe in what Mr. Gladstone used to call the principle of liberty as a factor of human progress. He has no sympathy with popular aspirations and when he finds them among a subject people he thinks he is rendering their country a service by trying to put them down." In the same address the late Mr. Gokhale summarised the attitude of the whole Indian administration as follows:—"Militarism, Service interests, and interests of English capitalists—all take procedure today of the true interests of the Indian people in the administration of the country. Things cannot be otherwise, for it is the government of the people of one country by the people of another, and this as Mill points out is bound to produce evils....."

### **Failure of Bureaucracy.**

Thus it was the ruthless "efficiency" of Lord Curzon's administration that finally brought to the mind of Indians the futility of an agitation for piecemeal and partial reforms, of never-ending "preparation" for a freer and healthier political life, and compelled them to seek the only alternative remedy to an irresponsible bureaucratic rule, as an assured method of securing national greatness and prosperity, namely, Self-government within the Empire. The people discovered to their dismay that a bureaucracy which in its origin was ostensibly intended to help

1 (Presidential address. Benares Congress 1905).

England in the fulfilment of its mission in India, was actively delaying it indefinitely. The instrument intended to be used for a beneficent purpose had turned in the hands of its makers. The Bureaucracy was in short, a failure. The catalogue of its failures is neither short nor insignificant.

### **Distinction of Race.**

When the proposals for the transfer of India from the Company to the Crown were communicated to the Court of Directors for the first time in 1858, a petition on behalf of the East India Company was presented to both the Houses of Parliament. In that petition the Company represented "That your Petitioners have seen with the greatest pain the demonstrations of indiscriminate animosity towards the Natives of India on the part of our countrymen in India and at home, which have grown up since the late unhappy events. They believe these sentiments to be fundamentally unjust; they know them to be fatal to the possibility of good government in India. They feel that if such demonstrations should continue and especially if weight be added to them by legislating under their supposed influence, no amount of wisdom and forbearance on the part of the Government will avail to restore the confidence of the governed in the intentions of their rulers without which it is vain even to attempt the improvement of the people.

"That your Petitioners cannot contemplate without dismay the doctrine now widely promulgated that India should be administered with an especial view to

the benefit of the English who reside there; or that in its administration any advantage should be sought for Her Majesty's subjects of European birth, except that which they will necessarily derive from their superiority of intelligence and from the increased prosperity of the people, the improvement of the productive resources of the country and the expansion of commercial intercourse. Your Petitioners regard it as the most honourable characteristic of the Government of India by England, that it has acknowledged no such distinction as that of a dominant and a subject race; but has held that its first duty was to the people of India. Your Petitioners feel that a great portion of the hostility with which they are assailed, is caused by the belief that they are peculiarly the guardians of this principle, and that so long as they have any voice in the administration of India, it cannot easily be infringed. And your Petitioners will not conceal their belief that their exclusion from any part in the Government is likely at the present time, to be regarded in India as a first successful attack on that principle.<sup>1</sup>

Now it is common knowledge that this distinction of "a dominant and a subject race" has become more and more emphasized since the transfer of the government from the Company to the Crown took place in 1858. There is ample proof of it in the non-fulfilment of solemn promises given to the Indians. Moving the second reading of the Bill-East India (Laws and Regulations) Act on the 11th March 1869, the Secretary

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<sup>1</sup> (Hansard-Parliamentary Debates 1857 Third Series Vol. CXLVIII. Appendix).

of State for India, His Grace the Duke of Argyll, in commenting upon clause 6 observed as follows:—

“With regard, however, to the employment of natives in the Government of their country, in the Covenanted Service formerly of the Company and now of the crown, I must say that we have not fulfilled our duty or the promises and engagements which we have made.

“In the Act of 1833 this declaration was solemnly put forth by the Parliament of England. “And be it enacted that no native of the said territories or any natural-born subject of His Majesty resident therein, shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the said Company.”

In 1853 Lord Monteagle “complained and I think with great force, that, while professing to open every office of profit and employment under the Company or the Crown to the natives of India, we practically excluded them by laying down regulations as to fitness which we knew natives could never fulfil.....

.....  
 “I have always felt that the regulations laid down for the competitive examination rendered nugatory the declaration of the Act of 1833, and so strongly has this been felt of late years by the Government of India that various suggestions have been made to remedy the evil.....”

1. Quoted in *Essays Speeches and Writings of the Hon'ble Dadabhai Naoroji*, Edited by C. L. Parekh 1877. ) pp. 250-51.



But notwithstanding these attempts, the position of Indians did not materially improve. In 1905 Mr. Gokhale declared.—“The Proclamation-1858-repeats the pledges contained in the Charter Act of 1833 and though an astounding attempt was made less than two years ago by the late Viceroy—Lord Curzon—to explain away its solemn import, the plain meaning of the royal message cannot be altered without attributing what is nothing less than an unworthy subterfuge to a Sovereign, the deep reverence for whom is an asset of the Empire. That the Charter Act of 1833 and the Queen’s Proclamation of 1858 have created in the eyes of reactionary rulers a most inconvenient situation is clear from a blunt declaration which another Viceroy of India, the late Lord Lytton, made in a confidential document and which has since seen the light of day. Speaking of our claims and expectations based on the pledges of the sovereign and the Parliament of England, he wrote:—“We all know that these claims and expectations never can or will be fulfilled. We have had to choose between prohibiting them (the natives of India) and cheating them and we have chosen the least straightforward course.....Since I am writing confidentially, I do not hesitate to say that both the Government of England and of India appear to me, up to the present moment, unable to answer satisfactorily the charge of having taken every means in their power of breaking to the heart the words of promise they had uttered to the ear.” We accept Lord Lytton as an unimpeachable authority on the

conduct of the Government in evading the fulfilment of the pledges. We deny his claim to lay down that our claims and expectations never can or will be fulfilled".<sup>1</sup> In August 1906 in his first speech on the Indian Budget Mr. John Morley hastened to declare. "There is a famous sentence in the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 which says: "It is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service—offices the duties of which they may be qualified by their educational talents and ability duly to discharge." I think these words "so far as may be" have been somewhat misinterpreted in the past. I do not believe that the ministers who advised Queen Victoria in framing one of the most memorable documents in all our history meant these words to be construed in a narrow, literal, restricted or pettifogging sense. I do not believe that Parliament ever intended this promise of the Queen's should be construed in any but a liberal and generous sense. The Governor-General of India to-day is, I am glad to say, a man of firm texture of mind. I do not believe the Governor-General has any intention of riding off on a narrow interpretation of a promise which was as wise and politic as it was just."<sup>2</sup>

In spite of this explicit statement, the recommendations of the Public Services Commission fall very short of the promises held out. An open and unblushing attempt at securing a racial domination for

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<sup>1</sup> Presidential Address, Benares, 1905.

<sup>2</sup> Morley's Indian Speeches.

an indefinite period underlies the proposals. This attempt at perpetuation of the "distinction of a dominant and subject race" cannot but be attributed to the failure of the Bureaucracy.

### **The Indian Defence Force.**

The most flagrant instance of this invidious distinction of race is furnished by the constitution of the Indian Defence Force. In introducing the bill in the Imperial Legislative Council in March last, the Commander-in-Chief, admitted that the proposed measure was a development of the Indian Volunteer Force. That Force had been constituted by an Act passed in 1869. The admission into the force had been confined to Anglo-Indians as they are now compendiously called. The real import of this restriction had hitherto been a matter of guess and inference. But by the publication of his memoirs entitled "Many Memories of Life in India, at Home and Abroad" Mr. J. H. Rivett-Carnac has now placed the meaning beyond the possibility of a doubt. He was a member of the Indian Civil Service, had a distinguished and successful career according to the accepted official standards of distinction and success and what is more, he became a Colonel of the Volunteers and spent nearly twenty years of his official life as Opium Agent at Ghazipore (1876-94) in organizing the Volunteer Force. As a reward for his efforts in this direction, he was appointed an Aide-de-Camp to Her Majesty Queen Victoria "an honour never before

-conferred on any member of the Indian Civil Service." Mr. Rivett-Carnac explains his activities as follows: "With the necessity of preparation in India against a day of trouble I had long been convinced. A foreigner who had visited the country had said to me on leaving ".....but to my mind the greatest of all these wonders is the way in which you Europeans in India, surrounded by thousands of Asiatics, live without any combination for mutual protection or defence. Were the country in the hands of our Government, every single one of you would be armed, drilled and would have his place assigned to him for the day of trouble." And this is the lesson I preached in season and out of season, to try and get all precautions thought out and all organisations complete during the piping times of peace so that trouble might find us cool and prepared. I wished every one to be practised in his work and shown his place in the boats, so to speak, just as a careful commander on board ship practises his crew with the life-boats when the sea is calm and there is time available to instruct and arrange..... With Volunteering I began modestly at Ghazipore by arming the Factory Staff, some eighteen in number. These were enrolled as Rifle Volunteers. Later the scheme was extended to the districts and all the officers serving in my Department were enlisted..... It was now proposed to increase it (corps) and enrol all the Europeans and Eurasians in the adjacent districts.....

