

# The Indo-British Association Ltd.

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MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS of the  
FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
of the INDO-BRITISH ASSOCIATION  
LTD., held on Monday, July 29th, 1918, at  
3 p.m., at the Cannon Street Hotel, London, E.C.

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SYDENHAM OF COMBE, G.C.S.I.,  
G.C.M.G., G.B.E., G.C.I.E., PRESIDENT, was in the chair.

Among those on the platform were:—

SIR CHARLES ARMSTRONG	J. M. PROPHIT, Esq.
SIR JOHN P. HEWETT	SIR HERBERT HOLMWOOD
A. D. JACKSON, Esq.	COLONEL R. D. MURRAY
SIR CHARLES McLEOD	J. A. TOOMEY, Esq.
J. C. SHORROCK, Esq.	SIR CECIL GRAHAM
GENERAL SIR O'MOORE CREAGH	MAJOR N. McLEOD
SIR HARVEY ADAMSON	MRS. FLORA ANNIE STEEL
DR. T. M. NAIR, of Madras	THE REV. W. SCOTT.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will call upon the Secretary to read  
the notice convening this meeting.

MR. S. M. EDWARDES (Secretary),

“The Indo-British Association, Ltd.

“The First Annual General Meeting of the above  
Association will be held at the Cannon Street Hotel on  
Monday, 29th July, 1918, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon,  
to transact ordinary business. The Meeting will be  
addressed by the President, Lord Sydenham, and other  
Members of the Association.

“By Order of the Council.”

THE CHAIRMAN: The following formal piece of business has to be transacted before we get to the particular business of the meeting. I move this Resolution:—

“ That under Article 59, Messrs. W. A. Browne & Company, of Winchester House, Chartered Accountants, be appointed first Auditors of the Association at a remuneration not exceeding 25 guineas per annum.”

Those in favour please hold up their hands.

*Agreed.*

THE CHAIRMAN: There are one or two points that I should like to speak about. First of all, I will read to you an extract from our Memorandum of Association, because it must dispel any misconception as to the objects of this Association:—

We are formed “ to promote and foster the unity and advancement of the Indian peoples under the British Crown. This Association realises that the natural result of British rule in India has been to encourage the growth of the spirit of nationality among Indians, and recognises, therefore, that British policy must be directed to lead them along safe and prudent lines compatible with their security, contentment and moral and material progress towards the goal of responsible Government.”

Our Executive Committee, as I think most of you know, is composed of myself, Sir Charles Armstrong; Mr. James Duncan, Sir William Garth, Sir John Hewett, Mr. A. D. Jackson, Sir Charles McLeod, The Right Hon. Sir West Ridgeway, Mr. J. C. Shorrocks, Colonel Sir Francis Young-husband and Sir David Yule.

I may say that the Auditors have examined and audited the accounts of the Association up to 6th June, the date of the registration of the Association.

We are very anxious to increase our numbers, and we hope you will communicate what you hear to-day to your friends and get them to become members of our Association. I should like to say that we are in touch with the European Associations in India and that there are two Indian Associations which have asked for affiliation with us, and we hope that many more such Associations in India will join us. Arrangements are being made to enrol them as well as individual Indians who are in sympathy with the objects of the

Association, and we hope our membership in the future will be largely strengthened by Indians.

I am very sorry to say we have been long in getting this second meeting together, but that is due in part to delay by legal business, which as you know is very great; also we thought it better to postpone this meeting until such time as we had the Report of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India, Mr. Montagu, before us, so that we might deal with its contents. I hope you will feel that during this interval we have developed many activities, and I think that perhaps our activities may be measured by the strong storm of abuse which has been showered upon us. It has been said that we are reactionaries, caring only for the interests of British commerce. I think all of you who have listened to the objects which I have read out will see that such an accusation cannot be maintained. We stand only for the interests of British commerce in so far as they affect and conduce to the progress of India as a whole, and I am here to-day, towards the end of a long life in the public service, only because of the affection which I bear to India and to Indians. (Cheers.) Well, we regard commerce only as it affects the interests of Great Britain and India alike. We do resent some of the attacks which have been made upon our fellow-countrymen in India, and we cannot ever forget, as the people who attack us forget, what British enterprise and British commerce have done towards promoting the advancement of India.

It has been said that this Association disagrees with the pronouncement of the Secretary of State which was made on the 21st August last. I assure you there is not a word of truth in that statement, and the Secretary of State himself told us only the other day that he did not believe it. All the time that I was in India it was my first object to try and promote the advancement of Indian Nationhood, and as I used to tell the Indians when I was there, it was only when Nationhood was at last attained that self-government would automatically follow in its steps. I really did my best to encourage all Indian industries which came to my notice. It is a fact that one of the greatest enterprises of its kind in India, and almost in the world, is a purely Indian concern to-day, entirely because of the steps that I personally took to ensure that it should be so.

We have, as an Association, no idea whatever of standing still, and we welcome some parts of this Report, and most especially that part in which it is proposed to assign much greater duties to the Provincial Government, because we believe that that alone will confer greater influence upon Indian opinion. We hope to lay before you an alternative scheme to that proposed by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State, a scheme which we believe would be accepted by moderate Indian opinion, and would mark a step, and a very considerable step, in the direction of ultimate self-government.

But to-day the main questions which we have to ask ourselves are these. Does this Report guarantee the interests of the great masses of the population and not merely fulfil the ambitions of the few? Are these proposals safe, really safe, in the present conditions of India as we know them, and what will be their effect upon the transaction of public business and upon the harmony of the administration as a whole? Now I beg you all to get the Report and judge for yourselves how these important questions ought to be answered. It is very stiff reading, and for that reason I regard it as dangerous, because in these strenuous days it is almost impossible to believe that many people can find time to give it the study which it deserves. It is unique of its kind, because it really comes to us without, I may say, any credentials except what the Authors call "the faith that is in us," and I think that very few people who know India will share in the faith which its Authors profess. (Cheers.)

