

should be a general policy in this country to place all loans in London, where the securities are acceptable to these conservative financiers. As a rule, better terms can be made there than by borrowing the money in Canada, and every dollar of British gold which comes here releases that much more Canadian capital for the development of the country.

Perhaps those who are always complaining that Great Britain is not putting as much money into Canadian development as the United States will bear these remarks in mind. The American capitalist's "wad" is visible to the naked eye of the ordinary citizen, whereas he sees nothing and thinks not at all of the vitalising current of capital passing from Great Britain, with its vast reserve of national wealth—the Empire's deposit account—into the great undertakings which are the foundations of the Greater Dominion that is to be. As Canada can grow the cheapest bushel of wheat, so Great Britain can lend the cheapest pound of gold. It is well to remember that fact from time to time.

INDIA

VISCOUNT MORLEY AND REFORMS

VERY serious issues are slowly approaching decision in India. They are not less serious because comparatively little is heard concerning them, and they are likely to have a far-reaching effect upon the future of British control in the Dependency. The question now engaging the constant attention of the Viceroy and the Government of India, and of the Secretary of State, is whether the people of India can be given a larger share in the management of their own affairs, and if so, what form the concessions should take. It is not a matter that can be lightly decided. Intense anxiety must attend any step forward, because India is a country where false moves cannot easily be rectified. The outlines of a scheme were first devised at least eighteen months ago. The scheme travelled home to the Secretary of State, and was then returned to India, where it made a public appearance in the familiar form of a letter from the Government. It has since been considered by the various Provincial Administrations, and has been discussed from very varying points of view. Recently the Government of India sifted the mass of opinions forwarded to them, and framed what is believed to be a revised scheme.

That scheme, in its turn, will no doubt be examined by the Secretary of State and his advisers, but it seems very improbable that any definite announcement concerning it can be made when the Indian Budget is presented to Parliament within the next few weeks. The period at the disposal of the Secretary of State is now too brief. Measures so momentous cannot be hastily rushed through, and in any case they will probably require embodiment in formal legislation. Hence it may be some time before they are fully disclosed.

The occasion is timely for a brief examination of the principles which should govern any measures of reform, and for a consideration of the proposals of the Government, so far as they are before the public. That a large proportion of the people of India care nothing at all about obtaining larger participation in the task of government will hardly be denied. It is not, however, with that mute and incurious figure, the ryot at the plough, that we alone have to deal. We have also to consider that a very great number of educated Indians, who after all are the salt of the population, the people who really count, do crave a larger voice in the control of Indian affairs. We claim that our rule is paternal; they are inclined to think it a little grandmotherly. Many of the men who quietly contend that India has advanced very rapidly in the last decade or two, and that they are now entitled to bear some further share of responsibility, have little or no sympathy with the exaggerated demands of the National Congress. They do not indulge in mob oratory in the bazaars, and they scoff at the corybantics of some of the self-elected "leaders of the people"; but they have their own convictions nevertheless, and cherish them with increasing tenacity. The situation we have to face is that the bulk of educated thinking Indians are standing in an attitude of expectancy. The free fights at Surat, the minor riots here and the semi-seditious speeches there, are the froth upon the surface of rapidly quickening expectations. Behind and beyond these symptoms—some of them, it must be admitted, not a little disquieting—lies a deep, a widespread, and, on the whole, an earnest desire for some slackening of the leading-strings.

How are we to confront these aspirations? How are we to deal with them? Some say there is nothing to be done, and that there is danger in any fresh development. Others, and I think

they are wiser, say that if there are risks in any large concessions, there are still greater dangers in a resolute determination to do nothing. It is not, however, from any craven fear of trouble that we should move forward a little. Reforms that have the appearance of being wrung from unwilling hands would not be valued, and had far better not be conceded at all. The only justification for any broad measure of reform must be the conviction that the best men among the people have advanced so far along the path of political evolution that they can with reasonable confidence be trusted to use new boons wisely. If we granted reforms out of deference to popular clamour, while secretly convinced that the hour was not yet ripe, we should be untrue to our trust, and should be inflicting a subtle wrong upon India. Better to stand abuse with contemptuous silence, than to make elaborate experiments, which we feel are doomed to failure, in order to placate noisy agitators and enter the haven of a quiet life. It is not as though we were throwing pieces of meat to pursuing wolves, but in the spirit of willingness to confide fresh privileges to men who are believed worthy of greater confidence, that this thing must be done, if it is done at all. Sometimes it is suggested that the requirements of the situation would be met if reforms were devised which, while seeming to concede a great deal, in reality left matters very much where they were before. It ought not to be necessary to condemn that conception of a boon. The educated men of India are not fools, and we cannot honestly proffer them an elaborate sham. If we did, we should create worse discontent than already exists. Any reforms that are framed must be a reality. They must really and definitely give the people a larger share of control, a more direct opportunity of influencing their own affairs than they have hitherto enjoyed. A broad and generous and sympathetic measure will meet with a quick response; but if we whittle away with one hand that which we profess to give with the other, we shall fail in our purpose, and deservedly fail. If we are to make concessions, we should make them freely and ungrudgingly, always remembering that our paramount duty, to ourselves and to India alike, is never to weaken the essential features of British control which have welded a multitude of states and races into one great Empire.

