

THOUGHTS ON INDIAN DISCONTENTS





By the Same Author

HELLENISM AND CHRISTIANITY SIBYLS AND SEERS

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THOUGHTS ON INDIAN DISCONTENTS

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PREFACE

AT a moment when India is much in the thoughts of men, and books dealing with the great problem, in view of the present crisis, are multiplied, the reflexions contained in this little book may be put forth for what they are worth. They go little into the details of the situation, for which, indeed, I have not sufficient knowledge. But just as sometimes the general lie of a mountain may be better discerned by one who looks at it from a distance than by someone close enough to see the details of rocks and trees, so it is just possible that my view of the Indian problem, although I look at it from a distance, may enable me to see some of its general lines in relation to the moving world of to-day. The little book on Indian Nationalism (Macmillan), which I wrote in 1913, had a kindly reception both from some of the Englishmen who had large experience of Indian administration and from some Indian Nationalists. It made, perhaps, no contribution likely to be permanently remembered, except one phrase-the "steel frame", quoted from it by Lord Sinha when he made his Presidential speech at the Indian National Congress, and quoted from Lord Sinha by Mr. Lloyd George in a speech from which it has passed into general currency. The phrase is now offensive to Indian Nationalists, although in its original context it was unexceptionable: my point was to insist that a steel frame, even if necessary, could hardly be comfortable, and that you could not be surprised if the wearer wished to get rid of it.



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THOUGHTS ON INDIAN DISCONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INDIAN UNREST, THE NEW PHASE

More than a century ago, as the result of a process which the rulers of England never clearly intended, the people of this Western island became the dominant power in the ancient and far-off and alien world of India. This rule of one people over another seemed to our ancestors to be justified by the great precedents of human history. Conquest of weaker peoples by stronger had always gone on in the world. England was only doing the same sort of thing which Rome had done, and Rome had never felt squeamish about its right to rule. Whatever ugly and evil passages there may be in the story how Rome built her Empire, the building of it certainly did display notable powers and capacities of the human spirit, and even certain kinds of moral virtue, which make the Roman Empire an achievement unquestionably imposing. There have always been people in England who thought of British rule in India in the light of such analogies. We have gained India, so they feel, as a possession by force of arms and political sagacity, and to think of relinquishing our power from any moral or sentimental scruple is a weakness which would make us show as poor creatures beside the Romans-a lamentable failure of nerve. Unfortunately we have a more complicated spiritual con-

stitution than the men of that old pagan world; even if we are not Christians, there is enough Christianity in our make-up to prevent us being wholeheartedly and happily pagan. Quite early in the history of British rule, the idea of right conferred by conquest was crossed by another idea which had never entered the mind of the Romansthe idea of trusteeship, the idea which regarded the people of India after the analogy of a minor who has to be trained by his guardian for independence. Great Englishmen in India at the beginning of the nineteenth century, like Elphinstone and Munro, looked forward frankly to England resigning the power to Indians some day, when Indians had received the necessary political education. The strange relation between this Western people and India was then a new thing, but as time went on and generations came who found British rule in India a fact in the world into which they were born, it came to seem part of the permanent order of things, and the imagination of a day when England would withdraw was relegated to a future so distant that it ceased to count for present action. Also an effect of the Mutiny was inevitably to make rule by the strong hand seem the essential thing for many days to come. Yet there continued to be from time to time utterances by people in authority which held up the other idea-that of training India for selfgovernment. Only one could hardly say that the Government had committed itself to this policy: the other view--the strong hand and no concessions-had a large amount of support amongst those who served, or had served, in India, and it was still doubtful which way the Government would ultimately incline. A copy of the little book

on *Indian Nationalism*, which I wrote in 1913, has been given me with pencilled annotations on the margins written by someone who had held, shortly before that date, one of the highest places amongst the British in India. I had written, "We have had authoritative statements that the ultimate object of the British rulers is to train India for self-government", and the pencilled comment is "Cant: we have sunk tons of money in India, and it would be a bold man who says we would risk its loss."

Then, eight years later, during the War, came the epoch-making statement in Parliament which issued in the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. England committed itself publicly and definitely to the policy which my critic had described as cant. By the Act of December 1919, not only was a declaration made that swaraj was the goal of British rule in India, but the work of transferring power was actually begun by the transference of certain departments of Government to Indian Ministers elected by Indians, and it was provided that every ten years a commission should consider whether the condition of things admitted of further transference. There remained now no difference between the view of the end adopted by the British Government and the view asserted by Indian Nationalists. There remained only disagreement regarding the way to that end. The British Government was resolved to transfer the government to Indians bit by bit, according to its own judgment what, at each date, the situation allowed: the Indian Nationalists wanted more powers transferred to them at once, and the rate of transference to be regulated by themselves, not by the British

Of course, many people in England thought this declaration of policy disastrous-people like the critic of my little book. Rome had never done anything like that. At least, if on two occasions Rome proclaimed the "autonomy of the Hellenes", there was no question of the Hellenes, enclosed as they were by the Roman power, ever asserting a real independence. People of the old Imperial school declared that India had become a lost dominion. And that is probably true. Whether it prove possible in the future for India to remain in any political connexion with the British Commonwealth of Nations or not, a self-governing India could not be a "possession" of Great Britain. If England had determined never to "lose" India, it ought never to have begun any process of transferring power to Indians. It is quite unreasonable to initiate such a process and then start back from its inevitable conclusion. It is arguable from the point of view of pagan imperialism that England was contemptible in surrendering power; it is arguable from another point of view that England was acting in accordance with the higher morality; but what is certain is that you cannot have it both ways. And now that the decision has been taken, England must accept the consequences. Old service men may inveigh against our weak sentimentalism from their club arm-chairs. When the Montagu-Chelmsford Constitution was set up, there were even some Indians who agreed with them. I have a letter written me in 1920 by an Indian friend, whom I had known as a young man of exceptional intelligence. After some years of contact with political life in India, he wrote in criticism of something I had published, in which I had expressed

the hope of India's making progress to democratic self-government:

I think Montagu and his friends have done a great evil to this country. As between Montagu and his critics (European), I prefer the latter. My own experience supports them. The day of honest government will soon be gone. I have not met one honest Indian politician. . . . I cannot imagine how it will end. I feel more than ever that "the faith in British institutions" is a myth. Britain is represented by the British officer. If he goes, off goes Britain also. This district has had Indian collectors for four years. There is more corruption in it than in any other I have seen. Is it not sad? Everyone I meet has the same opinion. . . . I marvel at your robust faith in democracy. I have lost what little faith I had. Our politicians only want to eliminate the Englishman, not to serve democracy. Most Indians are, by nature, bureaucratic. This becomes clear as soon as a "non-official" gets power. You must know that as yet there is no such person as "Liberal" or "Conservative" in India. We have only the non-official, who is supposed to be all that. India seems full of madmen. Many of us are too disgusted to act; others are powerless to stop a movement which looks for support to schoolboys, filled with the wind that comes out of our newspaper offices.

But whether England was wise or unwise in determining to make self-government the goal in India, it seems unlikely that it will now reverse its policy and go back to the old form of British rule.

A disagreement, as has just been said, remains between the British and the Indian Nationalists regarding the way to self-government. But it might have been thought that the situation would be greatly eased when the British formally adopted the Nationalist view of the goal, that their declaration would inaugurate a period in which such

controversy between the Government and the Nationalists as still went on would lose much of the old bitterness and vehemence, and a large measure of co-operation towards the common goal become possible. If anyone had such expectations, the event has been strangely different. Nationalist agitation against British rule in the old days, when the British held all the power fast in their own hands, was feeble compared with the virulent hostility which has marked Nationalist opposition ever since the British have begun transferring power to Indians. Various explanations of this may be given. The old service men probably say that it is just what they predicted: "the Oriental respects only strength", and any concessions he interprets as a sign of weakness, so that it is quite natural if agitation waxes bolder and more uncompromising as the Government yields to Nationalist demands. Or the result may be regarded as due to a series of unfortunate accidents which threw things out of track at the beginning of the new period: first unrest in the Punjab, combined with the threat of an Afghan invasion, which led to the Amritsar affair, then the breaking up of the Ottoman Empire, which troubled the Indian Mohammedans and led to the unhappily conceived Khilafat agitation. No doubt, like other movements of thought and feeling in great masses of men, the present temper in India is due to a conjunction of many causes at this particular moment of history. The general unrest in men's minds all over the world, which followed the War, counts for a good deal. But what specially has to be noted is that amongst the changes taking place in the world has been the national self-assertion of Turks, Chinese, Persians, against outside

control; a little while ago it also seemed as if Afghanistan were about to be transformed into a strong modern State. That a new thrill should have gone through the Indians as they looked at these things was inevitable. And the Russian Revolution adds another disturbing stimulusnot so much what Bolshevik emissaries can do in India by actual stealthy propaganda, but the wider effect produced by the spectacle of a great despotism, apparently of immense strength and range of power, annihilated in a moment and the seizure of power by people who only a little while before had been hunted agitators. When the existing order of things which environs us seems stable and unvarying, that acts upon our minds by suggestion and causes us to acquiesce in the world as we find it; but when great changes take place before our eyes, wild hopes suddenly seem not beyond the possibility of realization; for us, too, the hard shapes of the actual melt and the future becomes an exciting speculation: an inner vibration makes intolerable the humdrum of every day.

Whatever the causes may be of the present mood of Indians, it seems to be generally agreed by people acquainted with the situation that we must expect in the near future a hostile movement greater in range and intensity than any since the Mutiny. It is, of course, true that the Government has a position of much greater power than it had seventy years ago. This is due to a process which has been going on all over the globe—the process of scientific invention. An effect of that process has been to make it possible for smaller groups, if organized and equipped, to dominate ever greater masses of men and wider areas. In ancient times the forces of a

Government might easily find themselves opposed to insurgent forces on an equal, or even an inferior, footing. Each side fought with similar arms, and insurgents had opportunity to organize their attack before the Government was aware. Already in the nineteenth century the development of fire-arms, railways, and telegraphy were giving an advantage to Governments as against irregular forces. In countries like Turkey and Persia, the Central Government during the nineteenth century was getting the outlying provinces under its control to a much greater extent than had been possible in days when Turkey and Persia had been strong and illustrious amongst the States of the world. The power of the Central Government in these countries over the provinces was increasing at the very time when the power of the State, as against other States, was sinking. But in quite recent times there has been new and wonderful advance in scientific contrivance -wireless telegraphy, petrol locomotion, air navigation, machine-guns, tanks-and to a greater extent than ever before in the history of mankind a relatively small number of men can dominate immensely superior numbers and vast territories. We see the result to-day in countries where the dictatorship of a man or a group has been set up against the will of the people as a whole, or of large sections of the people. In Italy, it is probable that the Fascist dictatorship is not liked by a considerable portion of the Italian nation; in Russia, the peasantry, who constitute by far the most numerous part of the population, for the most part hate Bolshevism. But no opposition either in Italy or in Russia has a chance. The Central Government would be aware of it, thanks to present means

of communication, long before it came to a head, and crush it. Under present conditions, when any group in a country has once got firm hold of the central machinery and can depend on its forces, army and police, it can securely defy almost any amount of popular discontent. The tumult of the street, which for ancient government was always a thing to be feared—

> lest crowds on fire "To arms, to arms", the loiterers call, And thrones be tumbled in the mire,¹

this can be very quickly disposed of by aircraft and machine-guns. The only thing which can overthrow such a dominant group to-day-apart from foreign attack-is a dissension in its armed forces which divides them into two practically equivalent antagonistic bodies. For if it is only a case of the mutiny of a regiment or two, or of a minority of the police, it will, of course, be easily suppressed by the bulk of the forces which remain faithful. Where the armed forces, as in Italy or Russia, are of the same race as the rest of the people, there is always some risk of popular discontent infecting them, and if that happens the danger may become serious for the dominant group. But even when the armed forces are drawn from the people, a dominant group may give them special privileges and create an esprit de corps amongst them, which keeps them steadily on its side, immune from infection.

When we look at what has happened in the last few years in Italy, Russia, Spain, Poland, Turkey, we may

¹ Horace, Odes, 1, 35 (Conington's translation).

well wonder what the end of the process will be. If the progress of scientific contrivance, so far as it has gone, to-day enables small groups of men to dominate large countries, without the possibility of opposition, the progress of scientific contrivance, in the next hundred years, might quite well make it possible for a relatively small group of men to dominate the whole globe. International finance is already a power overriding national boundaries. A hundred years hence, a group belonging to no particular nation might rule the rest of mankind autocratically by means of a vast police system; for, of course, there would, in such a state of the world, be no national armies any more. War, at any rate, would have ceased, and it may be that mankind would not have paid too high a price for that, even in losing political liberty. But it would be rather an ironical conclusion to the present controversies between Englishmen and Indians if a hundred years hence they were both alike subject to some group whose leading members were Germans, Americans, or Japanese.

No doubt it is true that individuals can get into their hands some scientific means of destruction, for instance, bombs. But it hardly needs saying that the destruction wrought by a bomb can no more weaken a Government than a pea-shooter can bring down an elephant. A bomb may kill an individual official, but his place is immediately taken by another. It is likely to inflict hideous suffering on a number of perfectly innocent people; but without weakening the Government, it provokes reprisals which actually throw back the cause it was supposed to further. This is so generally recognized to-day

that no one can entertain the idea of throwing a bomb, unless he is an immature youth with crazy ideas of the world, or a man of really criminal tendencies attracted to a deed of violence, quite apart from any end that it may serve.

But if any Englishman, looking at the situation from the standpoint of national egoism only, regards the possibility of Indian hostility with equanimity because of the great strength of the Government's position, his vision is short. The Government certainly has the power to put down any force which the Indians could get together, but it could do so only by using drastic methods of repression, and very many people in England have now come to have sensibilities which would cause them acute mental distress if the Government of India became involved in a series of repressive measures, especially if any shooting on a large scale took place. Here again the old Diehards may say that we have become contemptibly soft and sentimental. Certainly in former days men in a position of power rarely felt such squeamishness. I am not sure whether there is any parallel in the past to Asoka's pangs of contrition for the blood he had shed in conquest. To-day, other peoples have less of such feelings than we have. The Fascists could never have established their power in Italy if they had not done a good deal of killing and exercised ruthless repression. The Bolsheviks in Russia, when they destroyed their bourgeoisie and upper class, inflicted death and torture wholesale on thousands without, apparently, a qualm. Perhaps if we had their mental constitution and applied their methods to India, no more would be heard of Indian unrest after quite a

short time. But the fact remains that the English to-day have not the mental constitution of the Bolsheviks, and to be responsible for bloodshed makes very many of us unhappy. "If there is trouble in India," a British officer said grimly to a friend of mine, "the first thing to do would be to cut all the cables to England." I am afraid to break communications would not be so easy in these days. But it is unquestionable that under certain conditions of popular excitement, when appeals to reason have ceased to have any effect, the Government can only maintain itself by striking hard, just as we are told that, in certain cases of hysteria, argument is of no avail, and nothing can restore self-control but a sound slap. Conjunctures really do sometimes occur when there are no alternatives before a Government but either to abdicate its functions and give up a country to anarchy or kill a number of people. This applies just as much to native Governments as to foreign Governments. In 1920, when Germany was in that state of paroxysm which not unnaturally followed the terrible experiences of the War and its conclusion, it is generally believed that the Social-Democrat Government saved the situation by shooting a good many people in the Ruhr. The German Communists denounced the action of the Government forces as an atrocity in terms just as strong as those used by Indians of the action of General Dyer: in any case it was a killing of Germans by a German Government. In India, before the days of British rule, the Mogul emperor drove his elephant upon an unruly crowd to stamp numbers to death. If in the future India has swaraj, an Indian Nationalist, should he hold a command in the police or the army, may quite

conceivably find himself faced with the choice either to fire upon a rebellious crowd and afterwards be pointed at as a brutal butcher, or not to fire and afterwards be pointed at as the man who, had he only showed nerve at the critical moment, might have crushed revolt in its beginnings and saved his country from extensive misery and bloodshed. I thank God that I am never likely to be in such a predicament. The possibility of such conjunctures occurring is inherent in government as such. The only difference in the case of a foreign Government is that the resentment caused by such action of the Government forces amongst those opposed to it has an additional sting from the thought that people of the country have been killed by foreigners. For the people actually killed or wounded I do not suppose that it makes much difference whether those who shoot are foreigners or fellowcountrymen, but it makes a deal of difference for the people all over the country who hear of the incident. That is just one of the things which make the position of foreign rulers an invidious one. There are actions which a foreign Government cannot do without provoking profound resentment in the country as a whole; and yet they may be actions which any Government, under certain conditions, is obliged to perform.

Whether it is sentimentalism or not for Englishmen to feel distress at the thought of the British Government in India suppressing revolt by killing or imprisoning a large number of people may be a matter of controversy: sentiment of some kind is implied in all moral valuation, and the feeling which makes people hate the idea of death and pain being inflicted upon a multitude of their fellow-men

by those for whose action they are themselves in part responsible cannot be described as an unworthy feeling simply because it is a sentiment. We should have to condemn all kindliness or chivalry or patriotism as sentimentalism at that rate. But it is clear, beyond all controversy, that sentimentalism, in the sense of something reprehensible, does exist where sentiment has got into the wrong place, where, for instance, it is allowed to obscure or distort our view of facts. Those Englishmen are guilty of such sentimentalism who wish the British Government to go on in India and refuse to contemplate the repressive measures without which, in certain contingencies, government could not go on. I do not think we could call pacific anarchists of the Tolstoyan type sentimentalists in the same sense; for Tolstoyans do face the fact that a readiness to take measures of this kind is essentially involved in government, and for that reason they want to get rid of all government. Tolstoy would not' even, on his principles, have approved of self-government for India. If, indeed, one asks such pacifists how, without any government at all, men of violent will are to be prevented from preying upon the weak and gentle, I have never heard of any satisfactory answer given from that quarter.

Englishmen who do both realize that such repressive measures would certainly be necessitated by any widespread movement against the Government in India, and at the same time hate the thought of them, cannot, therefore, be consoled, in looking at the present drift of things, by the consideration that, if it comes to the point, the Government is strong enough to put down any resistance.

They would do anything they could to prevent things coming to that point. Any Indians who have a sense of realities must look forward to such a conjuncture with even greater apprehension. There would be not only the suffering inflicted upon a great number of individuals among their fellow-countrymen, but the incalculable damage done to the whole of India. An unsuccessful attempt to paralyse or defeat the existing Government would leave all nationalism in India terribly weakened and throw back the advance of the country for a long time to come. Unfortunately, it by no means follows, when two bodies of men are moving to a collision, that because the more clear-sighted on each side see that the collision would be a catastrophe for both, which reasonableness could easily avoid, the catastrophe will therefore be avoided. Such movements of men in the mass are not directed by logic. There is a psychology of crowds, which shows the mass heaving by the force of impulses, only dimly conscious of their ends, acting under the suggestion of certain ideas or phrases, each individual dominated absolutely by the volume of feeling which runs through the whole. Those who are called leaders are largely themselves hypnotized by the ideas in the air. For them, too, it is impossible to make a sane calculation of the elements in the situation and see things and men, on their own side and on the other, as they really are. Or if they have a truer vision, they may not have the moral courage to set themselves in singular opposition to popular currents running strong.

For an Englishman to give advice to Indians in the present phase of things would not only be useless, it

would actually be a new provocation. For one of the principal constituents in the mass of feeling which now impels most of educated India is the desire to act for themselves, without external direction. The thing which especially exasperates them in the English is the assumption of superiority. In the jargon now fashionable this is described as an "inferiority complex". But to give advice seems necessarily to imply some belief in the giver of his superior wisdom. From an Englishman Indians to-day would receive advice less than from anybody. Possibly they would resent it less from Lord Irwin than from any other Englishman because his official position might furnish some excuse. But it is questionable whether under the conditions of the moment they would listen to advice from anyone, even, as a prominent Indian recently expressed it to me in conversation, "from the angel Gabriel".

Englishmen, therefore, who study the Indian situation at the present moment should beware of judging the action of Indians by logic. Action here, as so often, is to be explained, not by logic, but by psychology. It springs not from a cool and objective estimate of the facts of the world, but from impulses whose causes go back to a mass of feelings and thoughts which have been created by different incidents in the past and now work with the imperious force of hypnotic control. Probably if imaginative sympathy in an Englishman were large enough to enable him to enter into the feelings which have successively swayed Indians in recent years, many actions which, looked at from outside, seem wholly irrational would be understood as the inevitable outcome of their psychological

antecedents. Perhaps we might in some cases speak even of psychological justification. In the case, for instance, of the widespread opposition to the Simon Commission, nothing could be more inept, if judged by logic. It is easy to show that the arguments put forward by Indian Nationalists rest on quite false presuppositions, that if the Simon Commission is an organ of the House of Commons for transmitting to Parliament the views and desires of different elements in India, it will not do its work better by containing in itself an Indian element, any more than an ear-trumpet, which gathers for a deaf man the sounds by which I may convey to him my demands, would do its work better if I put my hand into it. Or, again, that the Indians were fighting about a point which would not help their cause if they won it, because, had their agitation had the maximum conceivable success and the Commission been constituted entirely of Indians, Parliament would have been less likely to agree to Indian demands, if presented to it by such a body, than Parliament would be to agree to Indian demands if presented to it by a body constituted of its own members, and that the agitation was therefore as deplorable strategy in politics as in war the strategy of a general would be who wasted his forces to attack a position which did not command the field of battle. All this is true enough, but the logical absurdity of the agitation does not prove that it was not the natural psychological reaction to faults committed on the British side. If report speaks true, Indian leaders, even those ready to co-operate, had real ground of grievance in not having been taken more into consultation whilst the plan of the Commission was still under consideration; and a

little more tact and courtesy in personal relations at an earlier stage would have obviated a great deal of the trouble. If this is so, we are not really meeting the case if we simply show that the agitation was logically absurd. We must get deeper down, to its psychological origins, and when we do that we cannot condemn it as wholly gratuitous.

