INDIA FROM A BACK BENCH

BY

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FOREWORD

THE authors of this Pamphlet do not claim to be "experts" on India. Our justification for writing it is that we are keenly interested in the problem and deeply impressed with its importance; and that each of us has some recent personal acquaintance with the country, gained officially or unofficially. We hope that it may not be without interest to some of those who, like ourselves, have tried to approach a very difficult question with as little prejudice, and as many of the facts, as possible.

A. B.
V. C.
D. & A.
A. W. H. J.
M. P.

I

THE PROBLEM AS WE SEE IT

THE PROBLEM AS WE SEE IT

An Exceptional Issue

THE problem of the future government of India is something altogether different from the ordinary issues which divide public opinion in this country. To the man-in-the-street, no doubt, it often seems a remote and uninteresting question ; but the truth is that whatever the right solution may be, there can be no question that its outcome will affect, for good or ill, the lives of everyone in this country. To-day, as in the past, India is a key-point in the structure of the Empire, in time of peace or in time of war. The Indian market has, to no small extent, dictated the lines on which the present distribution of our industrial forces has grown up. Our annual trade with India is more valuable to us than that with any other single country. Our connection with her represents the highest endeavour we have ever made to extend our conceptions of good government to an alien people. If this endeavour breaks down, or degenerates into the repression by force of an antagonised population, we shall have to admit failure in perhaps our greatest Imperial undertaking.

The Difficulties

The problem could hardly be more difficult. The complications and contradictions of modern India are such that only a fool would claim any one scheme to be an ideal solution of them all. Some element of compromise is thus inevitable. We cannot hope to find a solution which is theoretically unassailable, because there can be no such thing. We must search for a solution which will take into account our own

needs as well as those of India. It must work, and it must be capable of enduring, without being so rigid as to rule out all natural development. It must be something, in short, which will fit as many of the facts as possible, and in looking at the facts we must remember that India's political and racial aspirations and antipathies, loyalties and prejudices, are facts as real as administrative returns, or columns of statistics.

The Decision

Responsibility for the decision rests, of course, on the voters of this country and their representatives in Parliament, but the great majority of us are in no easy position to make up our minds. Only an insignificant fraction of the electorate has had either first-hand experience of post-War India, or the time and inclination to follow the intricate developments of the past fifteen years. In spite of the controversy on it, how many people have actually read the White Paper? Moreover, India is such a vast and varied country, that even actual residence there does not necessarily qualify a man to judge except of the district he knows. Experience of Madras, for instance, may be of little value on the North-West Frontier. There are the widest differences between, say, the Punjab and Mysore. Parliament and the people of this country have never had a more difficult or a more important issue to decide on such a scant foundation of personal knowledge.

The Present System

The ordinary person is naturally inclined to wonder what all the fuss is about, and to ask why we cannot go on in India as we are. The answer is a simple one. Whether we could, if we wished, go on indefinitely under the present system without a breakdown is, to say the least, a highly debatable point; and it is even more doubtful whether it would be in our interests to try to do so. The existing constitution of India is admittedly transitional, not permanent. The very Act which set it up in 1919 itself provided that after a term

of years a Commission (which duly materialised, under the chairmanship of Sir John Simon) should make recommendations to Parliament for its revision in whatever direction it thought fit. The Constitution of 1919, as such, has not proved itself a failure, since it was designedly an incomplete and experimental thing not intended as a permanent structure. Its authors no doubt reckoned, and reckoned rightly, that ten years' experience would show whether the experiment was in the right direction, or not. If it was not, this would become abundantly clear in ten years, and an entirely fresh start would be necessary. If, on the other hand, the experiment was on the right lines, the result after ten years would not be general satisfaction with things as they stood, but rather a widespread demand for further advance along the road already entered upon.

The Simon Commission went out to weigh India's post-1919 efforts in the direction of self-government. They did not find them wanting, and they recommended advance along the general line sketched out ten years before. There has, unfortunately, been no lack of difficulty and friction under the 1919 Constitution, but this to a considerable extent is due to the fact that the Constitution itself was in the nature of a compromise. By setting up elected assemblies, with Governments only partly answerable to them, it has afforded educated India the amplest opportunity—indeed encouragement—for political criticism and obstruction, without providing in a corresponding degree the practical antidote, which is political responsibility.

Parliament's Alternatives.

It has been our own experience that on whatever else they may differ, there is one thing upon which almost every Englishman or Indian in close touch with the affairs of the country could agree; it is that substantial constitutional change in India is becoming more and more necessary. The only real question is, therefore, what sort of changes shall be made? Parliament is a sovereign body and has power to

introduce whatever changes it pleases. It could, if it chose, provide India with a Fascist, or any other conceivable form of constitution. But if the changes it approves are to work, they must take into account history, present conditions, and the tendencies of the future which necessarily are conditioned by the past. On this basis the possible types of constitutional change resolve themselves into two, and two only. Either we must revert partly or wholly to our earlier system of direct bureaucratic rule; or else we must continue to move on in the direction we have followed hitherto, and give Indians increased political responsibility. In a word, we must either go forward or go back.

Backwards?

Only a few extremists are frank enough to advocate in public the scrapping of the existing elective system in India, and a reversion to direct rule. Other critics of the White Paper, however, in spite of some lip service to the idea of increased Indian responsibility, show signs of hankering after much the same policy. Yet another section of opinion appears to wish to retain things very much as they are now. But the risks of administrative deterioration and political disaffection to which this latter section is continually drawing attention are inherent in the *present* system, and are obviously not to be eliminated merely by attempting to stand still.

Indians and the Government

Excluding the personnel of the Army, the proportion of Englishmen to the Indian population works out to-day at 1 in about 12,000. This extreme disparity in numbers might not prevent our running a rough-and-ready military government. But anyone with the most rudimentary experience of administration must realise that this ratio means that if a reasonably good standard of government is to be maintained, Indian co-operation and goodwill are essential. It is naturally unprofitable to try to assess the precise conse-

quences of a step backwards in India. But the most robust optimist would hardly assert that we could hope for the same co-operation from educated Indians after we had taken it. Without this co-operation it would be a delusion to suppose that we could maintain the high standard of government we have always sought.

Socialist Intentions

Moreover, continuity would be essential if a step backwards were to have any chance of success. But public opinion in this country, as everyone knows, always hesitates to support indefinitely a policy which involves measures of repression, as a reactionary move in India certainly would do. A Socialist administration would reverse it immediately. It is worth recalling that Mr. Lansbury, writing in the " Clarion " on June 16th last, declared :—

> " What then is to be Labour's policy over here? Nothing new. We must stick to our oft-repeated statement that it is for India to decide whether she will join us as a partner, or break the connection and become a foreign power. . . . As to what form the government of India should take, this must be settled by Indians themselves . . . all we have to consider is how best we can secure the drafting of a scheme. . . . There is only one way out for a Socialist Government. We should summon, or ask Indians themselves to summon, a Constituent Assembly and hand over to that Assembly the task of deciding the future government of India. . . . There will certainly be an outcry that the Assembly will be captured by the Extremists. Certainly Conservatives will raise that cry, but they will have far worse things to cry about, for our own House of Commons will have been captured by ' Extremists '—ourselves. Do not let us be frightened by noise."

Those who show such zeal in opposing the present Government's proposals would be well advised to remember this declaration and reflect on all that it may imply.

Forwards?

Opponents of the Government's policy often suggest in speeches and newspaper articles that the question of greater political responsibility for Indians is a new one. The clamour and the publicity associated with it in India for the last ten years may be new; but the movement itself is not. Mr. Gandhi is not the first of his line, and Indian nationalism has its real origins well back in the last century. What is more, we ourselves cannot escape responsibility for its paternity, or its subsequent growth. Exactly a hundred years ago, Macaulay, then a Member of Council at Calcutta, wrote that if Indian public opinion inspired by ourselves were to demand European institutions, it "would be the proudest day in the annals of England." Through the century that has followed, responsible Englishmen have time and again expressed essentially the same sentiment, in varying words. Three successive Sovereigns in the course of formal Proclamations to India have sounded much the same note. It is really no matter for surprise that Indians should have interpreted these pronouncements as an intention on our part to give them an increasing share in their own government. On our side, it is idle to try to disguise the fact that we have committed ourselves in India not only by words, but by action.

Indianisation

It is not merely a matter of political concessions, but of the "Indianisation" of the machine of government itself, quite apart from politics. It is easy to trace the slow but continuous development in this direction from the XIXth century onwards, and public opinion in this country scarcely realises how far the process has already gone. How many people grasp the fact, for instance, that in five years' time —independently of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms or the White Paper proposals—at the present rate of recruitment there will be as many Indians as Englishmen in the executive

ranks of the Indian Civil Service itself? Or that the same position will be reached in the Indian Police Service ten years later?

In certain other Services Indianisation is still further advanced. The clerical and lower ranks of all the Services are, of course, almost wholly Indian. There is nothing new in these facts to those who know present-day India. But public opinion here should realise that the Government machine, on which so much depends, is already to no small extent in Indian hands; in other words, that we rely to-day, and rely successfully, on Indian co-operation. Another important point should be appreciated. In India, as elsewhere in the Empire, a strong sentiment of nationalism is not necessarily incompatible with an equally strong belief in the Imperial connection. Many Indian Members of the Services are at the same time convinced Nationalists and convinced Imperialists.

Our Teaching

In the same way it may not always be realised how far India's political ideas, or at any rate those of them which find expression, were derived from this country. Until very recently, Representative Government was accepted here without question, not merely as the best, but as the only system compatible with progressive civilisation. A very large part of the world, moreover, followed us in adopting this view. It was we who brought it to India, and it has been propagated through the westernised education, based ultimately on the doctrines of XIXth-century Liberalism, which we ourselves have introduced. A very large number of young men pass through the educational machine each year. For 1932, the number of enrolments in the principal universities alone is given at over 105,000; a figure, incidentally, which represents an increase of 75% over that for 1917.