It does not give the opinion of the Local Governments, all of whom must have been consulted, as to what reforms they thought desirable, and, more than that, it ignores the very strong and almost passionate protests which have been conveyed by memorials and by public utterances in India itself. We have circulated to you all a selection of those protests, and I do earnestly hope that you will read them and see how very important they are and how seriously we ought to regard them. And remember that they represent only a very hastily improvised organisation, and that they had against them a carefully engineered agitation, backed by ample funds and supported by nearly the whole of the Indian Press. I should like to say one word in this

connection. We have among us to-day Dr. Nair, a most able, loyal Indian. (Cheers.) He comes to us as a representative of Indian moderate opinion, and, besides that, he is the only Indian representative in this country of the working classes of India. But as I think you all know, he has been muzzled, and muzzled at a time when official impulse has been given to a raging and tearing propaganda almost all over the country. If you read the 300 pages of this Report, I think you will come to the conclusion that the main object of the Authors was to placate, or to find a way to placate, the Home Rulers in India, and that they did not realise what we all regard as the essential conditions of the country itself. I think that is shown by the estimate which they themselves give of the present political situation. They ask the question, what ratio of the people really wish for a greater political power? Now that is a most important question, and it is on the answer to that question that the decisions of the Government ought absolutely to depend. (Hear, hear.) They say, and very justly, it cannot be answered with any accuracy, which is most true. Then they go on to add, "There is a core of earnest men who believe sincerely and strive for political progress, around them a ring of less educated people to whom a phrase or a sentiment appeals and an outside fringe of those who have been described as 'attracted by curiosity to this new thing or who find diversion in attacking a big and very solemn Government as urchins might take a perilous joy in casting toy darts at an elephant.'"

Now, ladies and gentlemen, no one could gather from that statement what has actually happened or what the Leaders of the Home Rule Party are asking for at this moment. The Home Rule movement is undoubtedly a consequence of the war, and it began when our Empire was fighting for its life and with its back to the wall. It does not come from the class who have so gallantly fought in this war and who have suffered so severely in their lives. (Cheers.) What happened was this. The extremists captured the Congress platform and effected an alliance with the little Moslem League. They proceeded to take the fullest advantage of the difficulties of the Empire, and their demands and the strength of their language went on steadily increasing. At no time have the attacks and the slanders

upon British rule been so prevalent or so vicious as they have been during the period of this war.

And all that time the Leaders of the Home Rule Party were able to write and speak in safety because the British Empire held the seas.

Now the President of the Home Rule League told the Secretary of State that there were 52,000 members of that League throughout the whole of India. Let us add 100,000 to represent those less educated people to whom a phrase and a sentiment appeal, and if we add another 100,000 for that outside fringe which is attracted by curiosity or intimidated, as people have been on a large scale, we have 250,000 people, as in my opinion an excessive estimate of the numbers who are asking for Home Rule. (Cheers.) Now the demand of the Home Rulers is really this, that 250,000 at an outside estimate should govern 244,000,000 of people in British India alone. Now is that really democracy; is that what the Labour Party would really like to see? I can only say that if the Labour Party understood the true inwardness of this movement, they would be the first to dissociate themselves from it and to oppose it by every means in their power. (Cheers.) What would be thought of transferring all political power over the 45,000,000 of people in these islands to a section of the classes which speak French? And that is what it really amounts to; what we are asked to have in India. But the core of earnest men to which the Viceroy and the Secretary of State refer must, I assume, be the leaders of this movement.

Some of them have said quite plainly that their object is to turn us out of India altogether, and others have said it is their wish to turn us out indirectly by making our rule, as it at present stands, quite impossible. Mr. Tilak, who is probably the most able of all the Home Rule Leaders, is reported to have said last January that the attitude of the British Government was this, "We know we have to transfer our power; we shall do it gradually when our preparations are complete." His comment upon that attitude of the British Government was this, "That sort of defence ought not to be allowed to stand; we are entitled to the possession of the whole estate at once. If we allowed you to share in that possession it was in the hope that you would clear off; you must acknowledge that we are masters." I ask what a

movement is likely to lead to when its principal head indulges in language of that kind?

But other leaders belonging to this "core of earnest men" have been equally frank, and I need not trouble you with the copious extracts which I could read. Some of them tried to stop recruiting for the Indian Home Defence Force, and the result of that was that I believe 300 men were actually recruited in three months. Others at the Delhi Conference, as you will perhaps remember, tried to bargain on the basis of no Home Rule, no Man Power. There is really no doubt whatever as to the objects of the leaders of this great movement in India, and when we consider the proposals of the Report, surely it would be madness to disregard the nature of those objects, which are plain for us all to see.

I want to try and explain the main features of the scheme proposed, as they would affect our Government and our authority in India. I am sure that it will be very dull, but in such matters details are of very great and real importance. There are two ways, and so far as I can see two ways only, by which more power in the administration can be transferred to Indians. First, there is what may be called the geographical plan, by which a defined area can be handed entirely over to Indian officials, that area being gradually increased if the experiment is found to succeed, until at last a whole Province falls completely under Indian rule. That is one scheme. The other scheme would be to allocate certain services to an Indian Executive, and gradually increase these services till all the complete executive power comes into the hands of Indians. The Report adopts that second plan, and for reasons which I will give you I think you will see that that is very unsafe and even dangerous.

Now I will try to explain the result. Every Province is to have two Executives, which I will call A. and B. Executive A. is to consist of the Governor, one European, and one Indian, all appointed as now by the Crown. That is really the present system, except that one European is taken away, thus reducing the Council by one official, which I think would very much add to the difficulties of a new Governor when he came out fresh to India. But that system has worked well in the past, and it will continue to work well as long as there is not a permanent anti-government

majority in the Legislative Council; and that is exactly what the Home Rulers are now aiming at.

Now Executive B. is to consist of two, and eventually several more Ministers, as they are called, selected by Government from the elected members of the Legislative Council, and responsible only to a shadowy electorate. It is wisely ordained that those Ministers should be removed only at a General Election: otherwise the changes in that form of Government would be extraordinarily rapid. Two advisers without portfolio may be added. Those advisers would have no status, no special rate of pay, no authority and no vote, but they may be asked for advice if they are so good as to give it. Now A. has control of what are called the reserved services, and B. is to have control of all the transferred services, which, as I have said, are afterwards to be increased until every service has been taken over. When this remarkable Cabinet meets as a whole, which I should think would not be very often, there will be three bodies in it serving in totally different capacities, and the Governor will be the sole link between those three bodies. A. cannot deal with transferred services. B. cannot touch reserved services, but A. is wholly responsible for maintaining law and order in India, and B. has no responsibility whatever of that kind; and the advisers, of course, may speak in Cabinet if they are asked, but they have no vote and no authority to bring to bear upon anything.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I think a Cabinet of that kind is really nothing else than a menagerie. The Legislative Council is to have a substantial elected majority, and certain of its members may speak but not vote. Bills apparently are put in two categories. If Executive B. introduces a Bill dealing with transferred services only, and if that Bill is passed in Council, there seems to be no further check except a veto which it might be difficult to exercise; but if Executive A. brings in a Bill which is opposed, as it frequently would be, by the majority of the Legislative Council, then the Governor may certify that it is essential to the discharge of its responsibilities. But that does not end the matter in the least. The majority of the Council can then appeal to the Governor-General-in-Council, and the Governor-General-in-Council has to decide whether a certified Bill deals with the reserved sub-



jects or not. If the Governor-General-in-Council confirms the certificate, there will be a violent agitation against the Governor and the Viceroy, and probably both, but if the Governor's deliberate judgment in the matter, which he must understand better than the Government of India, is upset, then it seems to me clear that the position of the Governor must be rendered almost impossible. If the Government of India supports the certificate, that is to say, allows the Bill to proceed, the further procedure is as follows :—The Bill is first discussed by the Legislative Council as a whole, then it is referred to an elected Grand Committee, consisting of 40 to 50 per cent. of the Council, reproducing as nearly as possible the various elements in that larger body, which it would be very difficult to do, and the Governor is allowed to nominate a bare majority on that Grand Committee. The Grand Committee, after discussing the Bill, may refer it to a Select Committee. The Bill then returns to the Grand Committee, which discusses it again, and reports it back to the Legislative Council, which may have another discussion, ended only by a time limit which the Governor is empowered to lay down. Then the Bill passes automatically. But there is a further step. The elected majority may send up their objections with the Bill, and might succeed in stopping the Bill from receiving final sanction.