"It had appeared to me marvellous that some comprehensive scheme had not been worked out earlier for arming the Europeans against a possible day of trouble.....It may be supposed that the importance of all in India being prepared is so obvious, that every one with a view to his own interests would enrol almost without being asked. As a fact, however, the recruiting officer's task was far from easy..... Some persons will take heed; the greater number will let the matter slide until the peril is upon them. Then the difficulty would be that, in the case of an outbreak, every one would rush in at once and ask for arms..... I am glad to say that before leaving India, I had not only preached that view, but had been able to ensure its adoption in a portion of the country at least..... No effort was spared to popularise the movement. The Government officials brought from time to time a little legitimate pressure to bear on the clerks in the office to join, and this was right-wise enough, seeing that in the event of trouble the East Indian and his family would have to be protected. The Infantry-the Rifles-were chiefly composed of this class..... But I found.....the planters and non-officials, of whom we had a goodly portion, detested the infantry work. So it was determined to raise a corps of Light Horse, gentlemen riders and owners up.....In the Light Horse we eventually succeeded in enlisting nearly every man who was young enough to sit a horse and well enough off to keep one..... "By degrees, we succeeded in enrolling the great majority of the European and Eurasian residents in

the Rifles or Light Horse. There still remained a residue mostly oldish men, who could not be persuaded to undertake what they considered would be onerous duties." There were also some busy men barristers, merchants, and the like, and the missionaries. "I therefore bethought me of securing them by forming .....a "Reserve" and to which those not already in the fold could be admitted under less stringent conditions than those prescribed for the Volunteers .....

I persuaded the Government to take up the scheme and extend it throughout India. After some trouble, the idea was generally accepted, and the force of Europeans was considerably increased.....

.....  
Before I left India I had succeeded in persuading every man in the eight districts over which my command extended to arm—that is to say, to join either the Light Horse, the Rifles or the Reserve; and the Reserve system had been extended to other parts of India .....

In the matter of Volunteering, at least, I think that without attempting any false modesty, I may claim to have had some considerable success during my time in India." The Indian Volunteer Force thus grew out of distrust towards the people of India and was aimed against them. The Indian Defence Force as it is constituted at present, attempts to perpetuate this distrust and though it is opened to Indians, the conditions of admission tend to discourage rather than tempt them.

The lack of enthusiasm on the part of Indians about the Indian Defence Force thus finds its ample justification. It hurts their self-respect to join the Force with any eagerness when the call is so grudging.

### **Divide and Rule.**

In addition to this distinction of race receiving an added emphasis instead of a steady discouragement, the Bureaucracy, in its dealings with Indians, has shown an unfortunate *penchant* for the maxim of "divide and rule". Instead of promoting the sense of solidarity this had the inevitable effect of accentuating the differences among the Indian peoples. After the Mutiny, the Mahomedans as a community became suspect and the Hindus flattered themselves that they were in favour. When the Hindus saw the necessity of political agitation they became suspect, and the Mahomedans under the leadership of the late Sir Syed Ahmed were led to believe that they were the most deserving. When the Partition of Bengal was made, the susceptibilities of the Mahomedans were skilfully exploited in favour of that high-handed measure. When they founded the All-India Moslem League an attempt was made to represent it as a rival and a counter-blast to the Congress. Sir Bamfylde Fuller's famous expression of "a favourite wife" used in reference to the Mahomedan Community of Eastern Bengal denoted the extreme length to which this policy had been carried. The question of separate electorates is still used as a bone of contention, But when the

Moslem League realised the suicidal nature of its early policy and fell into line with the National Congress in its demand for Self-government, it began to be said that the Moslem League had been captured by the younger men and that they had capitulated to the Extremists in the National Congress and therefore no weight need be attached to that body. The League which had been in high favour in the first years of its activities became negligible in the official estimation a decade afterwards.

### **Classes vs. Masses.**

When the traditional antipathy between the Hindus and the Mahomedans failed to provide convenient arguments, the old plea of the division of classes and masses began to be emphasised. The Bureaucracy has always attempted to minimise the unrest in India by representing that it is confined to the educated classes only. It has consistently attempted to deny that the educated classes are the natural leaders of the masses and as a reply to the demands of educated Indians, it has been posing as a champion of the masses. While everywhere else in the world this leadership is admitted and recognised, in India alone it is denied to the educated classes. Sir Mahadeo Chaubal, now Member of the Bombay Executive Council, has dealt effectively with this plea in his Minute of Dissent appended to the Report of the Public Services Commission.

The Hon'ble Mr. Chaubal, as he then was, states:—  
 "If this argument is analysed one cannot help being struck with the assumption that this capacity to



represent the masses is taken for granted in the European and the Anglo-Indian. It is difficult to understand exactly what is intended to be conveyed by the word "represent." If it implies a knowledge of the conditions of life of these masses, their habits, their ways of living and thinking, their wants and grievances, the ability to enter into their thoughts, and appreciate what is necessary to educate them, to give them higher ideas of life, and make them realise their duties towards all about them, there ought to be no doubt that the educated Indian has all these in a far higher degree than any European or Anglo-Indian can claim to have. The charge really is that the educated Indian has a class bias, a sort of clannishness, a tendency to favour his own caste or community in the discharge of his official duties which detract from his usefulness in the higher service and therefore the presence of the European in large numbers is necessary to hold the scales evenly between these few educated thousands and the dumb and ignorant millions, who would otherwise be oppressed by them.

"This is rather a shallow pretence—this attempt to take shelter behind the masses; and I think it only fair to state that the class of educated Indians from which only the higher posts can be filled is singularly free from this narrow-mindedness and class or caste-bias, *e. g.* no instances of complaint on this score as against any of the Indian members of the Indian Civil Service would be available, and I have no hesitation in endorsing the opinion of Sir Narayan Chandavarkar in his recent contribution on village life

in his tour through Southern India, that the interests of the masses are likely to be for better understood and taken care of by the educated Indian than by the foreigner. As a matter of fact all the measures proposed for the regeneration of the lower and depressed classes have emanated from the educated Indians of the higher castes. The scheme for the free and compulsory education of these masses was proposed by an educated Indian of a high caste and supported mainly by the western educated classes. High-souled and self-sacrificing men are every day coming forward from this class, to work whole-heartedly in improving the condition of the masses.

"Perhaps the truth, however unpalatable, is that there are still a number of the average English officials in India who have a distrust and suspicion about the educated Indian. The explanation of this is probably that given by Sir P. M. Mehta in his evidence—that the English Official does not like the independence, the self-assertion and the self-respect which come naturally in the wake of education. As Dr. Wordsworth stated in his evidence before the last Commission, "deferential ignorance, conciliatory manners, and a plentiful absence of originality and independence are now, and will always be, at a premium." It is high time that this shibboleth was exploded."<sup>1</sup>

In this connection the comments of the Editor of the Royal Colonial Institute Journal, "United Empire",

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<sup>1</sup> (Quoted in Modern Review, June 1917 p. 676.)

in the War number, with reference to the Memorandum of the nineteen members of the Imperial Legislative Council submitted to the Viceroy in October last year, are instructive and illustrate the perverse attitude of Bureaucracy. The Editor says:—

“Far from being of help to the cause the signatories claim to have at heart, the document is liable to strengthen the hands of the more conservative element, which will argue that the nineteen members have shown by the promulgation of the Memorandum their unfitness for any larger powers or responsibilities than they already possess. Moreover, they have exposed themselves to the pertinent challenge that the agitation is the work of a Nationalist caucus which has belied its own claims by showing little or no interest in the agricultural life of India, and by excluding from its consultations all Indian nominated members of the Legislative Council as well as the European elected members.” This is fatuous to say the least. It is a calumny to maintain that the educated classes “show little or no interest in the agricultural life of India.” What Educated India thinks to-day Agricultural India will think tomorrow. Curiously enough, in his Comments on “Leadership and Democracy” in the same number, the Editor provides an effective reply to his absurd charge against Indians. He laments with reference to Great Britain that “the people are not merely prepared for leadership; they are clamouring for it. Why is it denied them?.....

.....

"The modern world provides a striking illustration of the contrast provided by leadership and the want of it. Japan and China are neighbouring countries with many points in common. Thanks to the leadership which their governing class has provided, the Japanese have become within a generation a first-class power. The Chinese lacking in enlightened leadership have floundered in a morass of unrest and half-baked ideas of progress, and have been entirely out-stripped in a race in which they started with considerable advantages".<sup>1</sup>

Who else but the Educated Indians will provide this "enlightened leadership" for the masses of India? The claim of the Bureaucracy to provide such leadership has only to be stated to be unhesitatingly rejected. When one of the ablest among the officials—Sir Alfred Lyall—had the hardi-hood to sing of India as the "Land of Regrets" not only without protest, but actually with a chorus of approval from the others, their claim to the "enlightened leadership" of the masses sounds preposterous. The educated classes are the natural leaders of the people of India, and it is sheer trifling with grave matters to maintain that in India alone the educated classes cannot represent and lead the masses.

### **"Enlightened leadership."**

Besides, what has the Bureaucracy done for the masses to justify its claim to a special leadership? Lord Curzon, the greatest champion the Bureaucracy ever had in India, claimed in his farewell speech at

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1. (Notes and Comments).

Bombay that even if he had antagonised the educated Indians, the masses would be grateful to him. Mr. Gokhale examined this plea with thoroughness in his Presidential address at Benares in 1905. He said: "This attempt to distinguish between the interests of the educated classes and those of the bulk of their countrymen is a favourite device with those who seek to repress the legitimate aspirations of our people. It is significant that Lord Curzon never resorted to it till he had finally broken with the educated classes. We know, of course, that the distinction is unreal and ridiculous and we know also that most of those who use it as a convenient means to disparage the educated classes cannot themselves really believe in it. Lord Curzon mentions the reduction of the salt duty, the writing off of famine arrears, the increased grants to primary education and to irrigation, the attempt at Police reform as measures on which he bases his claim. The suggestion here is that he adopted these measures for the good of the masses in spite of the opposition—at any rate the indifference—of the educated classes, when the plain fact is that it was the Congress that had been urging these measures year after year on the attention of the Government and that it was only after years of persistent agitation that it was able to move the Government in the desired direction" When Mr. Gokhale urged an immediate reduction of the salt-duty in view of a surplus of 7 crores, Lord Curzon "sneered at those who talked glibly" of the burdens of the masses and of the necessity of lowering the salt-tax as a measure of relief".....