The doctrines of XIXth-century England have, indeed, taken on a good deal of local colour in the process of transplantation. Nevertheless they remain to-day the basis of

Indian politics. If India asks for a more representative form of government, it is because we ourselves have taught her to do so; to say nothing of having given her to understand that ultimately she shall have it. This, after all, need not be a matter for the alarm and regret with which some appear to regard it. Our cardinal principle of Empire, and one which, on the whole, has been brilliantly successful, has been to fit the peoples dependent on us to stand by themselves.

India and Democracy

The principles of Representative Government on which our Empire has been built up, are admittedly not in the latest fashion. But the spectacle presented by much of Europe to-day does not suggest that we should be in any undue hurry to exchange our own Imperial tradition for the new nostrum of Authoritarianism.

It is often suggested that to remain faithful to this tradition, as it is interpreted in the White Paper, means in practice to thrust an advanced Democracy on India, a country wholly unsuited to it. It really means nothing of the kind. The Constitution proposed in the White Paper differs greatly from Democracy as we know it in this country, for it has had to be adapted to meet the quite different circumstances of India. It is not a theoretical Constitution, but a practical one, worked out to fit existing facts. The projected Federation would be made up partly of the British Indian Provinces, but partly also of Absolutist States. The Provinces, it is true, would continue to have elective machinery, but election based not on our idea of "one man one vote," but on the communal system and a relatively restricted franchise. In practice this means something unlike Western Democracy.

But that is not the point. Hitherto we have regarded the political as well as the material development of our dependencies as one of our Imperial responsibilities. This, however, does not mean that we must force an exact copy of our own system on them. Those who argue that any form

of democratic system can never suit India may be right; or they may be wrong. Time alone, and a long time at that, can provide the answer, and at this very early stage the most acute human intelligence can do no more than guess. What our tradition, if we are to follow it, does lay down is that India should be given the chance to work her own political machine under our guidance. The White Paper Scheme would give India this chance. But let it be repeated that only those who have not studied the proposals can describe them as imposing on her a slavish imitation of our own democratic institutions.

Responsibility

The word responsibility has been used several times, and by it we mean to imply some system under which the Executive Government both at the Centre and in the Provinces is in the main answerable to a majority of elected representatives.

Some critics of the White Paper Scheme, while not attacking the principle of Provincial Autonomy, speak as if they wished to see the Central Government left very much as it is to-day. But would self-governing Provinces really be compatible with a " non-responsible " and bureaucratic Central Government ? Indeed, to speak of Provincial Autonomy *and* a " strong " official government at the Centre, seems really to be a contradiction in terms. Either the Provinces could not be genuinely autonomous, or the Central Government could not be " strong." It is, in short, impossible to have it both ways, and to try to do so would be to invite what would be particularly dangerous, namely, a chronic conflict between the Provinces and Headquarters. As the Government of India's well-known Despatch of 1930 said in rather a different connection, a non-responsible Government in such circumstances would not be " strong, or even tolerable."

There would be, moreover, another insoluble difficulty of a practical order. The Princes have long claimed a share in the determination of All-India policies. This claim is one which must somehow be met, and the only practicable

way of meeting it is to admit them to the Central Government by means of a federal system. There is great advantage in so doing, because they will bring to that Government an element of experience and stability and a strong sense of attachment to the British Crown. The Princes have made it plain that they would enter a Federation only on the condition that they would thereby secure a measure of responsibility for All-India Affairs. If the Princes are to be given this responsibility, it is obvious that it cannot be denied to the representatives of British India also. Otherwise no partnership between the two could be equitable or even possible.

There is, finally, a psychological factor, difficult to define in a few words, but of decisive importance. Anyone who has watched from close range the effects of the tide of nationalistic sentiment which, since the War, has swept over the East from China to Egypt, will agree that one of the main ingredients of it is the exaggerated sensitiveness of many educated Orientals on what they regard as the position of inferiority or dependence of their country in relation to the West. This sensitiveness may be criticised, or even derided, but there is no denying its prevalence or its intensity. The educated Indian is susceptible to it; and especially so, perhaps, because he feels that India, though a member of the British Commonwealth, does not enjoy the status in it to which he believes she has a good claim. If India is given more responsibility for her own central government, this susceptibility will be diminished. But if further responsibility is withheld, it is likely to grow so acute that Indian co-operation in the business of government would become more and more difficult to ensure.

Co-operation

The word co-operation has been used more than once. There are those, of course, who maintain that it will not be forthcoming, basing their arguments on the fact that the Indian Liberals, to say nothing of Congress, have attacked the White Paper proposals. We must confess that both as

practical politicians, and as individuals with some knowledge of different parts of the East, we do not believe that these manifestations need be taken at their face value. As politicians we know that a Party's attitude when in Opposition is often far from a reliable guide to its attitude when faced with responsibility; and as individuals we are aware that it is a natural tendency of the East to refuse to recognise any bargain as a good one until it has been concluded. For these reasons we do not believe there is much reason to fear any extensive boycott of a new Constitution. The incentive to take part in it will be very strong, and as a matter of fact, straws already show clearly enough which way the wind is blowing. A General Election, probably the last under the existing Constitution, is to be held this autumn. Already Congress has thrown over the principle of non-co-operation and is strenuously preparing to fight as many seats as it can. Indeed, ex-Congress men seem likely to fight each other in many constituencies.

Indian Standards

There are those, also, who rate very low the value of Indian participation in the work of government, maintaining that the national characteristics include a tendency towards corruption, nepotism, communal bias, and inefficiency. Generalisations such as this, covering three hundred and fifty millions of people, are very easily made. But they are not to be proved or disproved without the sifting of an almost infinite mass of evidence. There is no question but that there are many Indians in the Services and in public life generally, whose standards are as high as can be found anywhere. It is also the case, on the other hand, that factors such as communal feeling, or the Hindu conception of the family, may expose to strong temptation some of those with patronage to exercise. Again, it is regrettably a fact that there have been cases of gross inefficiency, and worse, among local or municipal bodies.

It seems to us essential to look at the whole question

with a proper sense of proportion. If probity in local administration is to be the criterion, then it would be easy—much easier than in the case of India—to demonstrate that the United States of America are unfitted for self-government. The absurdity of this conclusion serves to show how great a mistake it is to try to generalise on such questions from isolated cases.

A Standard of Comparison

It so happens that there exists in India something in the nature of an independent standard by which to check the assertion that defects of character must prevent Indians from conducting their public affairs satisfactorily. The Indian States cover about one-third of the country, and in this very substantial proportion of India the part we have played in administration has been relatively small. Contrary to a conception often erroneously held in this country, the responsibility, and almost all of the executive work, has fallen on Indian and not on British shoulders. No one would assert that the results were of a uniform standard. But it is a fact that State Government at its best reaches a high level. Nor is this level attained only in such elementary aspects of government as, for instance, the maintenance of good order. There are States which make a most favourable showing in such matters as public works, hospitals, and so on. One illustration may be worth noting. In British India we have, perhaps, devoted as much attention in the past to education, proportionately speaking, as to any other department of government. Yet in the table of percentages of literacy in the various units of India (excluding Burma), three States fill the first three places, one of them showing a percentage of literacy over three times as high as that of the leading British Indian Province.

It would be as foolish to try to draw sweeping conclusions from a single case like this, as it is to draw the opposite conclusions from some instances of corruption in local councils. But the broad fact remains that there is evidence from the

States that Indians without direction from Whitehall or Delhi can and do achieve success in administration.

The Economics of the Question

The Indian market is, of course, of the first importance to this country to-day, and unlike many other markets which threaten to contract to vanishing point, it seems capable of a wide expansion, given the right conditions. Even assuming that an increase in Indian purchasing power stimulated a rapid development of her own industry, it still seems most unlikely that the latter could be extensive enough to overtake the whole demand of the huge and fast-increasing population. There would remain a large margin for our manufactured exports. Nor are the prospects one-sided. One of the effects of the nearly universal move in the direction of economic self-sufficiency which has marked the last five years has been to cut down, possibly for all time, the markets for many kinds of primary products. India's exports, for generations to come, must consist mainly of such products, and it may well happen that she will have to rely increasingly for an outlet for them on preferential markets in this country and the Empire.

If this is the general position, what policy on our part will stimulate the maximum flow of trade between India and this country? There are some who evidently still believe in the feasibility of trading by political pressure or coercion. An indirect light was thrown on the prospects of such a policy by the Congress boycotts of a few years ago. These were unexpectedly successful in inflicting loss on our trade; and a point which emerged very clearly was the difficulty of circumventing them by governmental action. They provided an excellent illustration of how hard it would be to force goods on unwilling buyers.

The Fiscal Autonomy Convention

However, the advocates of this line of policy, though they include a few individuals prominently in the public eye,

are a very small minority. Successive governments, with the support of the great majority of those whose interests are directly concerned, have sought to stimulate trade by precisely the opposite method, namely, the promotion of goodwill. What is known as the Fiscal Autonomy Convention (strictly speaking it was not a Convention, and did not provide for fiscal autonomy) was the product of the Reforms of 1919. It declared that if the Government of India was in agreement with the Legislature at Delhi upon a tariff measure, this country would not over-rule them. Actually, there has been no case of disagreement between the Governor-General and the Legislature necessitating the intervention of the Secretary of State since the Convention has operated, so that India has in practice enjoyed Fiscal Autonomy for nearly half a generation. To cancel it at this stage, a move which seems to commend itself to some politicians, would be ill-judged in the extreme ; and the more difficult to defend in that, having conceded to India the right to make her own tariffs when this was a free trade country, we ourselves have since adopted the principle of Protection, and formally confirmed it at Ottawa. So far as India is concerned, the inevitable result would be a sharp outburst of resentment which would wreck the prospect of trade expansion on a basis of friendly reciprocity. Very probably we should find ourselves back again in a series of boycotts and attempts to suppress them, a phase from which we emerged only a few years ago when political tension was relaxed as the result of Indian expectation of constitutional changes, and the sobering prospects of more responsibility.

