

Our demand for self-government

By P. K. Ray

OUR DEMAND FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT

(A PAPER READ AT THE INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
CALCUTTA, ON APRIL 8, 1916)

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(Second Impression)

PUBLISHED BY MR. BEJOY KRISHNA BOSE, ASSISTANT SECRETARY,
INDIAN ASSOCIATION,
Calcutta.
May, 1916.

Published by—
MR. BEJOY KRISHNA BOSE,
ASSISTANT SECRETARY,
INDIAN ASSOCIATION.
62, BOWBAZAR STREET.

CALCUTTA :
PRINTED BY SARODA PRASAD DAS,
WEEKLY NOTES PRINTING WORKS,
3, HASTINGS STREET.

Our Demand for Self-Government

Man, according to Aristotle, is a social animal. This social trait is the foundation of a community of interest and the genesis of states and governments. We had in the dim morning of history the family-state developing into a city-state in Rome and Greece, and into a caste or tribal state in India. The city-state was the last word of ancient Rome and Greece in politics, but in India we passed through various forms of it until we came to territorial states in the days of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. The idea of the territorial state had firmly got into the soil of India from the earliest historical times down to the beginning of the tenth century, when, with the Mahomedan invasion of India, a process of disintegration set in all over Upper or Northern India resulting in the complete collapse of the powers that were then in force.

While ancient Greece and Rome were the happy hunting-grounds of all sorts of crude essays and experiments in government, no particular form came to occupy a very outstanding feature of it. Aristocracy, timarchy, oligarchy or plutocracy, democracy and tyranny, all have had a fair trial in the ancient polity of Greece and Rome, though the ideal city,—governed by philosopher-statesmen with no anxiety to make money or take any advantage of the opportunities of position and devoting all their attention and energy to the best interest of the state,—remained confined to the *Dialogues* of Socrates and the *Republic* of Plato.

In ancient India, democratic ideas had permeated a good deal into the constitution of local institutions, but they hardly found much favour in the constitution of states. In

ancient India, therefore, we do not meet with a large variety in the forms of government. Though some of the monarchies and empires had nearly materialised the platonic ideal of a city "whose maker and builder is God," republics and democracies never came into much vogue at any time in our history. The Indian aspiration of good government was generally satisfied by the Rajah who, in early times, meant the man who pleased his people. This central idea of Hindu government continued till the seventh century, when Hiuen Tshang came into India and left a glowing account of the principalities of his day.

Government has been defined by competent jurists to be organised force,—a force to rule and dominate. In well-developed states, behind this organised force lies the authority and the sanction of the people. In less-developed states and conquered countries, this authority is the dread of the mailed fist and the consequent acquiescence or sufferance of the people to be governed by superior force.

Since India lost her independent states and passed into the hands of our Mahomedan conquerors, the authority of the government in this country was transferred from the willing consent of the people to a spirit of resignation to circumstances. Under British rule, no material change has taken place in the fundamental character of government, and the authority that the British possesses to-day for the governance of India is nothing unlike the power with which the great Mogul ruled this country in the fifteenth and the sixteenth century.

WHY DO WE WANT IT?

The British, having taken up the threads of government and administration from the Mahomedans, have worked steadily to broaden the basis of their rule in India. According to Dr. Wilson, I am referring to the present President of the United States, modern states have two different functions to discharge. What he calls the constituent part

is the usual category of governmental function,—the protection of life, liberty and property, together with all other functions that are necessary to the civic organisation of society. So far as the satisfactory discharge of this function goes, the British administration in India can stand all tests fairly well. Dr. Wilson's other category consists of the ministrant functions of the state, which are undertaken not by way of governing but by way of advancing the general interest of society and assisting every social organisation. In the modern world, a wide latitude of opinion prevails as to what exactly should constitute the ministrant functions of the state. There is not much difference of opinion, however, in the civilised world, regarding the inclusion of education, sanitation, care of the poor and incapable, and the regulation of trade and industry and labour under this category. Some of the modern states, as for example Germany, Switzerland, United States and Japan, are pushing these ministrant functions to raise the condition of the people by all manner of means, from the ministration of their spiritual needs down to meeting all their individual and corporate requirements. In this paper, however, we are not concerned with an examination of these ministrant functions as they prevail in other countries of the world. I have introduced the point here to show how badly wanting the Government of India has been in the discharge of these functions.