Now it is utterly impossible to conceive anything more cumbrous, more complicated, or more unsuited to Indian conditions, for everything in Government ought to be rendered as simple and as above board as possible. (Cheers.)

And surely you can all see that a system like that would put a premium upon intrigue, in which as we know the Indian genius excels.

But there are two other most serious consequences which must follow from that system. The first is this. The proceedings taken by Executive B. either by Bill or by Executive action, might quite conceivably give rise to trouble in some parts of the Presidency, but whatever B. may do A. has got to support B., by the use of force if necessary. Now that little difficulty is quite frankly recognised by Mr. Curtis, who is the inventor of this diarchic system. He says quite plainly that we may have to look on while Indian electorates hurt innocent people. That, ladies and gentlemen, is what we never can do as long as we are responsible for Govern-

ment in India, and, as we all know who have been in India, whatever was done would be attributed by the poor people who were suffering not to their electorates, not to their members, but to the Sirkar, which was looked upon in the past, and would still be looked upon, as responsible for everything. (Cheers.)

And curiously enough, it is that very difficulty which is foreseen and feared by many of the memorialists of whose warning this Report takes no account whatever. Everyone who has served in India knows quite well that one of the pre-occupations of British officials is to prevent Indians from oppressing Indians, and on account of the paucity of the European officers in some of the Departments we all sadly feel that that oppression does still go on, and we are unable entirely to do away with it.

The second very serious administrative objection is this, that all the services, the actual administration of the services, whether they are transferred or reserved, must all continue to be administered by the district officer on the spot, or by the Commissioner, so that these unfortunate officials will have to serve two masters, one subject to the control of Executive A., and ultimately to the control of Parliament, and the other uncontrolled altogether, except apparently by the elected majority in the Legislative Council. Now, surely that must give rise to the most acute irritation and difficulty right through every Province, and taken in conjunction with some other proposals in the Report to which I will not refer, it must have the effect of destroying the high standards at present prevailing not only in the Indian Civil Service, but in all the other European Services, because no really good and wise man would go out to India to serve under such conditions as those which I have attempted to describe. (Cheers.)

Policy in India, as in this country, must depend very largely upon finance, and the Budget must create an acute conflict between Executive A. and Executive B. The Ministers of Executive B. will clamour, of course, for money for the transferred services; the Executive Council may want it for the reserved services, or may want it specially for increasing the provision for the maintenance of law and order. In that case Executive A. would certainly be defeated in the Council, and to get over that difficulty the Governor

may certify the necessity. If he does that, he is certain to be attacked by the whole majority of the Legislative Council and by every newspaper which they are able to control. Now I believe that the Governor in such conditions may find his position quite impossible, and as after 10 years a Roving Commission is to go about examining into everything and seeing whether the Governor did his duty, I really think that no man of ability, and cherishing any self-respect, would take the post of Governor under those conditions. (Cheers.) I can only say that nothing would have induced me to go to Bombay under conditions of that kind.

Now I turn to the Supreme Government, which stands above all. At present the Viceroy's Council, as you know, has an official majority, and Lord Morley rightly considered that that official majority was essential to safety in India. That is all to be changed, and there are now to be two Chambers set up. The Upper Chamber, which is to be called the Council of State, is to consist of 21 elected and 29 nominated members, of whom four, that is the nominated members, must be non-officials. The Lower House, or the Legislative Assembly, is to consist of about 100 members, two-thirds to be elected, and of the nominated one-third not less than one-third must be non-officials. Government measures are ordinarily to be introduced into the Lower House and then passed on to the Upper House. If the Houses disagree, as they certainly would frequently do on account of their different complexion, then unless the Governor-General-in-Council certifies the amendments of the Upper House as essential amendments, the two Houses sit together, and in that case five nominated members might defeat the Government. If leave to introduce the Bill is refused or the Bill is rejected as a whole by the Lower House, then the Governor-General can certify it and send it on to the Upper House, which may pass it and merely report it to the Lower House. Ladies and gentlemen, that is not Government; that is Government by certification; that is not Government at all in any sense that we are accustomed to regard it.

As regards questions in these Houses, there is a very curious provision. The Governor-General is not to disallow a question on the ground that it cannot be answered consistently with the public interest, but power is to be retained

to prevent the putting of a question when the putting of it is inconsistent with the public interest. I really cannot understand what is meant by that, but the general effect of this most complicated scheme will inevitably be very long delays in business which may be urgent, and frequent conflicts between the two Houses; acute conflicts, worse conflicts than the House of Lords has with the House of Commons, and, further than that, it must mean the weakening of the great authority of the Viceroy in India.

And here also at the top of the tree there are to be immense opportunities for political intrigue, of which full advantage will be taken. There is much more that I should like to refer to, but I must not detain you longer. The general effect of the adoption of this Report must be to weaken the authority of Government throughout India just at a time when authority is urgently needed to maintain order. Dual authority will be established everywhere in the Provinces and will permeate right down from the Governor's Council to the humblest of the officials. In the Provinces, Government will be only in part British, no longer quite, as the majority in the two capacities will be Indian. That is a change which I think India is not at present fit for.

I think most of us know the very powerful forces of reaction which exist latent, but sometimes showing themselves, throughout India, and if these forces gain the upper hand, we should see a most serious setback to the progress and advancement of India, and I firmly believe that the results of this scheme would be to delay the ultimate self-government which we all desire to see established as soon as there is a real Indian nation to whom we can transfer our great responsibilities. (Cheers.)