Trade by Consent

Nothing could be further from the truth than to think that a policy directed towards commercial goodwill consists only in an exchange of appropriate platitudes at public banquets. It is a highly practical policy—in fact the only practical one. Five years ago the prospects of India endorsing the Ottawa Agreements would have been negligible. Actually, the Legislature did ratify them in 1933 by a large majority, in

dependently of the votes of the official *bloc*. The result has been a marked rise in our percentage of India's total imports. The Clare-Lees–Mody Agreement concluded last autumn is another case in point. It designedly covered only a limited field, but it marked a surprising change in Bombay's atttitude towards Lancashire. At the present moment the Government are negotiating a commerical treaty with the Government of India. The scope of these negotiations is not yet known, but doubtless their purpose is to extend the principles of the Ottawa Agreements.

These things are not manifestations of empty sentimentality, but bring us and India solid practical advantage. It is not for nothing that the word " goodwill " has acquired a technical meaning, and appears on the credit side of balance-sheets. The alternative, if it can be called an alternative, is a policy of the " strong hand." Let those who feel attracted by it remember that, applied to India, it would not put one unemployed Lancashire operative back to work, or contribute sixpence towards a dividend.

II

1927 TO 1934

Seven Years of Investigation

THE problem of India has been examined and re-examined in recent years with a thoroughness which can have few parallels. The Simon Commission was first appointed in 1927, and went to India in the following year. The Commission having reported, the Government of India itself subjected the Report to a prolonged scrutiny, and recorded its views in a well-known Despatch. Two Round Table Conferences met, the second of them being followed by the despatch of three more Committees of Enquiry to India. A third Round Table Conference ensued, and the Government, after some months of further preparation, then published its proposals as a White Paper. These proposals, in turn, were submitted to the Joint Select Committee, which has already sat for over a year, and has heard a mass of further evidence. This Committee's report will presumably be followed by the drafting of a Bill for submission to Parliament, where its passage through all its stages, in both Houses, will no doubt require months. The final enactment, whatever it may be, will thus be the product of over seven years of unremitting work, in the course of which every imaginable point of view will have found expression and every possible or impossible alternative considered. If hard work can find the best solution to the problem, the effort will not have been spared.

The Practical Issues

The prolonged enquiry that has been taking place since 1927 has already brought out and defined the main questions

to which Parliament will have to give an answer next year. No scheme, whatever form it might take, can shirk them. They are :—

1. How can India's demand for more responsibility, and her genuine belief that we intend to give it her, best be brought into accord with her own interests and those of the Empire ?
2. How can India's vast size, and the almost unlimited variety of her economic and cultural development, best be allowed for in framing a constitution applicable to the whole sub-continent ?
3. How can the sharply contrasted political systems of the States on the one side, and British India on the other, best be brought together in one workable scheme ?
4. How can the religious and racial divisions which, unhappily, still exists, best be minimised without injustice either to majorities, or minorities ?
5. Lastly, but not least, how can trade between this country, India, and the Empire, best be safeguarded and developed ?

The White Paper's Answers

The solutions to these five questions proposed by the Government in the White Paper are :—

1. Responsibility with Safeguards.
2. Provincial Autonomy.
3. Federation.
4. Communal Electorates.
5. The principles of Ottawa, with safeguards against discrimination.

The Joint Select Committee

The White Paper, which embodies these answers, has been referred to the Joint Select Committee ; and detailed

discussion of them is of little practical use until the Committee has reported. It is not that there is anything wrong in discussing them, but that discussion can lead to no particular conclusion since, however loudly extremists on either side may shout, it is certain that Parliament and public opinion as a whole quite rightly means to wait to hear what the Committee has to say before trying to make up its mind.

One of the unsatisfactory features of the controversy which has arisen over India is the attitude taken up by a group of politicians towards the Joint Select Committee. When it was first appointed, the cry went up that it had been "packed" by the Government and that its report would thus be neither independent nor reliable. This, be it noted, was the line taken by more than one politician who had himself refused to serve on it. But, latterly, this same group has reversed its attitude. The basis, if there was one, of the charge of breach of Privilege brought against Lord Derby and Sir Samuel Hoare, appeared to be that membership of the Committee entailed such extraordinary obligations that individuals who sit on it must ignore their own duties and responsibilities while the Committee remains in being. Either one view or the other plainly must be wrong. The Committee cannot, as the opponents of the White Paper policy have successively maintained, be both a packed body of politicians, whose recommendations must be suspect in advance; and an august tribunal, the members of which are bound to an impartiality and a detachment akin to that of His Majesty's Judges.

The Real Position

The truth is, of course, that neither of these versions corresponds with the facts. The functions of the Committee are not judicial, but political. Its members are drawn from political bodies, the House of Lords, and the House of Commons; and the problem before it is essentially political, since what it has to decide is India's political future. As for it being "packed," the Government packed it only in the

sense that they asked to serve on it the men best qualified by experience and by authority to advise Parliament and the country on a critical issue. Every point of view has been represented by witnesses before the Committee. The opponents of the White Paper Scheme gave lengthy evidence which is on record for everyone to read, and to judge on its merits.

The names of the Committee, with an indication of their previous work in connection with India, are as follows :—

Chairman

LORD LINLITHGOW . .	Chairman of Commission on Indian Agriculture.

Members

Major ATTLEE . . .	Member, Simon Commission.
Mr. R. A. BUTLER . .	Under-Secretary of State for India.
Mr. E. CADOGAN . .	Member, Simon Commission.
Sir AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN .	Secretary of State for India.
THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.	
THE LORD CHANCELLOR.	
Mr. F. S. COCKS.	
Sir R. CRADDOCK . .	Lieut.-Governor of Burma.
Mr. J. C. C. DAVIDSON .	Chairman, Indian States Enquiry Committee.
LORD DERBY.	
Mr. ISAAC FOOT . .	Delegate to Round Table Conferences.
LORD HALIFAX . .	Viceroy of India.
LORD HARDINGE . .	Viceroy of India.
Sir SAMUEL HOARE . .	Secretary of State for India.
LORD HUTCHISON . .	Member, States Enquiry Committee.
Mr. MORGAN JONES.	

LORD LOTHIAN . .	Delegate to Round Table Conferences. Chairman, Franchise Committee in India.
LORD LYTTON . . .	Governor of Bengal
LORD MIDDLETON . .	Indian Army
Sir JOSEPH NALL.	
LORD PEEL . . .	Secretary of State for India.
LORD EUSTACE PERCY .	Delegate to Round Table Conference. Chairman, Federal Finance Committee in India.
LORD RANKEILLOUR.	
LORD READING . . .	Viceroy of India.
LORD SALISBURY.	
Sir JOHN SIMON . .	Chairman, Statutory Commission.
LORD SNELL . . .	Under-Secretary of State for India.
Sir JOHN WARDLAW MILNE	Delegate to Round Table Conference.
LORD WINTERTON . .	Under-Secretary of State for India.
LORD ZETLAND . .	Governor of Bengal.

It will be seen that the Committee includes ex-Secretaries of State and Under-Secretaries for India; ex-Viceroys and Governors; and men on whose judgment, apart from any experience of the Indian problem, large sections of their fellow-countrymen rely. We cannot but think that when the findings of the Committee are published, the long-considered conclusions of men like these must outweigh the crude appeals to prejudice on which some of the critics of the Government rely.

III

THE PROBLEM FROM THE OTHER END

1. THE ARMY, by General Sir WILLIAM HENEKER
2. BRITISH INDUSTRY IN INDIA, by Sir ALEXANDER GIBB
3. JUSTICE, by Sir MAURICE HAYWARD
4. LAW AND ORDER, by Sir JAMES CRERAR
5. PENSIONS, by Sir HENRY LAWRENCE
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THE PROBLEM FROM THE OTHER END

The Man on the Spot

THE foregoing is, of course, written from the standpoint of Conservative Members of Parliament who before long will have to vote on a Government of India Bill. For the rest, the authors of this Pamphlet make no claim to anything but enough acquaintance with present-day India to enable them to realise the difficulty and the variety of the questions to which an answer has to be found. But we have also this advantage. In the course of the last few years we have had many opportunities of discussing these questions with men who were and are responsible for dealing with them. It is obvious that when, as in the present case, Parliament and the country has to decide a question of the first importance of which we have admittedly little first-hand and practical knowledge, the opinions of the man on the spot should carry great weight.

We have therefore asked some of these men briefly to set down their views on a few of the factors which go to make up the Indian problem. It will be seen that the experience and authority of the writers are beyond question. With one or two exceptions, they have all held highly responsible positions under the Crown, and held them, not in a past when the problems were vastly more simple, but in the confused and strained conditions of to-day. It seems to us no more than elementary common sense to rely on the opinions of men with records of service such as theirs, rather than on those of a few politicians and newspaper-men with little or no knowledge of India.

I

THE ARMY AND DEFENCE

By General Sir WILLIAM HENEKER, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O. (General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Command, India, 1928–1932)

The question of the Defence of India was considered in the Simon Commission Report, and it was suggested that the Army should be an Imperial concern, and therefore entirely removed from possibility of criticism in India. This idea, on consideration, was turned down, for it was felt that it would be difficult, at all events administratively, to make this important Department a water-tight Imperial affair.

The particular point which weighed with the soldiers, when consulted, was that it would be dangerous to isolate the departments of Defence and Railways one from the other. So Defence under the White Paper is to become a Reserved Department under the Governor-General, and his " reserved " functions will have a statutory basis.

Not long ago the British Government accepted certain Imperial implications with regard to India's Defence Force, and agreed to make an annual subvention of £1,500,000 for the advantages secured to Britain through the maintenance of an Army of the following size in India :—

British Troops	approx.	60,000
Indian Troops	,,	150,000
Reservists	,,	30,000

The duties of this Army can be classed under 3 headings :—

(1) Defence against external aggression.
(2) Duties in aid of civil power.
(3) Obligations under treaty, with regard to Indian States.