In trying to broaden the basis of their rule in India, the English have discharged the constituent functions of the state very satisfactorily, and to-day *Pax Britannica* is more firmly established in this country than in any other part of the British Empire. The maintenance of peace and security is indispensable to the maintenance of law and order, but in their anxiety to discharge the policeman's work efficiently, the English have very much overdone this part and neglected the other and evidently the more important function. I must confess we are a bit too over-governed in many matters.

Of all the ministrant functions of the state, the fight with

ignorance and poverty, disease and death, and the uplift of the condition of the masses are now regarded in every part of the civilised world as the most urgent and pressing. In India, however, the existing government has not so far succeeded in achieving any notable progress either in spreading the light of knowledge fast or wide, or in reducing to any appreciable extent the havoc and misery caused by plague and malaria, famine and poverty. In education, which Plato considered 'the sure basis of a well-ordered state' and which every modern country is putting to-day at the forefront of all its activities, India has made such an unconscionably slow progress that a few years ago Mr. William Jennings Bryan, a great figure in contemporary American life, found compelled to lament over it in very strong terms. In sanitation also, we have made very little progress: and so on to the end of the chapter. The sum total of Indian prosperity may have advanced under British rule, but large classes have gone down before unequal competition. India still continues mainly to be an agricultural country. A race that sticks like a limpet to the soil may be happy and even self-satisfied, but can never be great. And as for the literate classes, though so small in number, they have hardly many avenues of life opened to them and they have hardly any considerable share in the industrial and commercial exploitation of our resources and raw materials and other assets. The lack of multiplicity of occupation has converted our middle classes into practically a nation of clerks. As Treitschke, the great German apostle of blood and iron, says with a sneer: "clerks of good family are found only in India, if at all." Our government has also failed to make many serious attempts to conquer the vagaries of Nature and harness her forces for the benefit of our people. We remain condemned before the civilised world as an 'unprogressive' people, because our government has not found it wise to accelerate the pace of reform as we would have it. It appears very natural, however, and modern history corroborates the fact, that no foreign power can dis-

charge the ministrant functions of the state adequately and satisfactorily so long as it does not enlist the active co-operation, and is thoroughly identified with all the interests, of the governed. Our first reason for demanding self-government is, therefore, to enable the state in India to discharge its ministrant functions properly and in healthy competition with all civilised countries, and to enable it to march side by side with the proudest nations of the world.

Our second reason for demanding self-government is our anxiety, both in the interest of England and India, to see the end of a system of benevolent despotism. In the history of this world, this system of government has not been always an unredeemed chapter of misery and oppression. Cincinnatus and Marcus Aurelius, Augustus and Hadrian in the West, and Sree Krishna and Ram Chandra, Asoka and Akbar in the East, have been benevolent despots whose rule would be welcome in any clime and under any circumstance. But, unfortunately for the world, despots of such a type are not easy to find in every generation. The House of Bourbon have been as great a curse in France as the Great Mogul in India. With a different education and under the influence of a different civilisation, India no more wants her governors to play the role of benevolent despots. India has suffered too long under various restrictions of personal and public liberty, and her forbearance has been very much over-taxed. She is now anxious to see the end of personal rule, no matter how Lords Morley and Curzon may look at the question.