.....  
 "Considering how large these surpluses have been, I do not think the relief given by Lord Curzon to the tax-payers of the country has by any means been liberal." Lord Curzon estimated the amount of this relief at 7 millions sterling, but he did not mention that "he had taken from the tax-payers 33 millions sterling over and above the requirements of the Government...  
 .....

"Much has been made of Lord Curzon's increased grants to primary education..... But if he has given a quarter of a million more to education he has given five millions a year more to the Army: and with reckless profusion he has increased the salaries of European Officials in many departments and has created several posts for them. "A spirit of expenditure" has been abroad. Of course a ruler cannot labour as devotedly as Lord Curzon has done for seven years for increased efficiency without removing or mitigating important administrative evils; but that is quite different from a claim of championing the special interests of the masses as against their natural leaders and spokesmen, the educated classes of the community."

### **Improvement of Agriculture.**

Special interests of the masses must always and especially in the present stage of economic development of India, mean the interests of the agriculturists. Championship of these interests must mean special care bestowed on agricultural development. What has the Bureaucracy specially done for agricultura

development? Every year the Government collects its-land revenue and justifies its incidence on the ground of the State being the landlord. Is it not pertinent to enquire whether the State has been conscientiously discharging its duty as landlord to its tenants—the rayats? Any one who is at all familiar with land-revenue administration will be forced to admit that while the rayat has ordinarily to discharge all the obligations of a tenant, the Government usually evades those of a landlord. It cannot be argued that as the State professes to charge only one-half of the rent, it can avoid the whole of the duty of a landlord. In short, the State is not like the ordinary landlord whom the tenant has a chance of compelling to resort to an impartial tribunal for the settlement of disputes, but it is the landlord with the big stick, compelling the tenant to seek redress, if at all, in tribunals of his own creation. The relation between the rayats and the Government is therefore more analogous to that between the villeins and the lord of the Manor in the Middle Ages than to that between a landlord and a tenant of modern times. Our revenue courts show a distant resemblance to the Manor courts presided over by the lord's steward. The chance of securing relief was about the same in both cases. Very often relief became a question of discretion. But apart from this radical defect in the administration of land-revenue, it is worth noting how much the Government spends for the improvement of agriculture, let alone the question of primary education. While it takes several crores by way of land-revenue it spends only a few lakhs on the

improvement of agriculture. As the landlord one would imagine the State was bound to spend proportionately large sums for this purpose. The duty of improving agriculture and of helping the farmer is recognised in countries where the State does not profess to own the land at all. The United States of America spends colossal sums every year for this purpose and it does so because the State owes a duty to the Farmer. Prof. L. H. Bailey's book "The State and the Farmer" gives a reasoned exposition of the policy which every modern state must of necessity adopt, because agriculture is now recognised as the basic industry of a nation.

The Imperial Department of Agriculture, in India, costs Rs. 4,63,817 (1915-16)<sup>1</sup> every year. The Imperial and Provincial Expenditure on the Agricultural Department is Rs. 4,63,817+Rs. 45,32,844=Rs.49,96661 (1915-16)<sup>1</sup>. The amount of total Land Revenue in India under Principal Heads of Revenue is Rs. 33,04,6740. or £22,031,161.<sup>2</sup> Compare with this the expenditure on the Department of Agriculture in England and in Holland where, by the way, the State is not the landlord and does not raise a large amount of land-revenue and call it rent.

"Just as the English Board of Agriculture is concerned with fisheries as well as with farming, the Dutch Department is concerned with trade as well as with agriculture. It takes an expert therefore to say

1. (Report of the Progress of Agriculture in India 1915-16).

2. (Finance and Revenue Accounts of the Government of India 1915-16).



precisely how much of its expenditure is properly debited to the man on the land.....  
 Taking the figures for the Netherlands they total over £ 250,000 including the following:—

Education:—	£
Agricultural School and Winter Courses	59750
.....	15000
Cattle breeding ... ..	20000
Agricultural Experiment Stations ...	14441
Institute for Plant Diseases at Wageningen ... ..	5025
Veterinary Service ... ..	60411
Butter Inspection and Butter and Cheese control stations ... ..	6161
Dairy Experimental Farm ... ..	291
Subsidies to Agricultural Banks ...	1333
Subsidy to Netherlands Agricultural Committee, ... ..	875
	<hr/>
	£ 183,257

.....  
 With regard to the English Board's expenditure,..... the total sum laid out by the nation.....cannot be less than £ 460,000 in the year. Of this £ 93,530 comes from the Development Fund, that is £ 34,940 for agricultural research, £ 40,000 for light horse breeding, £ 4700 for Forestry £ 10,000 for the provision and maintenance of farm institutes and £ 5690 for the development of Fisheries. The £ 460,000 includes the expenditure on the Fisheries branch.

.....In the case of Holland and Great Britain it is to be specially remembered that the former is preponderatingly agricultural in character".<sup>1</sup>

The population of Holland in 1910 was 5,945,153 and the ratio of town to country population 37.4 to 62.6 P. C. The population of the Bombay Presidency alone in 1911 was roughly speaking 197 millions. How much does the State, which itself calls the landlord, spend on the Agricultural Department? And how does it compare with Holland where the State is not the landlord and yet spends £ 250,000 or Rs. 37,50,000 every year on its department of Agriculture? The Land Revenue under Principal Heads of Revenue for Bombay was Rs. 5,21,45,711<sup>2</sup> and the Bombay Government spent 8 lacs, in round numbers, on its department of Agriculture!

### **Agricultural Indebtedness.**

Closely allied to this question of improvement of agriculture is the question of agricultural indebtedness. The Government woke up to its "leadership" of the masses after the occurrence of severe distresses and famines in several parts of the country. The famine of 1899 made it impossible for Government to remain inactive. A Famine Code was compiled for each province and co-operation was adopted as the only remedy for improving the economic condition of the masses. In para 29 of the Report of the Committee

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1. A Free Farmer in a Free State p. 115.

2 (Finance and Revenue Accounts of the Government of India 1915-16.)

on Co-operation in India " requirements before registration " are mentioned. The Committee State: " We hold it necessary, for instance, that the Registrar should be able to ascertain (1) whether the proposed members have really assimilated the principles of co-operation (2) whether they appear to be too involved in debt to make a society successful (and for this purpose a statement showing, though not in great detail, the assets and liabilities of intending members should be submitted, (3) whether adequate working capital is available in the movement (4) whether the applicants are men of good character and the village as a whole free from the taint of litigiousness (5) whether means are at hand to provide for the necessary supervision of the society when formed." One cannot help describing these requirements as extraordinary. They are counsels of perfection and must seriously detract from the efficacy of the cooperation as interpreted by this Committee. It is really the persons who are "too involved in debt to make a society successful," who need to be helped most. This was admitted by Sir John Woodburn, Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, when Co-operation was first thought of. He wrote: "The Indian rayat is not poorer than the German peasants whose miseries and struggles aroused Raiffeissen's sympathy and in whose worldly condition he effected so marvellous a change for the better".<sup>1</sup>

In para 39 of the Report the Committee say:.....  
.....in our opinion it is not the pace at which the

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<sup>1</sup> ( Quoted in Gourlay's Diaries ).

movement proceeds which is of importance, so much as the quality of the societies which are established ..... "One really begins to wonder what the end in view may be. Is it the establishment of model societies or the redemption of the rayats from their debts? The rayat needs to be saved and it is no consolation to him to know that by the spread of scientific co-operation his son and grandson may be saved from misery. Co-operation cannot be the only remedy, at any rate not as co-operation is understood and applied in India. Generations of rayats must, at the present rate die before co-operation steps in to help them. Such was not the attitude of co-operators in Europe. They delivered no such message of despair. They made ample provision of funds and made it clear that provided a man was honest and continued honest, he need not despair of improving his status. They democratised credit and mobilised honesty. Nothing of the kind has been done in India on an adequate scale. The co-operative movement has scarcely influenced even the fringe of the population. This does not bear out the claim of a championship of the masses.