With regard to (1), the bulk of the Army is disposed in proximity to the Northern Frontiers of India, and acts as a barrier

against incursions by the warlike tribesmen who live in the mountains, and who possess some 500,000 first-class fighting men. It is only the troops which prevent these tribesmen from swooping down into the fertile Indian plains, looting and plundering.

Our present Commander-in-Chief in India, Field-Marshal Sir Philip Chetwode, is a believer in mechanised weapons of war, and he is gradually forming an up-to-date armoured force. Its duty will be to bar the way should, some day, India be menaced from the north by a more formidable enemy than the tribesmen.

With regard to (2), communal troubles break out occasionally in different parts of India, and troops are located in convenient centres from which they can be rushed to vital points in aid of the civil authorities.

Regarding (3), Troops, by ancient treaty, have to be located within certain Indian States in case of trouble, but the real need for this treaty seems to be disappearing every year.

The question of the Indianisation of the Indian Army is exercising a great many minds. Some people seem to imagine that Indianisation will mean placing Indians in command of Regiments and even Brigades at once. But if British officers are not given superior commands until they have risen gradually through the junior ranks, why should Indians be selected without experience for such appointments? The proposed system will follow the ordinary rule, and Indians joining a Regiment will gradually rise year by year under the senior British officers of the Regiment, until, after some 25 years or so, all the British officers having been " pushed out " at the top, an Indian will get command.

In conclusion I would ask those who are interested, and would study the whole question, not to be led away by the utterances and catchwords of politicians out of office. To " scuttle out of India " as Mr. Winston Churchill threatens we must do, and so allow the frontier tribes to ravage the plains, and to leave India to " return to the jungle " as Lord Lloyd states will result under the White Paper scheme, seem to be extraordinary statements for responsibly minded people

to make. We recognise, as do the Indians themselves, that it is imperative we should remain in the country, not only to conserve the enormous interests we possess, but in order to prevent what Mr. Winston Churchill and Lord Lloyd contend will happen, when we go. But they do not tell us why we are going!

I know from my own experience and from the many conversations I have had with Congress leaders and with Ghandi himself, that no Indian of standing desires the British to leave the country. They want a larger say in the Government, but they want us to remain to help them, and to see that, through the Army, order and tranquillity are assured. Only then can prosperity spread through the country.

2

THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR BRITISH INDUSTRY IN THE NEW INDIA

Sir ALEXANDER GIBB, G.B.E., C.B., Chairman of Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners, Consulting Engineers.

It is a commonplace that the origin of the Indian Empire was commercial. It is true, too, that great wealth has flowed to this country in the past from India for commercial services rendered and goods supplied—more wealth than does now, and much more, if the fears of the critics of the White Paper are justified, than is likely when those proposals have been implemented. But I am convinced that they are fundamentally wrong in their judgment. The critics do not realise that Indian industrial and commercial development has, for some time past now, undergone a basic change. In the past, development and business in India have been, directly or indirectly, almost wholely a matter of Government. The Government decreed canals, railways, ports, roads, power stations and the rest; and itself saw them carried through, efficiently and for the most part economically, to the great benefit of the country.

But those days are, I believe, past. The future development of India and its business expansion will be inspired, devised and sponsored by the people of India, and not by its Government. This change is evolutionary and inevitable. Equally inevitable is it that industrial failures and commercial scandals will be experienced, even as they are in our own country. Such are part of the price of progress; and though the fair-minded, honourable and cautious Indian Civil Servant would like to limit the chances of such failures, it cannot be done, except by putting obstacles in the way of development, with even more unfortunate effects. Business in these days is intensively competitive; it involves the taking of big risks and the acceptance of heavy commitments; and

it has become international in its outlook. For all of which reasons it must be beyond the province of even the best Departmental mind. The commercial future of India requires, therefore, in my opinion, a complete and drastic change from the old paternal form of Government.

What, then, of our own position in the new India? The potentialities of India are obviously immense. She will quite possibly make comparatively greater strides in the next generation than any other country in the world—including even China. In such a development there will be great chances for enterprise and the enterprising—for those capable of understanding and meeting the new conditions. There is no reason to fear that our own industries will be unable to adapt themselves eventually to the fundamental changes that are taking place, if only they are not handicapped by a perpetuation of the spirit of hostility in India, such as we have experienced all too much in recent years—and once they have something definite on which to base their policy.

The White Paper proposals must, I am satisfied, be more effective towards improving the atmosphere and regaining the friendship and mutual trust which are the basis of all business, than could ever be achieved if the present state of affairs were to be continued. And since unrest and uncertainty are as potent obstacles to business and development, as friendship and confidence are helpful, the sooner the new proposals are enacted, the better for British industry and British interests.

3

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

By Sir MAURICE HAYWARD, K.C.S.I., Judge, High Court, Bombay, 1918–1921; Member, Executive Council, Bombay, 1921–1926

The cultivators who constitute the great majority of the people depended in the past on the strength of their village mud walls for protection of their cattle and crops against marauders who infested the land. The decay everywhere of these mud walls is eloquent of the trust now placed in a disciplined police force and a regular system of magistrates. Selected members of the subordinate executive services are invested with magisterial powers for the trial of minor offences in every district. They are all Indians. They exercise these powers in strict subordination to the District Magistrate, who is ordinarily a member of the Indian Civil Service. Their judgments are subject to revision by the Sessions Judge, who tries all major offences in the district. He also is ordinarily a member of the Indian Civil Service. Civil suits are tried by subordinate judges recruited from junior members of the local Bars. They too are all Indians. Their judgments are generally subject to revision by the District Judge, who is also the Sessions Judge and so ordinarily a member of the Indian Civil Service. Criminal and civil appeals lie from the judgments of the District and Sessions Judges to the provincial High Courts, which include a number of Indian judges. Appeals lie from the High Courts to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

The Courts are subject thus to strict supervision, which is secured further by the submission of detailed returns and by the periodical inspections of superior judicial officers. Corruption which was rife in times past is seldom charged against the magistrates and judges of the present day, who are well educated and highly paid and who, moreover, depend for promotion upon their efficiency and integrity as observed by

the High Courts. The opinions of the latter are taken in nearly every case of promotion or posting by the Executive Governments. Complete separation of judicial and executive functions has so far not been possible in the case of the subordinate magistracy. The cost would be prohibitive and magistrates have, moreover, to exercise executive powers from time to time for the maintenance of law and order. But the independence of the judiciary from the executive has been practically secured and has the powerful support of the Indian Bar, which is fully represented on the Indian Legislatures. The danger of the judiciary being subjected to political influences under the reform proposals seems therefore slight. But inasmuch as it is not possible to predicate that political pressure will not be exerted on Indian ministers, it is of essential importance to make provision in the reform scheme to preserve unimpaired the control and effective superintendence of the provincial High Courts. It has therefore been suggested that special limitations should be laid in this matter on the powers of the provincial Executives and Legislatures. The question was raised by the Secretary of State before the Joint Committee, and it is hoped that the necessary safeguards will be included in the Constitution Act by Parliament.

4

LAW AND ORDER

By Sir JAMES CRERAR, K.C.S.I., C.I.E. (Indian Civil Service, 1901–1932. Home Member,[1] Government of India, 1927–1932).

The White Paper contemplates that in a Federation composed of the Indian States and the Provinces, the Departments of Government which are concerned with the Law Courts, the Magistracy, the Police, the Jails and allied matters should, in the Provinces, be placed under the control, like other departments of the Provincial Government, of a responsible ministry, subject to certain special provisions. This is what is commonly called the Transfer of Law and Order. It was recommended by the Simon Commission, in whose report a full examination of the question will be found. This recommendation was concurred in by the Government of India, and all Provincial Governments. I believe that the great majority of men who have been in recent and immediate contact both with the specific problems of Law and Order in India and with the general political situation there, hold the same opinion.

The general direction and the measure of the advance now to be made are pretty closely conditioned by the past history and the present facts of the case. In any scheme whatever, which is to be conformable with these, there must be a really effective measure of Provincial Autonomy. Without this, no plan of federation could subsist and no political co-operation in India could be expected. For Provincial Autonomy the Transfer of Law and Order is indispensable. The Law Courts, Magistrates and Police, not only sustain the framework within which Government operates, but they are necessary instruments of its policy and decisions. The " reservation " of Law and Order would mean, in effect, that

[1] Equivalent to Home Secretary in British Cabinet.

the Government, having no direct means of executing its own decisions, would require the previous assent, to any measure proposed, of an external authority. A scheme of Provincial Autonomy on such terms would clearly be illusory and could not be regarded as an honest offer. It would, as the Government of India have pointed out, concentrate every manifestation of political discontent on the most delicate and vital part of the machinery. The remedy must be to place the primary responsibility where clearly it ought to lie.

Under this new dispensation it is necessary that the officers concerned should continue to be properly supported and protected in the discharge of their duties. The Law Courts will continue to be exempt from executive interference with their judicial functions and the superintendence of the High Courts over the Lower Courts maintained. On the Governor, as the representative of the Crown, special responsibilities will devolve and special powers to discharge them will be conferred, including a special responsibility for peace and tranquillity and the internal administration and discipline of the Police.

The British tradition is to act on established principles, to recognise plain facts and to make provision for contingencies. The Scheme has all these merits.

5

PENSIONS

By Sir HENRY LAWRENCE, K.C.S.I., Member, Executive Council, Bombay, 1921–1926; Acting Governor, Bombay, 1926.

An Englishman of high experience in public life asked me, " What is all this fuss about Indian Pensions ? "

I explained that some pensioners present and prospective feared that the future Government of India would repudiate or diminish the pensions now paid or promised.

He then asked, " What are Pensions ? "

I replied " Indian Pensions " are of two different classes, which are often confused. Let us call them classes A and B. A are payments to retired officers of the Civil and Military Services similar to the payments to such officers in England. These payments have been defined to be " Deferred Pay," i.e. a part of the salaries earned by active service, the payment of which is deferred to a date after retirement.

There is another complication in regard to the Indian Civil Service. Up to ten years ago these men paid a compulsory contribution towards their pensions, and about one-third of what the older men now draw is a refund of their own money. Class B is quite different: consisting of payments made to the widows and orphans of officers of the Civil and Military Services.