Despotism, however benevolent and self-sacrificing it may be, has generally been found everywhere in the world as helpless, nervous, irresponsible, capricious, and weak. It is more often than not inspired by panic, because it is not always sure of the mind of the governed, and panic inevitably brings cruelty in its train. The state under such a rule is bound to be a weak one, and the weak state cannot afford to be tolerant any more than the poor can afford to be generous. Even in England, so long as the state was under foreign

influence and was consequently weak, it was much more cruel than the present Government of India is, and distinguished historians have told us that the hideous treason laws of Tudor times were due more to unfounded fear and panic than to any real necessity. To all intents and purposes, our state is weak, and it is weak because it does not carry the community with it. We desire the end of benevolent despotism in India because, in the first instance, as pointed out by John Stuart Mill, consciousness of responsibility to no one but oneself is always a precarious guarantee of right action, and in the second, we want our state to grow strong and puissant. We would rather be governed by a cold, soulless, representative machinery than be fantastically treated to fits of concession and oppression by the most well-meaning despots of the world.

The next reason for our asking for self government is that, instead of a foreign bureaucracy, we want the people of India to be the real state in this country. "The State? I am the State," said Louis XIV: and this presumptuous assumption of the functions of the state made a travesty of government in France in the 18th century. It is impossible for a foreign bureaucracy to get into the skin of an alien people, divided by 7,000 miles of deep sea, and then be closely identified with the interests and aspirations of the latter. If the object of the state is to become virtually personified in the thought of the people, and if it is to be the centre of civic affection and civic virtue of the people, surely the present Government can never pretend to fill up that place.

England can never understand India even if she had a mind to, though we know Sir Valentine Chirol goes from Whitehall to Simla and Simla to Whitehall twice every year. Monsieur Georges Bourdon, a distinguished Frenchman, after having conducted an enquiry among Germans for a long number of years as to what they think, what they want, what they can do, writes in his new book,

the *German Enigma*: "In spite of all our excellent and just estimates of her, we know nothing of Germany: neither does she know anything of us." If this be true of two European countries which have lived for centuries as neighbours and derived their inspiration of life from a common civilisation, how abysmal must be the ignorance of England with regard to the life and thought of the Indian people? I maintain, with Lords Morley and Cromer, that no democracy can maintain an Empire, particularly with such an imperfect knowledge of its affairs. This ignorance may prove fatal both to England and India, and the only remedy is to take the whole people of India into the confidence of the rulers by introducing a large measure of self-government into the constitution of this country.

India to-day grumbles being governed by a foreign bureaucracy. The rule of the Indian Civil Service has become abhorrent to the cultivated intelligence and the sense of self-respect of the educated Indian of the twentieth century. He would have very little of it, if he could help it, though one must admit that many members of this service have given the best of their lives in ameliorating the conditions of our people in various ways. "Officials," justly remarks Mr. Nevinson, "usually govern badly, because they naturally magnify their office and routine above life, regarding the intrusion of reality as an unwarrantable disturbance to their habitual toil or leisure. But that is not the worst of it. Even under the most efficient officialdom, the governed suffer a degrading loss of personality." If this be true of an indigenous officialdom, how bitter and galling must it be when the officialdom is alien, as in India? Mr. Nevinson continues: "It is disastrous to maintain order, however mechanically perfect, or to organise virtue and comfort, however judiciously proportionate, if personality and variety are gone. Self-government is better than good government and self-government implies the right to go wrong. It is nobler for a nation, as for a man, to struggle towards excellence with its

own natural force and vitality, however blindly and vainly, than to live in irreproachable decency under expert guidance from without." This is another additional reason why India desires self-government.

India, fortunately or unfortunately, no longer looks upon the problem of government with the self-satisfied complacency of the middle ages. She has now been thrown into the vortex of world-politics and she cannot, therefore, live in an atmosphere of detachment outside the currents and forces of modern life. She realises to-day what very little progress she has made under the heel of despotic and bureaucratic rule for over a thousand years, and looks abroad and is amazed by the giant strides that some of the European countries have made during the last three or four centuries, and Japan in fifty years, on the road to progress.

In Europe, the seventeenth century was marked by the overthrow of absolutism through the efforts of the English; the eighteenth found the overthrow of oligarchy, thanks to France; and the nineteenth saw the birth of nationalism, due chiefly to Germany, and some advance towards democracy. Democratic rule is now practically established all over Europe and America, and in Japan and China and Persia in Asia. India refuses to lag behind and to be deprived of the heritage of modern life.

