

DISAFFECTION IN INDIA.

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THE spread of disturbance in India need not cause any immediate alarm as regards the possibility of maintaining order in the affected provinces. The forces at the disposal of the Government of India, if used with discretion and firmness, are fully sufficient to check anything in the nature of sporadic risings of a people among whom, but few firearms are to be found, and whose grievances, where not purely imaginary and the invention of unscrupulous agitators, are not serious or of a kind to induce men to run personal risks. The arrest of the principal agitators and a sufficient display of force should be sufficient to maintain order in present circumstances. The really disquieting feature is the fact that the widespread spirit of unrest and discontent, which has been manifested, proves that there must be certain serious defects in our system of government; whilst the existence of a large class of professional agitators, the wide circulation of an inflammatory press, and the development of communications, are all factors which daily increase the facilities for the spread of sedition.

I propose to discuss what appear to me to be the more serious causes of disaffection, and the possibility of applying suitable remedies. I believe that a faulty system of education, the licence ad-

mitted to a gutter press, the lowering of British prestige by a series of untoward incidents, and the want of touch between officials and the people, have been the principal causes of the spread and manifestation of a regrettable spirit of disaffection.

As regards education, there is an Educational Department, one of numerous subordinate departments under the Indian Home Department, which is represented in the Government of India by the Member of Council for the Home Department. This officer, commonly called the "Home Member," is an Indian civilian selected for his experience and capacity in provincial administration; and, whilst generally an excellent administrator, he rarely has any special interest in education, or the particular qualifications desirable in the man responsible for the education of the youth of India. Under the Indian Home Member are the secretary and assistant secretaries in his department, and all matters to be dealt with filter through the usual bureaucratic channels to the secretary, who submits them, with his own views to his chief. If the chief has no particular interest in a question, the opinion of the secretary prevails, unless a strong and interested Viceroy takes a line of his own and carries the other members of the Coun-

oil with him in a question of large importance which comes before the Government of India in Council. But there is no guarantee for either the secretary or the Viceroy being more interested in educational matters or better qualified to deal with them than the Home Member, and it is certain that the time and energy of all high officials are always so fully taken up with numerous pressing and responsible duties that, failing special interest, educational questions are likely to be decided by minor officials from the purely bureaucratic point of view, which is frequently obstructive to innovation, and displays a deep-rooted faith in the religious observance of regulations and precedents and keeping down expenditure.

But these are not the only circumstances which place obstacles in the way of improvement in the educational system. No part of India is under the direct authority of the central government. The country is divided up into provinces, each of which is directly administered by a local government. The administrative machinery of a local government includes a superior educational officer; and if, for reasons which have been pointed out, the central government is unlikely to be very keen about educational questions, such questions are, as a rule, likely to interest local governments still less,—with the result that the views put forward as those of the local government concerned may be simply those of the provincial education officer, and

these may possibly be more or less biased by a feeling of opposition to any intervention by the central authority. In any case, the education officers have, until recently, been recruited from a class which, too frequently, possessed neither the scholastic nor other qualifications desirable in those who were to form and guide the youth of India. And this is not surprising, considering the inferiority of the positions they were invited to fill. Of the directors of public instruction, the heads of education in their respective provinces, only three can reach a maximum fixed pay of Rs. 2500 a-month; whilst among civilians, a collector of the first grade receives Rs. 2250, a commissioner Rs. 2900, and a chief secretary to Government in Bengal Rs. 3333,—with every possibility for really superior men to reach much higher posts and emoluments. A director of public instruction, as educational adviser to the provincial government, fulfils the same class of duties as the provincial chief engineer who advises in the Public Works Department, or as an inspector-general of police, but both of these officials are paid considerably more than the education officer.

The fact is that the education officers have been, with intent, kept in a distinctly subordinate position. The director has no direct access to the governor of the province, and can only address the local government through a chief secretary who is overburdened with other business, and who, as I have already pointed out,

may feel no personal interest in educational questions. It is true that latterly a new system has been adopted for the recruitment of education officers, and some very promising young men have joined the junior ranks, but, when they realise their position as regards official and consequent social standing, it is to be feared that the echo of their inevitable disappointment will deter others of similar qualifications from joining the service. I cannot believe in any permanent improvement until the directors have direct access to the chief executive officer in their respective provinces and a sensible increase of salary in the higher ranks.