The Funds from which these Class B pensions are met have been subscribed by those Services, on insurance principles, and are the absolute property of the members of those Services. For convenience of administration these funds have been collected by the Government treasury by compulsory deductions from salaries and have been credited to the current revenues of the State and spent year by year for the purposes of the State: and it is not disputed that they are a debt due by the State to the subscribers.

My friend suggested that it was obvious that any risk to these Class B pensions would arouse the sympathies of English voters with the widows and orphans; and that the Government would be well advised to get rid of this embarrassing obligation. The capital sum involved could not be a heavy liability to a State with the high credit which India enjoys on the Stock Markets of the world; and it should be possible to transfer this capital sum at once from India to England.

I observed that the total sum at issue was about twelve million pounds; and the Joint Select Committee would no doubt consider the political danger of allowing this bagatelle to be exploited against the White Paper. The Secretary of State had already proposed to transfer this sum to Trustees to invest in England within fifteen years, and this period could clearly be reduced if the Joint Select Committee recommended that it be dealt with by loan.

Provision is already made in the White Paper to enable Trustees to administer this sum and to exempt it from the onerous burdens of the Income Tax. These precautions have therefore been carefully devised for the protection of the widow and the orphan, and the Government is entitled to some credit for their forethought.

"Now let us return to the Class A Pensions," said my friend. "How do they compare in security with the Pensions of other countries?"

"Well," I replied, "the safety of the last generation has gone, whether for pensions or for investments in State Loans, or in any class of gilt-edged securities. The life-savings of the rentier classes have been destroyed in France, Germany and Italy through the depreciation of currencies; even in England such safe trustee investments as railways have ruined countless families; many continental countries and even some States within the British Empire have reduced the pensions paid by the State, and the comprehensive answer to the question of the comparative safety of Indian pensions is that they are more safe than pensions in any other country except England.

Why then do Insurance Companies refuse to insure them?

This refusal is not limited to India, nor has it arisen out of the White Paper. I understand that the Insurance Companies decided long before the Indian policy took its present form that it was not possible for actuaries to calculate the risks of the insurance of pensions; and that therefore it was not sound business for an Insurance Company to handle. When applications for Pension insurances were very rare, a few were accepted many years ago, owing to their infinitesimal proportion to the other risks. There are ample data for life statistics, there are no data for political or social upheavals, which destroy pensions. And many Companies cut out this business years ago, with no reference to the state of India.

"Now tell me," said my friend, "what do you regard as the guarantees for the safety of these Pensions?"

The answer is somewhat technical, first in law and then in statistics: in law because the Constitutional Act prescribes that the pensions shall be paid in full, and that the Governor-General has a special responsibility to take measures for that full payment; and in statistics, because the total pension payments are only four million pounds a year, and this sum is less than five per cent. of the Indian revenues.

The Governor-General has full power to direct that these four million pounds are met before the Cabinet proceeds to distribute the rest of the revenues of the State. It is not within the legal powers of the Cabinet or the Legislative Assembly to withhold the payment of these pensions: and the Governor-General has the legal power if necessary to impose special taxation to fulfil this statutory obligation. On these grounds I consider that so far as the legal position is concerned, Indian pensioners have less ground for anxiety than pensioners anywhere else outside England.

Critics of the Government, who are less optimistic of the future, urge that Parliament should give a guarantee of these payments, and it is certainly open to Parliament to take this course. Any such guarantee would be interpreted in opposite ways at the fancy of the different political parties. Some

would say that this was a reflection on the good faith of an Indian Cabinet, would excite ill-will and invite repudiation. Others would say that since the Government maintain that there is no risk the guarantee would be the acid test of the good faith of *their* professions, and would allay very genuine fears without any danger of loss to the British taxpayer.

6

INDIAN POLICE—1898 TO 1932

By Sir CHARLES STEAD, C.B.E., M.V.O. (Indian Police, 1898–1933; Inspector-General, Punjab, 1928–1933)

In this brief article I feel that I cannot do better than describe my own progressive reactions to the proposal to transfer "Law and Order," including "Police," to the control of a Minister responsible to the electorate. Frankly, the very idea, when it first confronted me during the visit of the Simon Commission to India, struck me as absurd and outside practical politics. But with the subsequent experiences of the fateful concluding years of my service, my angle of vision widened and I was able to see not only the disastrous nature of the risks that would be run if the transfer of Police were refused, but also some positive advantages in the support of a Minister with a considerable popular backing.

My initial objections to the proposal were (1) the possibility of political interference with the discipline and working of the Force, and (2) a grave apprehension that, in a crisis, the Minister would not be able to rise above narrow communalism. The first objection would be fairly adequately met if the recommendations in the printed representation of the Indian Police Association to the Select Committee were accepted. In the alternative, as the representation points out, it would be impossible for the Indian Police, as a service, to function usefully. This warning sounds no uncertain note.

The other objection vanished from my mind by the end of 1930, as we obtained mastery over the Civil Disobedience movement, in the course of which I had learnt that there were Indians, inside and outside the Services, capable of rising to the occasion under the stimulus of responsibility.

Now for the advantages promised by the transfer. The most important is additional support of the police from a considerable portion of the electorate. In India, at any rate,

the working efficiency of a police force is to be measured largely by its ability to command assistance from the public. In the past it has been possible to dragoon the people into active support of the police. This official power is waning and in some parts of India has approached vanishing-point. So the police must rely in the future on the good offices of those leaders and politicians able, *and, under the stimulus of responsibility, willing*, to attract public support to the criminal administration. As a practical policeman I foresee other advantages such as a firmer hand with the Terrorist Movement, and much improved co-operation between British Indian and States police forces, consequent upon federation.

7

PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY

By Viscount GOSCHEN of Hawkhurst, P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Governor of Madras, 1924–1929; Acting Governor-General of India

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The form of Provincial Government established by the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms in 1921, has, in one respect, not fulfilled the hopes of those who introduced it. It was believed that Diarchy, by making over certain important departments to Ministers responsible to the Councils, would develop a real sense of political responsibility, even though the remaining departments were left under bureaucratic control.

From this point of view the result has been disappointing; for Diarchy has inculcated a spirit of irresponsibility rather than responsibility. The Ministers have to rely for support on the official *bloc* in the Councils (about a quarter of the whole number of members), and for this reason their sense of responsibility to the elected members is " blurred," and the elected members regard them as to some extent suspect.

The Ministers are not responsible for " Law and Order " or Finance. In other words, they have not to find the money for their departments and are consequently handicapped in starting new schemes: and they are not responsible for the effect of their administration on the peace of the province. They thus stand to lose the credit and escape the blame that fuller responsibility would award them.

These restrictions naturally produce their reactions outside the councils, on the minds of the more intelligent of the voters. They feel that once their representative enters the Government as a Minister, he ceases to be responsible to those who elected him and to the party to which his electors belong.

In this way, from the point of view of the development of

true political responsibility, Diarchy has not done all that was expected of it, either for the Ministers or for the Councils or for the electorates, though it has provided valuable administrative experience and has accelerated the development of certain important departments.

The defects I have mentioned will be continued if we retain the dual system. Only under a system in which the responsibility for the administration and for the defence of all its branches is shared equally by all the members of the Government alike, can we expect to get a real spirit of responsibility. Provincial Autonomy gives such a system.

With Provincial Autonomy, the racial motive will to a large extent disappear, and parties will tend to develop more on true political lines. The Ministers will realise that they must depend on themselves and their party and that they have a real live responsibility to the Councils and the electorates, and the voters will learn that their future welfare depends upon their own action.

We need have no unreasonable anxiety about the administration of the departments which are now to be transferred. The record of Ministers in the departments for which they have been hitherto responsible is on the whole a very creditable one. And it must not be forgotten that Indians have in all provinces successfully held charge of reserved departments. In Madras, my own old province, where the reforms for various reasons have perhaps worked most successfully, an Indian has from the first held the " Law and Order " portfolio to the satisfaction of all concerned.

8

THE PROBLEM OF RURAL RECONSTRUCTION IN INDIA

By Major-General the Right Hon. Sir FREDERICK SYKES, P.C., G.C.I.E., G.B.E., K.C.B., C.M.G., Governor of Bombay, 1928–1933

The political and financial sides of the Indian problem have tended to overshadow the question of rural improvement, which is their foundation and without which no constitution, however ingeniously devised, has any real chance of success.

Financial stability, essential to the Reforms, requires a contented and prosperous countryside. Much of the recent agrarian trouble has been the result of the use of economic depression by the political agitator. Improved economic conditions will not only ensure better social welfare, but disperse unsound propaganda. Violent oscillations to Right or Left, in India as elsewhere, are movements of despair. They are the antithesis to the idea of personal liberty, thought, speech and action, protected by law within reasonable limits, which is the birthright of a citizen of the British Empire. The best policy to check extremism and to ensure confidence, stability and progress is one of firmness, sympathy, action and practical construction.

In India the line of approach is to the countryside. India contains 700,000 villages and is primarily a vast agricultural area: three-fifths of the revenue comes from the land; some three-quarters of the 350 million population get their living by tilling the soil; no class has been harder hit than the peasant by the world depression; the standard of living of many millions is little above the level of mere existence. An increase in the spending power of only 6d. per head per annum in the population of India would represent nearly £9,000,000 a year! And the population is increasing at the rate of 10% per decade.

The problem is not insoluble, but it has many complexities. There is, for instance, rural indebtedness, estimated at £750,000,000—of which hardly 5% is incurred for productive purposes—and involving a loss to the cultivator of some £100,000,000 a year. Then "fragmentation" of the land under Hindu family law results in the bulk of the holdings being under five acres. Again, Hindu religious prejudice prevents the breeding of cattle for the market, and the feeling against the castration of bulls has resulted in vast unproductive herds. Another difficulty is that the cultivation of crops, being a seasonal occupation, causes some six to eight months a year of idleness to the peasant.