In the same way, in looking at the Indian situation to-day as a whole, we should regard the psychological grounds of action as more important than the reasons put forward in debate. It may be impossible now, when large bodies of men are moving with the impetus of masssuggestion, for any political sagacity to divert them from disaster. The situation bears a kind of likeness to the situation in the British Labour world before the attempt at a general strike in 1926. The human masses in that world, too, are largely driven by impulses which have psychological, rather than logical, grounds. And before 1926 the idea, widely prevalent, at the back of men's minds that the adherents of Labour had in a general strike a weapon which they could use any day, and which would infallibly bring the bourgeoisie there and then to its knees, acted as a continual exciting cause and made it almost impossible for those who believed in it to acquiesce in any negotiated arrangement. They were inevitably restless till the weapon had been tried. When it was tried in 1026 it proved to be deceptive. The bourgeoisie could not, indeed, hold out permanently if labour were withdrawn from the essential services of the country; but it was shown that in these days when young men of the British bourgeoisie turn their hands in ordinary times to so many

kinds of manual work, there were enough young men in an emergency to carry on the essential services for a much longer time than the strikers could maintain themselves. The supposition that a merely passive strike could bring the British *bourgeoisie* to its knees is now therefore eliminated for everybody as a delusion. That is a good thing, but it is a good thing purchased at excessive cost. No one knows when the country will recover from the economic damage inflicted upon it by the Strike of 1926.

There is a very similar idea widespread in India that a large movement of civil disobedience, without actual, organized war, would compel the Government to capitulate. No doubt the idea here, too, is a delusion; but so long as it rules in the minds of men, the psychological conditions for reasonable agreement are not there. It may be that Indian Nationalists will have to try civil disobedience, just as Labour had to try a general strike in 1926. But the cost of such an experiment for India is likely to be even greater than the cost of 1926 for England-terrible to contemplate. Perhaps if among the Indians themselves a man arose great enough to sway men's minds, one who saw the facts of the world as they are, a way might be found by which India might win its freedom and the terrible damage of a vain struggle be avoided. But such men come only when God sends them, and the more clear-sighted Indian leaders of to-day, whilst they see the extent of the possible catastrophe, see also the magnitude of the forces now moving men in the mass, and so are tempted to abandon the attempt to save the situation as hopeless and resign themselves to a dull fatalism. The thing which makes the thought of a possible collision and

struggle so poignant is that there is no reason, in the factors of the problem itself, why it should not be solved peaceably. There seems a way in which the Indians could secure the whole of their desire—unless the thing they desire proves to be something which the nature of things forbids—and in which at the same time the conditions regarded by the English as essential to their withdrawal would be satisfied. If Englishmen once set this way before themselves clearly and showed that they were willing to follow it, there is a faint chance that on the Indian side, too, a change might occur which allowed the voice of reason to be heard. This little book is written only in the hope that it may serve to make a few things clearer.

First, we must ask ourselves what our attitude really is to the Indian demand for independence.



CHAPTER II

THE BURDEN OF THE PAST

To many Englishmen it is obvious wickedness in an Indian to desire the end of British rule in India. By established usage the word "sedition" is applied to such a desire when active, and to the opposite attitude the word "loyalty". "Sedition" is something ugly, malignant, dark; and loyalty, we rightly feel, is one of the most beautiful things there is in human relations. Yet we have now got as far as publicly admitting that the desire of the Indians to govern themselves within the framework of the British Commonwealth of Nations is justified. There is, after all, no one among the Ten Commandments which says, "Thou shalt obey the English". The fact that some generations ago the British obtained, by force of arms, by political sagacity, and by good luck, the predominant power in India would not, by itself, constitute a ground for the Indians to acquiesce in British rule for ever as the inscrutable will of God. A Russian ought, at that rate, to acquiesce in Bolshevik rule as the inscrutable will of God. British rule may be justified if, on the whole, it makes India happier than India would be without it: it cannot be justified by the mere fact of its existence.

Let us look at the map of the world. There is no civilized people governed by foreigners except the Indians, and except some few smaller peoples governed by the French, the Dutch, the Japanese, and the Americans. Egypt and Irak are in some respects controlled by Great

Britain, but self-governing in their interior affairs and largely even in their foreign affairs. China, Persia, Turkey, Arabia, Afghanistan, are completely independent. All these nations may change their political constitutions just as they please. They may shape their foreign policy with no restraint except treaty obligations. India alone can do nothing without the leave of the English. Can we expect any Indian to find this agreeable? In Africa there are large tracts inhabited by primitive peoples who could not develop the resources of their countries for the benefit of the world as a whole unless they were, for the present, under civilized direction. But the Indians if we leave out the hill tribes—are people of ancient civilization. Must they be under a tutelage not considered necessary even for Afghans and Arabs?

I do not think, if I were an Indian, I could be satisfied with any state of things in which the affairs of India were not settled by Indians as freely as those of China, Persia, and Turkey are settled by Chinese, Persians, and Turks; and this would include the conduct of foreign policy. Whether this is compatible with India's remaining in the frame of the British Commonwealth is surely doubtful-even if it had the autonomy of a Dominion, like Canada. For if you had India as a sovereign State within the frame of the Commonwealth, it is hardly credible that in the long run its immense superiority in size would not tell. In the existing system of the Commonwealth, of course, States count individually without regard to the size of their populations; yet it may be questioned whether a self-governing India would put up for long with a position which gave its three hundred

The Burden of the Past

and fifty millions no greater weight in the common councils than Australia's six or seven millions, and far less weight than Great Britain's fifty millions. If, on the other hand, the system were ever altered, so as to allow India to count in the Commonwealth proportionately to its size, the position would be intolerable for the States of the British race. It would be reversing the present position with a vengeance—England controlled by India! Considerations such as these dispose me to agree with those Indian politicians who decline to accept Dominion Government as the goal—as more than a stage on the way to complete independence.

Yet I cannot be insensible to the considerations which the school represented by that admirable periodical the Round Table put forward, impressed upon me as they have been in conversation by my friend Professor Coupland. According to this view, a great peril before humanity in its future course is the antagonism between the European and the non-European peoples. Unless some way is found of obviating the struggle, the consequences will be frightful, not for one side only, but for mankind as a whole. But there could be no more effectual way of obviating the struggle than by fashioning a political system within the frame of which one of the greatest European peoples and one of the greatest Asiatic peoples lived together on a footing of political justice and mutual respect. It would be an irrefutable demonstration in practice that a modus vivendi between Europeans and Asiatics could be found: it would be a bridge between two great sections of humanity. To throw away that hope, to break up what has such great potentialities of good for

the world in a fit of impatience because of our difficulties in finding the right political adjustment at the moment, would be tragic.

It is a generous dream, and I cannot but be moved by it. If, indeed, it is ultimately possible for the British Commonwealth of Nations to be such a frame! But I still doubt whether the difficulty I have pointed to could be got over. Might we believe that some kind of relation of alliance between the British States of the Commonwealth and India could exist in the future which would give India complete freedom within the political system and still not make it predominant? There may be some way which I do not see, and till we can be sure that there is not, I think that the warning not to scrap, in a fit of impatience, what has great possibilities of good, should give us pause. But, as a matter of fact, the question whether ultimately India ought to be within the frame of the Commonwealth or quite detached does not seem to me one which can be profitably discussed to-day, for the answer to the question depends on the condition of the world as a whole. The chief reason why large political systems are desirable is their greater strength for defence against enemies outside them. It might, for instance, a hundred years hence, be that the connexion with England would mean for India some restriction of its liberty of self-determination, which would be in itself a disadvantage, and yet that this disadvantage would be more than compensated by a greater security from outside attack. The world might, on the other hand, at that time-by a growth of the League of Nations or in some other way -have left the phase of violent national antagonisms

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behind, and weaker communities would be in no danger of being overwhelmed. In such a world there would seem no reason why India, supposing it had complete autonomy within, should be burdened with any tie to another State. It may even be asked whether there would be any reason for the British Commonwealth of Nations to exist any more, even if the British States of the Commonwealth liked to continue, for reasons of old sentiment, to express in some political way their sense of kinship. And if we question that we may also question whether there would be any reason for India to be under one government; the different peoples of India might then, like the different peoples of Europe, develop each its own particular genius without fear of interference from outside, in friendly neighbourhood. If the need of large combinations for common defence is ruled out, there is a good deal to be said for small States. But all speculations of this kind are rather idle; for we do not know what the world is going to be a hundred years hence, or fifty years hence, or even twenty years hence.

All, I think, that can to-day be affirmed with certainty is that no solution of the Indian problem would be satisfactory which does not allow Indians to settle the affairs of their community, in the larger or the smaller sense, as freely as Chinese, Turks, and Persians settle the affairs of their respective countries to-day. But before we ask how this is to be brought about, I think we should consider why it is that India to-day is under foreign rule and not China, Turkey, or Persia. When you look at the map of Asia, why is it that the two great projections of land to the south, India and Further

India, are mostly under foreign rule, and not the rest of the continent? For who with reason could allege intellectual inferiority in the inhabitants of these regions? It was in India that a great literature was produced in former centuries, whose beginnings go back to a date before Homer, and one of the great world religions, Buddhism, which has conquered a good part of the Chinese and Japanese, arose in India.

The subjection of India to foreign rule is not a new thing. Long before the English were ever heard of there, one conquering people after another crossed the mountains into the country and subdued the peoples they found there-Persians, Greeks, Scythians, Central Asiatics, Mohammedans. It is sometimes said that the Indians were exposed to conquest because they were themselves so gentle and peaceful a people, so absorbed in contemplation of higher things that the violent of the earth found them an easy prey. Nothing could be more absurd. The Indians of former times were by no means averse from war. The history of ancient India, so far as it can be recovered, is a history of perpetual fightings, though they were fightings between one Indian people or dynasty and another. The most popular religious work which has come down from earlier centuries, the Bhagavad-gita, starts as the exhortation of an incarnate god addressed to an Indian price, showing him how foolish it is for him to shrink before the battle from slaughtering thousands of his enemies. He is to consider that their souls are immortal, and that he need therefore feel no compunction in destroying their bodies. It was when the Indians had to fight with foreign invaders that on so many occasions

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they went under. Probably one reason for this unhappy feature in the history of the southern projection of Asia is just that it is the southern projection. We speak often of the supposed contrast of East and West, but the contrast of North and South is just as important. The climate of India, nearer the Equator, acts as a terrible oppression upon the races who, in the wanderings of mankind, have made it their home. Europeans, we know, find the Indian climate so exhausting that they can in most cases (of course, there are individual exceptions) maintain their stamina only by returning at intervals to their cooler home-lands. One would have thought that by the process of natural selection the race actually inhabiting the country would, in the course of centuries, have become adapted to its physical environment. And no doubt this has happened to a considerable extent. It is possible for a much larger proportion of Indians to be healthy in India than it is for Europeans. Yet the weight of the climate continues apparently to have its effect upon Indians even to-day. I find that my Indian friends almost all tell me that they feel very much more vigorous in Europe than they do at home, and I have had many letters from my friends describing their physical prostration and the decline of their health after returning to Indian conditions. The climate probably affects practical energies rather than the activity of mind. Thus it is understandable that in such a climate a type of man should be produced whose achievements are in the region of speculation and dream, expressed in great religious literature and in great poetry. When the clash came between Indians and men of the more northern

races, the tougher fibre told. And it is to be noted that even within India itself the contrast between North and South counts for something, for the people of the Punjab are often closer in physique to the northern races than to the Indians of the rest of India; the stalwart Sikh policeman is noticeable in other regions of India by his contrast with the people native to the place; the magnificent men we see in Indian regiments, brought occasionally to this country, come largely from Northern India.

No doubt an immense deal of hard physical work is always being done by the labouring masses of India. But such a work can be done in a patient, plodding way, even when vitality is not at its highest. We are often told that submissiveness and an apathetic following of routine characterize the Indian tillers of the soil. If this is so, it must be largely the effect of the climate, always there as a depressing burden, even when habit has made men unconscious of it. The essential note of Indian religion and philosophy-world-weariness, desire to escape from the earthly mode of consciousness-is the index of a temperament for which the sun is a terrible and cruel power. The hand of the Indian, which you take in greeting, is often quite limp and without muscle, and I have sometimes been told by English people that this is one of the things which gives them a kind of physical discomfort when they meet Indians. It has certainly seemed to me that Indian young men, as a generality, have less of that exuberant physical vitality which we describe as "animal spirits", and I think that is really a principal reason why young Englishmen who have it do not feel at home

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with Indians, although they may not themselves be aware of the explanation. Chinese students, I should judge by casual observation, show a temperament much more like that of English undergraduates. Of course, there are many exceptions to all this generalizing. I have known individual young Indians with the same endowment of animal spirits as most young Englishmen and with a hand-grasp as firm and decisive. But it is what the generality of Indians are which has here to be considered.

If this enervating effect of the Indian climate is a fact, as I believe it to be, that fact has an important political bearing. Supposing the Indian peoples are to attain independence in direct conflict with a people of Northern race, that fact is one which they have at the outset to face and, if possible, remedy. For man need by no means be passively determined by the disadvantages of his environment. By his reason and his will he can largely get the better of them, and sometimes in the overcoming of difficulties he will develop his personality more strongly than if the difficulties had never been there. To-day, more than ever before, when science has given us so much larger knowledge of the physical world, the disadvantages of a particular environment can be counteracted by rational method, and perhaps more than neutralized. If the Indians of the past had had the scientific knowledge of the body which we have to-day, and had had a religion which disposed them to work perseveringly for improving conditions in the world around them, it is safe to say that India would not be to-day under foreign rule. Unhappily, by some kind of strange fatality, the Indians of the past seem to have taken to the very ways which, so far from

counteracting the effects of the Indian climate, aggravated them.

So much has been said in the last year or two about the customs determining the age of marriage and the treatment of mothers in pregnancy and childbirth that one need do no more than indicate them here. If any devil had sat down to devise means by which the vitality and stamina of the race could be reduced to its minimum, he could hardly have drawn out a more effective scheme. In regard, again, to the insanitary conditions under which the majority of Indians live, little need be said here. They are now too well known.

The Hindu religion in its higher forms taught men rather to emancipate themselves in spirit from a world which was incurably unsatisfactory than attempt to make the actual world different. In its lower forms it even incorporated in itself those very customs which destroyed the vitality of the race at its root. So far from disposing men to change them, it made it almost impossibly hard to do so. It made the attempt appear dreadful impiety.

Indians cannot help their climate; but all these other things which have held them back are created by human will and can be changed by human will.

Neither England nor America, Indians often say, deserves to be put higher than India, because there are shocking moral evils in those countries, too. Of course there are. But the important question is not where each nation comes on the list in order of merit—God only knows that—but what effect the evils in India are having as a hindrance to India's advance. And here one has to note that the evils in England and America have not the

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same physical result in the race. A dreadful picture may certainly be made by putting together the vice discoverable in European countries and America; but though adultery and fornication may be just as sinful in the sight of God as child-marriage, they do not in themselves (except in so far as they spread venereal disease) sap the physical stamina of the race as child-marriage does. The vice in England and America has not reached the proportions which make a people so weak that it has to submit to foreign rule: the various depressing conditions in India, of which child-marriage is one of the most signal, have weakened Indians to that extent.

We see hundreds of Indian students in this country, and no one can look at them, when a large number are gathered together, without seeing that, as compared with a casual lot, equally numerous, of English undergraduates, they show poor physical development. What chance, one is sometimes disposed to ask oneself, if it really ever came to a struggle, would men like that have against the young men of Northern races? Testimony which comes to me from India leads me to believe that mentally, too, the student class there is much below what it might be, if Indian society were ordered aright. A friend of mine, a Hindu of high caste, is a teacher in an Indian university. He expressed to me a year or two ago his discouragement at the general quality of his pupils. Early marriage had, he said, in the case of most, left them no capacity for taking hold of ideas: it was almost impossible to interest them in anything but the material side of life. He did not blame them, for they had already, as fathers, the care of providing for a family, and were bound

to consider, in the first instance, how to earn money. It was not their fault; it was the fault of the social system. They combined, as he put it, "the cynicism of old men with the ignorance of children". In *The Times* of February 18, 1929, an address of Sir Stanley Jackson, the Governor of Bengal, to the Convocation of Calcutta University is reported, in which he referred to the appalling revelation made public by the students' welfare scheme: "that only three out of every ten students are physically normal".

But even if these things are true of the majority of students under the present system, a sufficient number of individuals, even to-day, show bodies and minds finely developed to prove that there is no essential inferiority in the Indian race as such, but only weaknesses which a rational constitution of society would go far to cure. Individual Indian students in our universities have won the highest honours and shown a freshness and quickness of mind which makes converse with them a delight. Others have distinguished themselves in gamesespecially in cricket and tennis. You might, I think, by picking out the finest specimens, in regard to physical development, make an assemblage of young men whose beauty and agility of body it would not be easy to match amongst English undergraduates. That shows what Indians can be. Unhappily, most young Indians are not like that.

A capital truth to be grasped in regard to India is that the weakness of the people is the cause of the foreign government, and not the foreign government the cause of the weakness. And you do not necessarily remove causes by removing effects; but you do necessarily remove effects

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by removing causes. If one understands *swaraj* in a purely negative sense, as connoting only that a foreign government is not there, but not implying anything of what *is* there, when the foreign government is gone, and if it were merely a question of giving India *swaraj* in this negative sense, the Indian problem would be simple indeed. The British could leave to-morrow and the thing would be done! But the problem is really of such complexity that the best part of the British to-day desire that India should have *swaraj*, and at the same time no one in England—except a few ill-informed extremists on the fringe of the Labour Party—would be willing that the British should evacuate India to-morrow. It may be worth while to consider both these apparently opposed inclinations in the British mind.

And first, let us make it clear that the British really do desire to see India free.



CHAPTER III

THE MOTIVES OF THE BRITISH

THERE may be people on the British side who believe that the motives of British statesmanship in regard to India are altruistic and exalted all through, or who, without believing this, put forward in public an idealized scheme of British action which does not correspond with the reality. There are, on the other hand, no doubt a great many cynics who like to represent the motives of statesmen as entirely base, or at any rate nationally selfish. The young especially often mistake cynicism for cleverness. In truth, the cynic is just the person who is blind to the interest and wonder of human nature. For human nature really is a very queer thing-rising at one moment to heights of divine self-sacrifice and sinking at another moment below the beast. All over the world the higher and lower motives are in conflict, and to anyone who has eyes that conflict is tragic and splendid. The cynic is without eyes. In the same individual opposite motives work. It is perhaps impossible to find any human virtue which has not some alloy of baser motive, and in the most degraded there may suddenly be shoots of strange and beautiful goodness. Most of what is called hypocrisy is unconscious, and is often only the failure of men to be true in practice throughout to their own ideals and professed principles.

The motive which led the British to set the freedom of India before themselves as a goal may perhaps best be described as a sense of decency. It may be asked, Why did

they suddenly begin to proclaim this intention in 1917? Why had they not stated this all the time before? As a matter of fact, there had, as I wrote in 1913, been, as far back as that date, some authoritative utterances that it was the ultimate object of British rule to train India for self-government. But it was the War which made the British Government adopt distinctly and definitely the policy of trying to establish self-government in India by stages and made them set about the first stage of diarchy ¹ at once. Before that, though there had been the powerful movement of opinion just indicated in favour of making self-government the goal in India, there were, no doubt, a good many men of influence, especially men who had done military or civil service in India, opposed to any surrender of power at all, like the critic who pencilled comments on the pages of my little book; it was still not quite certain which was the Government who would go. The War caused the Government to commit itself to the policy of gradual surrender.