These proposals, ladies and gentlemen, will not placate the little class of Brahmins and lawyers which has raised a ferment in India during this war. The political leaders, as I daresay you know, are already vehemently protesting against them. This is what Mr. Tilak said on the 10th of this month:—"It is entirely unacceptable and will not satisfy anybody; it is only a miserable cheeseparing measure proposed in the interests of bureaucracy, whose vested interests must always remain adverse to our aspirations; we must take our case to England and appeal to the English

democracy." I think if the British democracy could understand Mr. Tilak's language and Mr. Tilak's objects they would make very short shrift of the proposals of the Government—(cheers)—but these proposals, believe me, will alarm all sane and moderate opinion throughout India. I go further, and I firmly believe that they will lead to administrative chaos, and very soon afterwards to political chaos throughout India. Now let me quote the words of the Zemindar of Telaprole to a large gathering of non-Brahmins in Southern India. He said: "Britain must understand that we are not cattle to be sold by one master to another, with the further humiliation of having the first master standing by with a bludgeon in case we object to be sold." Remember those words. That is the view which is taken by a great many other of the memorialists, as you will see from the little pamphlet which we have issued to you, and I believe it expresses the feeling of millions of people in India who would not understand one word of this Report, but who would most strongly object to be handed over to the tender mercies of their traditional oppressors. (Cheers.) Ladies and gentlemen, Russia is giving us the most appalling object lesson as to what happens when authority in a centralised Government is weakened or destroyed among a people of whom 80 per cent. are illiterates, and the effect of the weakening or the destruction of our rule in India would be far more disastrous, because the antagonisms, racial, religious and social, are far more bitter and also more complex in India than anything that exists in Russia.

During the great Mutiny, there were whole districts in which the British officers remained at their posts, but, of course, had ceased to exercise all authority. Sir Alfred Lyall records his experiences of that time, and this is what he said he saw: "Every man does what is right in his own eyes; villages are fighting against villages, Hindu Rajputs against Mussulmans, and Petty Chiefs are starting up in every direction." That is exactly what would happen directly our authority weakens in India. He describes a battle between 2,000 Rajputs and 3,000 Mussulmans in his own district, and he said both sides were perfectly friendly to the British officials, who had lost all their power and were simply lookers-on. You can see from this that India was lapsing at once in a few months to that state of blood-stained anarchy from which British rule has rescued her.

That is a grave warning which we must not disregard. We have made many mistakes in India, as all Governments do, even this best of Governments that we have got now, but we cannot discard the heavy responsibilities which have fallen upon us, and we cannot risk anything like anarchy in a vast country like India. There are throughout India dark forces which will emerge at once if we allow our rule to be weakened, and those forces will easily set back the progress and the civilisation of India for a century. The time has come to say firmly that we must be the judges of what it is now safe to do for India—(cheers)—and as long as the safety of India from all external dangers depends solely and entirely upon us, it must be for us to judge what we can safely do in internal politics. We must press on the education of the masses as far as we can and we must take care that the education is real education, and not the sham education of which there is so very much in India. We must help on Indian enterprise by promoting scientific and technical education, which I did my best to do during the whole time I was in Bombay. We must help the agriculturists to increase their production, and we must help them to lessen their indebtedness, which we are doing gradually by means of the co-operative system, which is working wonderfully in some parts of India already. But it is practical business men that India really wants, and if only the intelligentsia would take to business and study science and industry, instead of becoming lawyers and living as parasites upon the people of India, then Indian progress would be immensely accelerated. Bengal boasts, or used to boast, of having 10,000 lawyers within its limits, and most of these lawyers are absolutely useless to their country. Bengal, curiously enough, shows singularly little business enterprise on the side of the Indian.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, in conclusion, the Indo-British Association exists only to help India, and while we must oppose political changes which are certain to endanger the interests of the toiling masses of India, we do hope in time to become a real link between the East and the West and to number in our ranks many earnest Indian patriots who will work with us for the good of their great country. (Cheers.)

I am afraid I have wearied you, but I hope I have made our objects clear and the reasons for which we object to certain parts of this Report equally clear. I am sure that you are all with the Association in earnestly desiring by every means to advance India towards nationhood and towards that self-government which nationhood alone can render safe and beneficent. (Cheers.)

MRS. STEEL : My Lord Chairman, gentlemen and ladies, I have come a long way to speak to you to-day, because I feel a certain responsibility for various utterances of mine in the past. Without magnifying offices, I think it may fairly be said that Rudyard Kipling and I are largely responsible for awakening the interest of British people in their Indian dependency. His is doubtless the lion's share, but my words have told also. Now, in looking back on them, I am conscious that, attracted as I ever have been by the overmastering charm of India, sympathetic as I find myself to the heart's core with her profoundly interesting people, seeing as I do the artistic charm of her whole *mise en scène*, I have glozed over many sordid details of Indian life, such as the horrors of the temple court at Kali ghat, the obscenities of Tantra worship, the almost inconceivable absurdities of the Striach-char or Woman's law; above all the absolutely unbelievable spiritual arrogance of the Twice-Born. Of this latter none are qualified to speak, save those familiar with, say, the tortuous alleys that surround the Temple of Viseshwar at Benares; those who, familiar with the ignorant, uneducated Hindu women, know the extent of the hold which a hereditary priesthood has on the female sex. And, mind you, there is no country in the world where mankind is so circumvented by womenkind as India. Verily the average Indian male is a henpecked creature in all matters of custom and religion. It is about this inevitable spiritual arrogance, which is born in the flesh, bred in the bone of the priestly class, that I speak to-day, in order to show you, if I can, that whatever be the outcome of this wordy volume on Indian reform which I hold in my hand—it is longer than a three-volume novel—on Indian Constitutional Reforms, it is idle to say that the proletariat of India can, or should be, treated like the proletariat of Britain. I grant you it springs from a human root; but the soil in which it grows is so artificial by reason of a social system unique in the world, that the product is like a green carnation, chemically

treated, which in the process loses its likeness to a flower.

This social system is Caste, that regulated spirit of exclusiveness which divides Indian society into a series of watertight compartments, which condemns 50 millions of God's creatures to perpetual degradation, almost damnation; and which elevates 14 millions to what is practically Godship. Many of us doubtless remember Sir Walter Scott's pen-pictures of the Calvinistic Covenanter who knows he is elect. Multiply that spiritual pride a million times, and you have the Brahman. Through no fault of his own, mind. His religion teaches it. Let there be no doubt as to this.

The Mâhâbhârata—that acknowledged storehouse of religion—is full from beginning to end of its 32 volumes with such words as these: "Everything in the universe belongs to the Brahman; by his birth alone he is entitled to all. The Creator intended the outcaste to be a servant; he can by no means acquire the status of the Brahman."

This gives us the position in a nutshell. It gives us a social system unique to India. A social system which, with its intermediary gamut of higher or lower castes, cannot possibly be compared to the mere social distinctions and class differentiations in other countries. So to compare it is disingenuous in the extreme, and simply serves to cloud the issues.