The need for village improvement is widely admitted. Public health, education, agricultural indebtedness and the rest have been worked at for many years by the various departments of Government. A number of valuable experiments, official and non-official, but of restricted scope and much dependent upon the individual personal factor, have also been tried to improve rural conditions. But it was obvious that the problem required different, more comprehensive and more intensive treatment. A constructive and practical plan on an All-India scale, and sustained on the broadest possible basis, was clearly what should be aimed at. And, if soundly based and carried through in the right spirit, there could be no doubt as to its success and its effects upon the health, happiness and prosperity of the country.

I therefore started a new line of approach for the Bombay Presidency, hoping that if the principles proved sound they might be adopted by India as a whole. The scheme, a non-official and official one, embraced every aspect of village life and was designed to secure greater welfare and better economic conditions for the masses of the population. It was most cordially welcomed and actively supported on all sides. Its essence was to guide the villager to help himself. It was based upon the principle that human well-being is largely achieved by human beings themselves in their own immediate surroundings, rather than by something which descends upon

them from the Government. It was shown that much could be done without expenditure of money, though any available local funds would be very useful; and it was laid down that any financial help from Government which might, eventually, be forthcoming, would be devoted to help those villages which had done their best in helping themselves.

Executive committees worked out their most pressing needs; district associations were formed and utilised all existing rural organisations; and personal example, competition, propaganda, pamphlets, magic-lantern demonstrations were employed. Experiments have also for some time been in hand with broadcasting and this will be very useful when a satisfactory system has been evolved and money is available. A few special village improvement officials were appointed to help the scheme, and the work of the village councils and the district organisations was assisted by the divisional commissioners.

Reports which I have heard continue to be very encouraging. Space does not permit me to say more than that as instances, villagers upon their own initiative and by voluntary labour are building schools, constructing roads, drains and gutters, and cleaning large numbers of houses and improving sanitary conditions.

The Government of India has since held an economic conference to discuss a possible common plan, while ensuring that there is full local flexibility to meet particular needs—any legislation must, for instance, be provincial. This is useful and I hope will be continued by periodic conferences as clearing-houses for information, arranging committees and carrying out surveys in the whole economic field. It is also more important both Provincially and at the Centre, that popular sympathy should be enlisted and retained as has been done in Bombay. The people must be told all along the line what are the objects in view, what is being done and what is going to be done and how. In framing the final scheme I called for constructive suggestions from the public at large, and received a very large number. Suggestions must continue to be welcomed and the people shown how they

themselves can organise and co-operate to help to the greatest advantage..

All classes will, I know from practical and personal experience, welcome such a constructive policy and definite lead. It is upon the foundations of confidence, co-operation and economic stability that the political and financial structure must be raised and the future prosperity and progress of the country be ensured.

9

THE FUTURE OF THE SERVICES

By Sir ERNEST HOTSON, K.C.S.I., O.B.E., Member, Executive Council, Bombay, 1926–1931; Acting Governor, Bombay, 1931

I cannot avoid putting the proposed provisions for the security of the Services in the foreground. This is regrettable, since the "Safeguards" are, like precautions against epidemics, necessary but not fit for discussion at length except by experts. The layman who talks too much about cholera is only increasing his susceptibility to the disease.

Paragraph 182 of the White Paper and Appendix VII preserve all existing Service rights, including the personal concurrence of the Governor in important orders, the right of complaint to the Governor, and the right of appeal to the Secretary of State. Para. 70 (*c*) imposes on the Governor a "special responsibility" for the interests of the Services. Para. 69 empowers him to make rules "for the transmission to himself of all such information as he may direct." In answers to the Joint Select Committee the Secretary of State has explained that this will enable the Governor to summon any official to an interview.

If after personal discussions with the Minister at meetings of the Cabinet over which he can (Para. 69) preside, the Governor cannot obtain the assent of the Minister, he can (Para. 71) act as he thinks fit. He can also dismiss the Minister or the whole Cabinet (Para. 66) and if necessary dissolve the Legislature (Para. 75). The Viceroy has similar but more extensive powers. Behind these lie emergency powers for use in a crisis.

No doubt these powers would be used if necessary. We may reasonably prefer to believe that there will be some realism and practical sense in Indian politics and that alarmist prophecies of governments devoted to wrecking policies

will prove but a chimera. This is indeed what a knowledge of Indian psychology and a study of the Communal Award alike teach us.

What is more, the young men who have gone out to India during the last few years, are not unhappy or uncomfortable in their lives to-day and can scarcely understand the qualms with which those accustomed in their youth to different conditions anticipate the future.

10

THE STATES IN AN ALL-INDIA FEDERATION

By Sir V. T. KRISHNAMA CHARI, Diwan[1] of Baroda

When, at the first Round Table Conference, the Princes expressed themselves in favour of an All-India Federation, it was no hasty decision. It was the outcome of a series of investigations undertaken by them from 1918 onwards, under the auspices of the Chamber and of individual Rulers, on the constitutional position of the States and on the implications of the new policy announced on August 20, 1917.

It may be asked—why did the States decide to accept an All-India Federation as a practical issue, instead of as an ideal to be realised in an undefined future? The reason lies mainly in economic causes. "India is, in fact, as well as by legal definition, one geographical whole." States and Provinces are intermingled; and policies adopted in British India on matters of common concern—railways, tariffs, currency, coinage, opium and so on—react on the States and affect them in manifold ways. In the framing of these policies the States, however, have no part; and as the Davidson Committee have guardedly put it—"in recent years . . . it has become less easy for the Crown to discharge its responsibilities as trustee for all the conflicting interests under its suzerainty or rule." The States, therefore, believe that their interest in economic spheres lies in securing a recognised share in the formulation and execution of policies, and that, if this be delayed, the "corroding influence" of economic policies pursued in British India will be more and more increasingly felt by them.

The nature of the new relationship which the States have in mind may now be described. In the first place, there is the economic field which is to be assigned to the federation. In this, the States, while they are prepared to have an effective federation, wish to define with precision the legislative and

[1] Diwan is the equivalent of Prime Minister.

administrative powers exercised by the Centre in their areas. This will be done by individual instruments of accession. Only the powers which are specifically mentioned are to be delegated. Outside of these, the States desire that their internal sovereignty should remain unaffected and that analogies drawn from other federations should not be imported. To mention only two instances. The States do not agree that federation alters the status of their subjects. Again, they maintain that the methods adopted for associating their people with their Governments and for selecting representatives for the federal houses are their own domestic concern. To put it briefly, the new partnership is to be created for a specific purpose and is to derive its authority exclusively from the deed of partnership (the instrument of accession).

A unique feature of the All-India Federation is that there will be over one hundred units in it, possessing relations of a special nature with the Crown, by virtue of treaties and engagements. The States have made it clear beyond all doubt that they desire these relations to remain as they are. This, indeed, is a condition of their entry into the federation. It is natural that Rulers of Indian States, most of whom possess ancient lineage, should entertain feelings of loyalty and devotion to the person of the King Emperor and to the Crown. But the treaties go beyond this. Under them, the Crown guarantees to the States security from without and protection against internal danger. This is not the place to examine how the existence of these obligations will determine the direction of future developments in the constitution of India, or whether the existence of these relationships will have any reaction, in the fulness of time, on the relationships between the Crown and the members of the Commonwealth.

What part can the States play in the future of India? The answer to this may be furnished in the words of His Highness the Maharaja Gaekwar in a speech made by him on the occasion of H.E. the Viceroy's visit to his State in December 1931. He said :—

"I am glad that to-day we are proposing to build on the wider basis and surer foundations of an All-India federation. . . . I am fully convinced that in any such scheme the States can play a notable part. . . . In many fields of activity—mass education, reorientation of indigenous culture, social legislation, devising of methods for associating the people with the administration, reconciliation of communal and other conflicting interests —States, with their distinctive traditions, can embark on useful experiments. . . ."

II

TRANSFERRED DEPARTMENTS

By Sir HUGH M'PHERSON, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., Acting Governor, Bihar and Orissa, 1925; Member, Executive Council, Bihar and Orissa, 1921–1925

Hostile critics of the White Paper often seek to prejudice the British public against the proposed changes by attacking the record of Indian Ministers in the departments transferred to their charge under the Reforms of 1921. Ignoring the general verdicts of the Simon Commission, the Government of India and other authorities, they quote individual instances of abuse and failure, taken mainly from the Provincial reports on local bodies, and paint therefrom a picture of unrelieved gloom. They argue that the Reforms of 1921 have been seriously prejudicial to the illiterate masses, of whom we are the trustees, and that any further extension of ministerial responsibility will be disastrous to their future well-being.

Those of us who have worked with Indian ministers since 1921 know that, with rare exceptions, they have striven faithfully to maintain the high traditions of public service inherited from their official predecessors, that they have displayed most laudable solicitude for the welfare of the poorer classes, and that they have achieved notable advances in such fields as education and public health. Save in the sphere of local self-government, explained below, they took over their departments with no essential changes in the conditions of work. They had the Governors to advise them, the secretariats to guide them and the departmental and district staffs to carry out their policies. There was no inherent reason why there should be any failure of previous administrative standards, and no failure occurred, as there is ample evidence to testify. Nor is there any reason to anticipate a decline of efficiency in the additional departments (land revenue, irrigation, forests, law and order) now proposed to be entrusted to Ministers,

for they will have the same Governors, the same secretariats and the same departmental and District Staffs to assist them in the performance of their new duties.

In the sphere of local self-government only was there any serious change in the previous conditions of work, and that change produced results which were inevitable under any system of overhead control. After 1921, district boards and municipalities (corresponding to our County and Borough Councils) were freed from the local official control which had kept them safe for the first forty years of their existence, but had stunted the growth of the self-governing spirit. Elections under the new conditions took place in the wake of the first non-co-operation campaign, and it is not surprising that some of the local bodies were captured by Congress extremists and that excesses and irregularities were committed by the worst of the new boards. The Ministers were at first powerless to curb abuses because adequate control had not been retained in the enabling Acts. But in their annual reviews they were unsparing in their criticism of defects, and it is these references that have been turned to account by opponents of the White Paper. This concentration on bad patches in the provincial reviews is most unfair to the Ministers, because it suggests that they are directly responsible for abuses and that the work of the local bodies covers the whole field of their activities. It is, moreover, most misleading, because it is one-sided, and ignores all that is promising and praiseworthy in the same reports.