The War brought to a head, on the British side, for two main reasons, the resolution to steer for self-government in India. One reason was a feeling that the willing part taken by Indians in the War called for recognition; the comradeship of the battlefield must have its consequence in political equality. The other reason, and per-

¹ This, and not "dyarchy", is the proper spelling, though Mr. Lionel Curtis unfortunately adopted "dyarchy' from a letter, he tells us, of Sir William Meyer (*Dyarchy*, p. xxxii). $\Delta iap\chi la$ would be possible in Greek, as meaning "double rule" ($\delta l \partial p ovor \kappa p \Delta r o \varsigma$ in Aeschylus), but $\delta v a \rho \chi l a$ would be a monstrosity.

haps in the end the more powerful reason, was the effect upon the minds of the British people of the idea of "the self-determination of nations", which was so continually put forward in the propaganda of the Allies against Germany. It is sometimes said that the cry of "self-determination" was not raised sincerely. That is not true of a large number of the people who gave it their voices. It would, of course, be impossible to deny that some speakers on platforms, or writers for the Press, may have used it as mere propaganda without any sincere conviction; but certainly a large number of people, including many men of political influence, were thoroughly sincere in exalting "self-determination" as the requirement of justice in international life. No one, for instance, who had any personal contact with the group represented by New Europe, the editor of which paper afterwards became so well known to India, Sir Frederick Whyte, can doubt for a moment that "self-determination" was a cause for which they had made it a principal thing in their lives to contend. I believe it even to be true that self-determination was one of the ideas by which Mr. Lloyd George was really, if spasmodically, guided in his policy. And the actual rearrangement of the map of Europe after the War gives no ground to a cynic for saying that the idea had been insincere propaganda whilst the War was undecided. One has only to set maps of Europe and the Nearer East, coloured ethnographically, beside the maps of Europe and the Near East coloured according to States, before the War and after, to see how much more closely the map of to-day corresponds with ethnographical divisions. It is true, no doubt, that in marking out the boundaries

of States the principle of nationality cannot be followed with absolute rigidity, and that minor modifications have to be made in consideration of such things as mountain-chains or rivers, or where nationalities are very much mixed in certain regions some portions of peoples have to be left on the wrong side of the frontier. It is also unfortunately true that in some respects the victorious Powers violated the principle they professed when they drew the new frontiers—most flagrantly in assigning non-Polish territory to Poland, the spoilt child of these Powers. In the case of some fragments of nationalities attached to alien States, the treatment meted out to them to-day bears too great a resemblance to the way the Germans treated their Polish and Danish provinces before the War.

Yet, take it all in all, it remains true that the claims of the various nationalities of Europe to self-determination have been met by the new map to a vastly greater extent than they were met by the old, and that the Turkish Empire has given place to a group of really national States.

Of course, one must acknowledge that, sincere as the Allies may have been in standing for self-determination in regard to Europe and the Nearer East, they cannot claim great merit for their championship of the principle, because it was a principle which, if applied, bore very much harder on the enemy than it did on themselves, except on the old Russia. If applied to France, it would mean no reduction, since there was no European population attached to France which did not want to be French. Italy, too, had no European population which did not

want to be Italian-unless the few Home Rulers who may have existed in Sicily deserve to be counted. Great Britain had no European population which did not want to be British, except the people of Central and Southern Ireland, and it seemed possible that their claims might be. satisfied by Home Rule. But, applied to Germany, it meant the severance of large districts of Polish population on the east and on the west, the severance of districts inhabited by Danes, and of Alsace-Lorraine, whose population, though mainly German in stock, preferred to be attached to France. Applied to Austria-Hungary, meant complete dismemberment-Czechoslovaks, it Southern Slavs, Rumanians detached from Habsburg rule, and Austria proper, German in population, left a State no bigger than Switzerland. Applied to the Turkish Empire, it again meant dismemberment and the erection of the Arab countries as independent States. Nor could the claims of Poles, Southern Slavs, and Rumanians, under the Hohenzollern or the Habsburg Crown, have been satisfied by any measure of Home Rule, as the claims of Ireland conceivably might be, because these people wanted not only Home Rule, but union with their kinsmen on the other side of the frontier. No measure of Home Rule could possibly satisfy the Irish if, on beyond Ireland in the Atlantic, there was another larger island inhabited by Irish and politically independent with which the Irish of Ireland wished to unite. That was the problem of Croatia and Bosnia and Transylvania for Austrian and Hungarian statesmen, and there was no solution of it compatible with the continued existence of the Habsburg realm. No Power has so great responsibility for bringing

on the War in 1914 as Austria, not Germany nor Russia yet it must be recognized that in fighting against Great-Serbian nationalism, Austria-Hungary was fighting for its own existence. You can hardly expect any State to agree to its own dissolution. But when once the spirit of nationalism had been aroused, Austria-Hungary could go on existing only by continued violence done to the principle of national self-determination. That was the tragedy which brought on the Great War.

This has been something of a digression, but it is understandable that all the talk about self-determination in Europe and the Turkish Empire profoundly affected general feeling amongst educated people in England in regard to the problem of India. It was impossible for the British to go about saying what a fine thing self-determination was, and what fine principles the British Commonwealth had, compared with those of Germans and Austrians and Turks, and not feel that it would be a fine thing to concede self-determination to Indians. It is psychologically perfectly natural that at that moment the British sincerely embraced the idea of a self-governing India in a way they had never done before. It is natural even if you were to suppose-what is not true-that the British talk about self-determination had been purely hypocritical; for even a hypocrite may be influenced by the part he adopts and find his view of things gradually shaped by the principles which he continues to proclaim as excellent. He may, more or less, really become what he set out to act. That is one of the things which make it hard to draw a hard-and-fast line between hypocrisy and moral effort to be better; for moral effort means

that a man tries to act in a character which has not yet become firmly his own, to conform himself to an ideal which is still beyond him.

So far as the British were influenced by their own championship of self-determination to embrace the idea of self-government in India, they were moved by an ideal motive. They desired self-government in India, not because it would bring them any advantage, but because they saw it as the just thing, the fine thing. It may be thought shrewd to say with a smile that no people in possession of power or territory have ever surrendered it willingly; but it is really silly. The will to perform altruistic actions and to make sacrifices is just as truly an element in human nature as the clinging to power and possessions; and if there are many instances in history when the latter motive has excluded the operation of the former, there are also instances when the former motive has prevailed over the latter. If we have to recognize that individuals have quite commonly sacrificed themselves for their country, there is nothing impossible in the people of a country, as a whole, surrendering something for the sake of mankind, for a principle of justice which is higher than patriotism. When Gladstone caused Great Britain to cede the Ionian Islands to the new Greek national State, no one can allege that the action had any motive but an ideal one.

Nor do I think that the motive of doing what is morally just is the only ideal motive which may come in. There is another one harder to classify; I can think of no better way of describing it than aesthetic. I mean the kind of interest which an historian has in contemplating the

movement of mankind, with its dramatic variations, its development of different peoples, each with a distinct genius of its own; or the kind of interest which a traveller has whose journeyings make him, like Ulysses, acquainted with a great variety of lands and peoples.

> Much have I seen and known—cities of men And manners, climates, councils, governments.

And to-day, even if a man does not travel in the body, he can survey, by what he reads and hears, and by the pictures he sees, the countries and peoples of the globe with all their richly varied characteristics. What such an observer of mankind desires is that each national tradition should be exhibited distinct and unblurred, a spontaneous outcome of each people's life; and if it were possible for the different nations to be assimilated by force to one alien type, though it were his own national type, it would deprive the spectacle for him of its essential interest. The pleasure which many Englishmen find in going to France or Germany or Italy comes just from the environment being different from the familiar one at home: very likely they are anything but pleased to meet their fellow-countrymen abroad and avoid their company. So in the case of India, the more it was a really Indian India, the distinctive expression in all departments of life of the Indian mind and temperament, the greater interest would it have for such an observer. There is no doubt a great interest for any intelligent person in the system of government carried on by the British in India, the arrangements by which the various administrative

problems have been grappled with by British statesmanship, the modifications which the system has undergone in the course of time to meet new conditions; but the study of this is part of the study of the British people, not of the Indian peoples. It has the same kind of interest, as the study of the Roman Empire, of that great system of law and government extended by Rome over a heterogeneous multitude of peoples. Both Roman rule and British rule have been great facts in the history of mankind, and the study of both is thoroughly worth while. But the study of British rule in India is not the study of India, and the essential interest of India for such an observer as we have spoken of would be greater if in the political department, as well as in others, the Indian mind and character expressed itself spontaneously. I am sure that such a feeling as this is not uncommon amongst the English-amongst those naturally whose education has fitted them to take a wide view of the world and the history of man.

The combination of this aesthetic feeling, if it may be called so, with the moral feeling for what is just, has strongly disposed the best part of the British people to desire a self-governing India. Yet there is no body of opinion in England of any weight which would agree to the complete withdrawal of the British at the present moment. How is this? What are the motives which deter?

One motive commonly assigned I believe to be quite negligible—the love of domination. It is a *cliché* of the Nationalist Press and platform that the British refuse to give up India because the reflexion that India is under

British rule in itself gives them pleasure. In those circles which determine Government action this motive is not there. There are, as has been admitted, self-regarding motives, as well as altruistic ones, which hold the British back-we shall deal with them presently; but these motives do not include any love for domination as such. That is a motive ruled out, in the best part of the British people, by the motives which, as we have seen, make the idea of a self-governing India attractive to them. The mistake of Indians in supposing that the love of domination is a motive of British policy is easily understandable, because they do actually see this motive operative in a certain number of the less educated men and women of pure, or of mixed, British race to be met with in India. Where the political conditions give a position of superiority to one of the nations represented in the Indian peninsula, it cannot but be that among the thousands of that nation there are a certain number of individuals of the baser kind who like to domineer. Human nature being what it is, that is inevitable. And even if the majority of Englishmen in India behave civilly, any Indian who has met some hundreds of them is likely to have met some individuals who behaved rudely to him; and quite naturally such rudeness remains in his mind, and the resentment may colour his whole attitude afterwards. I remember one of my Indian friends once telling me that, so far as he had been able to trace, violent anti-British Nationalism, when sincere, almost always had its roots in some incident of that kind in the man's personal experience. That was before the days of psycho-analysis. And only the other day I had a letter from an Indian friend, a man of wider

European literary culture than any other Indian I know He wrote:

I am incapable of objectivity in judging the uses and demerits of the British connexion. Surely much good has come out of it. My own life has been richer and more adventurous and fuller for it. But when I think of the British in India, I always see a drunken, rough soldier who entered our house and whipped my aunt, or a Customs official (probably a Eurasian) who hit my father for being in his wife's way on the pavement. That such things can take place is enough for me to condemn a relation which has developed along many contradictory paths.

That such things are possible-that they should sometimes occur is, I fear, as I have said, inevitable-adds another motive to those which impel the best Englishmen to desire that the British position of political superiority should give place to a relation of equality. And it is quite natural that such incidents should lead Indians to generalize from the few rude Englishmen (or Eurasians) whom they meet to the British people as a whole. But it is nevertheless a mistake to suppose that, among those educated circles in England whose opinions affect Government action, love of domination has any place. You cannot really infer the mind of the Government in England from the behaviour of a drunken soldier and a Eurasian Customs official in India-or even from more highly placed Englishmen in India, who may on occasion treat Indians with rudeness or a manner of offensive superiority.

But if it is not the love of domination which holds the British back, what is it? One altruistic motive, I think,

and two self-regarding ones. The altruistic motive comes from the consideration of what would probably happen to India if the British withdrew now. It is unnecessary to labour this, because it is the argument which springs automatically to the lips of almost every Englishman whenever the subject of Indian self-government comes up. "Do you realize what it would mean in India if the British withdrew? All the antagonistic elements in India, held in leash by the British rule, would immediately spring at each other's throats. It would be a sanguinary chaos. And the great masses of the Indian people who till the soil and who are kept by the British administration at a certain level of well-being-it is they who would be chief sufferers from such a state of things-if not from an actual break-down of government, at any rate from the neglect and incompetence of the lawyers and journalists who would try to direct the Government machine." We have heard all that said very often. Indians have heard it said by Englishmen till they are tired of hearing it; but the fact that a statement is made very often does not prove that it is not true. It seems to me fairly certain that something very like that would follow a withdrawal of the British to-day. We cannot, of course, be quite sure what would happen under imagined conditions which do not exist; but I do not see that from the Indian side any arguments have been brought forward to give assurance that such a forecast of what would happen is baseless. Sometimes Indians say, "But even if it did happen, it is worth while having a period of sanguinary chaos if we find our own way for ourselves out of the chaos and establish a Government according to our own mind."

Certainly, if one could be sure that the chaos would be only a temporary condition leading to a state of things better than the present, the chaos might be worth while. But there seems to me no ground for confidence that the chaos would lead to a better state of things. It might go, on for a very long while and cause untold sufferings to millions. Probably in the end local despotisms would be established by the abler or luckier adventurers; and I fear that it would involve also foreign interference in a worse form than the present. It is almost certain that the contending elements in India would, for the sake of prevailing one over the other, be ready to engage the services of discreditable European adventurers who had some technical military skill or organizing ability. There are always a certain number of such adventurers at loose ends in Europe, and an India in chaos would offer them a tempting field of prey. If there is going to be European interference it is far better that it should be by the responsible agents of a regular Government than by such filibustering soldiers of fortune.

It is obviously impossible either to prove, or to disprove, that what this forecast supposes would take place. But it is a demonstrable fact that, rightly or wrongly, but absolutely sincerely, the great majority of Englishmen who have acquaintance with India *believe* that it would take place. That psychological fact, which cannot be questioned, is a factor of capital importance in the situation. Any arguments on grounds of theoretical justice, or the beauty of constitutional liberty, do not, indeed, leave them cold, but are neutralized when they think of the

consequences, should they who hold up the pillars of government in India abruptly retire and leave the fabric to collapse. You might have brought them by abstract argument almost to the point of resolving to go, but when it came to the point, and they pictured in imagination the misery which such an action would bring upon millions-no, that is impossible. The simplest humanitarian feeling here dictates, not elaborate examination of the right of the British to be in India; for it might, I think, be hard to show that the British had any right to undertake the government of India in the first instance. They feel themselves trustees for the welfare of three hundred and fifty million people-but what authority made them trustees? Yet such considerations do not remove the moral impossibility of going now. Even if you take the blackest view of the original penetration of India by the British, if you picture them like pirates taking possession of a ship-the figure would not really be fair, because, although the British first established themselves in India from two self-regarding motives, the desire to make money and the desire to prevent India being seized by the French, still they did not find India as a ship happily navigated by its native crew, they found it as a ship over which different bands of pirates were already quarrelling; they thrust themselves in among the number and gradually got possession. Nor did they, in coming, violate any national sentiment, such as exists to-day; it mattered little, probably, to the passive population of India in those days whether their masters were European or Asiatic. The British Empire in India has this in common with the old Habsburg Empire in

Europe, of which we have already spoken; that, too, was put together at a time before Nationalist sentiment was aroused; its troubles began when the different peoples included in the artificial frame awoke to national consciousness. But supposing, as I was about to say, you take the blackest view of the British acquisition of India, and picture them like pirates seizing a ship, what would be the duty of the pirates if, after they had navigated the ship for a long time, they experienced sudden conversion, and all at once desired to do the morally right thing? Would it be right for them, if an opportunity of leaving the ship offered, to leave it there and then? Hardly, if by this time those who were left of the original crew and passengers could not by themselves provide the hands and the technical knowledge required to navigate the ship, and the waters it had to traverse were difficult and dangerous. If it had been a crime, then, to take possession of the ship, it would be no less a crime now to abandon it. The pirates would be bound in duty to remain on board and navigate the ship till they had brought it safely to port, or till a sufficient number of the old crew had learnt the art of navigation. One cannot always make good a wrong action simply by reversing it. Thus the answer to the question whether the British were justified or not in going into India does not settle the question whether they ought now to leave India. If the forecast of what would follow their leaving is true, their leaving it now would be shameful.

It is plain, then, that those to-day amongst the British who take what is called in journalistic language the view "sympathetic to Indian national aspirations" do not,

with negligible exceptions, differ from the old Diehards of the club arm-chairs in regard to their forecast of the consequences, should the British quit India altogether at the present moment. This applies just as much to the leaders of the Labour Party as to Conservative and Liberal politicians. Where they differ signally from the old Diehards is in believing that with time the internal conditions in India may be so changed that the British might withdraw without the disastrous consequences following, and that it is worth while to work persistently to help Indians to bring about that change. But when this is expressed by saying that they do not believe Indians yet to be "fit for self-government", a wrong idea may easily be conveyed. Those educated Indians who are conscious that they have the same qualifications as educated Englishmen-being, some of them, cleverer than most members of the British Parliament-resent the implication that they are incapable of carrying on an efficient administration. And the less well-informed members of the Labour Party, meeting Indian politicians of this stamp, think that no further inquiry into the readiness of India for self-government is needed, and that the British might just as well pack up to-morrow. Certainly, if one takes the best Indian leaders, their high ability is obvious. If one or other of these men were transplanted to the British Parliament or the London County Council, they would make their mark there. There is no assembly in the world to which Mr. Srinivasa Sastri would not be an ornament; when he was at Geneva amongst statesmen picked from all over Europe, he was one of the menso I have been told by someone present-who made the

greatest impression by his personality and mastery of speech.

But the truth is that the conditions which would make India fit for self-government are not yet reached, because you have a number of educated men individually able. What makes constitutional government possible in England is that you have, not only a large number of educated and able men who can perform the actual work of administration, but that you have behind them a great body of active public opinion which keeps the administrators continually under criticism and prevents their falling below a certain level of industry, honesty, and efficiency. If you had only the class of administrators, without the continual force of public opinion, it is hardly credible that in England the administration would not soon sink in industry, honesty, or efficiency. It is this body of effective public opinion which is still wanting in India. It can only exist when education has become much wider spread, and the great mass of the people, now ignorant and passive, has acquired the knowledge and the will to keep the administrators up to the mark. The British Civil Service in India is kept at its present level only because it is continually influenced by the public opinion of England; it is continually recruited from young men who have been impressed during their early years with the British standards of conduct in regard to public duty, and who know that the eyes of their fellow-countrymen are always upon them. But suppose India were severed from Great Britain in a way which left the British personnel of the Civil Service domiciled in India, cut off from the public opinion at home, and with no effective

public opinion in India to control them, I do not think that the present level of industry, honesty, and efficiency would long be maintained—perhaps in the first generation, but not in the second. If, therefore, we hold that a class of Indian administrators would not be satisfactory, without the control of public opinion, we are not putting educated Indians individually below educated Englishmen. No class of administrators of any race domiciled in India, as India is to-day, and not controlled by a public opinion, would be satisfactory. One may say, indeed, that the fundamental thing in the problem of India is the creation of an effective Indian public opinion. If that can be achieved, then indeed the British may think of packing up.

Till such effective public opinion is there, the British do not see an India into whose hands they might resign control. The thin line of an educated intelligentsia is not India, and their demands are not the demands of India. Peasant India remains a vague mass in the background still slumbering in primitive ignorance, but with very real needs for food and health and happiness. If it is true that the sanguinary chaos would follow a withdrawal of the British to-day, the British might even so withdraw and feel they were not guilty of any dereliction of duty, supposing the Indian people as a whole, with a full understanding of what it meant, told them that it preferred the chaos to British rule. No such declaration can come from the Indian people to-day because, even if it were possible to stir up the peasantry to raise a cry for swaraj, they are too ignorant to know what a withdrawal of the British would mean. At the time of the agitation seven or eight

years ago, some of the peasantry were asking for *swaraj* under the impression that it meant that they would no longer have to pay any taxes. Naturally that sounded very nice. Supposing we withdrew from India on the demand of the thin line of the intelligentsia, and the anticipated consequences followed, might not this great mass of agricultural India reproach us bitterly for the unfaithfulness which abandoned them to their fate, simply because we were asked to do so by a number of lawyers and journalists who had no authority to speak in their name?

An Indian friend wrote to me a few months ago:

The interest of our rural population must be the first and foremost consideration of the Government. There is no leadership in rural areas. Extension of the rural franchise will not solve the problem. For a quarter of a century the Indian Government's main concern should be to give effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Agriculture. After that period we shall see the real foundation of a representative form of government emerging out of the modernized socio-economic life of the people. In reframing a constitution for India we must remember two words of the Preamble to the Government of India Act: (1) responsible, (2) representative government is the chief aim of the constitution. Are the present leaders representative? Have they shown earnestness to undertake the full responsibilities involved in the task of rural betterment? Personally, I do not care what administrative machinery you may devise for India, I want better living, better farming, better education of the 95 per cent. of our population.