To prove this, I point out that all Western religions declare that men are equal before God, and denounce the snobbery of class feeling; the Hindu religion—a singularly strong and living one—declares they are not equal, and canonises the resultant exclusiveness. In truth, the spirit of exclusiveness is India's first cardinal virtue.

This being so, it follows that in any action which will affect the Indian peoples as a whole this factor must be taken into account. Now in the chapter of Mr. Montagu's report entitled "The Conditions of the Problem," with which—mercifully—I have alone to deal, I find abundant evidence that the factor has been duly stated, but none that it has been used in working out the result.

We are told plainly that "India is divided in a manner to which there is no parallel in the world by the inveterate antagonism of races and religion," that "a series of cleavages—of religion, race, or caste, constantly threatens its solidarity." We are also told that "the basis of any



system"—mark the any—" of a responsible government is a lively and effective sense of the sanctity of other people's rights, a sense"—mark the words again—" which ultimately rests on the traditions and habits of thought of the people."

Could anything be more just, more reasonable?

But when we turn somewhat curiously to see what form of responsible government can be based on the tradition and thought which denies any right whatever to a quarter of God's creatures, which limits those of all but a very small minority by arbitrary and senseless restrictions, we only find a weak-kneed hope that the reforms themselves will provide a remedy; coupled with the inane remark that in the West the ballot box has checked, but has not abolished, social exclusiveness, and that in India it will help to soften the rigidity of the caste system. Now I am only a woman, but I am bold to say that the man who penned those words had not the remotest idea of the facts.

Caste is curiously, appallingly tenacious. For thousands of years every Indian reformer, every pioneer of progress, every Heaven-sent intellect, has fought against Caste; yet it is as strong as ever.

The last census reports show that caste exclusiveness shows signs, if anything, of greater rigidity. The status of the intermediary castes is rising with greater wealth, and as it rises, the individual's desire to look down and differentiate himself from his poorer and less fortunate neighbour makes itself felt. To hand on humiliation is a human weakness, but, as a writer on India says, "there alone is it made the ruling principle of life." In Southern India it is still pollution to come within ten yards of an untouchable. Only last year in the Punjab a dying man tormented with thirst was denied water, because of caste. Quite lately a sub-caste of Brahmans excommunicated an Indian gentleman because he took a female relation by rail, and even reformers, not so long ago, quarrelled over the admission of an outcaste to a festive dinner!

I admit that in Bengal there is growing up a great laxity in respect to caste restrictions in food and drink; but I agree with Sir Herbert Risley in holding that, side by side with this, comes a more rigid observance of the essentials of caste, especially those connected with marriage.

And here we touch on the three great evils of India which are undoubtedly the offspring of caste, the fruits of those three Frankenstein monsters—endogamy, exogamy, hypergamy, which are the very backbone of the caste system. Those three evils are female infanticide, infant marriage, enforced widowhood.

The statistics as to these are enlightening as showing the extent to which custom has changed during the last 20 years. In 1891 the proportion of females throughout India was 962 to 1,000 males. It is now 963—an alteration of one in 20 years. Eighteen Hindu girls per mille were married between birth and five years in 1891; sixteen were so married in 1911—an alteration of two in 20 years. There were 176 widows per mille in 1891 and 173 in 1911—an alteration of three in 20 years. Not a very encouraging advance! As the census report says, "The effect of legislation against infant marriage is not very noticeable."

Yet we are told that modern India has set its face against caste and its concomitants. I believe this to be the case to a certain extent, though a society has lately been formed at Benares for preventing existing social organisations from being subverted. But we must remember that what the report calls the politically minded—that is to say, the truly educated—are in India but as a poor pennyworth of bread to an intolerable amount of sack. The report says  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., but I have no means of verifying this. I can only say that but 15 males per mille are literate in English, or say  $4\frac{1}{2}$  millions in all. Now if we allow for the large number of Madrassis in low positions who speak and write English and for the large proportion of schoolboys, we cannot safely put the truly educated at more than two millions. And of these how many have outspokenly condemned caste? I have not come upon one. They are full of enthusiasm. They are philanthropic. But in their writings we are constantly adjured to admire "the complex social organisation of India which has ever tended to peace, order, progress"; we are bidden "to revive the glories of the past, to remember the matchless continuity of Madras social and religious life." Not one word of even regret do we hear for the 50 millions who, under this complex organisation, are doomed to damnation.

Now this attitude of mind might seem surprising did we not know that, almost without exception, the educated, the

politically-minded men of India belong to the higher castes, to whom the idea of privilege is bred in the bone, born in the flesh. Let us turn for verification to the educational statistics. In Bengal, the Province which is most vocal for responsible government, the incidence of education amongst Brahmans is 644 per mille. They are overtopped by the Baidis with 720, and nearly equalled by the Kyasths with 569. On the other hand, the incidence of the pronouncedly lower castes is from 50 to nil per thousand. Briefly, the four highest castes are 24 times as much educated as the four lowest. So it is clear that a large proportion of the so-called "politically minded" belong to those classes who have religious sanction for claiming privilege for themselves and denying it to others.

The question remains whether, in reliance on their religion, they do so claim it. Some undoubtedly do not. Some as undoubtedly do. Here and there an enthusiast like Ram Bhai Dutt may try to raise the depressed classes; but the majority of the Twice-Born do not trouble themselves much about the matter. They leave it with Mr. Montagu to say that if the higher castes refuse to "admit the children of low castes to schools which their own sons attend, or if caste exclusiveness takes even a harsher shape," they should have it explained to them that "they are only retarding a cause that ought to be dearer to them than their own sectional interests!" Well! Mr. Montagu is not the first who has given the Twice-Born that good advice. I, at any rate, spent twenty-five years in scattering it broadcast.

I have often said—and I say it again—that when I see Brahman gentlemen teaching in a sweepers' school I will consider responsible government; but I am not aware that this qualification has yet been achieved.

Apart from this, these educational statistics prove conclusively that any *reality* in responsible government at the present moment must create an oligarchy, and create one from a class which by inherited instinct must look down on a vast proportion of those whom they rule. Not that I object to oligarchies—I rather like them. But for Heaven's sake do not call them democratic! The word is inapplicable to the Indian social system with which we will have to deal for many and many a long year. Think of it! Only 8 Hindu women in every 1,000 are literate, and the amount of sheer obstinacy which an uneducated Indian woman can show

when what she thinks righteous is in question—well, I know.

Many and many a long year. That is the outlook. In all my half century's experience of India I have never met with one responsible Indian official who did not recognise that our task was to educate India to self-government, though many shook their heads, and may possibly have said, "*Hanoz Dihli dur ast,*" a trite quotation of which one is dead tired, and which we hope has at last found a quiet grave in this Report.

But in truth it has ever seemed to me that Britain is not the guardian of a minor, but of a family of minors. And because the eldest has passed through school and college, that is no reason for breaking up the trust.