The sort of democracy that was accepted as the gospel of ancient Greece and Rome has been supplanted in the course of evolution by a system of government which is representative of the people. Plato and Aristotle conceived the state as one unit and human beings as fractions of this unit. Representative government, as conceived by De Tocqueville, Rousseau or Comte in France, or by Bentham, Mill, Grote and Bain in England, makes the individual the unit of the state and makes 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number' as its principal concern. It is not possible for me, nor is it necessary for my purpose, to define this happiness. I may, however, in

passing, mention that Aristotle defined this happiness, in his *Ethics*, to lie in the active exercise of a man's vital powers along the lines of excellence, in a life affording full scope for their development. India desires that her people should also claim the greatest happiness of the greatest number, a thing which is only possible by the establishment of self, or representative, government.

But a more potent reason for our calling for self-government is the insistent anxiety of India to develop a political personality. As Treitschke observes: "The ideal of one state containing all mankind is no ideal at all. The whole content of civilisation cannot be realised in a single state. All people, just like individual men, are one-sided, but in the very fulness of one-sidedness the richness of human race is seen. The rays of the divine light only appears in individual nations infinitely broken: each one exhibits a different picture and a different conception of the divinity. Every people has, therefore, the right to believe that certain powers of the divine reason display themselves in it at their highest. Without overrating itself, a people does not arrive at knowledge of itself at all . . . such a feeling is necessary in order that the people may preserve and maintain itself." India has very often in the past contributed very materially to the civilisation of man and carried the light of the East to the Western world. Why, why on earth, should she not again be asked, or allowed the opportunity, to come to the front of nations and give her best to the service of God and man?

And then, above everything, we desire self-government because that seems to be the natural condition of all people and communities. Locke says: "Men being by nature all free, equal and independent, no one can be put out of this estate and subjected to the political power of another without his consent. The only way whereby anyone divests himself of his natural liberty and puts on the bonds of civil society is by agreeing with other men to join and unite into

a community." Rousseau had similarly laid down the proposition in his *Social Contract* that man is born free, and that his primitive nature was not anger or strife but liberty and equality. Or as Swift says: "All government without the consent of the governed is the very definition of slavery." We want, therefore, to stand upon the natural rights of man. Like the sleeping lion in the story, India has now awakened to a consciousness of her power and position, thanks to her contact with England, and she will have no rest or peace till she has become a free, organic, self-conscious and self-directing nation with her great organs of popular representation and all constitutional guarantees of personal and public liberty,—the great lever of social morality organised to enforce the collective and co-ordinating conscience of her whole people.

I have stated above, as fully as I can, *why* we demand self-government. I consider this to be the only practical issue in the consideration of this subject, and that is why I have discussed and put this part of my discourse before anything else. The question of India's fitness for self-government appears to me to be a merely academic question, with which practical politicians need not concern themselves to-day. Every nation has a right to govern itself, no matter whether she is fitted for it or no. As self-government varies from ordinary representative government to the most complicated popular control culminating in the 'referendum,' so there can be no particular or definite standard of fitness for it. As soon as a nation gets into this heritage, it begins to grow into freedom and work out its destiny to the best of its light, however feeble that light may be. There is no special qualification, no specified time, no particular condition of development for a nation to come by its natural heritage of self-government. The history of every independent state will show that each of them has developed its peculiar and distinctive form of self-government, independent of any parallel or precedent and not unconditioned

by heredity or environment. It is the equal privilege of savage tribes in the Pacific Islands as well as of highly-developed social organisms in the continent of Europe. It does not even depend upon any measure of social or intellectual freedom. To ignore, therefore, the famous principle of political liberty enunciated by the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman that self-government is better than good government, is the prime offence of all benevolent despots, who either seek to benefit by their rule the people of their own country or the subject races of an Empire. Englishmen and Indians who raise the question of our fitness really do not comprehend the right issue and only cover the atmosphere with a fog in order to avoid the realities of life.