### **Primary Education.**

The question of co-operation leads to that of education and sanitation. The failure of the Bureaucracy in these matters is so well known that it needs no emphasis. In the domain of education a novel principle was enunciated by Sir Herbert Risley. It still exercises influence over the Educational policy of Government. Sir Herbert Risley laid down that "it

is not in the interest of the poor (in India) that they should receive high education."<sup>1</sup>

What would Carlyle have said to an egregious statement like this. In his *Chartism* published in 1840 he thundered:—

“Who would suppose that Education were a thing which had to be advocated on the ground of local expediency, or indeed on any ground? As if it stood not on the basis of an everlasting duty, as a prime necessity of man! It is a thing that should need no advocating; much as it does actually need. To impart the gift of thinking to those who cannot think, and yet who could in that case think: this, one would imagine, was the first function a government had to set about discharging. Were it not a cruel thing to see, in any province of an empire, the inhabitants living all mutilated in their limbs, each strong man with his right arm lamed? How much crueller to find the strong soul with its eyes still sealed—its eyes extinct, so that it sees not! Light has come into the world; but to this poor peasant it has come in vain. For six thousand years the sons of Adam, in sleepless effort, have been devising, doing, discovering; in mysterious, infinite, indissoluble communion, warring, a little band of brothers, against the black empire of necessity and night; they have accomplished such a conquest and conquests; and to this man it is all as if it had not been. The four and twenty letters of the alphabet are still runic enigmas to him. He passes by on the other side; and

that great spiritual kingdom, the toil-won conquest of his own brothers, all that his brothers have conquered, is a thing not extant for him. An invisible empire; he knows it not—suspects it not. And is not this his withal; the conquest of his own brothers, the lawfully acquired possession of all men? Baleful enchantment lies over him from generation to generation; he knows not that such an empire is his—that such an empire is his at all.....Heavier wrong is not done under the sun. It lasts from year to year, from century to century; the blinded sire slaves himself out, and leaves a blinded son; and men, made in the image of God, continue as two-legged beasts of labour: and in the largest empire of the world it is a debate whether a small fraction of the revenue of one day shall, after thirteen centuries, be laid out on it, or not laid out on it. Have we governors? Have we teachers? Have we had a Church these thirteen hundred years? What is an overseer of souls, an archoverseer, archiepiscopus? Is he something? If so, let him lay his hand on his heart and say what thing!" Carlyle's thundering ought to be enough to shake the apathy of the Bureaucracy and induce a searching of the heart over the neglect of primary education in India.

### **Sanitation.**

With regard to sanitation, there is a sanitary department and some years ago a conference on Malaria was held at Calcutta or Madras. The outbreak of plague

in urban areas receives more attention than formerly, but in rural areas there is not much improvement. Attention to the whole area must entail, in the first instance, an enormous increase in the staff of the department and with the present inadequate budget that cannot be done. For the rest, let Mr. Sydney Webb speak. "We are accustomed, in Europe," he says, "to take as a rough test of the social administration of any nation the changes in its annual death rate; or, rather, in the average expectation of life of the whole population. The first and most important business of a Government is, after all, to contrive that its people should live and not die! In the long run, in the judgment of history, it is by this test that Governments will be judged. How does India stand this test? In the most civilized parts of Europe, during the past three-quarters of a century, *mainly by a development of Local Government*—using only that scientific knowledge which is equally available to all administrations—we have about doubled the average expectation of life of the whole population. Seeing that in India, where the circumstances are more adverse, the average expectation of life of the people is only somewhere about one-half that of the people of England, there is perhaps no direction in which the community could more profitably invest its thought, its effort and its money, than in a wise development of its Local Government." The late Mr. Gokhale was never tired of urging on the attention of Government the necessity of in-

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1 Preface pp. XIII—XIV. Village Government in British India. By John Matthai.

creasing the expenditure on Sanitation and of strengthening the Resources of the Local Bodies. The response of the Government to these representations, however, was poor.

So much for the "enlightened leadership" of the masses. It is necessary to allude to two more failures and pass on. They are as big, perhaps bigger, than the failure of the leadership of the masses. I refer to the ever-increasing burden of military expenditure. India has been made to pay not only for its own defence but for imperialistic ventures round about India. Truly, in the matter of military expenditure, Lord Salisbury's dictum—"India must be bled"—has been fully realised. During the early months of the war, as Lord Hardinge declared in his apologia on the House of Lords, "India was bled white."

The frantic efforts of the Munitions department under Sir Thomas Holland are a clear proof that India's resources have not hitherto been either fully organised or even developed. Backwardness of India in Industry and Commerce is surely a grave reproach to the boasted efficiency of the administration.

### Summary.

This enumeration does not by any means exhaust the catalogue of failures. But it is enough to show that the Bureaucracy has made few or no *positive* attempts to prepare the people of India for Self-government. That this was the end in view is clear from the remarks of the Duke of Argyll in the House of



Lords on the Petition of the East India Company. He said in concluding his speech ".....and if the Company's *raj* is now to end, it will end in order to give way to the *raj* of that Imperial Crown—which will not cease to rule in India until one or other of two events have happened—until we shall have declined, and that greatly, from the valour and capacity of those who founded that empire and of those whom our own days have shown themselves so able to defend it—or may God speed the time!—until we shall have raised the people of India more nearly to a level with ourselves."¹ The Duke of Argyll, be it remembered, was a member of the Cabinet and was speaking on behalf of Government.

Most of the good hitherto done by the Bureaucracy has been *negative* and *incidental*. There is thus sufficient basis for the belief of Indians that the Bureaucracy is a failure. It has had unrestricted power for two generations and it has not been able to show adequate results. It has pinned its faith to what it calls "a slow and sure advance." At the rate of this advance several generations, perhaps centuries, must pass before India is able to achieve what other countries have achieved within a generation or two, with aid of Self-government!

### Effects of bureaucratic rule.

The effects of a bureaucratic rule have been disastrous. Let us quote Mr. Gokhale once more. He

¹ February 11 1858. Hansard-Parliamentary Debates Vol. CXLVI p. 1150.

said: "The domination of one race over another—especially when there is no great disparity between their intellectual endowments or their general civilisation—inflicts great injury on the subject-race in a thousand insidious ways. On the moral side, the present situation is steadily destroying our capacity for initiative and dwarfing us as men of action. On the material side, it has resulted in a fearful impoverishment of the people. For a hundred years and more now India has been for members of the dominant race a country where fortunes were to be made, to be taken out and spent elsewhere".<sup>1</sup> Let us here quote a witness who is not a politician but a serious student and teacher of Politics and Sociology. Mr. Graham Wallas of the London School of Economics and Political Science has incidentally presented the case for India with great force. In his work on the "Great Society" in a chapter discussing whether there is an art of Thought he writes: "This"—whether the moral atmosphere not only of the colleges and schools but of the social and political institutions "is one of the considerations which trouble some Englishman who hopes that, on the whole, our Empire in India makes for good. The thousand members of the covenanted Civil Service obviously cannot do all the thinking required by a population of three hundred millions living under rapidly changing social and industrial conditions. If India is to fight successfully the plague which ships and railways spread, if she is to revive the arts and industries which have been killed by Manchester

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<sup>1</sup> Presidential Address...Benares 1905.

and Birmingham, above all, if she is to contribute her fair share to the world's literature and science a much larger number of creative thinkers must appear among her native inhabitants. But Anglo-Indian Officials do not, one fears, often produce or perhaps often desire to produce an emotional condition, favourable to the growth of creative thought in the natives with whom they are brought into contact. Athens during the last quarter of the fifth century B. C. was not well-governed ; and if the British Empire then existed, and if Athens had been brought within it, the administration of the city would undoubtedly have been improved in some important respects. But one does not like to imagine the effect on the intellectual output of the fifth century B. C. if even the best of Mr. Rudyard Kipling's public-school subalterns had stalked daily through the agora, snubbing as he passed that intolerable bounder Euripides, or clearing out of his way the probably seditious group that were gathered round Socrates."¹

### **The Remedy.**

The remedy then would lie in creating an atmosphere favourable to the development of the full stature of Indian manhood. One way of doing this would be to inculcate a sense of responsibility in the mind of the Bureaucracy towards the people of India. The main cause of the failure of the Bureaucracy in India has been its irresponsibility. It has never been made to

realise that its duty to the Indians consists in helping them to govern themselves and not in making attempts to keep them in perpetual tutelage. This antipathy to the natural aspirations of the people did not always characterise the attitude of the officials. In his Presidential address Mr. Gokhale has quoted from a letter from Mr. Hodgson Pratt, who had been a member of the Bengal Civil Service, in proof of this. "Fifty years ago" wrote Mr. Pratt, "while India was still under the Government of the East India Company, it was considered both just and wise to introduce measures for national education on a liberal scale, with adequate provision of schools, colleges and universities. This event was hailed with lively satisfaction by the native population as heralding a new era of social progress and as satisfying the active intelligence of the Hindus....."

"The inevitable result of such teaching was clearly perceived by the Government of those days and was regarded in a generous spirit. In support of this I may mention that at the time of the inauguration of these measures I accompanied the then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal (Sir Frederick Halliday) on one of his winter tours through the province. Naturally, he called the attention of those who attended the public meetings held by him, to the new education policy, and he always took occasion to declare that the schools would promote one of the leading purposes of British rule, *which was to prepare the people for Self-Government*. It certainly was not

be adopted, which would disappoint the legitimate hopes thus created."

This antipathy towards the aspirations of the people appears to have developed since the transfer of India from the Company to the Crown, as a consequence of the growing emphasis on the "distinction of a dominant and a subject race." This invidious distinction cannot disappear so long as the Englishman and the Indian are not put on the same level in actual practice as well as in theory. It is often said, that this distinction is the outcome of a mis-understanding or at any rate the absence of a proper understanding between the Englishmen and the Indians, and that with increased social intercourse it will tend to disappear. In other words, as the social ideals and practice of Indians tend to approach or even assimilate themselves to those of Englishmen, the anomalies and difficulties of the present situation will begin to disappear. For a generation and more, some Indians put exclusive faith in this solution and made strenuous attempts to reform social abuses and expected to win political rights in proportion to the improvement made. But they discovered, that they had been misled by a defective analysis of the situation, and that the complete solution of the difficulties and disabilities did not lie either in social reform or in increased social intercourse alone, but it had also to be sought in the acquisition of political rights. The value of political reform as an aid to social reform began to be realised when Indians fully discovered that the officials never

felt the necessity nor took the trouble to understand them; not only that, but they could safely neglect them, ignore them. The growth of the racial distinction was not due to mere ignorance but to a deliberate propaganda culminating in the notorious "White man's Burden" sung by Kipling. The remedy, it was realised, lay in securing such a position for Indians in their own country that it should become the business of the officials to understand them.