It may be that the lengthy recommendations of this Report will, indeed, provide a remedy for sectional interests, since, as the Report itself says—"so long as these remain paramount any form of self-government must at best be limited."

But I have read this book—at least, I have tried to read it—from beginning to end, and I can only say that, knowing the foundation upon which it is built, it seems to me that all "these cloud-topped towers and gorgeous palaces" are "but the baseless fabric of a vision;" for I agree with what I consider the final dictum of the Report when it says "India of to-day presents inequalities which it must be admitted our scheme fails for the present to remove." (Cheers.)

MR. J. C. SHORROCK: My Lord, ladies and gentlemen, I, like Mrs. Steel, have also read this book which I have in my hand, the Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms. I have read every word of it, and it is the first blow of the axe levelled at the root of the tree planted by our forefathers, which we to-day know by the name of the British Empire of India.

This book contains no single line of evidence that India, which in race, language, and creed is a continent, desires any form of Government based on Western democratic lines.

There are many references in it to the opinion of the politically-minded class, by which phrase politicians are doubtless meant, but commercial opinion is ignored, and no attempt is made to discover or to tell us what are the wants, hopes and aspirations of the great mass of the labouring population. The book condemns the Congress-League-

Scheme of Home Rule; it admits in more places than one that India is not ready for self-government on democratic lines, and confesses that a child must learn to walk before it runs. It then immediately proceeds to make an abject surrender of these principles to the clamour of extremist politicians. It adopts the Congress-League-Scheme of Home Rule, clothed in a somewhat different garb, it transfers the power of a well-tryed British administration to untryed elected representatives from some sort of electorate, persons who, as a community, though not always as individuals, have already proved their incompetence to deal with public affairs in humbler administrative spheres than those of provincial Government. Finally the child—India—dragged off its tottering feet, is tied behind the chariot bearing the fetish of democratic ideals and theories and whirled at full gallop towards that mythical goal of complete popular Government for India.

In studying these proposals, I started by trying to regard them with as open a mind as possible from two standpoints. Firstly, that of a British citizen imbued with all our traditions of the liberty of the subject, of strong patriotism and national ideals; and, secondly, that of an East India merchant, whose material interests lay not in Great Britain but in India itself.

I am aware that by a section of my fellow-countrymen our occupation as East India merchants is supposed to be tainted with the vice of capitalism, and in India I have been told that we are unlawful shakers of the Pagoda tree, and near akin to those "Robbers from Rajputana," as a Bengalee friend of mine described the Marwari commercial community in Calcutta, who have completely ousted them from the local trade of their province.

Let us admit at once that British East India merchants are not in the East for the good of their health, but having charged up to them the full measure of selfish motives, they must, as a body, be given the credit for the fact that in India, and for the permanent benefit of India, they have caused three ears of corn to grow where one grew before. A consideration of such facts shows there is little or no difference between the views of the British citizen, knowing India and having its ultimate welfare at heart, and the British merchant whose labours and responsibilities lie in that country. The paramount essential demanded by traders is

the preservation of law and order, not the law and order of the mailed fist, but such as obtains by the consent of the mass of the population under good Government, and it is that law and order which we emphatically maintain exists in India to-day, under a just, impartial and good British administration.

In the few remaining words I have to say I shall therefore speak as a British merchant, and in saying what I do I know I am speaking for the great majority of my fellow traders.

We are no politicians, and with us good management of a commercial undertaking is on all fours with the good government of a community. We therefore emphatically disapprove of and strongly protest against the experiment advocated in the proposals, namely, of transferring the functions of executive government from a well-trying and competent British bureaucracy, controlled by our own Parliament in England, to an untried and incompetent Indian bureaucracy, controlled by nobody but themselves, and subject only to the influence of a Governor or of a shadowy electorate, which, if it can ever be created, we know from experience of India will reproduce tenfold all the evils and abuses of our own rotten boroughs of a hundred years ago.

These proposals, if they materialise and develop on the lines laid down in the Report, will undermine our confidence in the stability of Indian institutions, fiscal, monetary and financial. There are indications that the Lancashire cotton trade and other kindred trades in the North of England and Scotland will, under new fiscal experiments, be demoralised, if not ruined, for a generation, with the consequent want of employment for hundreds of thousands of our fellow-countrymen. The great *Pax Britannica*, with its consequent law and order throughout the length and breadth of India, is seriously threatened, and the coming generation of British merchants in India—I do not refer to the mere exporters and importers of merchandise—will have to realise that trading conditions in India will again become what they were 100 to 150 years ago, and similar to the conditions now ruling in such lawless countries as Mexico, Russia, Persia and portions of China.

I would ask all of you not to content yourselves with the perusal of a summary which may be misleading, but to study

the Report word for word, and with your experience of India, apply its proposals to the Province you know best, and I think you will all come to the same conclusion as I have, namely, that the very least our Association can ask Parliament to do is to suspend judgment and to insist on the consideration of these revolutionary proposals being postponed to more normal times before any steps be taken that will destroy—I borrow the word from this book—one of the greatest wonders of the world and bring ruin and misery to millions of our fellow subjects in India.

THE REV. WILLIAM SCOTT: My Lord, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to give you the situation from another point of view. It is nearly 27 years since I first went to India in connection with the Church of Scotland Mission. It is, I confess, not desirable for missionaries to be mixed up with politics, and had the bearing of the proposed scheme for India been purely political I should have declined the invitation to raise my voice here. But the issues involved are wide and far-reaching and concern very directly the work we missionaries have been seeking to establish, and for which many of us have given the best of our lives. One of the most marked features of mission work in the populous districts in the Punjab has been the interest taken in the low-caste community, the advance made in the Christian Church, composed as it is chiefly of low-caste Christians, and the real uplift of many individual Christians. Numbers of our people have received some education, and are able to take an intelligent interest in the public questions of the day; numbers are being trained in various industrial institutions, and are from year to year recruiting the ranks of the country's artisans. The teaching of the almost numberless village schools is largely in the hands of these people, and the ranks of the native ministry in the coming years will be chiefly filled by these.

But we have them occupying positions of still greater responsibility and influence, and I can think of four headmasters of important schools who began life under these very humble circumstances. When you remember that the subordinate teachers are Sikh, Mussulman, Hindu, and even Brahmin, who pay the head master the respect due to the head of an institution, you can understand the advance that has been made in having as head master a Christian from

the humblest origin—an advance no doubt due to the genuine worth of the young men. Besides this, the war has afforded the Christian community a unique opportunity. Three years ago the Army opened its ranks to the Panjabi Christians, and two strong battalions of them have been raised, one being now on active service in Mesopotamia. Nearly all the privates, and most of the non-commissioned officers, are from the poorer section of the community, and in February last the first of these to wear native officer's uniform was commissioned. I may say that earlier in life he had been two years the captain of our school eleven, and had helped to win the District Belt, which we gained probably oftener than any other school in the district.