These are the difficulties in the situation which affect the control of education and the introduction of suitable reforms. Lord Curzon, with characteristic energy, endeavoured to forestall the probable objections of the provincial governments to proposed changes by summoning representatives from the various provinces to a great educational conference in Simla, and presiding himself over prolonged meetings, attended by more than twenty officials and others connected with education. The unavoidable prolixity of the discussions, and the numerous other urgent calls on the time of the Viceroy, resulted, however, in the practical abandonment of any serious attempt to deal with the all-important branches of primary and technical education, and the labours of the Conference, and of the commit-

tee, subsequently appointed to travel through the country and formulate proposals, led to nothing more important than the production of the much-criticised Universities Bill. I would not venture a personal opinion on the merits of this Bill, but it raised a storm of opposition among educated Indians interested in the question, and also much local ill-feeling against what was considered an unnecessary endeavour to force the various universities in different provinces to adopt one and the same system as regards their governing bodies. One thing the University Bill did not do—it did not provide for the selection of youths fitted to profit by such education as the universities give; and, moreover, it did not provide for the giving of a practical education suited to fit the student to earn his living after leaving the university. I am strongly of opinion that the absence of such provision is a radical defect in the Indian university system, and that this defect has induced the gravest and most prejudicial political consequences.

The question should be seriously considered whether the time has not arrived for abandoning the policy of imparting only a liberal education in favour of the development of more technical education, which in present economic circumstances would be more useful than the university course now followed.

The Indian university system has been devised and modelled, and even its latest modifi-

cations have been adopted, under the guidance of English university men, sometimes of great distinction as scholars, and all deeply convinced of the merits of the system in which they have been brought up, and faithful to the traditions of their English universities, of which they are so justly proud. But there is no resemblance between the class of men who enter Oxford and Cambridge and the candidates for admission, say, to the Calcutta University;—neither is there any resemblance between the motives and aspirations which respectively induce the young Indian and the young Englishman to seek a university education. It may safely be said that the object of the young Indian, in the great majority of cases, has been to qualify for admission to Government service, coupled at times with an ill-defined though laudable ambition to acquire knowledge and to rise superior to his natural surroundings. None of these considerations are likely to influence the ordinary Oxford or Cambridge undergraduate. They are, however, on all fours with those which send young Russians to their universities. What is suitable for the Englishman is not necessarily suitable for the Indian or Russian; and the system devised to meet the requirements of the Englishman is in nearly every respect unsuited to the Indian and Russian. In Russia it produced the nihilist; in India it has produced his Indian counterpart, the ill-informed and dangerously loquacious political agitator.

As in Russia, so in India, the great employer of educated labour is the Government, and the youth who seeks employment in any but the very lowest grades of Government service must have a university diploma. The Indian Government thus not only encourages but practically forces the young man who desires to improve his position to endeavour to enter a university; and, whilst the university course can fit him for no other walk in life than Government service, in my opinion it fails to properly prepare him for even that. In these circumstances the disappointed young man who fails to obtain a qualifying diploma at the university, and the still more disappointed one who, having obtained the diploma, is unable to secure a Government post, becomes a discontented and often dangerous member of society. He considers himself greatly superior to his fellows, and attributes to the wrong-headedness or malevolence of the Government his failure to establish that superiority in a practical—i.e., in a lucrative manner.

The native of India, and particularly the Bengali Hindoo, is not trained to reason or to think for himself. He has a marvellous memory, he is industrious in learning anything and everything by heart, and he has a certain smartness in preparing himself for an examination on specially defined and limited subjects; but if he is asked a question which cannot be answered otherwise than by a more or less literal

quotation from a text-book, he is very frequently nonplussed. A good story illustrating this defective training is that of the teacher who, being asked how far his pupils were advanced in Euclid, said with pride that many of them had learned several books, and that the only mistakes they sometimes made were in forgetting where one problem ended and the next one began. But this is not the only kind of defect in the English education of the native. At an early stage of acquaintance with Western ideas, the Indian generally breaks away from the traditions of his forefathers and all the steadying principles of respect for parents and authority which they inculcate. He frequently adopts Herbert Spencer and Stuart Mill as his prophets, without the counterpoise of the precepts of the Christian religion teaching submission to Cæsar, reciprocal obligations to the neighbour, and the fulfilment of duty in that state of life to which God may be pleased to call him. Without this counterpoise or that of his abandoned Indian conservative tradition, his studies of the great modern writers disturb the balance of his untrained mind, and too often all that he is capable of learning from his favourite authors is an exaggerated spirit of individualism and negation of authority which are the immediate stepping-stones to Nihilism.

In common justice I must here state that, notwithstanding my severe criticisms on the ordinary results of the class of

education now offered to young Indians desirous of entering Government service, I have had the pleasure of finding among several of the Indian officials of the Indian Finance Department excellent solid brains and capacity. There are now men, including Bengalis, serving the Government of India who are thoroughly fitted to take a high place in any European administration, and who need not fear Western competition. I must, however, add the qualification that nearly all such men whom I have met have belonged to old families of recognised standing in the native community. I am not sure that men of this class always receive the full measure of promotion which, in my opinion, is advisable and is their due.