### **Efficacy of a Vote.**

The study of Modern history had induced the firm conviction that without the possession of a vote and an effective representation in a popular assembly, it would be idle for Indians to expect that they would be heard with respect or that their wishes would prevail with the Government. The history of Europe, during the period during which India has been directly under the Crown, is a history of the rise and development of a Government where the people can no longer be ignored. It is a record of popular movements forcing Governments to broaden their basis by giving the franchise to the people and providing a means for influencing the executive. What has been the result of the extension of the franchise and popularising the basis of Government in European countries? The most obvious and indisputable result has been the improvement in the economic condition of the people and a consequent rise in their standard of life. Everywhere where the people secured the vote,

immediate and increasing attention began to be given by the government to the interests and well-being of the masses. What was this due to? It was not due to the absence of the distinction between classes and masses, but to the fact that as the masses possessed the vote they could not and would not be ignored. Measures for the amelioration of their condition had to be undertaken.

In modern times, therefore, political franchise is an indispensable possession. It is a lever with which alone it is possible to move governments. It is a weapon for attacking vested interests. It is a privilege which always ensures respectful attention from the authorities. That is the reason, why there has always been a struggle between the people and the government for the possession and extension of franchise. That is the reason, why the suffragettes agitated and suffered only a few years ago and now they have come by their own. "Women's questions, women's rights, when social and industrial matters come before Parliament, will be considered in a new spirit and the representations made by women will receive a new attention. The average party man has always acted and spoken on the assumption that the Nation consists exclusively of men. He will soon begin (he has begun already) to revise that habit. He will be forced to study the opinions of his women voters and he will have to earn their confidence."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Commonwealth—August 3rd 1917. The English Woman's Vote.  
By H. N. Brailsford.

It may be said that this quotation proves nothing. It merely gives the expectations of an individual writer—Mr. Brailsford. Let us, therefore, consider the effects, direct and indirect, of the extension of the franchise in England by the reforms of 1867 and 1884. The direct effect of the extension was that a new type of a member and a minister came forward. It is a commonplace of modern English history, that the members as well as ministers show a noticeable change since 1867. Though it is true that the Factory Acts and other legislation benefiting the industrial worker dates from before 1867, still the major portion of such legislation affecting the status and well-being of the worker is subsequent to that date. The volume of such legislation is still increasing. The quickened conscience of the State can legitimately be ascribed to the extension of the franchise to the workmen. In regard to taxation this same period has witnessed striking alterations and developments. Mr. Bernard Mallet, in his *British Budgets 1887-1913*, says: "The conscience of the community has become increasingly alive to all that is unfavourable in the material condition of the poorer classes; unlimited confidence in the efficacy of public action and public money in dealing with social problems has taken the place of a somewhat too dogmatic reliance upon spontaneous development and individual effort and foresight; the principles of state socialism have largely superseded those of free exchange in every direction except that of foreign trade; and the conception of the objects for which taxation may be legitimately imposed has there-



fore been immensely widened.....

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 "As between the income-tax paying class on the one hand and those below the income-tax limit on the other, the proportion of taxation falling upon each as shown by the proportion of direct to indirect taxation, has been very considerably altered since the beginning of this period—1887-1913—to the advantage of the poorer sections of the population.....

.....  
 "When it is considered in what manner a large proportion of the taxation which falls upon them—wage-earners—is raised and how much of the proceeds are devoted to their exclusive benefit, it may be admitted that, judged by the standards which prevail in other countries and which have in the past prevailed at home, the poor classes are now in a relatively favourable position as regards their obligations to the State."<sup>1</sup>

All this has been achieved not because the classes in England evince an extraordinary amount of sympathy and readiness to make sacrifices for the masses but because the masses occupy a strategic position owing to their possession of the franchise and the Conservatives and the Liberals both have to mollify them by promises and performances lest they be kept out of power altogether.

The introduction of compulsory Primary Education, the Public Health Acts, the enormous extension

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1. "British Budgets" 1887-1913. Preface pp. VII-X. By Bernard Mallet.

of secondary and technical education, the multiplication of new universities, the cheapening of education, all these activities belong to a period subsequent to 1867. And though every one of these cannot be attributed to the extension of the franchise alone its influence in the back ground is undeniable. Apart from these effects there has been a change of attitude towards the masses in ordinary life and it is not without its influence in literature and on the method and manner of public discussion. The superciliousness of the classes has practically disappeared. The franchise has therefore been a tremendous power for good in Europe and in England. Why should it not become the same in India?

### **What will the Vote do in India?**

What will the vote do in India is a question likely to be impatiently asked. Let us see. If the vote does nothing else in India to begin with, but destroy the feeling of immunity from the consequences of their arrogant attitude, in the minds of Europeans—official as well as non-official—it will have done a great deal to adjust the balance in favour of Indians. Such a feeling of immunity and a sense of superiority do, undoubtedly, exist at present. Their removal will foster a sense of responsibility towards India and Indians. When the Bureaucracy and non-official Europeans realise that Indians cannot safely be ignored, they will change their attitude, and cultivate sympathy and understanding, just as the privileged classes learned to do in

England. It is not because of ignorance, that Anglo-Indians are as a rule hostile towards Indians, but because they know too well how powerful they are and how comparatively feeble and harmless Indians are. Nothing but an equalization of status, in fact as well as in theory, will mend the situation. Social intercourse will then become practicable, as it can only take place between equals and not between privileged and non-privileged classes.

The effects of a political franchise will not be confined to the adjustment of the relations between Anglo-Indians and Indians. Among the Indians themselves, the franchise will initiate a process of equalization. The hauteur of the classes standing higher in the conventional social scale will of necessity tend to give way to an actively tolerant attitude. Political equality will begin to undermine social privilege. Instead of an offensive patronising, destructive of self-respect, and demoralising charity, the masses will begin to receive an amount of intelligent sympathy and support. Instead of remaining unorganised and helpless the necessity of organisation will become impressed on them. They will learn to take care of themselves, and advocate their interests much more effectively than the classes can ever expect to do here or any where else. By the possession of a political franchise, the masses have come by their own in Europe and elsewhere. They took a generation and a little more to achieve this. Having regard to the extent and amount of illi-

teracy in India, thanks to the "enlightened leadership" of the Bureaucracy for two generations, the masses will probably take a little longer, but that they will come by their own here, as everywhere else, appears to be beyond reasonable doubt.

Among the classes themselves, an unrestricted scope for the most varied activities, which we may surely expect from a government thoroughly responsive to public opinion, will in all probability lessen the bickerings, the jealousies, and the unseemly scramble for opportunities occasioned by the rigid restriction of careers to a few overcrowded avocations and pursuits. In the present cramped surroundings, there are few opportunities in India as compared to free countries, in our daily life for any but the sordid impulses of human nature to display and develop themselves. For instance, what can be more deplorable than the behaviour of Indians observed and noted by Sir Charles Dilke in 1890 in his *Problems of Greater Britain*, to the effect that "the official class themselves admit, that many of the natives who attack the Congress do so to ingratiate themselves with their British rulers and to push their claims for decorations."

Other and nobler motives besides self-interest will have a chance for free play. The franchise will not usher in a new Heaven and a new Earth. That is certain. But it will make the political atmosphere, in India, on the whole purer and healthier.

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1. Quoted in *Indian National Evolution*. By A. C. Mazumdar  
p: 300.

It cannot be maintained that what the franchise did in Europe and other countries, it will not do in India. The belief, that freedom is the monopoly of any particular race, whether Teutonic, Anglo-Saxon, or Latin, that domination of the East is the birth-right of the West, that colour instead of being what it really is, a pigment of the skin, has some mysterious properties, this belief, this doctrine of Predestination in politics, has been discredited long since by the emergence of Japan, and since the outbreak of the present war, has come to be recognised as a dangerous, though a comfortable and convenient, superstition.

It cannot be that the vote loses its efficacy in Asia. For what is a vote but an antidote to irresponsibility? Such it has been in Europe: such will it be in Asia. Irresponsibility is the same in its character and effects everywhere, be it Asia, Europe or America.

### **Representative Government.**

Possession of a vote, however, involves as a necessary corollary the provision of machinery for its effective exercise in moulding the policy of the government. A franchise makes representative government a necessity, because without it, it is a delusion and a snare.

It is worthy of note that the distinction between a representative government and a responsible government is a recent one. It is due to the political exigencies of the British Empire. Mill, who wrote his

famous treatise on Representative Government, knows no such distinction. In his eyes they are one and the same. He wrote the treatise in 1860 and it was the constitutional and political development of Canada and Australia after that date that gave rise to this distinction and now it has become familiar to politicians. The distinction is based on the degree to which the people are allowed to influence the government. If they make and unmake governments they are said to enjoy responsible government. If they can only influence government without dominating it, or dictating to it, they are said to have representative government. The difference is thus one of degree and not of kind and that is why Dr. A. B. Keith has characterised representative government as the most unstable of governments. It either develops into responsible government or deteriorates into one controlled by a narrow oligarchy. In either case, it is important to remember, the people do not fall back in status. They have to be humoured in either case. They cannot be ignored.