I have tried to explain the altruistic motive which deters the British from leaving India to-day; but I had admitted that there are also two self-regarding motives. We now

come to these. The first and most important was rightly characterized by the critic of my book, already spoken of, when he said that the British would shrink from losing the great amount of capital sunk in India. When he inferred that the talk of preparing India for self-government was cant, that was not true; but it was quite true that one reason for which the British shrink from the idea of chaos in India is the fearful blow which such a state of things would inflict upon the economic fabric of Great Britain. It would mean losses not only to great financiers and merchants, but severe loss to a great number of humble homes all over the country. Such a large amount of money comes to Great Britain from India in the form of interest on capital invested in India, in railways, agriculture, industrial enterprise, that if chaos in India turned all this wealth to smoke, hardly any stocks and shares in Great Britain would remain unaffected. It is not true to say that the return to Great Britain of interest on capital invested in India is an exploitation of India. Any prosperous country desires to attract foreign capital, and the money which it sends back in interest may procure it more than compensating advantages. A successful commercial transaction may be a gain to both sides. A vast amount of British capital is invested in countries which are politically quite independent, in Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, in the United States, and from all those countries there comes to Great Britain a stream of money paid as interest or purchasemoney for British goods. An absolutely independent India would still want to attract British capital and buy British goods, and if an independent India were richer

and more prosperous than India to-day, a larger amount of money in the form of interest and purchase-money for British goods would go from India to England than goes to-day. If it is hard for Indians to believe that the English sincerely desire a healthy and prosperous India, it should be plain to them that self-regarding motives (to leave altruistic ones out of account) must make English business men desire this. They do not want to lose the advantages, it might be said, which they have under British rule, and which the safe guarding of native industries under swaraj would do away. But if India were more prosperous under swaraj, British business men might be credited, at any rate, with the intelligence to see that any advantages they lost in that way would be more than made up for by the general increase of business which prosperity would bring.

England has not drawn any regular tribute from India such as Rome drew from the provinces. In the first days of British rule, in the eighteenth century, individual Englishmen made fortunes in India by discreditable means, but since the actions of the British in India, after the days of Burke and Fox, came to be more closely controlled from home, I do not see that a charge of exploiting the country economically can be substantiated. So far as the charge is made it seems to rest upon two considerations. One is the amount of money paid in salaries and pensions to British officials and for the maintenance of the British military forces in India. Obviously an independent India would not have these heads of expenditure, but it would have to find money for a great many more native Indian officials and for the maintenance

of Indian military and naval forces. That money would, it is true, be mainly spent in India, and the upkeep of a staff of foreign officials and a foreign army is in that way more costly to India. It only remains a question whether the work which has been done in the last century and a half by the foreign officials and the foreign army was not worth the extra cost. That is a very large question which cannot possibly be gone into here. Some Indians believe, or profess to believe, that India left to herself, as India was in the latter part of the eighteenth century, could have done the work just as well. It may, at any rate, be pointed out that you cannot give the complete estimate of what the British have done in India to-day; for the worth of that largely depends on what it is going to lead to. If it is ultimately found to have helped to set up an India capable of self-government, its worth will be much higher than if it is found that all it could do was to carry on an administration which left the people as weak in themselves at the end of the time as at the beginning. What it is going to lead to, the future alone can show.

Whether, however, the money paid by India for British officials and the British Army has been excessive or not, it certainly does not count as a motive which makes the British unwilling to relinguish control of India. The blow to the British economic system which would be given by chaos in India is a motive, but the money drawn in salaries and pensions by officials and ex-officials affects only a relatively small number of individuals or families. No doubt those who have already done service and retired would be hard hit by the loss of their pensions, but if

that were the only bar to India's attaining self-government it would be well worth India's while to find the small amount required to pay the pensions of ex-officials till their death. Young Englishmen would no longer have the prospect of a career in the Indian Civil Service; but, that would certainly not be felt in England as a great privation. Three or four years ago the Government was even being troubled because so few young Englishmen came forward as candidates for the India Civil Service; it was not a question of keeping in existence a number of posts eagerly coveted by the British, but of finding enough young Britons who wanted the posts actually there.

The other consideration upon which the charge of exploiting India has been based is that the British made laws which gave an advantage to British commercial enterprise in India over Indian commercial enterprise. This again raises large economic questions with which I am incapable of dealing. In any case what the laws made by the British did was to establish a system of Free Trade, and the complaint from the Nationalist side is that Free Trade was unfair to India, because India's infant industries needed protection against the fully developed industries of Great Britain. We know how intricate and doubtful the controversy between Free Traders and Protectionists is in regard to the industries of Great Britain. Indian industrialists would no doubt have had a better chance of making more money at the outset if Indian industries had been protected against British competition. Whether the Indian people as a whole would have benefited by Protection is precisely a matter on which different European economists would take

different views, and on which, I fancy, Indian economists would differ. It cannot, at any rate, be said that the policy of Free Trade was a selfish policy, because it gave an open door not only to the commerce of Great Britain, but to the commerce of other nations as well. German industrial enterprise before the War was making rapid advance in India. On the other hand, it was not, of course, unselfish in any meritorious sense, because the British believed that Free Trade was the policy recommended by enlightened self-interest. In any case, to-day the controversy does not affect the question of swaraj, since India already has the power of imposing protective duties if it wishes to do so. I remember some time about 1914 talking to an Indian of ability in the Civil Service, and his maintaining that the real test of British sincerity in professions of good will to India would be whether England would consent to India's putting protective duties on foreign imports, including British. He doubted whether the British would ever consent to that. I met him again two years ago, and reminded him of our previous conversation, saying: "How now? What you thought hardly possible has come to pass." He smiled, and said that it was so, but that he himself had now come to question whether protective duties were really a good thing for India.

What British business interests require is, not to exploit India but to have in India a field where conditions are so orderly and stable that the capital already invested in the country—in railways, tea-plantations, and so on is safe, that there are favourable prospects for further commercial enterprise in the future, and a large demand

for British goods-a market such as they have in Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina, but ampler and more secure. It is not swaraj in itself that they shrink from, but the consequences of swaraj. It is odd to think, but it is true, that the picture in the mind of extreme Indian Nationalists. of that which they want to realize is not so far from what British business interests desire. For extreme Nationalists picture the India which would exist with swaraj as an orderly and prosperous India, and if it were an orderly and prosperous India it would be a favourable field for British trade and British capital. Nothing, strange as it seems, would tend to remove the British opposition to swaraj more effectually than if the Indian extremist leaders could give British men of business a sure guarantee that the extremist programme would be realized! Of course, it is quite impossible for anyone to give such a guarantee; for the control of the antagonistic elements in India is not a task which any set of people can be sure that they would succeed in till they have tried. British commercial interests do not want to run the risk of the experiment being made under existing conditions.

The second self-regarding motive which deters the British from leaving India at present is the fear that the country would be taken possession of by some other Power. Such a fear, not lust of conquest, was a main motive in the expansion of British power in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—such a fear combined with the desire of commercial gain. Lust of conquest may have been the driving motive in the old world-conquerors, Alexander the Great, Jenghiz Khan, Timur Leng. But even in the expansion of Rome the lust of conquest

probably came in only now and then-in the plans of Julius Caesar, perhaps, or in those of Trajan. Rome, like Great Britain, won its empire without having intended to do so at the beginning, by advance after advance, prompted by the special circumstances of each case which made it seem desirable to suppress some particular enemy just beyond the existing frontier. British rule in India did not, indeed, grow by an insensibly gradual process, but by notable acts of annexation made at particular moments by certain of the men who held the post of Governor-General. And it would be impossible to prove that none of them had any feeling of gratification in thinking that the Empire was bigger in consequence of their action. Yet I believe that if they had such a feeling it was not their main motive. A State hostile or restless just beyond the frontier was an annoyance in the work of administration, and to annex outright seemed a more satisfactory alternative than continual fresh intervention. Before Dalhousie, for instance, annexed the Punjab, there had been an attempt to secure the peace of the frontier in that direction by supporting a native Government. I think the motive in such cases was less the desire to conquer for conquest's sake than the desire "to make a clean job of it". A man with an ideal of strong, orderly government saw a better and a simpler general adjustment when disturbing factors were got under the regular control of the central power. A trouble was then disposed of once for all, which otherwise would have to be dealt with over and over again. The bent to simplify and regulate in a high-handed way may be an unamiable characteristic, but it would be a psychological inexacti-

tude to identify such a tendency with the sheer lust of conquest.

The motive, beside the commercial one, which at the outset impelled the British to establish their power in certain regions of Asia and Africa, was the fear that this or the other weaker country would be seized by a rival Power and made a base for hostile operations. In the eighteenth century, when England was constantly engaged with France, first with the Bourbon monarchy and then with Napoleon, it was fear of the French. In the nineteenth century, when the British occupied Egypt, it was not from any pleasure which they had in directing the Egyptians. It was not from any desire to engross the wealth of Egypt; they did not use their power in Egypt to give an advantage to their own commerce. Before the War, German enterprise in Egypt was going ahead faster than British. They occupied Egypt because it lay at a critical point on the main maritime high-road which connected England with India and with Australasia, and an Egypt weak and disorderly would probably be occupied by a rival Power. This was not nonsense. During the War, when I was reading the German Press in different Government bureaux of information, it was one of the stock things to which German public men and journalists continually recurred, that after the War they would obtain command of the Suez Canal, themselves or through their friends the Turks, and so be in a position at any moment to put upon England a pressure which would force England to give way to their wishes.

It is to be noted that this motive, the fear of rival

Powers, has been very much modified by the result of the War. There is no rival Power now whom England fears as it feared Germany since the beginning of the century and France before that. The removal of this fear may be seen in the fact that England soon after the end of the War reduced its control of Egypt to a minimum, leaving there only a relatively small body of troops which would relieve it from any anxiety about the Suez Canal. But what has changed the situation more than anything else is the creation of the League of Nations. If the authority of the League becomes surely established, and it comes to include the United States and Russia, the fear which each nation had of its rivals in the past will be very much diminished. A nation now occupying a weaker country might thus quit it much more readily and leave the people of the land to make their own experiments in government. Even if they made a mess of it, there would be less danger of a rival nation stepping in. I do not think that Indians generally realize how greatly their interests are affected by the success or unsuccess of the League of Nations. It may seem to them to mean only a series of arrangements which the European Powers make among themselves; but if the mutual fears and suspicions of the European Powers have been a main motive driving forward European imperialism, the removal of those fears and suspicions is an essential condition for the withdrawal of European control from the East. The period, as a matter of fact, since the establishment of the League has been a period in which European control in Asia has visibly contracted, and the two phenomena are not unrelated.

The desire of the British to have in India a field for honest and legitimate commercial enterprise is, although self-regarding, not selfish in a bad sense so long as it does not seek to override the just claims of Indians. If it would be a good thing for Indians that the British should leave India at once, and if there were at the same time some commercial advantage to the British in staying, then it would be definitely selfish, not only self-regarding, in the British to stay; and those amongst the British who care for justice more than gain would lift their voices declaring that the British must go. But here comes in the complexity of the present situation : those who care for justice in England to-day believe, by a great majority, that it would be a bad thing for the Indians that the British should leave India now. So the altruistic and selfregarding motive do not in this case clash, but coincide in their practical result. Now when a man alleges an altruistic motive for an action, and at the same time admits a self-regarding one, it is commonly supposed that the self-regarding motive is his real motive, and that the altruistic motive is merely an afterthought intended to give a fairer colour to his action. And when we consider the process by which British power has expanded, such a suspicion in this case might seem confirmed; for it is quite certain that self-regarding motives alone, and not altruistic ones, have impelled the British to extend their rule over other countries. It has never even been pretended, when they have entered another country, that they have done so out of love to the inhabitants, because they could not bear to see them so badly governed and yearned to give them the benefits of British

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rule. It is only after they have established their rule in a country, in order to defend their own national interests or to secure a source of economic supply, that they allege a consideration for the good of the inhabitants as a motive which forbids them to quit it.

This is absolutely true, but it does not prove the alleged motive to be a mere pretence. For to go into a country and govern it, when the national interests did not require such a step, would be an act of self-sacrifice on the part of the governing nation; it would be an expenditure of its energies and resources in a direction which brought it no compensating advantage. And it is hard to think of circumstances which would make it right for a nation to sacrifice its own interests, when the sacrifice was not required by the obligations of justice. The people of country A, still in no political connexion with country B, have not such a claim upon country B that country B is bound in justice to make a sacrifice on their behalf. But if country B has once imposed its rule upon country A, then it has contracted obligations to the people of that country, and it becomes a matter of justice that country B should make a consideration for their interests a real motive for its action.

It has been maintained—especially in Germany before the War—that the ethics of private life do not apply to nations at all, that one nation is not bound to consider right and wrong in its dealings with another nation, but only its own advantage. The truth, I think, is that the same principles of right and wrong as apply in private life apply to dealings between nations, but that the analogy to the nation in private life is not the

individual acting as a separate individual, but the individual acting as a trustee. For the actions of nations are determined by the Government of each nation, and the Government consists of men who are trustees for the national interests; they would be unfaithful to their trust if they sacrificed the national interests out of benevolence to some other people. This is just the same in private life; a man who has the disposal of property on behalf of a ward incapable of making decisions on his own account would act wrongfully if he gave away money in charity out of the property. The trustee can consider only the law of justice; that law forbids him to try to get for his ward more than his ward's just share, but it equally commands him to secure for his ward his ward's just share to the full. So, too, the Government of a nation is bound not to try to get such advantage for its own nation as would violate the just claims of other nations. A nation may even perform an act of selfsacrifice, when the sacrifice is required by justice-for instance, by fidelity to treaty engagements. We have had a curious illustration of this point lately, when the Balfour Note was denounced by a Socialist statesman, Mr. Snowden, in Parliament as "infamous", on the ground that it was generous to other nations. One answer given on the Conservative side, that an action which deserves the beautiful description of generous cannot be infamous, is wide of the mark. If the Balfour Note really was generous to other nations at the expense of England, Mr. Snowden was quite right in condemning it. Such generosity would be wrong in a statesman, not because the ethics of public life are different

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from the ethics of private life, but because in private life, too, such generosity would be wrong in a trustee. Another defence of the Balfour Note in *The Times*, argues that it was not infamous, because generosity in this case was really intelligent self-interest; it was of advantage to England that economic prosperity should be restored to the Continent of Europe. This, if true, quite justifies the Note; only, in so far as the Note was dictated by national self-interest, it was not generous as self-sacrifice on the part of an individual is generous. A nation cannot be generous in that sense.

If these considerations are right, we can see how a nation could not assume the government of another people for any motives except self-regarding ones. But if its own self-interest prompted it to do so, the action would conflict with justice, unless it were also to the advantage of the people of the country ruled. If, therefore, self-interest prompts a nation to extend its rule over some other people, all those in the nation who care for justice are bound to raise the question whether it is really for the good of the other people that they should he ruled by the nation, and to go on pressing the question to long as the rule of the nation continues, because, even if it was for the advantage of the other people that they should be ruled for a time by the nation in question, ; might not be for their advantage that the rule should continue. In this way the question regarding the good in the subject-people necessarily comes up subsequently in the operation of the self-regarding motives-a sort arguery or challenge set against the nation's self-regarding

action, the voice of a conscience dogging action but not prompting it.

But from the fact that the consideration of the good of the people ruled comes up subsequently to the operation of self-regarding motives, it cannot be inferred that the consideration of the good of the ruled is not a sincere motive, and not a motive which really affects national action. Sometimes, no doubt, there has been an attempt to find moral justification for lines of action altogether evil, followed from selfish motives. A flagrant example is the justification of the slave-trade put forth in the eighteenth century:

To abolish a status which in all ages God has sanctioned, and man has continued, would not only be robbery to an innumerable class of our fellow-subjects; but it would be extreme cruelty to the African savages, a portion of whom it saves from massacre, or intolerable bondage in their own country, and introduces into a much happier state of life; especially now when their passage to the West Indies and their treatment there is humanly regulated. To abolish that trade would be to "shut the gates of mercy on mankind".—Bos-WELL'S *Life of Johnson*, A.D. 1777.

It is salutary for us to bear in mind that things as outrageous as this could be said by decent people in England a few generations ago. Do we suffer from a similar blindspot, we feel bound to ask ourselves. It was certainly not conscious humbug: Boswell quite sincerely believed that the slave-trade conferred a great balance of good upon the Africans. Yet the case of the slave-trade is also perhaps the one which most conclusively refutes the cynic who asserts that moral considerations count for

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nothing in practice. For we see the challenge put to the evil in the first instance by quite a small group in the nation who cared for justice, we see their protest gradually gather to itself a greater and greater volume of public opinion—opinion determined by moral considerations and we see it in the end prevail over the whole compass of self-regarding motives, so that the nation was willing to make a financial sacrifice of twenty millions sterling to meet the claims of justice. The self-regarding motives take the start and the moral motives lag behind, but it may well be with the moral motives that the ultimate victory lies.



CHAPTER IV

THE WAY OUT OF THE DEADLOCK

IF these considerations are valid, it is plain that the solution of the Indian problem, which to some people might seem the simple one-the immediate withdrawal of the British from India-is out of the question. And at this point it should be clearly pointed out that there is no essential difference between immediately conceding to India "Dominion Government" and immediately withdrawing altogether. The blessed phrase "Dominion Government" has been put forward in the demand of a considerable section of Indian Nationalists, but no one seems to know precisely what they understand by it. If "Dominion Government" means the same thing in the case of India as it does in the case of Canada and Australia, it means the complete withdrawal of all British forces. This, in the case of Canada and Australia, does not imply their ceasing to be members of the British Commonwealth of Nations, because, although there is no British garrison in Canada or Australia, they are still tied to England by a strong voluntary bond, constituted by kinship, by old memories, and by present interests. But there is no bond of kinship tying India to England, and if all the British troops were removed from India it is exceedingly unlikely that India would form a single State, adhering to the British Commonwealth. In this case the difference between "Dominion Government" and complete withdrawal is not worth bothering about. It is possible that some Indian politicians who use the

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phrase "Dominion Government" do not wish to see the British forces immediately withdrawn. If so, they use the phrase "Dominion Government" in an improper sense. Nor would it even be possible to contend that India might have the same political independence as Canada or Australia and yet go on being protected by a British army. For it is quite certain that if England has to provide for the military protection of India and for the peace between its different elements, England is bound to have a share in the administration of the country which it has not in the administration of Canada and Australia. To use the phrase "Dominion Government" under those conditions in the case of India would be wholly misleading.

But if England is not willing to withdraw immediately, and if Indian Nationalists are determined to institute a hostile movement against the Government unless "Dominion Government" is granted immediately, is there any way of avoiding the disastrous conflict?

There would certainly seem a strange stupidity somewhere, if a conflict came about, with all its misery and waste, when, as we have seen, there is agreement at the outset between the British and the Indian Nationalists regarding the end. Both picture an India in the future which is on the one hand internally healthy, wealthy, and well-educated, and on the other hand extremely free. But in the making of that picture actual the two sides want to put in its two constituents in different order. The British want first to put in the internal well-being and then add the freedom as the consummation; the Indian Nationalists want to begin with the freedom and then put in the

internal well-being. It is agreed on both sides that to build up a healthy, wealthy, and well-educated India must necessarily take some time-a generation or two generations at least, since in no shorter time could improved arrangements tell in the physique of the race-so that in any case the India seen in visionary picture could not become actual next year, even if one constituent in the picture, the withdrawal of British control, took place next year. The end which both sides desire must obviously be a good many years distant. And it may be asked, supposing fifty years, or a hundred years, hence the end were reached, and you had an India both strong internally and externally free, would it matter very much in which order the two constituents had been put in? To quarrel about that, would it not be like quarrelling whether the rice is to be put on the plate first and the curry on the top, or the curry first and the rice on the top? From both sides the answer would come that in this case the order does matter very much; for each side believes that if you begin by putting in, or trying to put in, the constituent with which the other side wants to begin, the process will never go through. The Indian Nationalists say that a healthy, wealthy, and well-educated India cannot be built up till after the foreign control has gone; and the British believe that if you began by withdrawing the British control, what would follow would not be the building up of a nation, but a state of misery and confusion which put off any possibility of internal improvement for an indefinite period.

Is there any way out of this deadlock? I believe that there is.

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One must take note that all the quarrelling and debate -or almost all of it-in recent years has been concerned with the question who is going to run the political machine, or how political power is to be distributed between different bodies of men. And it is agreement about this which it seems so hopeless to strive for: you may go on arguing till Doomsday that India is capable or is not capable of self-government, and neither side will be any more convinced of the view of the other at the end. But it seems to me that there is an issue, if we can carry our thought to something more fundamental and ask what, after all, the political machine is for. Political power is not, on any right view, an end in itself, but a means to an end. There may be politicians who think of politics simply as giving them a field in which they can shine individually, or the excitement of a great game, but no one who cares for his nation more than for himself can have such a view. Politics is a means-one means among many-to producing a rich, secure, healthy, and happy national life; and with all this fierce concentration of interest upon the question who is going to run the machine and how the machine is to be constructed the question of the end which the machine is to help to realize drops out of sight. It is as if several people in a motor-car were quarrelling who was to drive, whilst they were quite vague as to the destination and the right road to get there.