England herself has, at different periods, been conquered and held under subjection by the Romans, Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Danes and Normans, not to speak of the successful inroads by the Picts and Scots from the North. Not a long time before Simon de Montford laid the foundation of representative government in England, Anglo-Saxon patriotism never transcended provincial boundaries, and the English language went underground and became the patois of peasants, for the upper classes would have very little of it, as they themselves wrote Latin and spoke French. Foreigners ruled and owned the land and the term 'native' became synonymous with 'serf.' The great mass of the population were always at the beck and call of their lords, were like their goods and chattels, and could not leave their land, nor marry, nor enter the church, nor go to school without their leave. Even so late as the seventeenth century, under James I, parliamentary and popular privileges in England existed by royal grace and could not be claimed as rights. And not till the Long Parliament, which met in the reign of Charles I, did the English people demand that the ministers of the state should have the confidence of parliament, or, sovereignty being indivisible, as Hobbes puts it, peace could not be kept between a sovereign legislature and a sovereign executive. And, lastly, it was not till the middle

of the 18th century that Walpole became the first Prime Minister of England, when the responsibility of government was really transferred from the head of the monarchy and fixed to the head of the parliament. And as for education, England had not made any decisive or satisfactory advance till the passing of the Elementary Education Act in 1870. If full and free responsible government has developed in England under such circumstances, India has no need to despair of her future.

The example of French Canada, of the South African Republic, of Ireland, and the Philippine Islands also precludes us from considering the question that submission to superior physical force involves the forfeiture of the right to self-government. Nor is it any good discussing the fact that several countries in the world, together with some of our own native states, enjoy this privilege under very discouraging circumstances and unfavourable conditions of life. Nor, with the cases of Persia, China and Japan before us, can it any longer be maintained that self-government is the privilege of only the West, and that in the East it is like the desire of the moth for the star.

Buckle and Seeley have both held, of course from two different points of view, that we are unfit and disqualified for self-government. Buckle has maintained that our climate, our conditions of social life, principally the caste system, and our staple food, rice, keep us out of the zone of the civilised world. Seeley, on the other hand, has laid down the proposition that the people which has no community of interest in the matter of religion, speech and blood, must necessarily lack the solidarity which can make of it a nation. Though the theories of Buckle and Seeley have not been completely exploded by modern historical investigations, not much weight is attached to these opinions in these days in view of the great development of representative institutions in countries like Russia and Germany, in Persia and China, and also in some parts of South America. On the other hand, in many essential res-

pects, we have outlived the conditions of life which led Buckle and Seeley think so poorly of us and our civilisation in their day.

England has placed to her credit many humanitarian efforts in the present-day administration of India, but in no matter has she met with greater success than in welding the heterogenous masses of our population into one nation. We may not yet be *one* nation, though there can be no doubt that we are on the fair way of being one. India no longer represents a mere geographical expression as it used to do in the days of Sir George Chesney and the Strachey brothers, and the throbbing of an Indian nationality is now distinctly audible in every part of this great empire. As the Norman, coming from outside and exempt from all local prejudice, applied at one time the same methods of government and exploitation to all parts of England, so the Englishman has brought common ideas and common laws to bear upon all parts of India. And as in England, in Norman times, so in India to-day, the steady pressure of a superimposed civilisation has tended to obliterate local and class distinctions. In a recent and brilliant summary of English history [Mr. Pollard's *History of England*, Home University Library], we read: "unwittingly Norman and Angevin despotism made an English nation out of Anglo-Saxon tribes, as English despotism has made a nation out of Irish septs and will make another out of the hundred races and religions of our Indian Empire." Mr. Pollard elaborates this theory at length, and I find it impossible to resist making one extract from this portion of his book as a reply to Buckle and Seeley. "The difficulties of despotic rule," says Mr. Pollard, "were mitigated in the past by the utter absence of any common sentiments and ideas among the many races, religions and castes which constituted India, and a Machiavelian perpetuation of these divisions might have eased the labours of its governors. But a government suffers for its virtues, and the steady efforts of Great Britain to