Responsible government and self-government are supposed to be identical. So far as the practice of the British Empire is concerned and so far as the practice of those countries which imitate the British are concerned, this view is correct. But there is one outstanding exception to this identification in all cases and that is the United States of America. There the Executive is independent of the Legislature in so far that the latter cannot turn out the former by an adverse vote. The Executive changes with the

President who is elected for 4 years. But surely, the Americans enjoy self-government even though the Executive is independent of the Legislature. "In order to become a law or Act of Congress a bill must pass both houses and receive the signature of the President. Such is the ordinary process of legislation. But the President may withhold his signature and in that case the measure which he has refused to sanction must receive the votes of two-thirds of the members of each house, given upon a reconsideration, before it can go upon the statute book. The President is given ten days for the consideration of each measure. If he take no action upon it within the ten days, or if within that period he sign it, its provisions become law; if within the ten days he inform Congress by special message that he will not sign the bill, returning it to the house in which it originated with a statement of his reasons for not signing it, another passage of the measure by a majority of two-thirds in each house is required to make it a law."¹ So that the Legislature is ultimately allowed to prevail.

The relevance of this quotation from Woodrow Wilson lies in the fact that far too much attention has been and is being given to the degree and kind of control over the Executive when even the power of the purse is still to be secured in India. So long as the power of the purse remains with the people, the exact and actual relations between the Legislature and the Executive may be trusted to shape themselves in

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1. Woodrow Wilson. The State-Section 1299.

obedience to the balance of forces in the country. In my view, therefore, a particular brand of self-government does not matter.

What does matter is, adequate representation, elective majority, the power of the purse and, above all, the uncompromising assertion of the accountability of the Bureaucracy to the people. In other words, our assemblies whether you call them parliaments, or by any other name, must become competent to discharge all the usual functions of representative assemblies all over the world.

### **Fitness for Representative Government.**

It may be objected that India is not ready for representative government, that Indians are not yet sufficiently trained for it. This really raises the eternal question of fitness in another form. It will not do to avoid it as it goes to the very root of the matter.

This question of fitness, it must be said, is constantly raised by Anglo-Indians. It troubles many patriotic Indians also. But both Anglo-Indians and Indians absolutely ignore the primary function of representative assemblies. The primary function of such assemblies is the redress of grievances and the granting of supplies. The representative assemblies are above every thing "grand inquests of the nation," at which all public questions of real importance find opportunity for adequate discussion. It is a common-place of British Constitutional development



that the power of the purse has been the "parent power" of the House of Commons and that supplies were never voted before the redress of grievances by the Crown. When Anglo-Indians and Indians learn to bear in mind that ventilation and redress of grievances is the paramount duty of representative assemblies, doubts and difficulties will tend to disappear. Vacillation will cease and the need for adequate representation will begin to be emphasized. Asking questions is, not without ample reasons, one of the most valued and jealously guarded privilege of representative assemblies all over the world. It is liable to abuse like any other privilege. "But there is no more valuable safeguard against mal-administration, no more effective method of bringing the search-light of criticism to bear on the action or inaction of the executive Government and its subordinates. A minister has to be constantly asking himself not merely whether his proceedings and proceedings of those for whom he is responsible are legally or technically defensible, but what kind of answer he can give if questioned about them in the house, and how that answer will be received."<sup>1</sup>

So highly is this right esteemed that in France they have provided for what is called "Interpellation." This "Interpellation" is very different from the interpellation in our Legislative Councils. "It is the question exalted into a subject of formal discussion; it is the weightiest form of interrogating ministers: it makes

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<sup>1</sup> Ilbert—Parliament pp. 113. Home University Library.)

them and all that they have done the objects of set attack and defence.<sup>1</sup>"

It can be brought on without the acquiescence of the minister. If the right of putting questions has not been very effectively employed in India, it has been so, because, its importance has not been fully realised and also because, the administration in India works mostly behind a screen behind which no profane eye can penetrate.

For discharging the functions of a "grand inquest of the nation" we Indians are as fitted as any other people. To deny this one must be prepared to maintain that in order to know (a) that you have grievances (b) that you are wronged (c) that you are denied opportunities, (d) that you are neglected (e) that you are exploited, (f) that you are denied justice, you must be able to read, write and calculate, sign your name and half diagnose the situation. This is as much as to maintain that a patient must be half a doctor himself before he can know that he is not keeping well. Stated in this form it will undoubtedly appear absurd. But pushed to the limit, this is what this argument about fitness amounts to. The people are always intelligent enough to know that something is wrong. It rests with their natural leaders and paid experts to help in devising suitable remedies.

The right to petition and seek redress is an immemorial right of the subject both in the East and in

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1. Woodrow Wilson. The State—Section 429.

the West. Only, with the development of representative institutions it does not stand out so prominently in the West as it does in the East. What was the House of Commons itself at the commencement and for a century and more afterwards, but a body for collective petitioning for redress and collective grant of supplies? At the beginning of each parliament the English King or his great Council on his behalf "appointed persons to receive and try these petitions, that is to say, to sort them out, to consider what remedy, if any, each petition required and to devise an appropriate form of remedy.. The triers or auditors of petitions were really committees of the King's Council. Until near the close of the nineteenth century receivers and triers of petitions.....were appointed at the beginning of each parliament by an entry in the lords journals. But their functions had ceased for many centuries."<sup>1</sup>

And the reason for this cessation of function was that the control of Parliament had become increasingly efficient.

In India, we have yet to secure that the ventilation and redress of grievances shall be effective. And for this consummation a surer method than popular representation has yet to be devised. The argument about the fitness of the people for representative government is thus deprived of whatever relevance it is supposed to possess. This

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1. Ilbert-Parliament p. 18.

argument has troubled only those who exaggerate the legislative function of representative assemblies at the expense of the other and more important ones.

The attempt of the Bureaucracy in India is to confine the Councils to legislation. Sir Reginald Craddock in his remarks on the Resolution moved by the Hon'ble Pandit M. M. Malviya in the last session, maintained that the main business of the Imperial Legislative Council was legislation and therefore it was not necessary to increase either the number of its sessions or the duration of its sittings. This position serves to illustrate the fundamental divergence of view between the Bureaucracy and the people. The former would reduce and restrict the business of the present Councils, Provincial as well as Imperial, to legislation. The latter would elevate them into genuine representative assemblies. Unless and until the Councils become fully representative assemblies in their functions, they cannot acquire and exercise effective control over the administration; they cannot, in short, bring responsibility home to the Bureaucracy.

It cannot be sufficiently emphasised that the legislative is not the most important function either of governments or of representative assemblies. The whole legislative output of the British Parliament in the 18th century is represented by a half dozen acts at the most. It was not till the 19th century and not till after the Reform Bills of 1832, 1867 and 1884 that legislative activity became prominent. And even with

this quickened activity of Parliament in legislation at present, this function is still regarded as "not its most important function." Let me quote the high authority Sir Courtney Ilbert, the Clerk of the House of Commons, in corroboration of my statement. He describes the business of the House of Commons, the progenitor of representative assemblies, in these words:—

"Its business is three-fold—legislative, financial, critical. It makes laws with the concurrence of the House of Lords and of the Crown. It imposes taxes and appropriates revenue. By means of questions and discussions it criticises and controls the action of the executive."<sup>1</sup> But this is not the historical sequence of its business. "The commons appear as petitioners for laws rather than as legislators."<sup>2</sup>

In historical sequence the order has to be changed to financial, critical, and legislative. "The making of laws is the function with which the House of Commons is most commonly associated in the popular mind. But this was not its original function, perhaps is still not its most important function. The House is something much more than, and very different from a merely legislative body. Napoleon, when framing a constitution for France saw and expressed clearly the difference between a legislature as he conceived it should be and the British Parliament as it actually was. He professed the greatest reverence for the

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1. Redlich—*Parliamentary Procedure*. Preface p. VI. Sir C. P. Ilbert.

2. Ilbert—*Parliament* p. 23.

legislative power, but legislation in his view did not mean finance, criticism of the administration or ninety nine out of the hundred things with which in England the Parliament occupies itself. The legislature according to him, should legislate, should construct grand laws on scientific principles of jurisprudence, but it must respect the independence of the executive as it desires its own independence to be respected. It must not criticise the Government. Thus according to Napoleon, ninety-nine per cent of the work of the British Parliament at the beginning of the nineteenth century lay outside the proper province of legislature. And he would say the same to-day".<sup>1</sup>

If it can be said of the House of Commons itself that the legislative is "perhaps still not its most important function" it is absurd for any one to maintain that the main business of representative assemblies is legislation. There is a striking resemblance in the attitude of Napoleon, the prince of despots, and the attitude of Sir Reginald Craddock, towards the legislature and the motive is the same, namely, the independence of the executive and freedom from criticism.

Thus a close scrutiny of the hackneyed argument about fitness reveals its unsound and specious nature. It is found to be based on a total misconception of the primary function of representative assemblies.