It is with considerable diffidence that I venture to suggest some possible remedies for the unfortunate situation I have described; but it is a barren labour to confine oneself entirely to criticism. The first remedy is, I believe, to select the classes from which university students should be drawn. I think that university education can be safely given to all young men of means, and that special facilities for obtaining it should be given to all those whose intellectual capacity appears to offer some reasonable guarantee that they would profit by higher education, but who cannot afford the expense. The social standing of young men of independent fortune will as a rule prevent their suffering from what I may call "university intoxication"; that is,

the idea, readily acquired, that they are both immensely superior to their non-university fellow-countrymen, and that they have fitted themselves to hold the highest places in the Administration. Relatively few of the wealthier classes seek employment in the Government service, and they are therefore not disappointed at the inevitable failure of Government to provide posts answering to the ambitions of all who are theoretically qualified. But the free admission to the universities of all young men of the upper classes who may be ready to pay fees which would prove prohibitive to the poorer mass would by no means satisfy all requirements; the universities should be open to all alike, rich or poor, if the result of the education to be received can make them more useful and therefore better citizens. I would deprecate nothing more strongly than the exclusion of the struggling but capable young men. There are excellent brains in India, and it is an imperative duty to discover them and to afford them every opportunity for useful development.

The question is how the superior intellects are to be discovered and how utilised, and this is a difficult problem. I fear that the first step must necessarily be the selection, on the special recommendation of their teachers, of the most promising lads in the different provinces; but as such selection, in spite of all the instructions which might be given, would almost certainly be mainly based on capacity to pass examinations

of the competitive type, it would, I think, be necessary to appoint a very special board, having larger and more practical ideas than the ordinary examiner, who should test as far as possible the general qualifications of the candidates recommended by provincial authorities. Further, it would be desirable that those whom this special board might select should, under their general supervision, undergo a year's probationary course of training as a further test of their general fitness, on the understanding that should they, at any time during the year, fail to satisfy their instructors, they would be dismissed, whilst those who continued to give satisfaction would finally enter the universities at the expense of the State. I attach the greatest importance to a probationary period, because it would permit of sifting and rejection before youths had reached an age at which it becomes difficult to make an altogether fresh start.

It will probably be objected to my proposal that the result of admitting to the universities, free of charge, all those who might desire to enter and be approved as fitted to profit by higher education, would be to create a too heavy charge on Government revenues, and to overcrowd the universities. I cannot for a moment admit such objections. The advantages of a university course should be offered free of charge to all Indians capable of profiting thereby, but unable to pay the fees, and if the universities became overcrowded they should be

extended or additional ones founded. As to the cost to the State, I would point out that out of the Indian annual budget, amounting to approximately £74,000,000, only some £2,000,000 are devoted to education, whilst out of a budget of about £144,000,000 in the United Kingdom, very nearly £17,000,000 are spent on education.

Assuming that a lad recommended from the provinces, and accepted by the special board, continued to show promise throughout his year's probation, it is of the highest importance that the university course provided at the expense of the State should fully fit him for a future career, useful to his fellow-citizens and profitable to himself. To secure this, it must once for all be recognised by the educational authorities that a university course is a means to an end, and not an end in itself, whilst to-day they appear to hold an exactly contrary opinion. Incredible as the following story may seem, I can vouch for its authenticity. Not very long ago, a member of the Government having observed that the young men entering his department with the usual university diplomas appeared to be very poorly qualified by their education for the special work they were called upon to perform, inquired carefully into the system of examination under which they had been selected for employment, and discovered that it included no test of capacity in the practical subjects dealt

with in his department; he therefore, with great care, elaborated a curriculum for examination which, in the opinion of the chief officers of the department, would fairly meet requirements. It was difficult to suppose that any other authority could understand better than the department concerned what was required; but the would-be reformer found that, according to precedent, no such change as he proposed could be made without consulting the education department, and on the matter being submitted to these guides of the youth of India they condemned the proposed innovation root and branch, on the ground that the university course could not possibly qualify a young man to pass an examination on the lines suggested. It would seem that in the opinion of the education authorities, if the university course was only adapted to prepare lawyers, a youth who desired to become a physician must study law to prepare himself to practise medicine.