If, instead of beginning with questions of the distribution of power, we began with the question how more power is to be generated and to what purposes the power is to be applied, we might make much better progress; for when there is too little power there, no plan for

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distributing it can give a satisfactory result. And in India to-day, if the British direction were withdrawn, the amount of power would be too small-with an India as physically poor, as ill-educated, as superstitious, as divided, as it is to-day, no scheme of political reconstruction could achieve much. There must be more power there for any machinery to work effectively. But when we start by setting before ourselves in imagination the India we want to see brought into being and ask what the most promising means for realizing each element in the picture would be, one thing which immediately strikes us is how very much of the work would not be done by the political machine at all, but by agencies distinct from the State. The State has no doubt an important part in the building up of a nation, and we shall try to see in outline some of the things which the State can do to help. But it is a part only, and one effect of the concentration upon politics in recent years has been an enormous over estimate of the part of the State. One thing, for instance, which one hears continually from the lips of Indians is that, if they once had political independence-a State completely under their own direction-then they could set about building up the nation and achieve the task successfully. I believe this to be a complete illusion. An independent Indian State would not be able to build up a satisfactory Indian nation, any more than a State directed by foreigners can build up a satisfactory Indian nation. No State can build up a satisfactory Indian nation. No State can do more than help in certain ways a work which must largely be done apart from the State.

A view of the State prevalent in former generations in

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Europe, which limited its functions to those of keeping the peace, preventing crime at home and organizing defence against foreigners, is now generally recognized to have been too limited. It is also the State's business to help towards making the nation an efficient and happy nation in bodily, mental, and spiritual respects. This is seen particularly in regard to education, where it is generally held that the State has a duty, as to which more will be said presently. But if that older view of the functions of the State was too narrow, more recent views have assigned far too much to the State. Any healthy national life is largely carried on by private initiative, by voluntary associations, and the formation of public opinion due to a spontaneous process or to successful propaganda by those who champion some particular belief or practice. It is the business of the State to preserve this large field of private enterprise from undue disturbance, to fence it safely against foreign attack, to apply some of the money it raises in taxation to furthering activities useful to the community, to creating conditions by legislation favourable to the general health and mental and spiritual wellbeing. But if this kind of help from the State is indispensable, there is also a danger of the State interfering too much; a good many activities of the national life actually suffer if subjected to unnecessary State direction and control.

If all this is true one sees the fallacy when Indians argue: It is impossible for foreigners to do the work of building up the new India. Of course it is impossible for foreigners to do that work. If the work is ever done at all, it must be done by Indians, done largely in the field of

private enterprise and private social and spiritual propaganda. All that any Government can do, foreign or native, is to fence that field against disturbance and supply means, as may be needed, to some particular activity. And it does not by any means follow, because a foreign Government cannot build up a nation, that a foreign Government cannot keep the fence secure for a certain period while the nation proceeds with its own work of renovation, and continue its general control till the nation has reached the degree of strength which would allow it simultaneously to prosecute the internal work of reconstruction and hold the fence for itself.

Of course, if a Government can by legislation create conditions favourable to wholesome activity, national and social, the converse must be equally true, that a Government may make laws which hinder such activities. That is something for which all Indian patriots should be on the watch, whether the Government is a foreign or an indigenous one. If in the present state of things there are laws made by the British which definitely hinder the progress of India to health and strength, or if there are laws which the Government ought to make to further that process, and does not make, Indians have there something against which to direct their energies of protest and agitation far more important than changes in political machinery. A law which hinders progress is something much more serious than a particular act of the Government, however much such an act may stir resentment at the time. For that reason the agitation which followed the Amritsar affair seems to me to have been, if psychologically inevitable, not altogether happily directed.

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For at that moment the way was just opened to a new state of things, and to refuse to advance in that way, as a protest against something which was an outcome of the old state of things, seemed a mistake. Protest may have been thoroughly justified, but that the protest should take that form was unfortunate. After all, the important thing is not to make the steel frame as comfortable as possible, but so to increase the health and strength of India that it gets rid of the steel frame. No particular act of the Government which inflicts momentary irritation matters nearly so much as legislative arrangements which constitute a permanent impediment to progress.

It will be seen that in regard to each element in this work of building up India there are two things which are important: (1) to have sound knowledge what arrangements, social and legal, do, as a matter of fact, promote the advance of India in this particular respect, and (2) the bringing about an effective body of public opinion in support of such arrangements. In cases where the help of the State is required, it is also important (3) to get the necessary legislative enactments passed.

In regard to the first of these things, the attainment of knowledge, it is by no means something which is come by automatically, without systematic pains. It is not as if to-day Indians saw quite clearly what was wanted, but could not get the necessary laws passed: in regard to many things affecting the well-being of India, Indians are as ignorant as anyone else of what is wanted. The conditions of well-being in the various respects are so complicated that everyone, even the person best informed, must feel his grasp of the problems imperfect. People natu-

rally self-confident, or too unintelligent to understand the complexities of each problem, may rush into some line of ill-considered propaganda. It is true we cannot always go on inquiring, that sooner or later we must act on the best beliefs we have after such a study of the subject as circumstances allow; but a wise man will always hold his beliefs with a certain provisionalness and be ready to modify them in the light of further information. It is at any rate plain that a great deal more systematic study and research is needed, even if we can start activity on the data, as we provisionally see them, to-day.

Who can say with any feeling of certainty what diet, under Indian climatic conditions, would produce the maximum of physical and mental energy? Who can say what regulation of private property on the part of the State would work out in the long run for the greatest happiness of the greatest number? Who can say what arrangements as to popular education would give the best results? One could fill pages with such questions.

Knowledge, knowledge, knowledge, that is the first requirement for the advance of India to real good. This was clearly seen by those who founded the Servants of India Society, which made systematic study of the facts bearing on national and social welfare one of its principal objects. Whether the Society has accomplished all that was hoped I do not know; but I am quite certain that it was guided truly when it set out to make a sound knowledge of the facts the basis of action, and that it is in precisely such work, if it can be extended all over the country, that hope for the advance of India would lie. This kind of research may be carried on in three ways. It

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may be study by an individual, who has the opportunity and the means and who carries on a propaganda by himself, to induce the public to accept and enforce his results. But the knowledge required can often be more effectively gained, and propaganda for its acceptance better carried on, by group effort than by an individual working alone. The second way, therefore, is research by organized, voluntary groups. The Servants of India Society just named is an example. In England we have an example in the Round Table group. All such research is due to the initiative and energy of individuals banded together voluntarily apart from the State. Where the questions studied are highly technical, the groups will be formed by people of special professional knowledge-for instance, questions requiring a knowledge of medicine would naturally be studied by groups of doctors formed ad hoc, or by the established medical bodies. A good deal of research can best be carried on in connexion with universities, acting as autonomous bodies, though largely supported by grants from the State.

But since research on a large scale may be very costly and may require authority to subject a large number of people to examination, it can sometimes be carried on only by Commissions appointed and financed by the State, like the recent Royal Commission on Agriculture in India. Any Government in India, foreign or indigenous, which did its duty would increase in that way, as occasion requires, the knowledge necessary for the making of right arrangements in respect of each element of the national well-being. Indians, it may be observed, do not co-operate in the work of rebuilding India simply by sitting as

legislators in the various parliamentary assemblies. The legislation passed by such assemblies is largely framed according to knowledge won, or opinions formed, outside the assemblies. Indians who never sit in such assemblies may have a greater share in determining legislation than the majority of those who do, if they have a principal share in winning knowledge or forming opinions outside. In England, as Indians know, a man like Mr. Lionel Curtis has had greater influence upon British policy in regard to India and Ireland than any Member of Parliament, outside the Government. And in India, if Indians build up a new India, it will be not only by passing laws, but by determining the lines, outside the parliamentary assemblies, on which the laws will be passed.

It is plain, further, that so far as right action must be based on right knowledge, it is needful for the advance of India that Indians and Europeans should work together; for there are some kinds of knowledge which Europeans have more than Indians, and some which Indians have more than Europeans. The scientific work carried out in recent centuries in Europe has given the European experts, generally speaking, a greater knowledge of the laws governing human welfare, in matters physical, economic, political, so far as those laws depend on what is common to human nature as such. On the other hand, before such laws can be applied to the special conditions of India, a knowledge of these conditions is required which Indians naturally have more than Europeans. This does not, of course, mean only co-operation between Indians and Europeans belonging to the British Government. Even the Government, when it appoints a Commission like the

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Commission on Agriculture, puts on it Europeans unconnected with the Government, because of their special knowledge in that particular line. Similarly, a group of Indians formed privately to study some particular problem might well call in some Europeans with special knowledge for consultation, or an Indian medical school invite the co-operation of an eminent European specialist.

But even when all the knowledge possible has been got, that is only half, or not even half, the battle. It may need an immense work before an effective volume of Indian opinion and Indian desire can be brought into being to enforce it. There may be Indians to-day who by their own study and reflexion have already arrived at the truest and most far-sighted views of what is required for India's advance in this or that respect, but whose knowledge is futile because there is no substantial public opinion to back it up. If in the work of attaining knowledge Indians largely need the help of Europeans, the work of making that knowledge effective by public support is one which Indians must do almost entirely by themselves. It is not for me to suggest to them how it could best be done. Obviously it is a question of propaganda, the persuading of a larger and larger number of people that such and such a course is the right course, so that gradually a strong public opinion may put a constraint upon those who in that respect oppose the national good.

Then, thirdly, there is the need of getting the action of the State, in those cases where State action is required, to conform to requirements. If the national well-being would be increased by some particular law being passed, or some particular law being repealed, can Indians, as

things are, get this done? To a large extent they can, but I will come to that presently. First, it would be well, I think, to take a general survey of what building up a satisfactory India implies. As Euclid begins his problems with a statement of that which has to be done, so let us put the problem before us: an India to be made, which will stand amongst the nations of the world healthy, harmonious, happy, strong, intelligent, rich in spiritual activities.



CHAPTER V

THE ESSENTIAL TASK

To begin with the bottom, the foundation, the physical condition of the Indian peoples: when a people is as below par physically as Indians are to-day, no political rearrangement can secure strength and freedom. The question of diet will here have to be studied by those best qualified through their medical knowledge-Indians and Europeans. Apart from formal inquiries, the general discussion of such questions, in the Press and elsewhere, may lead to the prevalence of certain true beliefs which will affect ordinary practice. Perhaps it will be impossible to obtain complete unanimity. Even in Europe there are many questions of food and drink about which medical men equally well qualified disagree. But it is probable that if the best medical opinion occupied itself through a period of general discussions and expert inquiries with the question what food and drink, in kind and quantity, produced the maximum of health and vigour under Indian climatic conditions, there would come to be a consensus on many points which might lead to considerable changes in ordinary practice with happy results. It can hardly, I think, be questioned that the diet at present customary of richly oleaginous and highly spiced food is one very ill adapted to produce a vigorous people. In regard to all this, the State would not come in at all; it is no business of a Government to tell people what they are to eat and drink, nor, indeed, foreigners, except in so far as Indians invited the opinion of European medical experts:

all that part of the building up of the new India would have to be done by Indians themselves, Indians inquiring, discussing, and then working to create public opinion. There is nothing to prevent Indians doing all this to-day, just as well as they could do it under *swaraj*.

The physique of the people is affected, not only by what they eat and drink, but by sanitary conditions in their environment, by the suppression of different kinds of disease. Here, again, there is a large field open for private effort in propaganda. It is indeed not so much further knowledge of what promotes health and eliminates disease that is needed for the moment, as the inducing of the masses of the people to observe rules of conduct which correspond with what is known already. The Government alone cannot make people conform to sanitary requirements in their everyday life: only a great deal of private effort can spread enlightenment on such matters amongst the masses and carry on the necessary sanitary propaganda. I believe in Italy the young Fascists have made it part of their business to carry on such instruction and propaganda amongst the villagers, with good results. One wonders whether young Indians of the more educated class might not band themselves together for sanitary crusades. If they were successful they would have the satisfaction of knowing that they had actually increased the volume of India's strength, not merely got strength differently distributed in the political machine. But, of course, in regard to public health, action by the Government and the application of public funds does come in as well. Many of the sanitary arrangements in a locality must be made by the Government or by public

bodies: certain rules of practice may be enforced by law. The provision of medical help has to be made to some extent with public money. Certain diseases can be combated effectively only by an expenditure of money which goes beyond the means of individuals. I have heard it affirmed that experts know to-day precisely how hookworm, one of the diseases which lower the vitality of thousands in India, could be completely abolished if a certain sum of money, which can be estimated, were applied to the task. In regard to this activity of the Government, or of public bodies, Indians would not act so independently, but since both the Government and the work of public bodies is already to-day, in these respects, mainly conducted by Indians, it depends on the will and energy of Indians whether the physical well-being of the people is really increased in these respects by the action of the State or the local government. It is difficult to see that under an indigenous Government Indians would have here a clearer field.

There is one special matter of sanitary practice upon which the physical quality of Indians depends in a peculiar degree—the practice by which each individual is brought into the world. In regard to this, it is generally admitted that conditions prevalent in India are appalling. But all that concerns the treatment of a mother in pregnancy and child-birth is intimately mixed up with social traditions, and we are brought, therefore, by the mention of it to the part played by social traditions in affecting the physique of a nation. A large number of Indians are evidently to-day quite alive to the fact that bad social customs in regard to marriage and the bringing of

children into the world are among the chief causes which hold back India in a condition of weakness and political dependence. It is unnecessary to labour this point. The question is how these traditions are to be got rid of and better customs introduced. Here, again, action by Government, whether a foreign or an indigenous one, can do little. The main part of the work must be done by private propaganda, the creation of public opinion. This part of the building of India must be done by Indians exclusively; any attempt of foreigners here to co-operate might do more harm than good. In a recent book (Shiva, by Mr. R. J. Minney) it has been suggested that the British in India acted as they ought to act when they forcibly suppressed sati and the Thugs, and that they should have gone on to deal with a high hand, for the good of the people, in the matter of other evil customs. But. of course, it is a wholly different thing for a Government to prevent by force actions publicly done, like the burning of a widow, and to try to control what takes place in the privacy of the home. A Government may indeed pass a law fixing the age of consent, but the law will be one impossible to enforce except with the active support of public opinion. The British Government, as is well known, has always shrunk from interfering with Indian religion, and the pernicious customs in question are bound up with religion. The most serious charge brought against the British Government in this matter is that its servants have actually been instructed to vote against legislation which corresponded with the views of the advanced Indian social reformers. The excuse of the Government, no doubt, would be that it is unwilling to

give its support to legislation which goes against old custom till it is sure that the change is asked for, not only by advanced reformers, but by Indian public opinion as a whole. Legislation very much ahead of public opinion could not be enforced, and to pass laws which cannot be enforced tends to weaken the authority of law generally. I fear that in this matter the British have carried caution to the point when it becomes the reverse of admirable. In any case, it is certain that if Indians, under present political conditions, could form a considerable public opinion which demanded certain legislation in the interests of social reform, they could get such legislation passed.

Next to the production of healthy and well-developed bodies come all the questions connected with the equipment of life-the economic questions. The present poverty of the masses in India is one of the chief factors in the Indian problem, and one of the things which depress Indian physique and impede Indian education. Here, then, what publicists have to consider is, firstly, how more wealth is to be produced, and, secondly, how wealth is to be better distributed. The production of wealth would come under the three chief heads of agricultural, mineral, and industrial. In all three the main work would have to be done in India, as it has been done in England, by private enterprise, well-informed, efficient, and judicious. In such a firm as that of the Tatas one already sees Indian enterprise successfully going forward. It is by further private enterprise that the production of wealth in India will be increased, if it is increased. A good deal of the production of wealth in India to-day, in tea-planting, mining, and industry, is carried on with European capital under

European direction. It is a disadvantage to India that much of the money made in this way is spent in Europe and not in India. Sir Theodore Morison, I think, once suggested that Indians might get the production of wealth into Indian hands more safely, in the first instance, by entering as partners into concerns now run by Europeans, and gradually, as they acquired business experience, replacing the Europeans in control, than by starting wholly new enterprises for themselves with inadequate experience. In any case, under *swaraj*, private enterprise on the part of Indians would be required to increase the production of wealth, just as it is required to-day; and what, we may ask, is there to prevent Indians going ahead in this respect just as well to-day?

One answer to this question would probably be that, although private enterprise is the main agency in the production of wealth, favourable or unfavourable conditions for that enterprise can largely be created by Government action and that under swaraj more favourable conditions for native Indian enterprise would be created than exist to-day. I am not quite clear what it is supposed that an Indian State, directed by Indians, would do that the existing Government could not be got to do. Probably the idea is that under swaraj heavy protective duties would be put on foreign imports in order to help native industries. But we have already noted that many economists of standing do not believe that such duties would bring profit to the population of India as a whole, whereas, on the other side, if there were a unanimous demand for such duties amongst Indians, it is probable that the Government, under the existing constitution, or

the constitution as amended after the Simon Commission, could be induced to impose them.

Besides helping economic enterprise by duties, a Government can do something by the procuring and dissemination of economic knowledge. Knowledge as to requirements is mainly procured, so far as the Government goes, by Commissions, like the Royal Commission on Agriculture; and knowledge may be imparted by educational institutions supported by public fundsschools of economics, economic chairs at the universities. Is it thought that under swaraj there would be more, or more efficient, Commissions to explore the factors of success, or that more money would be spent out of the public funds for the establishment of schools and chairs of economics? I do not see how a Commission appointed by a self-governing India would be better in personnel or do its work more efficiently than the recent Royal Commission on Agriculture; and with regard to the expenditure of more public money on schools of economics, that seems exceedingly improbable in view of what the budgets of a self-governing India are likely to be.

So far as the distribution of wealth is affected by a Government, it is through taxation, or, in revolutionary crises, through confiscation. In India to-day, as in other countries, there are striking inequalities of wealth immensely rich landowners and lawyers and merchants and fearfully poor peasants. A Communist Government would abolish the inequality by abolishing private property, but so far Communism remains the theory of a small set of people, and has always broken down when an attempt has been made to translate it into practice.

Certainly in India to-day only a very small number amongst those who desire swaraj want a Communist revolution. But in Europe, Governments which are not even Socialist in the milder pink sense have nevertheless tried to mitigate the inequality of wealth by death duties and graduated income taxes, and the same kind of thing might be carried in India much farther than it has been carried to-day, whether under British control or under swaraj. That would take more away from the very rich, and it might be possible in proportion to lighten the taxation of the very poor. But it must be remembered that the Nationalist political leaders belong largely to the richer class, and it is a question how far they would welcome a readjustment of taxation in the sense indicated. Some of the sincere ones might. The Permanent Settlement of Bengal is sometimes pointed to as an arrangement unfair to the poor, which might be more easily changed by a native Government, because the British could not alter it without a breach of public faith. Yet in this matter, too, if a public opinion were created in Bengal which demanded the change, it would no doubt be possible to carry it out even before the coming of swaraj.

The problem of taxation confronts every Government, native or foreign. Every tax is an evil, in so far as it deprives the taxpayer of enjoyments he might otherwise have, but no Government can get on without levying taxes. The system of taxation devised by the British in India is one of the things most adversely criticized by Indian Nationalists, but the criticism is mainly negative: there seems no clear and general view what system

Indians would establish if they had a free hand. The fiscal system may be criticized both in respect of the levying of taxes-the amount raised excessive or inadequate, the methods of levying wrong-and in respect of the mode of expenditure. To take the latter first: in the case of India, a common complaint is that an excessive amount of money is spent under the present system on the army. Under swaraj, it is said, this item of expenditure being very much reduced the burden of taxation could be made lighter or more money could be spent on other things. This is exceedingly questionable. Of expenditure on military defence we shall speak in a moment, but for the moment one may observe that an India wholly detached from the British connexion would have not only military defence to consider, but naval defence as well, for its long coastline. The naval defence of India under the present system costs India nothing, and if India had to provide for that, as well as for the upkeep of an army, it does not seem probable that India would spend less on its defences than it does to-day.

In any case, a self-governing India would need large sums of money to be raised by taxation somehow, and if Indians do not like the way they are raised to-day they would have to find a better. Here, again, it is probable that even under the present system, if Indians could agree amongst themselves on a better scheme, they could get it passed. So long as their agreement is merely negative, it is ineffective. That was signally seen in the matter of the Salt Tax, which was certified by the Viceroy in March 1923, although the bulk of opinion, as expressed in the Legislative Assembly, was against it. It

was pointed out at the time that, while the Indian opponents of the tax agreed in condemning this particular tax, there was no agreement amongst them what other tax would raise the money required in a better way.

In India the difficulty before any Government—a difficulty just as grave for a Government purely Indian, if established to-day, as for the present one—is how to escape from a vicious circle: a nation cannot be built up except by a liberal expenditure of money on nationbuilding activities, and it is hard to find a way of raising that money by taxation from a nation as poor as the Indian masses are to-day.

A year or two ago I had a letter from an Indian friend, a man of wide knowledge and cautious judgment, whose experience in public work gives his opinion peculiar value. He held that the process of transferring power to Indians, having once been started by the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, must be carried through, as expeditiously as possible, to its completion. Self-government must come: that he regarded as something inevitable. But the thing which he anticipated with particular apprehension, when Indian ministers and assemblies took control, was an unwillingness to impose taxation. One group, competing for popularity with another group, would shrink from raising by taxation even the money urgently required for the public services. The privations entailed by taxation are felt immediately by the mass of taxpayers, whereas to understand the benefits which the money raised may ultimately procure requires an ability to look ahead and estimate values which the uneducated mass can hardly be expected to possess. To starve the

State by lightening taxation would therefore be the way to acquire popularity, and political groups depending on popular election would necessarily make popularity a prime consideration. When Indians talk of all that a selfgoverning Indian State would do to build up the nation, this is one of the difficulties which they do not usually take into the reckoning.