### **Indian Traditions.**

It may be said, however, that the traditions of Indians though they date from a hoary past, are

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid pp. VI.—VII.

against free and democratic institutions, and are steeped in religious and secular despotism. It is no use denying that this is the current view of Indian history. It is not the view of Anglo-Indians alone. Many Indians consciously or unconsciously subscribe to it. One Anglo-Indian writer has gone so far as to describe the period before the advent of British rule as the "Darkness before Dawn." There is no doubt, that he was carried away by the necessity of having an attractive title to his production and was not much concerned about the historical justice of it. But even supposing that the writer was quite sincere in this view of the pre-British period, such an attitude is not surprising. Equally shallow and erroneous views used to be held, at one time about the history of Europe before the Renaissance and the Reformation. This period used to be known as the Middle Ages, subdivided into the earlier or the Dark Ages and the later or the Middle Ages *par excellence*. In this period Europe was considered to have been immersed in "Cimmerian darkness" by the arrogant apostles of "Enlightenment." But the "Middle Age" of Europe has at last come by its own. It is now admitted that the expression "Dark Ages" serves only to measure the ignorance of historians, and not to provide a just description of the period. It is now recognised as the first formative period of European history, and as such deserving of the greatest care and attention. The later Middle Age or the Middle Ages *par excellence* do not any longer appear as a period of "Gothic barbarism" but as one which invented the represent-

ative government for the modern world, and which shows the highest development of trade and industry, of literature, of art and architecture before the advent of steam and the Industrial Revolution. The Middle Age is no longer dismissed with flippant epigrams.

Something very similar is taking place in regard to the history of India. Recent Sanskritic research is tending to rehabilitate Indian history in the eyes of professed students. The discovery of Arthas'astra, a work dealing with Politics and Administration, has revolutionised the accepted ideas about administration in Ancient India. It has stimulated research and we already have three works dealing with Indian polity Mr. Law's Studies in Indian Polity, Mr. John Matthai's Village Government in British India and Dr. Bannerji's Public Administration in Ancient India, covering mainly the millenium from 500 B. C to 500 A. D. In addition to these we have the Studies in History by Prof. Iyengar containing among other things an account of the Chola administration and his lectures on Indian Politics. All these works and studies have served to diffuse the conviction that the art of administration was highly developed even before the Mahomedan invasions and that Indians did not have to wait till the appearance of Europeans to learn its rudiments from them.

So much attention has hitherto been given to the village punchayats and their autonomy that it is almost forgotten that "India, for all its villages, has been



also, at all known periods, and to day still is .....  
 .....  
 a land of flourishing cities, of a distinctly urban civilisation, exhibiting not only splendid architecture, and the high development of the manufacturing arts made possible by the concentration of population and wealth, but likewise—what is much more—a secretion of thought, an accumulation of knowledge and a development of literature and philosophy which are not in the least like the characteristic product of villagers as we know them in Europe or America. And today, although the teeming crowds who throng the narrow lanes of Calcutta or Benares, Bombay or Poona, Madras or Hyderabad, or even the millions who temporarily swarm at Hardwar or Allahabad or Puri, may include only a small percentage of the whole population, yet the Indian Social order does not seem to be, in the European understanding of the phrase, either on its good side or on its bad side essentially one of villagers”<sup>1</sup>

Indians as well as Anglo-Indians have reason to envy Mr. Webb this singularly penetrating insight into the social conditions in India.

When attention is once directed to the history of municipal government in India before the beginning of British rule, and research undertaken in this neglected field, it will begin to be realised that in the

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1. Sydney Webb—Preface pp. XVI-XVII. Village Government in British India. By John Matthai.

government of cities, as in general administration, Indians had made an advance which might be compared to that of Medieval Europe. That Medieval India with its flourishing ports, and its hives of industry, its holy places, where thousands of people congregated, its seats of empire like Delhi and Vijayanagar, to mention only two, in short, its busy and thriving towns and cities, was without any developed municipal administration is utterly unbelievable.

The current view of Indian history which I am discussing is the outcome of the exaggerated importance naturally attached by Anglo-Indians to the XVIIIth century of Indian history. For Indians that century has only a pathological interest and no historical generalisations based on this period alone ought to find acceptance without a careful scrutiny. History of India, read in its true perspective, does not support the allegation that India is pre-eminently a land of despotism. It is really just the opposite of this. Look at the caste-system itself. Does it not appear as a system which allows the most extreme freedom of association? This is the main process by which castes and sub-castes, sects and sub-sects have been formed. Does not this fissiparous tendency really mean a persistent attempt of every group and sub-group to live and fashion its life in its own way? A despot, whether religious or secular, would have arrested this tendency by requiring some sort of permission or approval. Nothing of the kind, however, took place. And even now it is not unusual to see

groups separating themselves and wanting to live in their own way, though not with the same old freedom, or at any rate absence of restraint. India has thus been the land where separatism has run mad. Even the Mughals were able to claim only a partial success in curbing this tendency. It is the British who have really succeeded in welding India into a complex whole by the enormous power and weight of their administration.

Thus the traditions of separatism in India have been corrected, controlled and refined by the centralisation of administration. They are not such a hindrance now as they have been in the past.

### **Backwardness of India.**

It may still be urged, that India is far from modernised, that in arts and industries, in economic organisation, in the spread of knowledge, and intellectual outlook the country continues to be predominantly medieval. There is no gainsaying this statement. But it has no relevance to the urgency of representative government for India. As a matter of fact, representative government itself first arose and flourished amidst medieval conditions in Europe. The XIII century in Europe, when this form of government was developed was the hey-day medievalism. In the last century, Europe, with the exception of England and France, was just as medieval as India is at present. The transition from medieval conditions to modern is not even now

complete in Eastern Europe and in Russia and yet from 1830 onwards one country after another in Europe popularised its form of Government. In fact representative government has been the most potent means of quickening the transaction from outworn conditions to modern ones.

Representative government, self-government, has been the means to an end and not an end in itself. The policy of the United States of America in the Philippines is an illustration of this. Twenty years were sufficient in the eyes of that great Republic to start the Philippines on the modern road to improvement. But in the eyes of the Indian Bureaucracy even 60 years—to take only the period of direct administration by the Crown of England—do not suffice. This erroneous and obstinate belief partly arises from the confusion of means with the end. When Lord Ronaldshay, for example, tells the Indians that “Self-government within the Empire will someday be achieved, but it will come as the crown of much patient and sustained endeavor and by no conceivable possibility can it be brought about by a mere stroke of the pen,” His Excellency is guilty of a confusion of means with the end. Self-government or any other form of government has never been, nor can ever be an end in itself. *It is a means to an end.* The goal of all governmental activities is the development of the full stature of man and this is only possible where conditions of a full and free growth prevail.

The Duma in Russia had scarcely a decade, before the out-break of this terrible war, for its activities and though its freedom of action was considerably hampered by its own constitution and the attitude of the bureaucracy, it clearly showed what the the people can do when they make their voice heard in the administration of the country. The Duma took up the question of primary education among other matters and the effects are thus described by Sir Paul Vinogradoff in his "Self-government in Russia." "Large credits are voted from year to year and the striving towards universal education becomes a characteristic sign of the time. This is effected under unremitting pressure of the Duma "in the atmosphere of popular representation" as one of the workers in the field aptly put it. The third Duma made a real start in the direction of the introduction of universal instruction. "The first step was the passing of the law of June 3, 1908 ..... The goal of universal instruction was set first in 1920, then in 1922, ultimately in 1924.....What is even more important it was made a condition for obtaining grants from the Treasury that the counties and towns applying for them should present a plan for the gradual introduction of universal instruction and a map of the network of schools designed to carry out the plan..... Altogether the services rendered by the Duma representation in developing the productive expenditure of the Empire can hardly be over-estimated. It may be sufficient to say that the expenditure for all forms

of public instruction was actually doubled in the interval between 1907 and 1912 rising from 85 millions to 170 millions a year." The moral is obvious.

Anglo-Indians as well as many Indians often argue as if Self-government were a kind of a haven of rest to be reached after a strenuous and perhaps even a stormy voyage. It is nothing of the kind. Self-government is the instrument for the elevation of man. It needs to be constantly employed and carefully watched in operation. It is the most strenuous form of Government. So many requirements are postulated for Indians before they "attain" Self-government, that one is often inclined to wonder whether in countries which enjoy Self-government, there are no social and economic problems, no class-jealousies, no ignorance, no superstitions, no religious or political rancour, no self-seeking, no meanness, no nepotism, no pettifogging, no cowardice, no dishonesty, no cringing, in short, none of the innumerable short comings that are discovered in India and the Indians. This is ridiculous on the face of it.

### **Influence of Training and Environment.**

Neither the Europeans nor the Americans are, however, a race of supermen. They belong to the same species of Man as we do. They have failings and weaknesses just as much as any other people on this earth. The only thing is that their failings and weaknesses

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1 (Self-Government in Russia—Popular Education pp. 83-88.)

are not always exaggerated into an evidence of their Original Sin. The Europeans and Americans have opportunities while Indians have not. They have the fullest scope for the development of their individuality, while Indians grow up in a cramping, dwarfing, atmosphere fatal to the growth of moral stature. While democratic institutions have altered and accelerated the rate of growth for Europeans and Americans, bureaucratic institutions have retarded, if not altogether arrested, it for Indians. In the free and healthy atmosphere of the West, Indians grow and flourish just as much and just as well as the natives of those parts. In the bureaucratic and unhealthy atmosphere of India, the Westerners degenerate just as rapidly as the natives of this country. The Marquess of Wellesley was nicknamed the "Sultanised Englishman" by his own countrymen.