I cannot insist too strongly that the first reform required in the universities is to adapt the courses of education to the requirements for such careers as are likely to be suitable to young Indians desirous of advancement and of earning their livelihood in a useful manner. I believe that there are many careers outside Government service in which young Indians might excel, and I would instance scientific agriculture, medicine, the law, engineering, mining, chemistry, electricity. As regards botany, forestry,

and scientific agriculture, there is an old established and useful school of forestry at Dehra, and it may be hoped that the new Agricultural College at Poosa and other similar establishments will soon afford the education and training necessary to produce agricultural experts, for whom there is a great field in India. In engineering, mining, chemistry, and electricity, the field for Indians is not at present very large, and the Indian community outside Calcutta and Bombay is not so far in sufficient touch with industrial employers to be able easily to secure employment. The field in these branches is steadily increasing, and for the future there are excellent prospects; but meanwhile it is most desirable that Government should make an earnest endeavour to secure openings for qualified youths where it controls a demand for their services.

It seems reasonable that the course of preparation for each and every important career should be thought out and decided by committees of experts in the different branches, and that the care of the University Governing Boards should be directed towards the preparation of youths to meet the requirements indicated by the experience of competent experts. The loyal acceptance of this simple principle would, I believe, prove a most valuable reform in the Indian university system.

I have dealt in the first place with education in the universities, because it is the universities which, unfortunately I think, occupy the first

place in the attention of both official and non-official circles in India, and because it is the universities and colleges which are to-day the nurseries of discontent and therefore of disloyalty. But important as is the question of the reform of the universities on sound lines, that of primary education is no less important. The boy whose education consists in the development of the faculty of memory, acquires little worth having by his schooling; nevertheless little else is acquired in the great majority of Indian schools—where everything is learned from text-books, often exceedingly ill-chosen, and in some cases inculcating highly undesirable ideas verging even on disloyalty. I am glad to admit that there are certain noteworthy exceptions to the general rule, and I have myself seen in the Central Provinces, where the general standard of primary education is higher than elsewhere, a primary school where boys and children were not only taught to think, but where the general tone of the school seemed excellent, and the scholars interested in and delighted with their simple but well-devised studies. And here I may remark that having noticed the superiority of the Central Provinces in this respect, I inquired the reason, and was informed that it was attributable to the relative smallness of these Provinces, resulting in the Chief Commissioner and other high officials being able to devote more time to such details as education, and also probably to the fact that these

Provinces had been exceptionally fortunate in having a succession of capable and practical chief commissioners. I am bound to add that it was also observed that the Central Provinces had been considered so relatively unimportant and backward that they had in great measure mercifully escaped the attention of the central educational authorities. I do not give this view as my own, but that it should be seriously held is certainly a strong indication of the deficiencies of these authorities.

Although I have only skimmed the surface of this great question of education, I fear that I have already exceeded the limits of space in a short article in which so many important points must be noticed, but before turning to other subjects I must mention that Lord Curzon's creation of the new post of Director of Education with the Government of India gave an opening for valuable reform. The gentleman appointed to the post would appear to have many excellent qualifications for his work, but the bureaucratic system keeps him in a very subordinate position, on a level with the heads of the veterinary and other similar minor departments; he cannot take the smallest action except through the usual bureaucratic channels of the Home Department, and at every step he requires to exercise the greatest tact to avoid friction with the local governments. His opportunities for usefulness are therefore in present circumstances extremely limited.

I will now turn to the very difficult question of the native press and its proper treatment. It is not easy for people accustomed to the moderation of the European and particularly of the English press to realise the constant wild extravagances of Indian journalists, and I regret to add the frequent scurrilous, vindictive, and disloyal tendencies of many of their articles. Nobody was so badly treated by the Indian press as Lord Curzon during the latter part of his Viceroyalty, but I will not offer to the authors of the scandalous attacks made upon the late Viceroy the pleasure of giving additional publicity to any of their scurrilous paragraphs.

My personal opinion is that much too little attention is paid in India to the influence of the Indian press. It is commonly remarked that whilst so few of the people can read, the vapourings and vituperations of the press can do but little harm; it appears not to be remembered that when a single journal reaches a village its contents are read aloud by some member of the community and eagerly devoured with that astonishing credulity which is a remarkable feature in the East; when a whole countryside is prepared to believe that the Government is poisoning the wells and is responsible for the spread of the plague, there are no limits to credulity, and the fact must be reckoned with, more especially when a host of university-bred agitators are trading thereon to excite hostility to the Government.

There is no use in allowing the principles which are the guide in such matters in Western Europe to influence decisions with regard to the proper course to be pursued in India; the moral restraints on journalists in Western Europe are non-existent in the East, the public appealed to is a totally different one, and the journalists themselves are as a rule men of quite inferior ability, according to European standards, and without the smallest sense of responsibility to the public.