civilise and educate its Eastern subjects have tended to destroy the divisions which made common action, common aspirations, public opinion and self-government impossible in India. . . . They have built railways and canals, which made communications and contact unavoidable: they have imposed common measures of health, common legal principles, and a common education in English culture and methods of administration. The result has been to foster a consciousness of nationality, the growth of a public opinion, and a demand for a greater share in the management of affairs. The more efficient a despotism, the more certain is its supersession: and the problem for the Indian government is how to adjust and adapt the political emancipation of the natives of India to the slow growth of their education and sense of moral responsibility." This is just the problem for us and our administrators to tackle to-day, and, as self-government is not only the end but also the means to the end, we beg to offer this as the most satisfactory solution if it.

WHAT DO WE WANT?

We now come to our scheme of self-government. In formulating our demands, however, we have unfortunately, like the town-planner, not a clean slate to draw upon. It has been suggested in several quarters that we should go in for the colonial form of self-government. I am very sorry to point out that the 'colonial form' does not mean anything definite, as the government of the South African Union differs very materially from the government of the Commonwealth of Australia, and both of them lack several essential features of the constitution of the Dominion of Canada. It would not be possible or convenient to transplant in Indian soil the constitution of either Canada, Australia or Africa. Nor would it be wise or prudent to break away altogether from old moorings and turn the existing constitution topsy-turvy. Our aim must be evolution and not revolution. We must build upon existing materials, take things, facts, and

difficulties as we meet them to-day, and proceed on lines of least resistance.

In the first place, we must accept for the present the connection of England with this country and the government that England has established here during the course of nearly two centuries as unalterable and inevitable. For obvious reasons, it would also be wise to accept the system of provincial governments which have sprung up since the days of Clive and Hastings. We must not also overlook the fact that India is no longer the home of the Hindus alone, or the Mahomedans either, but the home also of a very large class of European and Asiatic people brought together to our shores from all parts of the world in different ages and under different conditions. There are also important classes of minorities domiciled in this country, besides large sections of the submerged population known as untouchables, whose wishes and interests have always got to be safeguarded and protected. These are the bed-rocks of Indian politics, and all schemes of reform must consider them as sacrosanct for all practical purposes.

I shall briefly state now what sort of self-government we are anxious to see established in India. In the first place, we want the entire scheme of local self-government, from union boards and panchayets upwards, to be manned and controlled by non-official Indians, with non-official chairmen, and placed in charge of a mixed official and non-official local Government Board. We want more power and resources at the elbow of rural, circle, sub-district, and district boards. We want the district officer to be absolutely freed from his judicial and magisterial functions and to do a good portion of his work with the assent of a representative council at his own headquarters. Then, we want the offices of the divisional commissioners, except in Sind, and the Board of Revenue, to be knocked on the head where they do exist, for, instead of adding to the efficiency of the administration in any way, they are like a fifth wheel in the coach and needlessly

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add to the expenditure of the state. In the next place, we want our provincial Legislative Councils to be far more representative of the people than they are at the present moment, and to see in them the establishment of a majority of elected non-official Indian members. These Legislative Councils should be possessed of plenary powers over the entire internal administration of the provinces and provided with autonomy, not in the sense in which Lord Hardinge or Lord Crewe would have it, but autonomy in the sense of having both the power to administer and to control. This control we want all along the line,—in administrative, legislative and fiscal matters. In our scheme of legislative autonomy, we demand the right for private members to introduce bills and resolutions without any previous sanction of the Government and the right of interpellation to be extended to all manner of subjects. In the first stage of this development, we shall not mind the veto of the Governor being frequently used under proper constitutional safe-guards. In fiscal matters, we want provincial autonomy to include the power to raise loans, to impose or alter taxation, and the right to vote upon the budget. In administrative measures, we desire the provincial Government, working under the control of the Legislative Council, to have complete freedom of initiative and execution. At the top of all this, we want the Executive Councils of the Governors to consist of four members, two of whom we want to be Indians. In the hands of these Indian members, to be elected by the Legislative Councils, we want to be entrusted the portfolios of (a) Education and Sanitation, and (b) Local Self-Government, Police, and Public Works. We want it also to be distinctly provided that no place should be reserved or earmarked in the Executive Councils for members of the Indian Civil Service, and that no member of the provincial Government should ever be recruited from the Bench of any High Court or *vice versa*.