In a bureaucratic atmosphere, not only in India but everywhere, people degenerate whether they are Europeans or Asiatics. The Civil Service in Great Britain is divided into classes. All of them are recruited by a competitive examination but the higher appointments are confined to Class I and this corresponds to the Civil Service as Indians understand it. It often happens that appointments in Class I are held by men junior in age to those in the lower classes. And you see the older man cringing to the younger. The situation compels him to do that. It is the condition of official preferment. Being always accustomed to obey and carry out orders he loses the

power of initiative. The same thing happens in India in the Provincial Services.<sup>1</sup> The conditions of service are such that a successful man must become pliant, obedient, resourceless. The same degeneration becomes noticeable in both cases, in England as well as in India. The degeneration can, therefore, have no reference to race. It points to the conditions of service.

Further, the demoralisation of the Westerner in the bureaucratic atmosphere of India is not only observable in the Public Services of British India, but also and to a more pronounced extent in, what are called, the Native States. In an atmosphere reeking with irresponsibility, and under the stimulus of self-interest, the Westerner develops an accommodating temper, a pliancy of attitude, an adaptability, a glibness of tongue, and even a moral lisp, in fact, all the foibles that are commonly attributed to Orientals alone. So that it begins to appear that irresponsibility creates an atmosphere, which is destructive of the moral fibre of man, and that no one, be he a prince or prophet, a priest, a public servant, or a politician, is proof against it.

Let us, here, take a historical instance. In the despotic age of Italian history and after, the character of the people degenerated so much that there was no crime, no form of violence or bloodshed, no species of lying and treachery, from which the

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<sup>1</sup> The Public Works Department appears to be an exception. Quite a number of the higher appointments are held by men of the Provincial Services: only they are paid less for the same kind of work.



Italians were supposed to shrink? "Italian cunning" became a familiar expression. What was it all due to? It was obviously due to the helpless dependence of the Italians on their irresponsible rulers. The defence of the weak against the strong, it is well-known, is secrecy, subterfuge, dissimulation and treachery. But in the period following the French Revolution and till the attainment of Italian Unity, we find a progressive change for the better inspite of the grinding despotism of Austria. What was this due to? It was manifestly due to the hope of freedom, to the moral exaltation, induced by the principles of the French Revolution and to the rise of a national sentiment. The noticeable improvement in the moral stature of European peoples is mostly subsequent to their attainment of freedom from despotic conditions of government. Do not the Balkan States which were, one after the other, carved out of the Turkish Empire in the last century show a development superior to that of the territories still under Turkish rule? The political conditions were altered and with the alteration of political conditions the whole atmosphere improved in purity and healthiness. There was no change either in the race or the religion of these peoples.

The United States of America has been absorbing immigrants from the East and the South-East of Europe, of a type which at its first arrival is far from attractive and yet in a generation, with training, the immigrants grow in stature, improve in outlook and are far on the way to become finished citizens of the Republic.

The atmosphere in India is, thus, in need of a change and a purification. There is nothing radically wrong with Indians as compared with Europeans and Americans.

### **A New Epoch.**

The present world-war has opened a new epoch. In order to form an adequate conception of it one has perforce to turn to geological phenomena. Geology alone would tell us of secular changes, like crustal movements or volcanic eruptions, shaking continents, devastating countries, distorting landscapes, defacing landmarks, compelling reconstruction, readjustment and preparing for new life, new knowledge and new values. This war is not inaptly comparable to such cosmic changes. It is unlike any other known to history. It exceeds the great French Revolution in the number and resources of the belligerents, the compass, scale and destructiveness of its operations and the magnitude and importance of the issues at stake. It is raging in three Continents, has embroiled most of civilised humanity and vitally affected every people on earth.

Western civilisation in all its bearings and with all its achievements, securing to it the domination of the world, appears to be on its trial. Doctrines of race, born of ignorance and prejudice and nourished by self-interest, systems of Government founded on racial domination, theories of trade and commerce resulting

in the exploitation of backward countries and peoples, and the claims of Christianity, Catholic and Protestant, to intrinsic moral superiority over other Faiths, are now in the melting pot.

The seismic character of this war is evident from the rumblings and reverberations it has set up throughout the world. Change is in the air. Neutral countries are stirring themselves to consolidate their economic gains. Readjustment is going on apace in the belligerent nations. Forecasts and schemes of reconstruction, economic, social and political, are everywhere in evidence.

The effect of the war on Christianity was thus described by "The Ditcher" in his Diary in the issue of the Capital on 19th January last. He wrote:

"Recent events in Europe and elsewhere have not made Christianity more respectable in the eyes of Indians than it appeared in the days of the first Portuguese missionaries. This war may effect a revival of Christian ethics in European countries, which in peace were given over to a hard materialism but it will not help the propagation of Christianity in Asia. What this would mean to the devoted men and women who are trying to form the character of Asiatics on the Christian plan is easier to conceive than describe. It will be hard to resist the Asiatic claim of character—formation, on an Asiatic basis, be the Prophet Zoroaster, Confucious, Budha or

Mehomet." By the time the war comes to an end, as it must in the near future, it is clear that things can never remain as they were before its out-break. Old land-marks will have become obsolete, shibboleths lost their meanings, proportions will have altered and theories once charged with potency evaporated.

India is caught up in this world-wide whirl. The demand for Self-government, however, is not due to the out-break and the continuance of the present war. It was due to the conviction that *Self-government is the means to an end and not an end in itself*. It has always been the means and never been an end in itself. Europe started on the high road to improvement by means of this instrument. The history of Eupore in the XIXth century is a witness to it. With this conviction, the late Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji formulated a demand for Self-government so long ago as 1906. The present war has only increased the intensity and the volume of opinion behind it, because the Allies are fighting for the right of all nations to govern themselves without dictation or domination from outside. The Metropolitan of Calcutta in his prayer on the last Intercession day—4th August—adjured the congregation in these words—"If we fail to train the Indians in Self-Government after condemning the German principle that the stongest Nation ought to subdue and enslave the weaker ones, we shall stand before God as hypocrites." This war has therefore deeply stirred the people of India and has

undoubtedly helped in sharpening their desire for autonomy. They cannot believe that Self-government is the birth-right of the Westerners alone, as colour can have no bearing on birth-right. The rapid spread and development of the Home Rule movement and the wide-spread indignation caused by the internment of Mrs. Besant and her coadjutors for no other reason but that of their vigorous advocacy of Self-government within the Empire for India at an early date, is a proof of it. The joint-session of the All-India Congress Committee and the Council of the All-India Muslim League at Bombay on the 28th and 29th July last and the representation to the Secretary of State for India demanding the release of the interned persons, requesting the issue of a declaration by the Imperial Government accepting Self-government within the Empire at no distant date as the goal of Indian administration, and arranging for a definite step towards that goal immediately at the conclusion of the war--this representation, is the clearest proof that Educated India is unanimous in the demand for Self-government.

The Proclamation of 1858 makes no allusion to and does not definitely contemplate Self-government within the Empire, for India. The demand for a new proclamation<sup>1</sup> by the Imperial Government specifically accepting this goal proves that the Proclamation of 1858

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1. Before the publication of this paper a definite announcement accepting this goal has been made by the Secretary of State in the House of Commons.

is now out of date and its fulfilment alone will not satisfy Indian aspirations.

If Indians clamour for a substantial and an increasing share in the Public Services, it is because they are so privileged and so attractive that they draw the Britisher, who is not by common repute a place-hunter, thousands of miles away from his own country. It is also because one of these services, the Indian Civil Service, is the Government, as Dr. Fisher has tersely put it, and to secure a growing percentage of these appointments means *under the present ordering*, securing a share in the Government of the country. But under a system of Government in which the people can make their influence felt, whatever the degree of it, whether it amounts to responsible Government or representative Government, much of the glamour which surrounds the Public Services in India at present, and especially the governing service, must of necessity disappear. Under such a system of Government, therefore, the Services will shrink in importance and the Britisher will not probably desire to retain his present monopoly of power and position. He may even consent to extinguish his vested interests within a definite period—say one generation. Indians will then inevitably man these services. Besides, with the disappearance of the hedges and barriers and with expanding activities, what happened elsewhere in the world will happen in India also. In advanced countries governmental activities form a small, and that too not always an important, portion of national

activities. Governmental activities loom large in the public eye only under despotic or unfree conditions of life, and only so long as the people remain dormant. As soon as they show signs of awakening, governmental activities diminish in importance, public services lose their *adventitious importance* and the best and the ablest men do not exclusively hanker after them. This aspect of the question, the Anglo-Indian and other critics appear to forget or at any rate ignore, and they represent that political agitation in India is a mere scramble for the "loaves and fishes of office." The number of appointments worth scrambling for cannot exceed three or four thousand at the most and to suppose that educated Indians can now be placated by allotting to them even a substantial portion of this number without altering the present character of the Government is to grievously misunderstand the movement for constitutional reforms. A mere substitution of an Indian bureaucracy in the place of the Anglo-Indian one will leave matters very much where they are at present. Agitation for Self-government, on the other hand, is an agitation against irresponsibility, whether it is a European who thrives on it or an Indian. Europeans as well as Indians, be they Bureaucrats or Brahmins, hereditary Nobles, Chiefs or Ruling Princes, must recognise, must be made to realise, their responsibility to the people. This is the inspiration and the meaning of the movement. To ignore or to be wilfully blind towards this, is to court disaster.

Hopes have been given, expectations have been raised, and it would be unwise in the extreme to

ignore or belittle the importance of this demand for responsible Government. This joint-demand by the National Congress and the Moslem League marks the culmination of one epoch and the opening of another in the political advancement of India. A frank recognition of this fact is indispensable to a sane and sober discussion of the scheme of reforms which has been before the public for several months. Carping would be out of place and even impertinent.

*12th August 1917.* }

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