Whilst the physique of the people is being improved by wise arrangements, and the material equipment of life being provided for by a sound economic system, the defence of the people against violent disturbance from within and without has to be thought of-police and army. It is in respect of this, as we have seen, that Nationalists charge the existing regime with being unnecessarily expensive. I have suggested that if a self-governing India had to provide for naval as well as for military defence, its expenditure would hardly be less. But on the general question of a State's expenditure on armaments, it is exceedingly hard to say what is reasonable expenditure and what is unreasonable. To begin, there are two wholly different points of reference by which reasonableness may be estimated-the amount of force against which defence is likely to be reea red, and the capacities of the people to bear taxation.With regard to the first, it obviously requires very special knowledge-the statesman's knowledge of the surrounding world, the technical knowledge of the military expert-to say how much hostile force is likely to be brought against the State, and what preparations, in men and material, would give the defence a good chance against in the amount will necessarily differ from time to time, according to the general

conditions of the world. Supposing the efforts of the League of Nations to bring about general disarmament in the world are ultimately successful, the particular problem of the defence of India would, of course, be very different from what it is to-day---on the supposition, that is, that Russia comes into the scheme. From the military point of view, presumably, an adequate system of defence means armaments and fortifications which would give the nation a certain superiority against any force which is likely to be brought against it. But you are in a region of probabilities and guess-work. Even when you have determined how much force is likely to be brought against the nation, it is again a calculation of mere probabilities what equipment and what dispositions would, as a matter of fact, give a superiority to the defence. And it is really absurd to talk as if you could fix a particular point, short of which the nation is in peril and above which it is safe. We have two collateral processes moving in opposite directions-security is a matter of degree: the more you increase your armaments the greater your security, should attack come, I but also the more you increase your armaments, the more money you are drawing away from the national well-being. All taxation used for military defence is an evil, but the evil of insecurity below a certain point is greater. As you diminish the evil of insecurity you increase the evil of

¹ Though, of course, it has to be remembered here that the increase of your armaments may alarm foreign Powers and so create enmity which may increase the hostile force to be reckoned with, as happened when Germany, by the increase of its fleet, drove England on to the side of its enemies.

taxation, till after a certain point the evil of taxation becomes greater than what remains of insecurity. But there is never a point beyond which security is complete; and it remains quite a possibility, in the case of some nations, that what military experts affirm to be the minimum of armaments necessary-that is, the armaments which would give a superiority to the defence against any force likely to be brought against it-is more than what national economists affirm the nation to be capable of bearing. Both the military experts and the national economists may be right, just as a man living on a bit of land threatened by submergence from the sea might incur death by drowning if he did not work at building a dyke, and might incur death by heart-disease if he did. If war goes on with its modern developments, other nations beside India may find themselves in that terrible predicament. That is why the hope of the world largely hangs upon the success of the League of Nations.

The armed forces in India are not there only for defence against foreign attack, but for the suppression of internal violence. The army is ready in an emergency to back up the police. It seems hardly conceivable that any Government in India, in any time we can foresee, could do without considerable armed forces for this purpose. It may be said that when there was no longer opposition to a foreign Government, much fewer forces would be needed to suppress the violent disturbers of public order. There seems no ground for this belief. A self-governing India is not thinkable at all, unless the antagonisms of to-day are reduced to much mitigated forms—the antagonisms between creed and creed,

between people and people, between class and class. But even if they were reduced to a point which made swaraj possible, it is exceedingly unlikely that the different antagonisms would disappear so completely that the will to violence never broke out, and the intestine feuds might rage all the more fiercely, just because there was not a foreign Government there to constitute the object of a common antagonism. Certainly any native State, ruled by Indians, would have enemies-enemies in its own territory and enemies beyond its borders, neighbouring Indian States or rajahs-and to meet force with force it would require soldiers and police, and must be ready to shoot in emergencies. Or if there continued to be one Central Government for the whole of India, it would need large federal forces to hold down the elements of disruption. Already to-day the Bolsheviks are quite frankly trying to use Indian Nationalism to create in India a war between classes. Having tried to use Chinese Nationalism in this way, and having failed, they announce it as their intention to bring it off in India, and incite the peasantry and depressed classes to attack their richer fellow-countrymen. Only a Government that was firm, as well as sagacious and just, could save India from anarchy, and to be firm a Government must have armed strength and be ready to use it.

To go back to the existing antagonisms which divide the population of India, these are the next thing to be considered in the building up of a prosperous nation. In this matter, again, the remedy lies in the hands of Indians, and the Government can do little to help. Probably the most hopeful way of reducing the antagon-

isms is for the men of good will in the various communities to keep in close touch with each other and try to induce their respective communities to avoid occasions of offence. The advance of education may help, though it is a mistake to think that intellectual education in itself necessarily softens enmities. Its effect is sometimes to make them more intense by making men more keenly sensible of their specific differences. In the antagonism to-day between Hindus and Mohammedans in India it has been observed that some of those most bitter on each side belong to the educated class. But a work of propaganda carried on by the men of good will in each community would probably make a great difference in the long run to the tone and temper prevalent in the community, though it is for Indians themselves by common consultation to determine how best it can be done. One thing may be worth pointing out, and that is that disagreements are often best cured, not by direct efforts to remove them by argument, but by co-operation in common tasks. Even if men enter upon co-operation with their differences still uncured, these differences tend to fade in consciousness during the process of work together. It was seen when the War broke out how in each country disagreements between parties that had seemed virulent sank to unimportance in face of the immense common task and peril. And if the work of building up, by research and by effort, the Indian nation, as we are trying to see it in outline, is one in which the different sections of the Indian people can work together-Brahmins, Non-Brahmins, Mohammedans, Christians, Parsees, working together on commissions of

research, in corporate efforts to shape public opinion in respect of all the things upon which public health and public well-being depend—it may well be that they would soon be able to discuss their disagreements in a very different spirit with much more hopeful prospects. I do not think that the antagonisms in India will ever be cured till one common interest is found which overrides them.

If in respect of these antagonisms the Government can do little to cure them, it is sometimes said, on the other hand, that the Government artificially keeps them alive and increases them. This, of course, is simply one manifestation of that unhappy habit of Indians to put the blame upon the Government for everything evil, even for things which could be remedied by the Indians themselves, if they addressed themselves to the task. But supposing it is true that any existing legislation has a tendency to promote disunion between the different communities, it is here again true that Indians could get it altered, if the best men in the different communities could agree amongst themselves. Supposing, for instance, the leading men amongst the Hindus and amongst the Mohammedans could agree that communal representation was a bad thing, as promoting disunion, it is certain that the Government would give way to representations which had such support.

As a matter of fact, it is possible to regard communal representation as in itself a bad thing, but possibly the best expedient to avoid friction at the moment. One has to remember that sometimes in discord between men a certain measure of separation may in the long run make

for concord. This may be seen in the case of some families. Ideally, brothers and sisters ought to be able to live together in harmony; but where living together results in continual quarrelling, it is often found that if relations live apart they can meet in a far more friendly way; and the removal, by separation, of constant irritation sometimes makes it possible in the end for living together to be resumed with happier result. To force people together into the closeness of contact which the ideal requires, but which they are not disposed for, makes their discord worse. So it may be that in India communal representation, as a kind of separation, is incompatible with the ideal, but advisable as an expedient till mutual irritation has subsided.

What has just been said of communal representation applies also to another great division of interests in India, the division between the Indian Nationalists and the Indian princes. The Indian princes are altogether unwilling to be controlled by parliamentary assemblies of Indians and much prefer their existing relation to the British Crown. No settlement of India can be contemplated by the British which overrides the feelings of the princes, who still rule more than a third of the peninsula. And yet it is plain that the ideal of a united India. even of an India federally united, is unrealizable if all these separate powers in the peninsula continue to exist in no subordination to any central authority. I notice that Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru is reported in the Press as having denounced the Report of the Butler Commission recently issued, because according to its recommendations a position would be conceded to the princes which,

he holds, would be a permanent bar in India's road to democratic unity. It has been fully admitted in this little book that any arrangement established by the British which stands as a hindrance to India's advance to prosperous *swaraj* is a much more serious grievance than any isolated action of the Government could be. If the recommendations of the Butler Commission were accepted, should we have such a grievance here?

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru may well be right in saying that the position conceded to the princes in the Report is incompatible with the Nationalist ideal. If to concede that position to the princes now meant that they would continue to hold the position for ever, the Nationalist ideal could never be realized. But it seems to me that this problem of the princes and Nationalist India is rather analogous to another problem nearer home-that of Northern Ireland and the rest of Ireland. Like the Indian princes, the people of Northern Ireland are determined not to be controlled by the other Irish, and wish to continue their old relation to the British Crown, and yet the separate existence of Northern Ireland is incompatible with the ideal of Irish unity. England, when the Treaty was made with the Nationalist Irish, stood firm in insisting that the Northern Irish should not be forced into union with the other Irish against their will; but it is probable that in the long run such an arrangement, which did not make a new division of Ireland, which only recognized a division already there, was the best way to promote Irish unity. For if an attempt had been made to force the Northern Irish at the present time into subordination to Nationalist Ireland, the result

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would probably have been a bitter war between the two sections of the Irish people, which would make the mutual enmity worse than before; on the other hand, if the Northern Irish are allowed to go on with their separate existence, so long as they desire, then it may well be that, if Nationalist Ireland makes a success of its Government and shows itself the kind of State with which the Northern Irish might safely unite, the next generation in Northern Ireland may lose their present suspicions and come willingly into the frame of a united Ireland. It is probably up to Nationalist Ireland, if it so desires, to woo and win Northern Ireland in this way; and a unity of Ireland constituted by the voluntary adherence of Northern Ireland would be a much more real unity than one forced upon the unwilling Northern Irish now. Much in the same way, I think, if the princes are allowed to remain separate from Nationalist India as long as they desire, then, supposing Nationalist India makes a success of its self-government, supposing, as time goes on, it shows a people more prosperous, better educated than the subjects of the princes, it is likely that the princes will no longer object to union with Nationalist India, or, if they did object, would be compelled by their subjects to come into the federal frame. And a union of India so constituted would be a better union than one carried through now by force.

We have now considered the needs of India in respect of physical well-being and of peace: we come to the intellectual and spiritual content of a life so secured.

Indians sometimes use exaggerated language in describing the limits which the present system sets to

their action. Even in the matter of criticizing the Government there is enormously greater freedom in India than in Italy or Russia. People have sometimes been good enough to send me extremist newspapers over longer or shorter periods. If they were specimens of a "muzzled Press", I can only say that the muzzle must have been a very wide one. It is not true to say that a nation cannot make spiritual contribution to the world under foreign rule. The greatest spiritual contribution which the people of Israel made to the world was through Jesus Christ, and those disciples of His who founded the Christian Church, especially the Jew Paul. And that contribution was made when the Jews were a subject-people under a government as ungentle as that of Rome. I do not see that there is any hindrance to-day from the Government to Indians expressing their genius in religion and thought and literature and art. As a matter of fact, India has made a significant contribution to the world in our own generation. In Mr. Gandhi it has shown the world a man of prophetic spirit, by whom people of far-away nations have been impressed; in Rabindranath Tagore it has produced a man of letters whose works are read all over the globe; in Ramanuja a mathematical genius; in Mr. Srinavasa Sistri a political speaker and diplomat of the first rank, and in the Bengal school of artists it has shown a power of new original creation. A good list might be made of other men who in different lines have attained greater or less distinction. Indians may say they would have produced more if it had not been for the foreign rule; but I fear there is sometimes a danger of Indians making the

foreign rule an excuse for what is really a failure of power or will in themselves. One is reminded of the people in Matthew Arnold's sonnet who put the blame for their failures upon the conditions of their earthly life, and say that in another world they will do much better.

> No, no! the energy of life may be Kept on after the grave, but not begun; And he who flagg'd not in the earthly strife, From strength to strength advancing—only he, His soul well-knit and all his battles won, Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life.

It is the Indians who now use profitably the field of free action open to them, who give ground for hope that under the conditions of *swaraj* India would make characteristic contributions to the world's heritage. Those Indians who do not use the field now open to them would probably not do much under *swaraj*. Perhaps it is one of the harmful things inseparable from a foreign rule that people can always throw upon it the blame for their own deficiencies.

In the matter of intellectual, artistic, and religious production, individual initiative counts for almost everything. The Government has had little to do with the production of new literature which has enriched the life of Bengal in recent times: it conferred upon Rabindranath Tagore a title which he afterwards saw reason to renounce. It is not the foreign Government which prevents in other parts of India the production of new original literature and art. Either the men to produce it are not there—and, if so, *swaraj* would not create them

---or the public is not there which buys good literature and good works of art, and, if so, I see no reason to suppose that the public would do, under a system of political self-government, what it could do to-day, and does not do. It may be said that under swaraj authors and artists would be encouraged by more Government patronage. I am afraid such an argument could move a European only to mirth, when he thought of what Government patronage means for literature and the arts in Europe. A Government, as such, has no qualifications for distinguishing between what is good and what is poor in literature and the arts, and the kind of literature and art which subsisted only by Government patronage would not be of interesting quality. In Europe the production of literature and art is due entirely to individual initiative; the encouragement and criticism which makes the production possible and maintains a standard is carried on in a certain educated section of society quite apart from any Government action. The comparative sterility of India in these things would not be affected by swaraj. It can be remedied only when there are more Indians who buy new Indian books of worth, and new works of art that are good, and that implies a level of taste general in a certain section of society, capable of distinguishing between good and bad work. I remember once hearing Mr. W. Rothenstein lament, in the matter of design in jewellery, that though exquisite work was still sometimes produced by Indian craftsmen following the old tradition, such work was becoming rarer and rarer simply because richer Indians had never trained themselves to understand it, and pre-

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ferred to buy commonplace European jewellery. It is not the Government which is in fault here. Bengal is far ahead of the rest of India in having a public which makes possible a creative modern literature and art.

We come to education, and here certainly Government action does take a large place. Yet even here the Government action has its main scope in the provision of primary and secondary education. The higher work of the universities is carried on by the universities as self-governing bodies, the Government only exercising a measure of control and supplying funds. In England education till the nineteenth century depended on private initiative, and even to-day the institutions which carry on secondary education and university education were founded by the liberality and judgment of individuals or private groups, the Government only making sure, by inspection, that the education given comes up to a certain standard. In India the most interesting schools are those founded by individuals or groups, not those instituted by Government-Rabindranath Tagore's school at Bolpur, the Gurukul in the Punjab, or Tyndale-Biscoe's school in Kashmir. Except that richer Indians are not willing to give the money, or that the men are wanting who have the right educational genius, there is no reason why educational establishments, making experiments on different lines, should not be multiplied all over India.

So far as the Government's activity is the inspection of institutions founded by private initiative, it is mainly negative—the elimination of such as fail to reach a certain standard. The Government's positive work in the

matter of education consists in the provision of primary education; in India also of secondary education by a number of Government schools; and further, in the acquisition of clear views regarding what is desirable in education and the best arrangements to secure it, this last part of the Government's work being done through Commissions appointed by the Government.

Education is a field which offers a number of the most complicated problems, and also a field of vital importance for the whole process of making India fit for self-government. Every other part of the process is touched by it: the inculcation of sanitary habits; the development of the body by gymnastic exercises and games; views as to good and evil in social arrangements, are all affected in a high degree by school life and school teaching. The chief reason, as we have seen, which makes it hard to imagine constitutional self-government in India to-day is the absence of a controlling public opinion in the great masses of the people. Such a public opinion can exist only when education is spread much more widely. It is generally admitted that the present state of education in India is one of the things which the British, after a century and a half of British rule, are least able to contemplate with pride and satisfaction. Yet the whole blame does not lie with the British: private initiative amongst Indians might have done far more for education than it has done; and censure of the Government commonly omits to take account of the difficulty presented by the vicious circle already described. One of the ablest and shrewdest, for instance, of our periodicals, the New Statesman, which defended Miss Mayo's book,

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felt that, as a paper of Socialist leanings, it must somehow avoid making its approval of Miss Mayo an approval of the British Government in India, and so turned its argument to the conclusion that, if things were as bad in India as Miss Mayo said, the shame must be borne by the British Government, who had not, in all this time, educated the Indians to better views and habits. But it is no good talking as if the British could have established an efficient system of education all over India by a stroke of the pen. It could be established only by a large expenditure of public money, and that could be raised only by taxation. Either, then, you must apply to education money hitherto applied to objects regarded as more urgently necessary or you must impose further taxation. And here comes in the vicious circle. People may be willing to pay taxes for education, if they appreciate the value of education, but they have to be already educated up to a certain point before they appreciate the value of education. It is quite natural that the foreign Government shrank from taxing the Indian masses for a purpose about which the Indian masses did not care, when they were already obliged to tax them for the essential work of the administration. To-day education has been transferred to Indians, and Indians have no more been able to get out of the vicious circle than the British were able to do. An Indian Minister of Education, I believe, who had always before the transference been an ardent champion of universal primary education, found when he had to tackle the problem in practice that the financial difficulty made him, as the German phrase is, put a great deal of water in his wine. Of course, Indians may

quite justly reply that to transfer education to them as a department is not to give them effective control of education, because if the finding of money for education is an essential factor in the problem, and if it is the British side of Government only which has power to decide how the money raised by taxation is to be allocated to different Government departments, then it is only the Government as a whole which can effectively tackle the problem of education. There is truth in this argument. But if the Indian friend referred to just now is right in thinking that one chief drawback under swarai would be an unwillingness to impose taxation, a selfgoverning India would find it even more difficult to get out of the vicious circle than British India has done. Indians might really regard it as a bit of good luck, if they knew how to utilize it, that they might get the taxation required in order to educate the masses up to the level which made them want education, imposed under a foreign regime, so that, when they took over, this first stage, with the odium attaching to it, would have been got through.

There seem, indeed, at the present time to be some signs to encourage. The Times of April 12, 1929, gives the summary of a report made by the Auxiliary Committee on Education, which tells us that "the largely increased enrolment in primary schools indicates that the old-time apathy of the masses is breaking down. There has also been a social and political awakening of the women of India and an expressed demand on their behalf for education and social reform." The same report, however, tells us that "in the whole of the educational system there are waste and ineffectiveness". In primary education "the waste is appalling". "The whole system of secondary education" is said to be dominated by a wrong ideal. It is not merely that more money is wanted; the money actually there is misspent. "The position of Moslem education is, on the whole, unsatisfactory."

Clearly here is a field where we may hope that wiser arrangements will make an enormous difference to the advance of the nation, and a field where the Government can do a great deal. But even here I doubt whether the most efficient Government Commissions will suffice to find the methods which give the richest return. The problem of education is really not a simple or easy one, and it requires to have much more thought and discussion directed to it by Indian educated society at large. The formation of a really intelligent and wellinformed opinion on the subject amongst educated Indians would certainly influence legislation, even while the Central Government continues to be directed by the British. And in this field the most signal advance, if advance is made, is much more likely to be due to the individual gifted with educational genius and to happy experiments by such individuals than to the action of any Government, British or Indian. In the work of inquiring and planning much may be done by private Commissions quite apart from the Government. There is an admirable little book on Indian village education, the result of an inquiry carried out for the Conference of Missionary Societies in 1919, by Mr. A. G. Fraser and four others, including one prominent Indian Christian,

Mr. K. T. Paul.¹ There has been nothing to prevent Indians carrying out many similar inquiries, if they had been willing to give the time and the money. If foreigners of good will can do it, Indians can too.

Only one or two observations are in place here. One is that the system of education has to be thought out from the very first principles—what you want education to do. We have all been too much inclined to follow the existing tradition without raising the fundamental questions. In the case of the great masses of the people, the object of education—I speak here of the education of the mind, not of the education of character—is to enable each man to understand his environment sufficiently to get the best out of life and give the best he is capable of to the community. If there is to be any public opinion amongst the masses of people of which the Government has to take account, that means a level of education which would give the ordinary peasant and labourer some understanding of what is needed for national well-being.

Secondly, in the case of the more educated class, it has to be remembered that all possible schemes of education are more or less unsatisfactory compromises. Boys cannot be taught all that it is desirable for boys to learn, because there are only twenty-four hours in the day. Before I had children of my own to educate, I had admirable schemes of education which proved quite impracticable when they encountered that inconvenient fact. You have to do the best you can with the twenty-four-hour day, and sacrifice a good deal of what can be demonstrated to be highly useful in order to make time for the things more

¹ Village Education in India (Oxford University Press, 1920).