In the Viceroy's Council, out of six members we want

three to be Indians, two of whom must have charge of Education, Sanitation, local Self-Government and Police. In our scheme of reconstruction, we want a general redistribution of work among the members of this Cabinet and the law member to have an independent portfolio with a distinct proviso that none of them is to be promoted to the office of a Lieutenant-Governor of any province. We want also the Viceroy's Legislative Council to be expanded to an Imperial Legislative Assembly of 120 members, three-fourths of whom must be elected non-officials. We want larger powers for non-official members to introduce Bills, move Resolutions and ask questions. We want the Indian members of the Executive Council to be elected out of a panel to be specially created by the Provincial Councils, and then we want the Government of India, acting under the advice of the Imperial Legislative Assembly, to be free from all interference of the Secretary of State for India.

In the constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia the legislative powers of the federal parliament are enumerated and limited, while the governments of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania retain the residuary powers of government over their respective provincial territories. In the constitution of Canada also, the nine provincial governments have independent legislatures with full powers to regulate their own local affairs and dispose of their revenues provided only they do not interfere with the action and policy of the central administration, which is a parliament of two houses similar in principle to that of the United Kingdom. In our scheme of legislative reform, we are practically combining the central idea of the Commonwealth of Australia and the Dominion of Canada and, with that view, the powers which shall have to be specially reserved for the Imperial Legislative Assembly need to be enumerated. The army and marine, wars and expeditions, customs tariff and imperial taxation, commerce and shipping, currency and mints, weights and

measures, emigration and immigration, foreign affairs and native states, insolvency, public debt, banking and insurance, census and statistics, references of the different provinces and adjustment of inter-provincial relations, besides maintenance of a close touch with the India Office in London, will be the principal concerns of the Government of India in ordinary times; and, during any emergency, it shall be competent to interfere with the domestic politics of any or of all the different provincial Governments.

As regards financial re-adjustment, we desire that the revenues under salt, customs, tributes, railways, post and telegraphs, and mint should belong exclusively to the Government of India, the services connected with them being imperial, while the revenues under land revenue, including irrigation, excise, forests, assessed taxes, stamps and registration should belong to the Provincial Government, the services being provincial.

Finally, we want the Secretary of State's Council to be abolished, and the powers and the functions of the Secretary of State for India to be steadily approximated to those of the Secretary of State for the Colonies and his pay placed on the British estimates. Till, however, the Secretary of State's Council is abolished and satisfactory autonomy is granted to the Government of India, we demand a place to be found in the House of Commons for a representative from every major province in India.

In this scheme we have got to add the recognition of the equality of status of Indians all over the British Empire towards which, thanks to Lord Hardinge, a beginning has already been made. Then, above everything, we want all commissions, in the army and the navy, together with volunteering, to be thrown open to deserving Indians, with proper facilities for military and naval instructions.

That is our scheme of self-government for the present. In this scheme we have tried to evolve a representative or

responsible form of government out of existing materials with the least disturbance to the existing machinery. There is bound to be some disturbance, as no changes in the constitution of any government are possible without it. The main principles upon which we want to go are that the foreign or alien character of the Government should be eliminated as far as possible, that the British and Indian interest in this country should be made identical, that the administration should be nationalised and made responsible to the people for its work and conduct and, lastly, the Indian Civil Service and the police should be kept in their proper places and reduced from the position of masters, to those of the servants, of the public.