The provincial reviews of recent years disclose in almost all provinces a story of steady and encouraging progress. They testify to an awakening of public interest in the local electorate, to an increased sense of responsibility within the boards, to growing freedom from political and sectional influences, to courageous facing of the financial stringency which oppresses India no less than other countries in the world, and to most admirable work done by a host of individual chairmen and members. Far from the chequered record of local bodies during the past ten years being a cause of reproach, it is a matter of congratulation that so much has been

achieved, despite political turmoil and financial depression. And the education thus obtained in the local sphere offers encouraging hope for the development of responsibility in the larger field of parliamentary institutions which will be opened to India under her new Constitution.

12

THE WOMEN OF INDIA

By Mrs. WHITEHEAD, C.B.E. (Mrs. Whitehead is the wife of the former Bishop of Madras)

What is likely to be the position of the women of India under the new scheme? What are the facts and what are our hopes? The outstanding fact about the 180 million women in India is the great rapidity with which changes are being introduced. Commissions on Education, officials and outside observers have all thrown the weight of their opinions into the need for the development of girls' education. There has been an enormous increase in the number of girls who go to school, and there are far more applications for entrance into the colleges than can possibly be accepted; in some Provinces the need for greatly increased expenditure has been recognised. Moreover, the results of female education have now been put to the test; educated women are a valuable asset to their families as earners of salaries, and the young men have learnt to appreciate an educated wife as a companion and friend. It is interesting to notice how often the first question asked with reference to a marriage is now, "Is she an educated girl?"

The young woman of the Indian towns comes much to the fore; she goes to meetings and speaks at them, she is on committees and she practises her profession with success. But it is said that the mind of India is turning from the towns to the villages, that India is again becoming rural-minded, and that agriculture, health and village education are beginning to occupy the chief place in her thoughts. It is in village life especially that the women of India and especially of Southern India and Burma have been felt as an influence in affairs. Those who have the good fortune to have lived in, or even to have camped in Indian villages, must have been struck by the frequency with which some woman of outstanding personality

is found, who is respected by men and women alike, and who is regarded as a sound practical adviser in the problems which confront the village leaders day by day. Very specially is this the case in the rapidly growing Christian Church ; again and again in even the most backward inland areas a strong leader amongst the women is one of the chief influences in the community, looked up to by the Church and also by the non-Christian people around.

The rapid progress of the women of India comes from within the people themselves ; it is believed to be an essential factor in the growth of national unity and social regeneration, so that it seems very probable that under the new constitution this movement will be advanced rather than retarded. In the villages of India there are inert masses hard to move, but so it is everywhere ; and hope for the future lies in the existence of the vigorous, practical, warm-hearted women to whom the new constitution may give an impetus in the service of their community of which the repercussions will be felt far beyond their own immediate personal influence.

IV

THE CONTROVERSY OVER INDIA

THE CONTROVERSY OVER INDIA

British Opinion in India

THE preceding pages record the views of some of those who have borne no small share of the heat and burden of the last ten years in India. No one can fail to remark that none of them advocates a policy of negation there, still less one of reaction. In this they are in no way exceptional. Their views, generally speaking, are the views of a great majority of Englishmen now in India—men of all Services, occupations and ranks—as the writers of this Pamphlet have reason to know after discussing these same questions with a great number of them. It is true that there are a few men with distinguished records of service in India who take a different view and oppose the whole of the present Government's Indian policy. But it will be found, in many cases, that those services came to an end a considerable time ago. Circumstances in India have changed, for good or ill, since their day. The opinions expressed on the preceding pages, by men familiar with the new India as well as with the old, bring out clearly that a radical change must have taken place in the political life and conditions of India during the last decade.

Opinion in England

The authors of this Pamphlet believe that the five general principles enumerated on page 22 offer the best solution of these admittedly highly complex problems. But there is a large number of other important questions upon which a wide and legitimate difference of opinion exists both in India and this country. Like everyone else, we look for

further information and advice on these varied points to the forthcoming Report of the Joint Select Committee.

In the meanwhile, many people in England are seriously concerned about the future in India, and properly anxious that no irremediable mistake should be made at this critical point. It is natural and right that this should be so. The problem is a vital one, and our Democracy will be dead when individuals cease to think for themselves on such issues, but prefer apathetically to accept whatever a government puts before them.

A Political Campaign

There has been, and is, reasoned criticism of the White Paper proposals which is not only legitimate, but necessary. In contrast to this, however, there is in daily evidence something altogether different. A campaign is being carried on which certainly is not merely a manifestation of the reasonable doubt felt by sober opinion. A group under political leadership and backed by a section of the Press, is hectically active. It has seen its opportunity in the fact that many of its hearers and readers have no independent information of their own by which to check even the most surprising assertions; while the Government properly remains silent until the Joint Select Committee's Report has been published.

It is amusing to observe that this group has lately been reinforced by a notable auxiliary in the person of Sir Oswald Mosley. In the time of the Conservative Government of 1924–1929, Sir Oswald visited India. He is reported to have advised the Extremists that they should call a Conference and draw up their own Constitution, to be handed to the British Government by way of an ultimatum. "The suspect hand of Britain," he was quoted as saying, "must have no part in the Indians' deliberations until the final proposals are formulated." This seems to contrast rather oddly with his more recent denunciations, at the Albert Hall and elsewhere, of the present Government's "policy of surrender in India."

Doubtful Methods

It did not seem too much to hope that all Conservative politicians, at any rate, would realise the gravity of the Indian issue; and would take care to present it to the public on a basis of reason and fact, and not of propagandist clap-trap. Unfortunately, this modest hope has not been realised. Strenuous efforts have been, and are being, made to confuse the issues and arouse ill-founded prejudice. We say deliberately that some of the Government's opponents resort to cheap catch-phrases, false comparisons, half-truths and misrepresentations in their effort to distort the realities of a problem already difficult enough. Below, we give some examples of such tactics, chosen not because they are the easiest to expose, but because they are among those most often employed.

Catchwords

This is a free country, and any little journalist is at liberty to hurl phrases such as "Scuttle," "Abject Surrender," "Betrayal of our Trust," and the like at men who have served their country well in peace and in war, and for that matter have served the Conservative Party equally well. Vulgar nonsense of this sort needs no comment.

There is, however, another slogan in frequent use, to the effect that the present Government has adopted a "Socialist" Indian policy. Whether or not our pre-war policy in India led gradually but directly up to post-War developments, may be a matter for debate. Personally, we take the view that on the evidence it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that there has been a real element of continuity in our Indian policy from well back in the last century down to the present day. If this is so, Socialists cannot be held responsible for what was done two or more generations ago, since for practical purposes there were then no Socialists. Coming to the post-War period, we find that the India Act of 1919 was framed by a Coalition Government which con-

tained 11 Unionist Ministers, and no member of the Labour Party. It was passed by a House of Commons of which the Unionist Members numbered 378, as against a total of 77 Labour Representatives. It is common knowledge, incidentally, that it was Lord Curzon himself who proposed the reference to "the progressive realisation of responsible Government in India" in the important Declaration of Policy made in Parliament by the Secretary of State for India in 1917. At each of the three successive Round Table Conferences, the Conservative Party was represented by strong delegations. At the Third and last Conference, which reviewed the conclusions of the preceding two, and upon the deliberations of which the White Paper proposals were largely based, the Conservative Delegation numbered 7. There were two National Labour Delegates, and none from the Opposition Socialists. The Joint Select Committee now sitting includes 19 Conservatives,while the Socialists number 4. One must bear in mind, moreover, the presence in India from 1921 up to the present day of Lords Reading, Halifax and Willingdon, who are certainly not Socialists. In the light of these facts, the assertion that the policy which has led up to the White Paper proposals is "Socialist," is at once seen to be nonsense. We have quoted them with some reluctance, only because of the attempts that are made to stir up party feeling by misrepresenting the position. We believe that such attempts do a great disservice to the interests of India and the Empire. If ever there was a great national issue on which every effort should be made to avoid party strife, and to ensure as much continuity of policy as possible, that issue is our relationship with India.

False Analogies

False analogies are not uncommon in political controversy, but the campaign against the Government's Indian policy has produced a rich crop of them. Speakers draw eloquent comparisons between the future of India, under the Government's proposals, and the present unhappy state of other

specially selected Eastern countries. Democracy, it is argued, is not only in eclipse in Europe, but it has brought confusion to the East, China and Persia being instanced as examples. Whether the eclipse of Democracy in Europe is permanent, or desirable if it were so, of course is a matter of opinion. But, unfortunately for the argument, neither China nor Persia are democratic states. The former, in so far as it has one political system at all, is actually an oligarchy based on a single party, as in Russia and elsewhere. The latter is a military autocracy. It so happens that Japan, which is the only Far Eastern country with an elective and parliamentary system at all comparable to those we know, is also the only one to have attained a Western standard of efficiency. But the case of Japan is not quoted. It would be highly inconvenient.

Ireland

No doubt it is tempting to indulge in inaccuracies such as those just referred to, about remote parts of the world ; and perhaps they do not greatly matter since they so obviously have very little to do with the case. But there is another type of propaganda current, based on events known to all of us, for which the word " inaccurate " is far too mild. The public is assured that India contains " a thousand Irelands," and much more in the same vein. We are invited to " Look at Ireland ! " If we do so, we certainly see a sorry spectacle, but one which has no bearing whatever on India or the White Paper scheme. One might just as well look to Kamschatka for enlightenment.