I dwell on these things for three reasons:—

(1) To illustrate what missions have been doing for India's depressed classes in raising and training them to be useful members of the State; and what is going on in our part of the country is being done by many missions in almost every part of India, among the fifty millions of depressed people that are waiting to be helped.

(2) To assure you that though they have had in the past no creditable history, and have no traditions to appeal to, yet in many cases they have latent capabilities and powers and need only to be given the opportunity, or a fair chance, to become a real asset to the State.

(3) To emphasise the fact that during all the previous centuries, in being neglected or treated as a subject and inferior race, they had received most unfair treatment; and continued neglect of them would, not only from the point of view of our sacred religion be a grave crime, but from the point of view of the State a grievous mistake. And it is just here that our mission work is related to the great question that is now before the country, and that has brought me here to-day.

The Christian looks on all men as brothers, and is prepared therefore to help even the Chuhra where he can. The Hindu sets less value on him than on his cow that supplies him with milk, butter, and ghi. He sprang from the feet of Brahm, is not one of the twice-born, and is destined therefore to a life of servitude and degradation, and between him and his higher caste neighbours there has ever been a wide gulf fixed. And this explains the Hindu's past treat-



ment of him, and warns us of the treatment that will be continued if his destiny is again entrusted to the same hands. There is no need to argue the point, though it could be both argued and illustrated, but the attitude of the Hindu to-day towards the low-caste man is practically the same as when Manu's Code first placed an impassable gulf between the two.

It is therefore with very great misgiving that we contemplate the possibility of the rule of the country undergoing any radical change. I repeat: the depressed classes are being given a chance, and they are profiting by it. They are eagerly seeking the education that has been placed within their reach, they are voluntarily renouncing many customs that helped to bring them into disrepute, and they are coming to realise that there is a possible place for them in the economy of the State. And it is right that this should be so. Therefore any change in the present conditions, so favourable to their social uplift, would be most regrettable; and, to say the least, there is a grave risk, if the reign of the high caste be introduced, of a relapse in the condition of the socially unfortunate.

It is Britain's proud boast that she has given liberty to the slave wherever her flag flies, and the only slaves left are they who refuse to rise above their own sordid passions; but it took her centuries as a nation to rise to this. India is not herself a nation, but a conglomeration of dissimilar elements, while the Hindu as a race is quite unprepared for the great privilege of rule. The ruler must possess the power to sympathise, to appreciate the needs of all classes, must be ready to right wrong, to remedy evil, and as far as possible to administer justice to all alike. And all this a Hindu Government would not be in a position to do.

I speak of the coming regime in India under the new scheme as Hindu, for there is little doubt that under any system of election the great proportion of representatives to the Legislative Councils will be Hindu. In our own Province, where the population has as large a Mussulman element as in any Province, the Mahommedans as a body have grave misgivings regarding the changes to be made. Intelligent Mahommedans have frequently asserted that Home Rule would just be Hindu Rule. And were the representation of Hinduism even a fair one, it would not be so bad. But the great body of the Hindu community, who are

perfectly satisfied with the present rule, and have no interest in politics as long as they are left to do their work in peace, would not really be represented. The advocates of Home Rule are the modern educated Hindu, who, like the Brahmin of the South and the Arya Samajist of the North, though comparatively few in numbers, have got the money, the influence, and the self-assertiveness to keep themselves prominently before the public. A few of them are money lenders and shopkeepers, but the majority of them are students or teachers or lawyers, the last-named class having a large proportion of Home Rulers among them. Not a few also are in Government service.

The Mussulman Home Ruler I have met, though in our part of the country he is a much rarer specimen, and it is certainly a significant phenomenon that Mussulmans are uniting with their Hindu neighbour in this modern outcry.

It is not because they are of one heart, or have been long of one mind; and the entente or compact will not bear much strain. In the last copy of the Indian Year Book which I have been able to consult I find that of eight elected representatives one is a European, one a Sikh, one a Mussulman, and five are Hindus. In the nominations an effort was made to make the balance more even, but the great feature of the prospective Home Rule Scheme is the election of representatives by a so-called popular vote.

No vote that can be taken in India under existing social conditions will be in any sense of the term a vote of the people. The Hindus have the numbers, they have the education, the wealth, the organisation, and they hold the coigns of vantage from which for many a year to come they will be able to regulate elections to their own interest, and they could not be prevented from having a preponderance of members in any representative body. Popular election in our British sense of the term is impossible among India's people: and no matter whether the elections be by Guilds, or by Trades, to Local or District Boards, or to wider organisations, that class of the people will possess outstanding influence.

With the spread of education and the gradual development of a sense of freedom and responsibility, the ideal may be realisable some day, and the voice of an awakened people clearly heard, but a strong, wise, beneficent leadership cannot be dispensed with—a leadership, wise and sympathetic

to appreciate the various standpoints, and strong and just to conserve the interests of all. That the country now has under British guidance, but it would not have it under Indian rule. There is no doubt whatever that the masses would prefer the English magistrate and ruler to an Indian, for in the case of the latter too often other considerations than those of justice are taken into account. How often, indeed, is the application definitely made in the court of the Deputy Commissioner that the case may be heard before a European or transferred to the European rather than be entrusted to an Indian. The European official may not be immaculate, he may often be very difficult to get on with, and in cases he may not be a complete success; but as a class he certainly has the confidence of the people and his name is a synonym for justice, for he can generally be trusted to deal with all castes and creeds with fairness and efficiency.

I question if anyone is in a better position than the missionary to learn the mind of the people in a matter of this kind; and men and women missionaries amongst us have many proofs of the people's trust in the Englishman's equity, if only he can become possessed of the real facts of a case; and nothing could be more iniquitous and censurable than the outcry of a few that British rule is against the interests of the country, nor anything falser than the assertion that the people do not want it. It is a significant fact that the voices thus raised in denunciation of British rule are the same as are calling most loudly for a rule of the people, as they term it. This itself is enough to make one view the movement with suspicion.

One naturally wonders why the question of Home Rule should have been brought to the front just now—a question that is bristling with difficulties—at a time when the Empire has its hands full; and not only brought to the front, but set down for decision when other matters of life-and-death importance should be engaging all our energies.

It may be said that there has been a demand for it for the past few years. This has, however, been only by a very few, and these (as I have stated) by no means the grateful admirers of Britain's work for India in the past.

It is also maintained that India's services during the war have made the call for Home Rule urgent. There is no denying that India has rendered good service, and that she

will do much more yet, if called upon. But I question if the agitators for Home Rule have had much hand in all that service.