I am very strongly of opinion that a constant wholesome control over the press in India is an absolute necessity, and a useful measure would probably be to prohibit the issue of any journal the proprietors of which did not contribute annually to Government a certain minimum sum under the head of income-tax. The better class of journals would not be affected by a reasonable minimum, as they already pay income-tax on their profits; but many of the worst class would speedily disappear, as these are generally produced by impecunious failures in other careers, and are sometimes printed in backyards by discharged Government printers, and even, it is said, with type stolen from Government. I believe it to be highly desirable that the cost of producing a newspaper should not be lower than that already incurred in the production of the better class of journals, and in this view it appears to me a grievous mistake to tax the public to pay for the heavy loss on unremunerative press

telegrams, and to carry newspapers at rates unremunerative to the Post Office; and yet of recent years this has been done without the smallest result as regards conciliating the press.

It is perhaps not generally remembered that until 1881 there existed a Press Commissionership in India which worked with excellent results, and, as far as can be ascertained, with the perfect goodwill of the editors, European and Indian. The Press Commissioner's duty was to establish confidential relations with editors, to issue communiqués, and, with a staff of translators, to watch the Press and to keep Government closely informed of the tone and tendency of the different journals. He had no authority to act in any way without the sanction of the executive authorities, but with such authority he could seize the plant of any recalcitrant seditious journal. A remarkable thing is that it was never found necessary to resort to this measure. The existence of the office of the Commissioner was a sufficient restraint; and, moreover, the guidance and help offered to editors by a tactful Commissioner was so much appreciated that, when the abolition of the office had been decided, a memorial was presented to the Viceroy, signed by nearly every vernacular editor in India, praying for the retention of the Press Commissionership. This fact, besides being very gratifying to Sir Roper Lethbridge, the Press Commissioner, showed clearly that control could be

exercised without in any way interfering with the proper independence of journalists.

I now come to the very delicate subject which I have indicated as "the lowering of British prestige by recent un-foward incidents." The native of India appreciates a just ruler, and he loves a master who is at once strong, just, and sympathetic; but he sees through all speeches to the gallery about "our coloured brothers," and he despises the man whom he suspects (and he is a good judge) of insincerity, and who fails to display the essential qualities of a ruler—firmness, disinterestedness, and devotion to the task of seeking to promote the welfare of those over whom he rules. Justice for the native is properly a popular cry in England, but it is often used in a mistaken manner by sincere men who, from want of experience with Orientals, fail to understand their ideas on the subject; and it is easy for popularity-hunters to use the cry with regrettable disregard to the consequences of the manner in which it may be used. Justice to the British servant of the Indian public is quite as legitimate a cry; and the fact that the servant is paid for his services never deprives him, in this country at all events, of his claim to justice at the hands of those whom he serves. Nowhere on this globe are the conditions of service more strenuous than are those cheerfully accepted, at times even at the cost of life, by the British official, the servant of the Indian peoples; and yet,

in the last few years an uncomfortable feeling has arisen in India that should an Englishman, however unwillingly, be involved in a disturbance with natives, he is by no means sure of justice. The result is that evilly-disposed natives, when not actually violent, assume a truculent and provocative attitude towards Europeans, which the latter are forced to accept, with the consequent development of racial antipathy and fatal loss of prestige to the whole white population.

Assaults by natives on Europeans, and particularly on soldiers, have become of frequent occurrence. But incriminated natives often appear to be but lightly punished; whilst, as in the case of Mr Bain, the tea-planter, when a European has been acquitted by a local tribunal, which is generally the most competent in such cases, retrial by a superior court may be, and has been, executively ordered. In the case of Mr Bain, the High Court dismissed the case referred by the Executive Government, with some very strong remarks as to the want of evidence against the defendant.

To return to the question of the constant assaults on British soldiers. Can any one believe that the soldier of to-day is rougher or in any way more likely to ill-treat natives than the soldier of thirty-five years ago? We all know that he is not; and yet, when I served as a soldier in India thirty-five years ago, the relations between the soldiers and natives were excellent, and complaints

on the subject were practically unknown. Tommy Atkins, as I knew him, was a thoroughly good-natured if somewhat rough fellow. He was not always very gentle with the natives, and he asserted himself as their superior; but there was no racial antipathy between him and them. He was sufficiently kindly in his general attitude to win their goodwill, and their appreciation was fully proved by such instances as the native cooks daily carrying Tommy's dinners under heavy fire on the ridge at Delhi. I know that it is said that thirty-five years ago the native would accept what he will not to-day, as he has now conceived more independent ideas and a greater sense of personal dignity. In reply I may, however, point out that practically all the serious cases of assault have occurred not in towns, but in the country, where the only new ideas have been derived, not from improved education or moral progress, but from the reading aloud of seditious newspapers, which have related stories of assaults on white men and the escape of the assailants with impunity, and suggested emulation of such exploits. The spirit of emulation has been aroused, with the accompanying result of loss of prestige to the white man and particularly to the British soldier. And prestige is everything in the East.