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essential. That makes one of the complications with which Indians must wrestle in thought. The difficulty is in one way graver for Indians than for us in England, and that is because education in India has to bring together two things which lie far apart-a great native tradition and the culture of modern Europe. Certainly Indian boys should not lose hold of the great heritage of the Indian past, but equally certainly they cannot be educated as if they were living in the days of Chandragupta and not in the twentieth century A.D. As Indians, they have certain things in common with their ancestors which they do not have in common with modern Europeans; as children of the twentieth century, they have certain things in common with modern Europeans which they do not have in common with their ancestors. But if Indian boys can give only part of their time to getting knowledge of the Indian tradition, and only the remainder of their time to acquiring modern knowledge and modern culture, the time difficulty becomes very serious in Indian education. Something has to be sacrificed on both sides, and you have to decide what on each side are the things of greatest value which must not be sacrificed. The difficulty is seen especially in the matter of language. An Indian boy should know at least three languages: Sanskrit, to give him knowledge of the great literature of ancient India; English, to give him an acquaintance with modern knowledge and modern culture, and to enable him to communicate with Indians from other regions; and his own vernacular, in order to communicate with his immediate environment and appreciate the expression of his own people in living literature.

If the Nationalists gain their point, who say that Hindi should replace English as the lingua franca for all India, a boy of the Madras Presidency would have to learn yet a fourth language quite unlike his own. You can bring sound arguments to show that knowledge of each of the four languages is imperative; but think of the difficulty of education if you have to bring in the time required to learn four languages! With so much time spent in acquiring the mere means of communication, what time is left over for learning the things to be communicated? No doubt there are boys with a special linguistic gift for whom it would come fairly easily to learn the four languages, but for the ordinary run of boys four languages are really an impossibility, if they are to be taught anything besides. Consider, against this, that for an English boy one language will serve, where an Indian boy requires four. English will give him a hold of the great literature of his people in the past, English will put him in possession of modern knowledge and modern culture, English will be his means of communication with people in all other parts of the British Empire; English is his vernacular. This undoubtedly handicaps the Indian boy, as against the English boy. The handicap is due to circumstances which no one can alter; it has to be accepted as part of the problem of Indian education and made the best of. But it means that any waste of time in Indian education on what is unessential for an Indian boy (such as the learning of English poetry, which is unintelligible without a knowledge of the natural background) is more pernicious than it would be in our own education.

CHAPTER VI

THE PROBLEM OF RELIGION

WE have now got our outline picture of the new India to be built up almost complete-a nation physically healthy and vigorous, well-furnished with the material means of life, at peace with itself, able to understand intelligently the world in which it lives, ready to give a reception for new creative work in art and letters. To crown all this it must have a worthy religion. Nor is religion merely a matter of the Crown, but something without which none of the other parts of nation-building can hope to stand. No intellectual enlightenment, without the support of moral character, can avail to make the picture a reality; and moral character must always be bound up with the attitude which each man has to the universe as a whole, that is to say, with his religion. None of the other elements of well-being just sketched can exist, unless the will is firm to follow what is seen to be the best; no education can be satisfactory which does not go with the training of character, and all character training involves the inculcation of some view of the universe. Many Indians would say that they have already by tradition a perfectly satisfactory religion; but modern knowledge subjects all religions to severe testing, and every tradition has to be reconsidered in the light of newer thought. In Europe sincere and educated Christians have, generally speaking, come to hold that, while the essentials of Christianity embody the supreme truth, a very great many things which earlier generations

of Christians believed must be discarded. Neither Hinduism nor Mohammedanism can escape an equally drastic revision. In regard to Hinduism, the great majority of educated Hindus would readily allow that Hinduism, as practised, has given cover to a number of evil things, and reforming sects have long existed who actively protest against much in the popular religious tradition. There is, therefore, a very great and very difficult task before Indians in the twentieth century-to determine what part of traditional religion is of permanent value and what is evil or has lost the value which it had in former days. Perhaps nothing really would have so powerful an effect upon the prospects of swaraj as the successful accomplishment of this task of religious readjustment, and there is nothing in which Indians must act more wholly for themselves, from which thought of Government interference is more completely excluded.

^{*} In regard to this question of religion, all that can be put forward here is some very general considerations. No religion to-day can be regarded as satisfactory for any people which does not give adequate expression to two polar and complementary truths about mankind: on the one hand the unity of the human family—the truth, stated as a Theistic religion states it, that we are all creatures of one God and children of one Father; and, on the other side, the truth that no individual man is wholly like any other man, and no people like any other people. A satisfactory religion would therefore be capable of becoming a brotherhood of all mankind, but would be a brotherhood which left room for an immense variety in modes of devotional expression and in

emphasis on this or the other part of Truth, as between man and man, between people and people. It is not enough for a mere sentiment of brotherhood to join people who in their outward acts of worship are wholly separate; for if communal acts of worship and external forms of some kind are implied in all religion which goes beyond a merely individual attitude to the universe, then those communal acts and external forms should express the essential realities of religion, and one of those essential realities is the unity, the potential brotherhood, of the whole human race. Thus a satisfactory religion means not only a sentiment of brotherhood, but a real society of all mankind, with an expression of its fellowship in some organic external forms, some communal acts of worship, some modes of declaring in the name of the society the truths for which the society as a whole stands-a universal Church. In one sense, no doubt, religion is, as Professor Whitehead has put it, "what the individual does with his own solitariness", I for each man alone for himself, as a unique being, has to settle his own relation to God; but that gives only one side of the truth: it is equally true that each individual is what he is as the member of a society-the great society of mankind or the smaller society to which he belongs-and religion should embody that truth as well.

Supposing, then, an ideal condition of mankind were reached, in which it formed one single religious community on the basis of truth, there would be certain beliefs, certain devotional practices, certain standards of behaviour which would be common to the whole body,

¹ Religion in the Making, Cambridge, 1927, p. 6.

catholic in the literal sense of that word, and certain ways of looking at things, certain devotional practices and modes of behaviour, which would reflect the peculiar character of each people and each individual. To-day no religion has yet succeeded in bringing the whole of mankind within the frame of its communal life; but there are three great religions each of which claims to offer a hasis whereon the whole of mankind could be unified in religious fellowship-in the chronological order of their appearance, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam. The members of each of these religions, believing that they stand for the essential truths upon which a religious brotherhood of mankind might be constructed, try, in some measure or other, to realize the ideal by bringing other people within the frame of their society. In India today some ninety millions of people accept the claims of Islam to furnish the adequate basis for the brotherhood of mankind, some five millions accept the claims of Christianity, whilst the claims of Buddhism, the one religion of the three which had an Indian origin, are accepted by only some hundreds of people in India proper, though by the majority of the population in Burma and Ceylon. You may say, then, that the majority of the population of India rejects all three of the proffered frames for a brotherhood of mankind. There is one other religion in India, professed by the small Parsee community of about 100,000, which set out at its origin in Iran, between two and three thousand years ago, to be a religion for mankind, but has for many centuries past renounced that aspiration, though modern historical researches have made us realize how very wide in the

world the influence of the prophet Zarathustra has been, how much in the Judaism of the last centuries B.C. was derived from the Iranian prophet, and passed from Judaism to Christianity, and from Judaism and Christianity to Islam, so that if the religion of Zarathustra seems in one way to have shrunk up to almost nothing, in another way it lives within two of the three religions most widely spread in the world to-day.

The majority of Indians reject all three of these religions, as has just been said. Very well, but when Indians face the religious problem they will see that they cannot stop there. The various forms of religion included in Hinduism do not even pretend to offer the basis for a universal religious brotherhood-that is to say, though they may express what is peculiar in the Indian genius, they give no expression at all to the unity of the human race. In the old days, before modern means of communication, the world, in the imaginative apprehension of a Hindu, might end at the Himalayas and the ocean, so that a religion merely Indian might still be felt to have universal quality. But to-day, when the barriers are down, when India finds itself just one region of a world which is becoming increasingly-in politics, in economics, in thought-unified, a religion which is merely Indian looks, in that larger environment, hopelessly provincial. If none of the three religions now trying to form a religious brotherhood of mankind offers a basis for that brotherhood satisfactory to the Indians, Indians cannot be held to have faced the religious problem till they offer a better one. Any Indian claiming to-day to have a

satisfactory religion must believe that this religion is the one fitted to be a religion for mankind, and if he can form any community on the basis of this religion he should regard that as the nucleus of the Universal Community and do what he can to bring other people, whatever race they belong to, into the frame of it, with the hope that some day on this basis the brotherhood of mankind may become more than a sentiment or aspiration-a concrete fact. Perhaps already the Brahma Somaj regards itself as this, but I do not think it is making much headway to-day towards constituting a religious brotherhood co-extensive with India, let alone coextensive with mankind. A Sikh once told me that he considered his religion as potentially the religion of mankind, but one does not hear of efforts on the part of the Sikh community to realize this ideal.

Of course, any community which regards itself as a potential nucleus for the Universal Community is bound to engage in some kind of propaganda. Some forms of propaganda are hateful: the use of force or the infliction of moral pain in order to compel people to profess a religion they do not really believe, or the persuading of them by some kind of material gratification. There may be cases even to-day in which Christians resort to one or other of these means: Christian missionaries are sometimes accused by Indians, I believe falsely, of resorting to the second; but whether individuals here and there may have done so or not, the idea of bribing people to profess Christianity would be repudiated with abhorrence by all sincere Christians. The only legitimate form of propaganda is to ask people to *look*. Anyone

believing that some conviction of his is a truth which it would be advantageous to others to act on is bound to invite the attention of others to the facts or the considerations which determine his own belief. He can ask them to look in the hope that if they do they will see what he sees, and then, if they join his community, it will be because of their own vision and judgment; if they look and are not convinced, he can only go on presenting the facts, perhaps not by words, perhaps only by his mode of conduct, and hope that in the end they will see it. That is a kind of propaganda not only legitimate, but obligatory for those who love their neighbours, and it is carried on not only by religious people, but by everyone who holds that it is to the advantage of others to believe certain things which he believes-truths about bodily health, it may be, or political truths. It is carried on by an atheist who believes that it is of advantage to people to believe that there is no God.

The essential thing is that each person in religion should follow his own vision and conscience: there is nothing in which it is more wicked to hinder a person from following his individual belief than in religion, provided, of course, that his form of religious belief does not prompt him to inflict damage on his neighbours. The same principle which makes it wicked for a Mohammedan to convert a Hindu by force, or a Christian missionary to bribe a Hindu or Mohammedan to profess Christianity, makes it wicked for a Hindu father to impose penalties on his son because he becomes a Mohammedan or a Christian, or a Mohammedan father to impose penalties on his son because he becomes a Christian.

The right of individual self-determination in religion is deeper and more sacred than the right of self-determination in politics; and it is one of the things of which Indians have reason to be ashamed, that so many Indian fathers to-day, while perhaps crying out for political freedom, refuse that more essential spiritual freedom to their sons. Here parental authority intrudes into a sphere where it has no legitimate place.

It might be answered that many Christian fathers would impose penalties on their sons if they became Mohammedans or Buddhists. Those who did so would probably be found not to be very real Christians. Certainly in the past there has too often been a domestic constraint in Christian families put upon members who took a line in religion differing from that of their parents. To-day, one is thankful to say, it would be rare amongst sincere Christians. Supposing that the son of an English Christian told his father to-day that he proposed becoming a Mohammedan or a Buddhist, the father would probably say something like this: "It will give me pain, if you do, because I believe you would be going away from the truth and not towards it. I ask you, therefore, very earnestly to consider once again the grounds of belief in Christ. If, when you have, you still feel that Mohammedanism is the true religion for mankind, you must follow your conscience and I shall respect your decision, quite sure that so long as you follow what you sincerely believe to be the best and the highest, God will ultimately lead you into all truth." That, I think, is the line an English Christian father would take to-day, and the difference of religious belief, so long as both

father and son knew each other to be sincere, would not lead to any severance of affectionate personal relations, certainly not to any attempt on the father's side to coerce his son by cutting off supplies or by any other of the methods which most Indian fathers, to their shame, use if their sons become Christians.

If Indians adhere to Christianity or to Islam or to Buddhism, or to any new religion which aspires to form a brotherhood of mankind, then they are confronted with the problem of distinguishing between the things which are essential and universal in their particular form of religion and the things which are merely local and temporary. Sometimes one hears people say, as if they were uttering a piece of profound wisdom, "Do not bother about the forms and dogmas with which people have overlaid the essential truths of religion; just hold fast to those essential truths themselves"-as if it were not precisely the hard thing to say what are the essential truths and what are a local and temporary vesture! It is like saying: "The ethical problem is really very simple: you have only to do what is right"! Religious beliefs and practices are not labelled "essential" and "non-essential". One might say, indeed, that the great problem in religion at the present day for all men everywhere is to determine what are the elements in religion which ought to be universal and what are the elements which rightly differ between people and people, between man and man; yes, and what, further, are the elements in some religions which are definitely false elements, which all men everywhere ought to reject. If you could securely mark out that, you would virtually have solved almost all religious

problems. There are people who say that belief in a God is unessential, all that is necessary is to believe in a brotherhood of humanity, a duty of service owed by man to man. Other people would say, "No: a belief in human brotherhood is left in the air, unsupported by a comprehensive view of the universe, unless it rests upon the belief in a personal God to whom all men are children; but it is unnecessary to combine belief in a personal God with any of the dogmas about God peculiar to Christians or Mohammedans or Hindus." Others, again, would say that if you seriously face the hard facts of the world, the belief in a personal God of love is left in the air unless it is supported by a belief in God's self-manifestation by His coming into the world in the person of Jesus Christ, but that it is unnecessary to combine personal devotion to Jesus Christ with any of those dogmas about His person or the mode by which His grace is communicated to men which are peculiar to Catholic Christians. There are Catholic Christians, again, who would say that if grace is communicated to the world from Jesus Christ it is essential to recognize the channels, appointed by God, through which men can claim that grace-that is to say, the sacraments of the Catholic Church and the ministry of apostolic origin. but that the Roman Communion has wrongly added to this doctrine the requirement of subordination to the Bishop of Rome. Roman Catholics would say that since the Church is one it is reasonable that its bishops should have over them one supreme bishop, and that since the authority of Peter and his successors was an essential part of God's scheme of salvation from the beginning

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it is an authority which all men everywhere ought to recognize.

It is no good telling all these people that what they have to do is to stick to essentials and waive non-essentials. And yet anyone who is going to work at making any religious community world-wide has to draw the distinction as best he can, according to his lights, between that which ought to be universal and that in which variation is permissible; for it is plain that mistakes of two kinds may be made. You may try to force upon people elements in your religion which have no universal validity and which are uncongenial to them; yes, but also people may leave out some element which is really essential and ought to be universal, and so have only an imperfect and maimed religion. There is a very large problem here with which Indians have got to wrestle, and anyone who is ready in a moment with some glib and facile solution shows only that he has never understood the problem in its reach and complexity.

I want here to point out some special characteristics of the Christian attempt to constitute the Universal Community of mankind and their bearing upon the present-day exigencies of young India. It may be said that these would be of interest only to those comparatively few millions of Indians who so far accept the Christian basis for brotherhood. But I believe that they deserve consideration even by those Indians who, whilst desiring a brotherhood of mankind, still reject the Christian basis. For if Indians reject all the three religions which have made notable attempts to form a worldbrotherhood, and if none of the distinctively Indian

religions, with the doubtful exception of the Brahma Somaj and the Sikh religion, even make the attempt at all, then it seems to follow of necessity that any new basis for the Universal Community which Indians may find must have all the virtues possessed by any one of the existing three, and something more besides. In regard, then, to the present-day exigencies of young India, I suppose it is true to say that the reason why the older type of Indian religion is felt to be unsatisfactory is that the emphasis with young India has come to be laid elsewhere. In the old Indian religion the ideal was individual emancipation by detachment, a diversion of interest from the world of maya to the changeless and eternal unity. No one ought to question that a real element in the salvation of man was here laid hold of, but it hardly meets the needs of the young generation; for while the old type of religion certainly enjoined works of benevolence, it hardly produced a passion for making a better world, or self-devotion to the cause of a community. It aimed rather at escape from earth to heaven than at bringing down heaven to earth. But to-day the note has come, by the Nationalist movement, to be all on sacrifice and service-devotion to the cause of the nation. Young India no longer says that this world is so incurably unsatisfactory that the less interest taken in it the better; young India is ardently interested in making this world different. The nation presents a cause which reaches out through time, and in that cause a man may be content to lose himself. "Who dies, if India lives?"

Now these things, which present-day Nationalism has made prominent, are precisely things on which Christ-

ianity lays peculiar stress. The typical emblem of Christianity is not, like the typical emblem of Buddhism, a sage sitting cross-legged in beatific contemplation, but a Man on a Cross-sacrifice and service. "The Son of man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." Again, neither in Islam nor in Buddhism is the Community as important as it is in Christianity. It is important in both; the great attraction of Islam is that it offers a world-wide brotherhood, and in the original Buddhism the idea of the Community was prominent: it was mentioned in the formula recited by the new adherent; the Community was one of the three things in which he took refuge, the other two being the Buddha himself and the Doctrine. But in Christianity the Church is much more than this: the whole society is believed to be really animated by one spiritual and supernatural life; it is the mystical "Body of Christ". Salvation for the Christian is indeed something individual in so far as it means an individual voluntary decision and a new relation between the individual and God; but it is not individual as it is in Hinduism. or as it was in the pre-Christian philosophies of Europe; salvation means incorporation in the Divine Community, so that the individual becomes a member, sharing in the Divine life of the whole. The figure of the Body expresses both the polar truths, the truth of unity and the truth of variety, each member having his distinctive quality and function and yet all the members together being one organism. Plurality, in Indian thought, is something you seek to get away from, in order to attain the One: religion is, even in dvaita forms of Hindu-

ism, a meeting of the individual and God, "alone with the Alone" (in the old Greek phrase). There seems no reason why all this multitude of different individuals should exist; they make a plurality which is merely illusory, unfortunate, or at any rate only useful as setting an impediment before the soul by transcending which it may gain strength on its way to reality. But in the Christian view the plurality is essential; it is transcended, not by being left behind, but by becoming a harmony, to which plurality and unity are equally essential-that is to say, the essence of the Christian conception is love, because love implies both plurality, or at least duality, and unity. Two lovers are always in a way tending to closer unity, and yet if they ceased to be two, the possibility of love would cease too. Love transcends plurality, but plurality must always be there to be transcended. Some Indians say that to love your neighbour is the same as to recognize that your neighbour is really yourself. But this is a confusion of thought. You could not love your neighbour unless your neighbour were other than yourself. If I do good to my neighbour because I recognize that this is doing good to myself, I might with equal logic take all good things for myself, because this would be doing good to my neighbour. It would be a matter of complete indifference whether he or I enjoyed the good things.

The figure of the Body implies not only a plurality combined in a unity, but a plurality of members which differ in quality and function. In fact, the individuality is not blurred by the unity, but is only understandable in connexion with the unity. Each individual is what he

is precisely because he has a unique place and office in the whole, a place and office which no other individual can hold. We see the same thing in a tune, where each note must have its particular quality expressed as clearly and distinctively as possible, whilst each note has its value in reference to the tune as a whole. So far, then, as the Church, the "Body of Christ", takes shape in this world, it shows an immense variety of quality and function amongst its members. There need be no fear that anyone becoming a member of it would have to forfeit his individual or national or racial quality. Something everyone entering that community has to renounce. We cannot alter the fact that the door is narrow and demands some sacrifice of pride. Indians see plainly enough that if Englishmen are going to be Christians in a real sense they must renounce the pride which springs from their position of material advantage and bow themselves to serve; but for Indians, too, it is a painful sacrifice of spiritual pride to recognize that it was not through Indians, but through the small Hebrew people, that the Author of new life came; whilst, strangely enough, for Jews the sacrifice of pride must be as painful as for any people, because, if the Author of new life came through the Hebrews, the bulk of the Jewish people, till to-day, has failed to recognize Him. No tact and consideration, no care in removing unnecessary obstacles, can do away with the fact that all who enter through that door must stoop, and that to be a Christian involves renunciations which are painful. But there need be no fear that it would mean an impoverishment of individual or racial quality. He who loses himself for that cause finds himself more

richly. Every valuable peculiarity of the individual temperament, everything valuable in each national tradition, must find its place in the Universal Community; but the evil things in each individual character and in each national tradition will have to go. To distinguish the good and evil is not always easy.

One thing further to notice: the Christian conception of the Church cannot be understood if it is only members of the Body now living on the earth who are thought of. By far the largest number of individuals belonging to the Body have passed, without ceasing to be members of the One Body, into the invisible world. It is only a very small fraction of the Church which is on earth at any particular moment, between the multitudes now invisible and the multitudes still to be born. And the Community will never be perfect till the unity of all its members, whenever they may have lived on the earth, is consummated under conditions different from those of earthly space and time. But that consummation is the "far-off divine event", the end which gives its meaning to the whole process of time, that for which the world from the immeasurable aeons of the past has come into existence. If matter exists for the sake of spirit, then the age-long material preparation of the solar system was for the sake of the animal life emerging at a definite time on our planet, and the emergence of that type was for the sake of the spirit to be embodied in man; the ultimate consummation can only be the full development of all that of which Spirit is capable. The perfection of Spirit, in the Christian view, is communal, the perfection of the Universal Community

in a state which will allow its myriads of members to be united in mutual love and mutual knowledge, one Spirit interpenetrating the whole Community from its apex, its one Divine Head, Man and God, in a way inconceivable to us who know only the conditions of earth. The Church on earth at any particular moment is only a fraction of the Community in process of being formed, but it is the fraction of an immortal Community capable of receiving into itself all mankind.