The loyal Mussulmans, considering the difficulties of their position, have given a sympathetic response, but does anyone claim that the ordinary Mussulman communities are pressing for Home Rule? The agitation has been engineered, and the poor, ignorant, but hard-working classes are incapable of engineering, and have no voice in the outcry, except as a parrot can give one. If they dread Hindu rule in the Punjab, there will be much more reason to fear it in other Provinces, where numerically Mahomedans are far behind.

Then the Sikhs have done well in the matter of recruiting, and Christians have done well, though their numbers in each case are limited. But one would like to hear what has been done by the classes that are clamouring most loudly just now. I am not in possession of the recruitment statistics, but I wholly misunderstand the spirit of the people, in spite of my twenty-seven years' residence among them, if the response of the Arya Samajists, for example, has been hearty and generous. And surely patriotism that has at heart the highest interests of the country and of the Empire, on which it admits the country must be dependent, would have suggested postponing settlement of this most disputable question till the great issues of the present world-war had been decided. Rather does it look like a stroke below the belt on their part, the seizing of an opportunity that might not have been afforded in normal times, when nerves were not on the stretch, and great issues hung not in the balance.

And so, as a well-wisher of India, and a Missionary interested in the social, moral and spiritual welfare of all its peoples, and speaking from a long acquaintance with India's conditions, and a long-standing friendship with not a few of her sons, I would strongly urge caution in delegating the control of affairs to Indians themselves. During my own stay in the country they have been entrusted with a rapidly growing responsibility, and the proportion of Indians in leading positions has been increasing from year to year. Such natural evolution I commend, for with it the people themselves are being developed; education and enlightenment among them are spreading; mutual forbearance and

goodwill are increasing, and even the masses are being prepared for realising their position in the economy of the country. And Home Rule will come, but gradually, I trust, and as the people are prepared for it; but to precipitate it by a vote of the British Parliament would be to run grave risks, to endanger the interests of many millions, because of the outcry of a few thousands. The lack of education on the part of the masses, the class feeling which dissimilar religious systems strongly intensify, and the Hindu Caste system that has so rent the social fabric, would all make the working of any Home Rule scheme a practical impossibility.

I do not think any protection under the head of "Reserved Subjects" could safeguard the interests of the depressed and most needy classes, while legislation was being carried on with a high-caste bias. If the people are not raised first, the forces against their speedy uplift afterwards would be very strong indeed, and the experiment would only intensify existing bad feeling, and create another serious problem for the Supreme Government.

It may be urged that in speaking against a Hindu Government in a land where many different interests have to be conserved, I fail to appreciate the advance that modern Hinduism has already made. It also, it is stated, has an interest in the low-caste communities, and has for some time been taking steps to raise them; it has its schools for their children, its charity institutions for their poor, its blind and orphan asylums, its labour establishments and other such organisations. I speak with full cognizance of these facts, for I am conscious that in latter years they have been copying Christians, but copying in the letter rather than in the spirit. Social service among non-Christians in India was unknown until Christian Missions led the way. India's social work previously consisted almost solely in its almsgiving, which was a very different thing from the wise helpfulness of the Christian Scriptures. Promiscuous beggary, encouraged by religion, used to be the curse of the country. But in course of time the medical and philanthropic work of the Christian appealed to the High Caste and led to imitation. But the imitation has been rather in self-defence, an imitation of the methods of Christians, in order if possible to retain under their own influence the menial classes whom they felt to be slipping from their grasp. Deeds speak louder than words: and their treatment of the past twenty centuries can-

not be explained away by the expenditure within the last twenty years of a few benevolent rupees. I maintain that the high caste Hindus have neither the genius, nor have they had the training to deal fairly with the multitudes of low caste and outcast that would be largely at their mercy, and to take a real interest in their moral and social uplift. In our treatment of these, therefore, this contemplated step would be a retrogression.

Then in the contemplated changes I should tremble regarding the change of attitude towards our Christian work. It is well known that some of those modern movements started as a direct set-off to Christianity, a kind of counter-offensive, and the stoutest and most aggressive opponents of the Christian Missionary in our Province have been from amongst their members; and I can well understand how earnestly the different organisations of native Christians should urge that the prospect for them is most unpromising. This, advisedly, I do not dwell on: though I could make much of it. Yet surely the voice of the Indian Christians ought to be heard in a national matter of this kind.

Nor has there been any real rapprochement between Hindus and Mahommedans, as a brief visit to India or a cursory acquaintance with its people might lead one to imagine. And these All-India Leagues or Congresses, where Hindus and Mahommedans are found temporarily shoulder to shoulder, and which would convey the impression of a real union between the two, are not truly representative either of the great Muslim nation or of the Hindu peoples. Home Rule is not a popular movement, even though an All-India Congress might suggest that it is.

In appearing here to-day, I speak for no one but myself, for I have had no opportunity of consulting experienced Indian Missionaries since being asked to speak. But probably my attitude is that of most Missionaries who know the country. Few people will question that we have the welfare of the people at heart, or suggest that, like the German Missionaries in Africa, we are political propagandists. In my own case, the present is the nearest approach to a political meeting that I have ever addressed since my student days. I am not against Home Rule, but I do consider it would be a mistake to give a large measure of Home Rule at once. Education is spreading rapidly, and, in course of

time, will reach all classes of the people; but it has yet far to spread. India has not several millions to be influenced, but 300 millions, and it is only a few years since primary education became general and the common people began to take an interest in it. The great bulk of the people in every Province are still illiterate and absolutely incapable of giving an opinion on public matters. Until they are in a position to be appealed to, the Government will be not that of the people, but of the few.

Let education be continued, let the people have increasing facilities for acquiring knowledge and understanding, and let the representation of Indians on the Councils be increased, if need be.

But let it be still British Rule, which the people have learned to trust, and under which all classes are sure of justice. The different sections of the people will become increasingly familiar with one another's standpoint, and increasingly sympathetic with each other's needs: the best methods of popular election will in course of time be evolved, and the way be paved for the fairest and most representative governing bodies that the Provinces could have. It is not in the interest of the country that Home Rule should be precipitated.

My Lord! I have not been thinking so much of the Imperial issues. It is Provincial Self-Government I have in view, and I would close by summing up my views of it in Mr. Montagu's words. Speaking at Cambridge recently he is reported to have said that "India was not ripe at the moment for self-government, and incomparable disaster would await anyone who gave Home Rule to India now. The principle of Government in India should be the progressive realisation of responsible government step by step, until India proved to the satisfaction of our Parliament that she was ready for Home Rule." We have been told that so far any changes made have been in degree rather than in kind; and I would urge that if any change is now to be made, let it still be one of degree, for the country is far from being ready for any drastic change.

A vote of thanks to the Chair was proposed by Mr. Ingram, and the proceedings then terminated.

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