In ordinary circumstances the prestige and influence of the better class of Englishmen who, without talking about "equality," is genuinely sympathetic in his dealings with

Indians, is perfectly extraordinary; and from such men the Indian, as a rule, will accept much which he would bitterly resent if supposed to be the outcome of a malevolent disposition or racial antipathy. I have known of a case where a high official, remarking the particularly respectful salaam of a prisoner whom he thought he recognised, asked if he had seen him before; and the prisoner replied cheerfully, "Yes, sahib. It was you who condemned me, although I was quite innocent; but you believed me guilty." That, if not attributable to a general spirit of antipathy, occasional severity of treatment is not seriously resented, is proved by the well-known fact that Indian masters are much more severe with their servants than any European now ventures to be, and yet we never hear of a native master being summoned for ill-treatment. This, surely, disposes of the theory that moral progress has rendered ordinary Indians of the present generation so much more susceptible than the preceding generation. Moreover, let it be noted that in the States under Indian rulers there are no agitators, no seditious press, and no discontent of the nature which has recently disturbed Bengal and the Punjab. Is, then, native rule, with all its shortcomings, better suited after all to the peoples of India than the British Raj, with its constant tendency to force Western ideas and systems on an Oriental population? I fear

that in many respects it is; and the causes lie in bureaucratic methods, centralisation, and insufficient touch and sympathy between the ruled and their Western rulers.

Amusing chapters might be written on the methods and proceedings of the bureaucracy in India, but it is not here desirable to dwell on the subject more than is necessary. To account for the extraordinary development of the bureaucratic system, it must be remembered that whereas in nearly every other country the highest executive authorities—such as Ministers of the Crown—are, as a rule, drawn from outside the ranks of the official hierarchy, in India the members of the Executive Government are, with few exceptions, selected from among the permanent officials, of whom it has been said that their god is “precedent,” and their sacred writings, minutes, despatches, and official notes; and there is no counteracting outside influence. The Indian official who runs counter to the prevailing sentiment is labelled dangerous, and seldom advanced to a position where his opinions could exercise an important influence. The few members of the Government who may be appointed from without the ranks of Indian officialdom are sympathised with in a kindly spirit for their unavoidable but unfortunate ignorance of the blessings of a heaven-sent government by bureaucracy; but their voices, if raised in protest, are as of those crying in the wilderness. There never will be

any reform from within; and, if it is to be secured, it must be by the appointment of a very strong Commission from England, composed of members versed in both official and business methods, and thus competent not only to master the intricacies of the existing system, but also to suggest practical reform. Some of the members should of course have had Indian experience.

It must be admitted that the Indian, and particularly the Bengali, once admitted into the official hierarchy, speedily develops a remarkable devotion to bureaucratic procedure, and his marvellous memory tempts him to revel in “precedent”; but, from the point of view of the causes of discontent in India, the important question is, How are the general public affected by the existing system, with its necessarily accompanying delays and uncertainties? To answer this question we must consider the system adopted by the oriental if left to himself, and we must remember that if he will accept a ten per cent improvement with satisfaction, he will probably fail to appreciate twenty per cent, and if forced to accept a complete, radical change, he will hate its authors. The oriental system of administration, in its primitive form, is represented by the ruler sitting in the gateway, accessible to all, and relying on his knowledge of mankind of his own race, to accept or refuse petitions, and to administer justice summarily and expeditiously. Can there be a greater contrast between such a system and the

bureaucratic one which we have forced on India? Indians marvel at our system, but they do not begin to understand it from our point of view, whilst they take note that it results in exasperating delays, and offers a wider scope for intrigue and greater temptations to the false witness than their own more summary methods. It is not, perhaps, too objectionable to the rich, for they can generally afford to wait the law's delays: their money will purchase either information or evidence, and they are often able to adapt their methods to our system. But for the masses it often constitutes a serious grievance. Peter the Great forced his subjects to shave, but practically every Russian peasant to-day wears a beard. Such is the force of traditional habits.

To illustrate the unsuitability of European procedure in oriental affairs, I will cite an incident in recent political history in Turkey. A certain Kurdish chief, Moosa, had acquired notoriety by his ruthless oppression of the Armenians in his district. The Consuls continually complained of his misdeeds to the Ambassadors in Constantinople, and these gentlemen in their turn addressed their complaints to the Ottoman Government. At last the scandal became so great that the Sultan realised that some satisfaction must be given. Moosa had many friends in the Palace, and an ingenious suggestion was made by which Moosa should be saved and the Ambassadors at the same time satisfied.