The scheme of reforms contained in the Government of India's letter of August 24 does not, it is believed, represent the final shape which the project will assume; but it must be considered here, because no modifications have been so far disclosed. It is not, as is sometimes stated, Viscount Morley's (if such be the name by which henceforward the Secretary of State will be known) scheme. In his last Budget speech, he generously admitted that the initiative came from Lord Minto, who did not move in accordance with instructions from home. "The Viceroy," he said, "with a liberal, courageous mind entered deliberately on the path of improvement." Let it be observed at once that, even in their original form, the proposals put forward constituted a very marked advance on the system hitherto obtaining. If they are criticised here, it is not for the purpose of suggesting that there was any lack of statesmanlike endeavour to discern a solution of an exceedingly difficult and complex problem. Lord Minto's scheme was thoroughly imbued by that desire to make genuine and liberal concessions which has been here insisted on as imperative. Some of its features are admirable, and are certain to be incorporated in the final decision. Others, again, while excellent in intention, do not appear to many who have studied them to be calculated to work well in practice.

The weakest part of the scheme is unquestionably the Imperial and Provincial Advisory Councils. It is proposed to form an Imperial Advisory Council, for purely consultative purposes. The Council is to consist of about sixty members, including about twenty ruling chiefs, the remainder being territorial magnates drawn from every province. This body will have no legislative recognition, and will not be vested with formal powers of any sort. Theoretically, the purpose which lies at the back of the proposal is praiseworthy enough. It is meant to associate the princes and nobles of India with the control of the Indian Empire, to form a sort of consultative House of Lords. Such an idea has been frequently advanced, notably by the Gaekwar of Baroda. I fear that in practice it would work very badly, and probably would soon have to be abandoned. Large consultative bodies without any power of initiative, gathered together from all parts of a wide empire, are at best a clumsy expedient. It is not at all certain that

it would be desirable to associate the princes of India, even in an irresponsible fashion, with the weighty decisions which the Government are frequently called upon to make on questions of general policy. The princes have their own States to rule, and the task ought to suffice. Hitherto they have for the most part studiously refrained from intervening in current politics outside their own territories. It should not be our hand that should drag them into the strife. The Viceroy has frequent opportunities already for consulting informally both the chiefs and important territorial magnates. He visits their states and they visit him at Simla and Calcutta. The constitution of the proposed body would in all probability cause endless jealousies. The capacity of the princes to offer counsel is very varied, and is not always in proportion to their relative status and dignity. It might be found that a Viceroy attached great importance to the advice of three or four chiefs of conspicuous ability, and was not so assiduous in consulting others. The consequence would be deep heartburnings and a prevalence of animosity that need never have been stirred up. Another objection is that the status of Imperial Councillor should not be limited to a territorial qualification. A really representative Advisory Council should include members of the learned professions, and men qualified to speak for trade and commerce. The great cities are practically excluded from representation on the Council, yet their influence is the strongest factor in India to-day. But, after all, the vital objection to the Imperial Advisory Council is that it carries us not much nearer the object in view. It does little to give the people of India a really effective voice in the management of their own affairs, and it would perhaps very soon be found to be a rather ornamental and somewhat meaningless body.

The Provincial Advisory Councils are even less inviting. They are to proffer wise advice, either collectively or individually, to Governors and Lieutenant-Governors. Their net is to be cast with a wider sweep, and representatives of the smaller landholders, industry, commerce, capital, and the professional classes are to be included. I confess that these provincial bodies appear to me likely to be even more futile and superfluous. They will be mere duplicates of the legislative councils, without even their limited powers. They seem calculated to become awkward

excrecences upon the administrative system. If the Viceroy is to the bulk of Indian mankind a rather inaccessible dignitary, that certainly does not apply to the rulers of provinces. They spend a great deal of their time in meeting and discussing current questions with the local notabilities. It may safely be asserted that no Governor or Lieutenant-Governor ever takes any important step affecting the welfare of his province without first informally debating it with very many unofficial persons of influence. There seems no conceivable purpose that the Provincial Advisory Councils could fulfil that is not equally well provided for already. They, too, are open to the vital objection already noted, that they imply no further delegation of power.