Above all, we demand that the principal functions of the state—the legislative, the administrative, and the judiciary—should be as much co-ordinated as possible. As Dr. Woodrow Wilson very truly observes: “the relations borne by the administration, the branch which executes the law, to the legislature, the branch which makes the laws, touch the very essence of a system of government. Legislation and administration ought under every well-devised system to go hand in hand. Laws must receive test of their wisdom and feasibility at the hands of administration; administration must take its energy and policy from legislation. Without legislation, administration must limp; and without administration, legislation must fail of effect. . . . A perfect understanding between executive and legislature is indispensable, and no such understanding can exist in the absence of relations of full confidence and intimacy between the two branches.” We are anxious for the establishment of this intimacy in all the local and imperial Governments of India; and, to begin with, it is our desire that the relation between the executive Governments and the legislative Councils should be roughly similar to those now existing between the Imperial Government and the Reichstag in Germany.

As regards the judiciary, it is only in the United States

where, by the constitution of George Washington, it has been established as an independent co-ordinate power. Such a thing, however, is impossible in India for a long time to come, or, for the matter of that, in most countries of the world. But perhaps the next best thing to do is to make the judiciary as much independent of the executive as is possible under the existing conditions of Indian life. A complete separation of the judicial and executive functions is, therefore, one of the first reforms that is badly wanted in India, and the judicial service in every province should be placed under the control and supervision of its own High Court.

In the scheme which I have drawn above, I have intentionally avoided discussing the position of the Indian princes and the people of the native states. Some provision has, no doubt, to be made to include them in a general scheme of national self-development, for India cannot be conceived to grow into a steady and consolidated power with one-third of her area and a fifth of her population left out of consideration. But how they may be brought within a general all-India scheme of political reform is a delicate question upon which we would very much like to hear the opinions of the statesmen and publicists of the native states themselves before offering any remarks of our own.

HOW MAY WE GET IT?

Having sketched out our desired scheme, it is now necessary to enquire as to how may we get it through. I, for my part, do not believe in the changed, or the changing, angle of vision of England in relation to the affairs of India. I do not believe that the end of the present war will bring us any nearer to our goal. I do not believe that it is ever possible for a democracy to view with sympathy the aspirations of such a distant and alien 'dependency.' I do not believe that England, in spite of all her professions of sympathy for India, can ever turn against the men on the spot and do us

justice and see eye to eye with us in regard to the problems of our administration. Nor do I believe in the game of waiting or in the policy of not going too fast, for, at the rate in which we are making progress towards constitutional liberty under the present rule, particularly in education, we may not reach our goal till very close to the day of judgment. There is no good adopting the wisdom of the ostrich to refuse to look facts in the face: political self-deception is not unoften worse than national suicide. Our only *modus operandi*, therefore, is to go in for our goal, like the Chartists and the Corn-Law Leaguers in England, with whole-hearted earnestness, and agitate for it, press for it, and fight for it by all manner of constitutional means open to us. If nations by themselves are made, we must not indefinitely hang by the coat-tail and wait upon the pleasure of a foreign power to furnish us with the necessary escort on the way to our goal. Our destiny is in our hands, a truism which Mr. Lyon reminded the people of Bengal not very long ago, and we must ourselves make or mar it, now or never. By the pressure and volume of public opinion, by adding strength and fibre to our character, by developing courage of convictions, by increasing the bounds of knowledge and disseminating ideas of civic rights and, above all, by carrying our masses with us in all our domestic, social and political aspirations we can, and we shall, at no distant future, make it impossible for the British to refuse us what we want and withhold us our natural rights. We must get our whole people to think with us, feel with us, and work with us. "They who do not feel the darkness," said Buckle, "will never look for the light." No amount of cold douche or condemnation from high quarters of our goal as 'extravagant' or 'unrealisable,' should damp our ardour and keep us from the fight. "Seek, and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be open" was as true in Christ's life-time as twenty centuries after his death and holds as good in the political, as in the religious, world. We must go on fighting

our battle with the greatest discretion, with all the constitutional weapons available to us, and, we are confident, our fight for freedom shall be as peaceful and bloodless as that of Turkey, China, Persia and Japan. On the successful issue of this fight will depend the future of the Indian people, and if we cannot work our way to political freedom quietly and *peacefully*, we shall richly deserve to be governed away and blotted out of the face of this earth.