The Ambassadors were informed that, to give them complete satisfaction, not only should Moosa be brought to justice but he should be tried at Constantinople in the presence of the representatives of the Embassies. The trial was held, and the hostile witnesses, for the most part Armenians, were encouraged to speak with a freedom which they would not have ventured in the provinces; and as a result they swore to the committal of every kind of possible and impossible atrocity, contradicted one another on what purported to be statements of fact, and obliged a Court proceeding on Western principles to discredit all their evidence. Moosa was acquitted. His friends had known how to protect him. The Ambassadors' complaints were silenced. And yet, without the intervention of Western procedure, Moosa could, and would, if it had pleased the Government, have been justly executed in the provinces without any further trial than a recitation of well-known facts.

The questions of centralisation and want of touch with the native population are in many ways intimately connected. Centralisation is nearly always considered from the point of view of the relations of the central government of India with the various local governments; and serious as is this question, it is, in my opinion, entirely overshadowed in importance by the comparatively unnoticed, though most prejudicial, centralisation in every local government, and also, in a

lesser degree, in the administrative machinery of the central government and in its relations with the India Office. With regard to the internal working of the central government, it is sufficient here to note that it has developed into a system which would appear to be based on a principle of mistrust rather than on that of devolution of responsibility; whilst as regards the relations of the India Office with the Government of India, the only fully competent advisers of the Secretary of State, whose advice must be accepted in the great majority of important cases, they cannot grant a pension exceeding Rs. 10 per mensem without the express sanction of the Secretary of State. I will not pursue this part of the subject farther, as I am convinced that centralisation in the local governments is a much more serious defect.

The development of communications by rail and telegraph, which has been the making of India from the economic point of view, has surely been a curse as regards efficient administration. In days gone by, when administrative requirements were of a much simpler nature, and when the absence of communications obliged lieutenant-governors to repose confidence in their senior district officers, and the latter in their turn to confide in their juniors, there was a necessary devolution of responsibility. In all urgent cases the district official, having no means of immediate communication with his superiors,

acted according to his own lights. He generally took pride in his district as his own special domain, he remained for years at a time in the same neighbourhood, and both circumstances and policy led him to establish intimate relations with the better classes of the natives who surrounded him. But all this is changed now. Until somewhat reduced by the recent separation of portions of Eastern Bengal, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal was responsible for the administration of a province over 150,000 square miles in extent, inhabited by a population of approximately eighty-six million souls. How could the most energetic of men establish and maintain during his short five years of office those personal relations with his European officers, and with the leaders of a native community of eighty-six millions, which are so essential in the East? It may be admitted that the great majority of lieutenant-governors have been men of exceptional ability and energy, and generally not wanting in sympathy with the population under their rule, but how in the circumstances of their position could they make their personal influence and sympathy duly felt? The task is beyond human possibilities.

If this has been the case with lieutenant-governors, the situation of district officers has, if possible, become still more difficult. The causes are numerous. The development of the bureaucratic system now forces the officer to devote most of his time to his desk, prepar-

ing reports and returns, asking for instructions on questions of detail which might often be left to his own discretion, and giving explanations if he has, either inadvertently or from necessity, failed to fulfil the letter of the law as laid down in some volume of regulations. Tied to his desk, he cannot give the time to that personal intercourse with the people which is the necessary foundation of close and sympathetic relations. The district officer is, moreover, constantly moved from one district to another. Under an unfortunate system, whenever a senior vacates his post temporarily, the next senior in an inferior grade, in whatever part of the province he may be, replaces him, to the prejudice of his immediate local junior, who, by his acquaintance with the district and with the ideas of his natural chief, is (unless exceptionally incompetent) best qualified to fill his place. Further, the great improvement of communications with Europe tempts the civilian to take leave far more frequently and for shorter periods than was formerly customary; and when he returns to his service in India he is very liable to be posted to a new district. The result is, that men sometimes change posts even three or four times in a single year, and all-important continuity of method and system is impossible. The official is too often a stranger to the people, who, if they knew and trusted him, would, with the fullest goodwill, accept his rule as autocrat.

Is it astonishing, in such circumstances, that a strong agi-

tation has arisen against the British Raj? The danger was foreseen during my last residence in India by many serious and far-sighted officers of Government, and still more by British officers in native regiments, by petty officials, and by merchants, who are necessarily in closer contact with the people. No one, I imagine, anticipated an outburst quite so soon; but after all the wonder is, perhaps, that it did not come sooner and stronger. If further and more serious trouble is to be averted, drastic reforms must be introduced while there is yet time. One, which is simple, is the absolute prohibition of unnecessary constant changes of post amongst district officers, district magistrates, and police officers. Another, much more complex, is to do away with the crushing and exasperating centralisation in unwieldy provincial governments.