In 1921, we cleared out of southern Ireland, bag and baggage, leaving only a signed Treaty behind us. That Treaty has since been repudiated in all but name by the political enemies of the Irishmen who signed it, and so now we have nothing. " What use were safeguards in Ireland ? " is a rhetorical question frequently asked ; and it is a particularly stupid one, seeing that there weren't any. Nobody except the wilder extremists suggests we should clear out of India ; quite the contrary. Apart from many other safe-

guards there, the existing services will remain. The White Paper proposals do not affect recruitment to the more important of them and the Parliamentary Safeguards of their conditions of service will be maintained. It is proposed to retain not only the British Garrison, but direct control of all the armed forces. A more complete contrast to our relationship to the Irish Free State could hardly be conceived. The things are not only different, but opposite.

And if these loose parallels from the Empire *must* be drawn, why only that of southern Ireland and not, say, those of Canada in the middle of last century, or of South Africa to-day? These comparisons would be equally valid or invalid. But, as in the case of Japan, mentioned already, they would be most inconvenient to the propagandists.

Half-Truths

This description fits an argument which, perhaps, is employed more often by the opponents of the Government than any other. It is to the effect that if we approved any constitutional scheme on the lines of the proposals in the White Paper, we should " Betray our Trust to the Masses," since the " masses " must suffer under a system of Democracy. The White Paper certainly proposes to continue the elective system introduced in 1919, and to enlarge it in some respects. But the conclusions drawn from this fact by the critics of the White Paper are often irrelevant or mistaken. To begin with, as has been pointed out already, " Democracy " is a word which must be used with great caution of the communal system under which, in the vast majority of cases, Indians vote not as individuals but as Caste Hindus, Moslems, Sikhs, Untouchables, or whatever may be their race, religion or caste.

" *The Masses* "

In any case it is untrue to say that the " masses " suffer under this system, whatever the right name for it may be.

If by " masses " is meant (as Socialists loosely use the word) the stratum of the population which is worst off economically and socially, a more striking example of what is thus meant could hardly be found anywhere than in the " Untouchables " of India, of whom there are some forty millions at a conservative estimate. Far from suffering under the system, the " Untouchables " are in a position of which they could not even have dreamed a generation ago. Not only given votes, but guaranteed seats, they have already begun to grasp the fact that they can and will use them to put an end to the injustice and oppression under which they have hitherto been allowed to suffer.

This interpretation of the word " masses " might perhaps be made to include also the women of India, since the great majority of them have hitherto suffered disabilities so serious that they may well account for the remarkable fact that in India, in contrast to almost everywhere else in the world, women are easily outnumbered by men. Under the White Paper proposals, a number of women will for the first time play a part in electing their political representatives. It is to be hoped that their votes will exert an increasing influence in framing social policy. Unless women share in the political life of the country, the eradication of various glaring social evils such as child-marriage which still persist in India, is likely to be a slow business.

Again, by " masses " may be meant literally " the majority of the population." The population of a country can, of course, be arbitrarily divided up in many ways, but a perfectly reasonable division, in the case of India, would class the small cultivators as " the majority of the population." There is no warrant for saying that they will be the losers. There is an immense preponderance in India of rural over urban population, the ratio being about 8 to 1. This ratio has not hitherto been reflected in the franchise, but the White Paper proposals give the countryside a substantial weight of numbers to balance any advantage which the towns might derive from more literacy, or otherwise. The experience of the last ten years, moreover, disposes of the suggestion that the Indian farmer

can't use a vote. He can, and does. It would, moreover, be a mistake to suppose that political events do not affect him, and will not affect him in the future. Like the cultivator all over the world, the Indian peasant stands to lose from political unrest, and gain from political calm. He has had far too little of the latter during the last ten or fifteen years; and even the most determined opponent of the White Paper proposals would hardly maintain that calm is to be expected if those proposals are rejected.

Misrepresentation

There have, unfortunately, been instances of direct misrepresentation, to use no harsher word, in the course of the campaign against the Government's policy. The least pleasant one, perhaps, has been the suggestion made in the House of Commons and outside it, that promotion to the higher posts in India has in recent years been dependent upon the readiness of the official concerned to subscribe to particular political views. "They wouldn't be where they are if they hadn't," is how one politician in this country puts it. This is a baseless imputation against men who are not in a position to reply to it. The opponents of the Government's Indian policy are doubtless extremely hard put to it to account for the awkward fact that a great majority of officials now serving in India consider that political changes are necessary. But this is no excuse for inventing an explanation designed to throw discredit both on those responsible for promotions in India and on those who receive them. It is an unworthy device; and an ineffective one. How can it explain away the fact that so high a proportion of the most distinguished officials lately retired, and thus no longer concerned with promotion or relegation, have expressed themselves in favour of political advance in India?

The Princes

Another baseless allegation is that Whitehall and the Government of India, in the interests of their own policy,

have subjected the Indian Princes to ruthless political blackmail; as Mr. Winston Churchill described it, to "enormous, subtle and improper pressure." It is worth looking into this charge at some little length as it affords a good illustration of what the opponents of the Government are prepared to say, not merely without evidence, but directly against it. There is no mystery about the position of the Princes to anyone who has troubled to follow the published documents. As long ago as October 1928, Sir John Simon, as Chairman of the Statutory Commission, expressed the view that a Federation which should include the Princes was the solution ultimately to be aimed at. At that date there seemed no immediate prospect of this becoming a practical proposition, but the Princes present at the first Round Table Conference themselves declared in favour of a Federation. It is not to be supposed that their attitude was, or is, due to any abstract admiration for the principle of Federation. No doubt they took their decision because, in the light of their own wide knowledge of their country and their countrymen, they concluded that political change was sooner or later inevitable, and that it would be better, in India's interests and their own, to take an active share in any Constitution which might be set up rather than to attempt to remain outside of, and isolated from it. This was unquestionably a far-sighted and statesmanlike decision, and nothing has happened since to dictate a change in it. At the same time, the Princes are concerned to see that their rights and interests shall be properly recognised in any new political régime. They have every right to insist upon this, and in doing so they will have the support of Conservative opinion in this country.

The Evidence

Those who allege that the Princes have now changed their minds, or rather that they would have done so but for blackmail from Delhi, appear to rely (so far as published evidence is concerned) mainly upon a passage from a speech made by Sir Akbar Hydari, the Representative of the great

State of Hyderabad, as long ago as December 1932, at the final Session of the last Round Table Conference. The passage ran as follows :—

> " Is it not a fact that the Secretary of State and His Majesty's Government have slowly but surely pressed us into the Federation ? No one who has watched the Secretary of State and his colleagues relentlessly holding us to it can doubt that it is an All-India Federation that they want and no lesser substitute."

These words were, as a matter of fact, delivered in a jocular manner, appropriate to the last meeting of a series of three long-drawn-out Conferences. In the course of the very same speech, Sir Akbar had declared, in more serious vein :—

> " There has been a feeling so far as the Indian States are concerned that when we come down to what have been called ' brass tacks ' the urge towards Federation would diminish and gradually disappear. On the contrary, Sir, during this Conference as we of the Indian States have come up against difficulties, in the same proportion have we shown our desire to overcome them and attain the goal."

and subsequently,

> " What I desire to say most emphatically is that the Indian States have not retired from the position that they have taken up from the very first."

Six months later, Mr. Winston Churchill's allegations as to " enormous, subtle and improper pressure " on the Princes evoked a protest from the Representatives of some of the most important States in India, including Hyderabad, Mysore, Travancore, Bikaner and Patiala. In a letter to " The Times " they wrote :—

> " The Members of the States' Delegation desire to point out that this statement has no foundation. We regret that sweeping statements of this character should be made without any substantiation. We are individually or collectively always at the disposal of those who wish to ascertain the views of the Princes on matters arising out of the White Paper."

It certainly is a matter for regret that " sweeping statements without any substantiation " are made not only as to the attitude of the Princes, but on the matters referred to on the preceding pages, and many others. Those who make them do the country, and the Conservative Party, no service. The problem of India is serious and difficult enough on a basis of sober fact, without being complicated by propagandism or pure fiction.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

IN this short Pamphlet it has only been possible to comment briefly on some of the problems which must be faced. There are many more of them. Before long, there will be available the Report of the Joint Select Committee which presumably will cover the whole field. This Committee is one of the strongest ever set up by Parliament, and it has spared no pains to make its investigation comprehensive. The evidence given before it fills a number of substantial volumes. There will be no one, in fact, whatever view he or she may have taken of the White Paper, who should not have much to learn from its findings.

To postpone forming final opinions until these findings are published, is the only course compatible with common sense. But in the meanwhile, certain points of principle stand out.

Parliament, as a Sovereign Body, will be free in the coming months, just as at any other time, to come to any decision whatsoever on India that it sees fit. But this freedom cannot alter the fact that previous Parliaments, and the Governments responsible to them, committed themselves to a definite line of policy. The present Parliament is at perfect liberty to alter or to reverse the policy of its predecessors. But it must be very careful to weigh all the consequences before it does so.

It would not be difficult to quote from a long series of documents, and speeches by responsible Englishmen, dating from the times of Lord Macaulay a century ago down to those of Lord Willingdon to-day, which can bear no meaning except that it has always been our intention to give India a more responsible government in due course. It is perfectly true

that if the number of these pronouncements had been a hundred times greater than it is, this would still not deprive the Parliament of 1935 of full liberty of action. But it is no less true that educated India, with every justification, has concluded that we have meant and still mean what we have said. The consequences in India of a general conviction that we had broken our word—and this there would be if we now refused to give her more responsibility—are not to be dismissed lightly.

There remains for Parliament's decision the question of the time and manner of political advance. Vocal India with something like unanimity claims that the time for advance is now; and there seems to be no decisive reason for delay from our point of view. If we wait, merely for the sake of waiting, conditions are infinitely more likely to deteriorate than to improve.

If we are to take a step forward, it would be worse than useless to take one that is too short and hesitant. That would merely ensure that we got the worst of both worlds. Admittedly, we must face some risk. No course of action whatsoever in India could eliminate it entirely. But if we fall back on a policy of negation or reaction, we shall be exchanging the risk of some confusion and difficulty for the certainty of a long conflict from which, whatever its final outcome, we stand to gain nothing.

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