The broadening of the basis of representation in the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils, and the increase in the numerical strength of those bodies, which forms the second half of the Government scheme is, however, so admirable both in principle and in detail that it need not be discussed here. Certain minor points may excite controversy, but the broad principles implied are so indisputably good that they should receive general approval. The final proposal, that Budgets should be discussed section by section instead of as a whole, is a sound innovation. The only defect is that, as will be contended later, it does not go far enough.

Here, then, are the two main features of the projected reforms as originally propounded. They consist of Imperial and Provincial Advisory Councils, with no legislative recognition and no formal powers; and an enlargement of the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils upon their present lines. How far do they represent any further concession of a definite share of control to the people of India? I do not think it needs any great perspicuity to discern that they leave the situation to a great extent where it was before. The Advisory Councils may exercise a certain amount of unseen influence on public policy, but they carry no vestige of any additional power. The Legislative Councils will have a larger number of members, but they have no further rights and privileges. These things are perfectly well understood in India. That is why the programme of reforms has awakened so little interest. That is why the current agitation is being pursued with unabated vigour, if with more

discretion and restraint. The educated and enlightened classes consider that their aspirations remain almost as unsatisfied as ever.

Can the excellent intentions of the Government of India be allowed to halt at this stage? It would rather seem that having gone so far, having aroused very vivid expectations, they must certainly go somewhat farther. Mr. John Morley last year quoted General Gordon's view of the true secret of governing men, which was: "Try to get into their skins; try to realise their feelings." It will not be difficult to realise the feelings of the people of British India if they are left to discover that the response to all their fond hopes is some new and elaborate machinery which hardly carries them a single step forward. Yet there are ways in which an advance might be made, which would leave British supremacy unimpaired, and yet would create an atmosphere of greater contentment. I do not for a moment suggest any closer participation in the functions of the Supreme Government. That portion of the present system must remain inviolable. In any case one should build the church before one builds the steeple. The proper place to begin to permit larger participation in control is in matters of local government. A policy devised to give the people a more potent voice in the management of their own affairs in their own districts would not only have an educative influence, but would be very deeply appreciated. The Indians themselves should bear more responsibility instead of being taught to lean, as they do at present, upon the district officials. No doubt they would make many mistakes. No doubt, as happens now in some municipal areas, there would often be a tendency to do very little. The point is that at least they would have had their chance, under conditions of greater freedom than now obtain anywhere, save in one or two of the largest cities. They should be relieved as far as possible from the constant necessity of saying ditto to the local Mr. Burke. That, at least, is one direction in which a further material reform might without serious difficulty be framed. It is in district administration that the first concessions should be made, by the conferment of more independent powers on local urban and rural bodies, and a further development of the representative principle.

In the larger arena of the Provincial Legislative Councils the problem is more complicated. But surely here, also, there is room for more tangible reforms. Lord Dufferin declared in 1886 that the enlargements and alterations he projected in the Legislative Councils, which were afterwards adopted, "must be accepted as a final settlement of the Indian system for the next ten or fifteen years." The specified period has now expired, but though a further enlargement of the Councils is proposed, no material alteration in the methods of procedure is contemplated. Is it not possible, while duly protecting the prerogatives of the Government, to make these councils far more effective deliberative assemblies, to give them far wider facilities for expressing the popular views? They do not at present meet often enough. Hardly any Council sits for more than five or six days a year, and even when they meet the privileges of non-official members are appreciably limited. Provincial Councils ought to meet at least once every three months, and always in the provincial capitals, the only proper place for important provincial bodies to deliberate. Non-official members might, under due restrictions, be permitted to introduce legislation, exactly as private members of both Houses of Parliament are able to do in England. It might also be possible for non-official members to move resolutions within specified categories, by way of expressing the public views. There are other ways in which the present official domination of the Councils might be materially lessened without diminishing the essentials of control. Perhaps, in the Provincial Councils, some system could even be devised which might gradually give the non-officials a more effective voice in questions of expenditure.

To discuss these issues in further detail would be to plunge into a mass of technicalities. All that is here suggested is that, by granting more definite privileges in the districts, and by a large development of the procedure in the Legislative Councils, a very useful and welcome series of reforms might be framed, which would have the effect of carrying the Indian people some distance nearer local self-government, without materially prejudicing British interests. There is a widespread recognition among Indians that Lord Minto has listened to their pleas with marked sympathy. The last word, however, really rests with the Secretary of State, and it is to him that they turn with wistful, eager eyes.