When centralisation is discussed, the Indian general idea of an antidote is to augment the importance and to increase the prestige of the local governments. But this is all wrong. It is these very governments which have become organised bureaucratic systems of centralised despotism. Compare the administration of a large province with that of a chief commissionership. The governor or lieutenant-governor is worked to death, and knows personally but relatively few of his officers, and still fewer of the influential natives in his province. He can only visit a limited number of his districts in any given year, and direct access to him is almost impos-

sible, hedged in as he is by provincial councils, boards of revenue, and other costly paraphernalia standing between him and his charge, and, in existing circumstances, necessary to give him some relief and maintain some movement in the administrative machine. On the other hand, in a moderately sized chief commissionership, the chief commissioner can personally visit each of his districts, and see all his district officials at their work, at least once a-year, and during the hot weather he can invite each of them in turn to stay a few days with him at the provincial government house. Moreover, he will with his secretaries deal directly with every class of question, without the intervention of councils or boards of revenue. He can know and be known by the more important men of all classes, and it depends only on his personal tact and sympathy with the native community for him to be in close touch with them.

In my opinion governorships and lieutenant-governorships, with all their paraphernalia, are to-day a huge mistake, a relic of times when nearly all conditions and circumstances were different. What is required is a large number of chief commissionerships of moderate size, and to any one who knows India there are some, the desirability of the creation of which appears clearly indicated. In the first rank stand a chief commissionership of Scinde and the settled parts of Beloochistan, a chief commissionership of Oudh, separated from the North-West

Provinces, and a chief commissionership of Orissa and Behar. Others may be more difficult to decide, and in all cases great caution should be exercised in making changes, and care should be taken to secure the concurrence of leading Indian local opinion. And this can be secured by frankness, tact, and sympathy.

The lesson of the agitation, spurious in the first instance, over the partition of Bengal must not be forgotten. It has shown how necessary measures, devised solely in the interest of good administration, and therefore in that of the Indian community, can be successfully misinterpreted to the masses by unscrupulous agitators. If Government is not in sufficiently close touch with the native community to guide it aright, through the influence of its natural leaders, such misunderstandings and troubles will be of frequent recurrence.

Respect for authority is natural to oriental conservatism, but authority must be presented in a form congenial to oriental ideas. We have heard much of the boycotting of British goods in the bazaars of Bengal as a serious feature in the recent anti-partition movement. The provincial bazaars are dominated by the Calcutta bazaar, and the question naturally arises, What has been done to favour the prestige of the British Raj in the Calcutta bazaar? Unfortunately, it must be admitted that less than nothing has been done. The political importance of the Calcutta bazaar, with its Indian mer-

chant princes, was formerly recognised, but, of late years it appears to have been lost sight of. The Maharajah Sir Narendra Krishna Deb, the Maharajah Durga Churn Law, and the Maharajah Sir Jotendro Mohun Tagore, all merchant princes, were all formerly recognised as such, and consulted by Government authorities; and, partly as a result of such recognition, and partly on account of their social position, they influenced and practically controlled public opinion in the bazaar. But the two first-named are dead, the third has passed the age of possible activity, and none of them has been replaced. Government has lost touch with the important Calcutta bazaar, as in many other directions. Without such leading as was secured by the tact of Lord Lansdowne and other sympathetic chiefs, the Calcutta bazaar was doomed to fall under the influence of the agitating seditious journalist who, ten years ago, would not have obtained a hearing. And let it be noted that, what has come to pass has not been without warning from anxious Europeans who did know and understand the situation.

There is much more to say on this subject, but the limits of a magazine article have, I fear, been already exceeded. I must conclude: in doing so I would urge before all things the necessity of reforms, well

thought out in detail, which should enable and encourage the British official to live more among the people and with the people, in sentiment and sympathy. Well-turned phrases, on justice to the native are of no avail with Orientals. The kindly heart and just nature are perhaps better appreciated in India than in most lands, but a fair field must be found for their influence under favouring conditions. The Indian civilian of to-day is, as a rule, unfortunately, but certainly, less in sympathy with the natives than was his predecessor. Is this solely the fault of an unsuitable administrative system, or is the result also due to the difference between the two classes of men? It is hard to believe that the first cause is alone sufficient to account entirely for the unfortunate change in relations between the official and the people. If it is not the sole cause, is it not time to consider whether youthful proficiency in classics and mathematics is any guarantee that the proficient possesses the essential qualities for success as a ruler? In the East personality is everything. Is it not possible to nominate to the Indian Civil Service by selection from among those who can prove that they have attained a required standard of education? Has any great empire been founded or maintained by scholars alone?