To any view, whether Christian or not, which implies a belief in the eternity of souls beyond death, the individual must be, in a way, more real and more important than the nation. This is odd when we look at things from the earthly standpoint. From that the nation is the great and durable thing. India or England abides, generation after generation, and the millions of individual Indians and Englishmen pass through life and are no more remembered than the dead leaves of two seasons ago. They may give their lives for their nation, and the generations to come will owe something to their sacrifice, but will not know their names.

> Time, like an ever-rolling stream, Bears all his sons away; They fly forgotten, as a dream Dies at the opening day.

But from the other standpoint it is the individuals who abide for ever, and the nations which pass away. Each earthly society—the family, the caste, the nation—is a temporary frame in which the immortal individuals are brought together for a moment during their earthly

existence (according to common Indian belief, in their series of earthly existences), but, sooner or later, the frame must perish and the individuals remain. If this is so, it seems impossible that devotion to a merely national cause can meet the measure of the human spirit: immortal itself, it cannot find its full satisfaction in the service of a mortal society. The nation belongs to the world of maya; the spirit belongs to the eternal. "Patriotism," in the ever-memorable words of one who laid down her life for England, "is not enough." Now, according to Christian belief, the Church is eternal, not only the members of the Church individually, but the Church as a society, as the Divine Community, the "Body of Christ". Here the immortal spirit finds a Community immortal too, a Community revealed, indeed, only partially at any moment on earth, but nevertheless really existing in part on earth-his home, his people, worthy of his utmost devotion. It always jars upon me when I hear Indian Christians or Indian Mohammedans say: "I am an Indian first, and a Christian (or a Mohammedan) second." They are putting the smaller society above the greater. For Islam, too, if it really, as Mohammedans believe, furnishes the nucleus for a religious brotherhood of mankind, must be something greater than any one nation. The Christian is putting the mortal society above the immortal, the temporal above the eternal. There is perhaps a sense in which those ill-sounding phrases may mean something right; for the spiritual Community takes earthly shape in small human societies which have legal existence within the State, which own property and can acquire political influence. If all that

is meant is that the worldly advantages of these small societies should be subordinated to the interests of the nation, of the whole—that no Christian community, for example, in India should strive for wealth, or for political rights, which would inflict injustice on other communities in India—in that sense it is no doubt right that a man should be an Indian first and a Christian second. But if it means what one fears, that the man's chief devotion is given to the mortal society and only his secondary devotion to the immortal society, it is a monstrous perversion.

It might be said at this point that our considerations, so far from showing that the exigencies of young India are met in a special way by Christianity, indicate the very opposite. Young India, it is true, lays stress on the service of a community, self-sacrifice in the cause of a community, and so does Christianity. But the community thought of by young India is a different community from the one thought of by the Christian, and so far from the service of one implying the service of the other, our remarks just now seem to set the mortal community and the immortal community over against each other almost as antagonists, as rival claimants for a man's devotion.

One has here to glance at what, as a matter of fact, the attitude of the Christian community has been towards efforts to serve earthly societies, to make this world a better place. Till the nineteenth century, although Christians regarded the perfection of the Divine Community as the consummation which gave its meaning to the time-process, and although they held it in consequence their duty, during their earthly existence, to

extend the Divine Community amongst contemporary men, they nevertheless thought of that consummation as coming some day by an abrupt act of Divine intervention, a catastrophic "end of the world", not by a gradual process of change in the world. Christians did not expect the world to grow better and better; many of them thought that it would grow worse and worse, till suddenly the end came, the triumph of good over evil. They were thus not very much concerned to labour for making the world a better place; they tried to do good to individuals and to convert individuals, but they did not try much to alter the standing arrangements of the world. It did not seem worth while. But in the nineteenth century, when Darwinism made general the idea of gradual evolution in biology, Christian conceptions underwent a change. Christians now came to think of a process by which God's will would be increasingly done on earth as it is in heaven, a gradual "spread of the Kingdom of God" in the world; and so far as this was accomplished by human effort, they thought of the New Jerusalem, not as in the old Christian symbolism, suddenly descending out of heaven, ready-built, from God, but as built up slowly by human hands on earth. From that time work for improving social conditions, for making national life more Christian in character, has been given a prominent place in Christian activity. A verse of Blake has come to be a favourite one in sermons:

> I will not cease from mental strife, Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand, Till I have built Jerusalem In England's green and pleasant land.

I think that this departure from the old view has sometimes gone too far, and that warning voices have not been raised without cause. If, before, Christians were wrong, as they certainly were wrong, in not concerning themselves enough with securing better conditions and arrangements in the world, there has been a tendency sometimes in recent days for Christians to regard it as the chief task of the Church to make this transient world a better place, when the chief task of the Church, if it has the courage of its convictions, must always be to bring immortal persons into vital union with the immortal Body and foster the supernatural life. But we see to-day that there is no clashing between service of the Divine Community and service of those earthly communities to which we may be, during our life here, attached. These temporary frames, family and nation, which bring men together here, give scope and exercise to the spirit of service, which can only find its full satisfaction in something beyond them. And service of the earthly community, work to meet the temporal needs of men, will not be less zealous or less efficient if put in its proper place of subordination to service of the immortal Community than when it is wrongly given the supreme place; it ought to be more zealous and more efficient, to derive strength from the higher loyalty. For Nationalism put in the supreme place continually turns to evil, as we have seen so terribly of late both in Europe and in Asia. Or if it does not turn to actual evil. the spirit which realizes its own immortality and the transitoriness of the nation is apt to have a feeling of dissatisfaction and futility at the end of its labours. It

was George Tyrrell who said that the Christian, on the contrary, could engage with a steadfast heart in labour to improve the earthly community, even if the labour was destined to be fruitless, so far as the world went, because it had its fruit in the life of the immortal spirit, which was exercised by the struggle. It is the same spirit of service and self-sacrifice which displays itself by what it does within the temporary frame and by what it does as a member of the immortal Body. And if it is the task of the Church to draw men to the Body by manifesting the Divine love, the Church will only convince men of the Divine love if it shows that first in the sphere where men are conscious of their needs-the sphere of the temporal life. A mother knows that there are things much more important for her child than the transient pleasures of childhood; but a boy comes to know his mother's love, and to trust it in regard to the more important things, because he finds her care for his little childish pleasures. The Church would not have gone wrong if it had kept in due balance two seemingly opposite expressions of the mind of its Lord, recorded in the Gospels. He is said to have told the multitude not to labour for the bread which perisheth, and at the same time to have been unwilling to send them away fasting, and Himself to have supplied them supernaturally with the bread which perisheth. We need not be bothered here with the question whether words attributed to Jesus by the Fourth Gospel two generations later were ever actually spoken by Him, or whether the story of the feeding acquired its miraculous halo in the memory of His disciples. In any case, the saying and the action here

attributed to Jesus give in combination the right principles of action for His followers in regard to the temporal needs of men.

Christian Indians ought to feel that in their religion, which makes self-sacrificing love actually the essential character of God, and which tells the individual that it is only in the service of a community that he can fully find himself, there is something which gives a basis of extraordinary strength to the ideals of self-sacrifice and service which Nationalism has made prominent. To-day only a few Indians have ever seriously thought of accepting the Christian basis, and of those who have, the majority have rejected it. The problem then remains for them of finding a worthy religion for the new India which they hope to create. If it is to satisfy men of the twentieth century and the centuries to come, it is well to realize what demands it will have to meet. It must be a religion which in India expresses itself in ways distinctively Indian, and yet not be merely an Indian religion. It must carry on all that is of value in the old religious tradition of India and cast out the evil elements in that tradition. It must have a basis on which Indians can set out afresh to build a religious brotherhood of all mankind; and it must offer men a figure better able to inspire them, in Europe and Asia and Africa and America, with the spirit of service and self-sacrifice than Jesus.

CHAPTER VII

BACKWARD-LOOKING NATIONALISM

THE great obstacle in the past to India's advance in each part of the field which we have surveyed, from physical well-being to religion, has been the backwardlooking Nationalism which glorified everything in the Indian tradition and depreciated everything Western. I fancy that in the near future we may see, on the contrary, young India go too far in repudiating its old tradition. Backward-looking Nationalism, when sanely critical, is in no opposition to forward-looking Nationalism, which directs itself to an ideal picture, not of the nation in the past, but of the nation as it is to be made in the future. Indeed, in a right attitude the two kinds of Nationalism go together. No one can form a right picture of his nation, as he should desire it to be in the future, unless he loves his nation, as it is characterized by the story of its past, and appreciates the valuable things in the national heritage. But when backward-looking Nationalism is not critical, it may form the gravest obstruction to forward-looking Nationalism; for then it glorifies the evil or useless things in the national tradition, the very things which hinder the nation from rising to something better in the future.

In India, during the last generation, there has been a good deal of this uncritical backward-looking Nationalism; and it was quite natural that there should be. For the easiest way to escape the feeling of humiliation which the spectacle of the present created was to find

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refuge in an idealized picture of the past, and so restore the self-respect which was wounded by the political supremacy of an alien people by reflecting how greatly superior in itself everything Indian was to everything Western. It was quite natural, under the existing conditions, that backward-looking Nationalism and forwardlooking Nationalism should coalesce. Indeed, Indians probably did not feel that Nationalism was twofold in this way; it was all one thing to them, pride in India's past and desire for India's freedom and honour in the future.

That they were unconscious of the inner opposition between the two elements in such Nationalism was seen, I think, in the reception given by Indians to the late William Archer's book, India and the Future, published in 1917. For the point of Archer's book was to exalt forwardlooking Indian Nationalism above the backward-looking. He warmly sympathized with the desire of Indians to make a better, a free, India, but he wanted them to throw off what seemed to him the evil and useless elements of the existing tradition. Archer's estimate of the old tradition of India no doubt showed the limitations of an English Liberal Rationalist: he saw nothing, for instance, in Indian religion but degraded barbaric superstition. Indians might well make a different division than his between the good and the bad elements in their tradition; yet Archer's purpose was thoroughly friendly; he wanted to persuade Indians to turn their efforts rather to making a better India than to glorifying the India that was, or the India that had been. To Indians, because they made then no distinction between backward-looking

and forward-looking Nationalism, and because Archer had offended backward-looking Nationalism, his book seemed the book of an enemy.

In the last few years events have happened in the world calculated to produce a profound change in the Indian mind. Indians have watched with tense concernment other Oriental peoples assert their national independence and display their freedom from Western control-the Turks, the Persians, the Chinese. For a moment it seemed as if Afghanistan was going to be erected as a strong State of modern type. But in all these cases the desire to be wholly free from political control by the West has gone with an eager desire to adopt Western characteristics, even in such matters as dress. A modern young Chinese woman is shown us in our illustrated papers with short skirts and short hair, just like her sister of the West. Turks and Persians wear European hats and coats; and we know that Amanullah's attempt to compel the Afghans to adopt European dress was one cause of his downfall. In all these cases forward-looking Nationalism has cast backward-looking Nationalism to the winds. The old national religious and social traditions have been contemptuously discarded. Indians have seen the two kinds of Nationalism, which they had considered as a single whole, fly violently apart. The example is bound to tell.

And another influence, perhaps even more powerful, working in the same direction, is that of Moscow. The word "Communism" runs on the lips of hundreds, as something splendid and new and exciting, even if they have the vaguest idea what it means. It means, at any

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rate, freedom from foreign rule, but, so far as the influence of Moscow reaches, it means also the extreme of contempt for everything that the old generation was proud of as India's spiritual heritage. It means a limitation of the horizon to the material. I understand that many of the young generation are following Moscow in throwing off religion. We have often been told that India is essentially religious, that its interest in the spiritual is fundamental. We used to be told the same thing about Russia, which, indeed, in many ways is singularly like India-the "mystical Russian soul"! The present rulers of Russia have no use at all for the "mystical Russian soul", and the attitude of the young Russians of Moscow and Leningrad to the universe seems to be the very opposite to everything which was once associated with Russia. I am afraid that the young Indians of the immediate future may be an equal shock to those who have formed a picture of "spiritual" India. Perhaps in Russia the peasantry, who form the largest part of the population, continue to be religious, and perhaps in India the peasantry, who there, too, form nine-tenths of the population, will continue to be religious. But that is obviously compatible with the dominant class being thoroughly anti-religious and materialistic.

The influence of Mahatma Gandhi would, a few years ago, have counted for a great deal in stemming the tide of materialism amongst the young. But I am told on all sides that to-day, although Mahatma Gandhi is still universally regarded with reverence as a man of saintly spirit, he is no longer taken as a guide for action. Perhaps in view of his advice having so repeatedly been proved

mistaken by the event, it is not surprising that his influence has waned. Yet I think it is important to recognize that even where his advice has been mistaken, the principle upon which it was based was not only a true principle, but one which India especially needed to have driven home and one which he saw more vividly than anyone else. The mistake in its application came only from his misapprehending the facts of the world; in his support of the Khilafat agitation, for instance—perhaps his most signal mistake—he was led to believe that to touch the rights of the Caliph was to touch the essence of the Mohammedan religion. The misapprehension became patent when the Turks, shortly afterwards, abolished the Caliph altogether.

I am very often reminded, in connexion with Mr. Gandhi, of Plato's celebrated parable of the Cave, in his Republic. Plato wants to explain how it is that the philosopher so often seems to common men of the world to be a person of less than ordinary intelligence. And he says that mankind, as a whole, are like people who live far down a cave and never see the light of day. They see only the shadows of things outside thrown upon the walls of the cave. But it may be that one day a man finds his way to the mouth of the cave and sees the real world outside, plain there in the sunshine. When he returns to the darkness of the cave he has a knowledge what the shadows mean not possessed by anyone else, but very likely his eyes, still full of the sunlight, see badly the things in the cave. He stumbles about, and knocks up against things, and appears foolish and awkward to the people who know only the glimmer of the cave. That,

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Plato says, is like the philosopher who has attained to contemplation of the Ideal: it is excess of light which makes him sometimes unskilful in dealing with things here.

But although the Idealist may seem of less use for the practical conduct of affairs than the Realist, he is, as a matter of fact, just as necessary, even for practical affairs, as the Realist. If things in the world are ever to be improved, two things are required : a clear view of what things really are in their existing state, and a clear view of the direction in which change is desirable-that is to say, of the ideal to which they should be made to approximate. These two kinds of vision do not always go together in the same man. Yet a man of the shrewdest realism, without a perception of the ideal, is just as incapable of bringing about a better state of things as the Idealist without a true vision of things as they are. Thus the man of prophetic spirit who comes amongst men, calling them to make the world more like the City of God whose glory he in a singular way beholds, to make themselves more like the citizens of that City, may make us ordinary men feel, as we did not feel before, that this or that thing in the world cannot go on, that the world must be changed, and changed in a particular direction. Without his cry we might have gone on indefinitely in our dull acceptance of things as they are. Only to change things effectively we must combine this vision of the ideal with a true estimate of things as they are, a realism which perhaps is not found in the prophet. His function is to awaken us, to stimulate us, not always to give us concrete instructions for practice. Very unhappy conse-

quences have sometimes followed from advice given by Mr. Gandhi, where his advice has not been checked by a better understanding than he has of actual people and things. Yet it would be a disaster if young Indians, because Mr. Gandhi is a mystic, failed to grasp the true sense of values which lies behind his advice, even when his advice is wrong.

That attitude towards the universe, towards religion and conduct, which young Indians will have if they draw their ideas from the Moscow of to-day, will be exceedingly unlike the one which they would get from Mr. Gandhi. He, too, has been profoundly influenced by Russia, but it is a very different Russia, the Russia which spoke through Tolstoy, whom Mr. Gandhi has always given a prominent place amongst his teachers. Indeed, Mr. Gandhi's scheme of opposition by non-co-operation has closer affinities with Tolstoy's pacifist anarchism than with the old Indian tradition, which exalted the office of the King. The principles of non-co-operation were laid down by Tolstoy in his Letter to a Hindu,1 before ever Mr. Gandhi instituted a campaign of nonco-operation in India. He had already, it is true, led a movement of passive resistance in South Africa. How much that movement was due to an influence of Tolstoy's writings upon Mr. Gandhi I do not know. Even if Mr. Gandhi arrived at his ideas of non-co-operation inde-

¹ Not accessible to-day, I believe, in an English translation, though an English translation of it was published by Mr. Gandhi in pamphlet form in 1910. A copy has been kindly lent me by Mr. H. S. L. Polak, then editor of *Indian Opinion*, in which periodical the translation was first published (January 1910).

pendently, we can hardly doubt that he was strengthened in them by Tolstoy's teaching.

Tolstoy may be held to have rejected some essential elements of Christian belief, yet he belonged, at any rate, to the old religious Russia which the Bolsheviks have trampled underfoot. Where religion, as in India, has given shelter to so much that is vile and evil, where men have cared so inadequately about improving material conditions, a violent swing in the other direction, by which men discard religion altogether and care exclusively for increasing the material comforts of the community, may not be without its advantages. As a destructive movement, getting rid of a mass of useless and unsavoury rubbish come down from the past, it may make room for the erection of a worthier spiritual fabric later on; but for the time being it will mean that things of supreme value have been lost. The obstacle which in the past generation was constituted by an uncritical refusal to assimilate India to the Western type, in points where the Western type was superior, may have been removed, but the work of building up a new India will be confronted by a difficulty of another kind-that valuable things in the old tradition, essential to a good national life, will have been thrown aside. A generation of young men without religion and impatient of all authority would not be the best qualified to be builders.

But perhaps to suppose that young India as a whole would be like that would be to judge precipitately by a few extreme examples. We may hope that there will be enough people able to make a sane estimate of the good and evil in the existing tradition and to judge wisely

what is needful and what is possible in the work of reconstruction. And I think it stands true that only in so far as Indians and British can co-operate in making India really healthier, really wealthier, and really bettereducated, can a happy issue be found from the present difficulties.



CHAPTER VIII

THE VISION OF WHAT MIGHT BE

SURVEYED rapidly, in general outline, the picture stands, then, of the India which has to be built up, if Indians are to have, not merely a negative swaraj-the absence of a foreign Government-but a swaraj worth having. And we have seen that although Government action can in various respects do much to help or to hinder the work of building up that India, the essential part of the work must be done, if it is done at all, by Indians acting as private individuals, or as groups of private individuals, apart from the State. We have seen also that there is nothing to prevent Indians, if the will and the ability are there, from making good progress with that work at once, under the existing regime. If they succeed in the work, and at last an India is there, so healthy, so united, so intelligent, that all those on the British side who shrink to-day from surrendering control to the India which is, inhibited by a genuine concern for the results which would follow to the Indian masses, see all ground for their fear removed, then the transference of power from British to Indians will be indeed a voluntary transference, an action on the part of the present rulers, but the Indians will not be mere passive recipientsfar from it. They will be able to look at the India which stands there, free, as their own creation, the work of their own thought and labour and self-devotion. And the action of the British in withdrawing will be because of what Indians have done. I think Indian amour propre in

such an event would find a nobler satisfaction than if they had driven out the British by a wasteful war.

A false impression would be given by these observations if they were taken to mean that nothing was being done at present by Indians to correct abuses and build up a healthier nation. To-day in India the necessity of such work is widely realized. Some of the Nationalist leaders combine their agitation against the British rule with calls addressed to their own people for social reform. At the last meeting of the National Congress two of the official speakers, Mr. Sen-Gupta, leader of the Swarajists in Bengal, and Pandit Motilal Nehru, denounced childmarriage and other existing evils in language so forcible that one British paper described it as reminiscent of Miss Mayo. Indeed, the most serious fault in Miss Mayo's book was her omission to point out the efforts being made by Indians to remedy the evils to which she called attention. Associations of Indian men and Indian women of different kinds are trying at various points to bring about a better state of things. If the reflexions uttered just now on what Indians might do to build up India's inner strength used the future or the conditional tense. this only meant that what is being done by Indians at present, admirable and encouraging as it is as a beginning, is still a small movement compared with the great mass of conservative inertia to be moved. There have not vet been corporate movements sufficiently extensive to make a noticeable difference in the physical well-being or the intellectual enlightenment of India's millions. It is in much larger organized efforts on the part of Indians that the hope of the future lies; and it is obvious that such efforts

have the better chance of success so far as the British and Indians unite their thought and their energies in work for a common end. If half, or more than half, the energy on each side is spent in mutual friction, there is so much less energy and time left for the great task which really matters—the increase of solid good, physical, economic, intellectual, spiritual.

While the work of building the new India, if ever accomplished, will have been in its most essential part a work done by Indians, it will owe something, at this point or at that, to help given by the British. So far as it is affected by the action of the State, and so far as the State, during the stage of building, has been under British control, there will have been co-operation between British and Indians. Where some new legislative enactment has been needful to further the progress of India towards health and economic welfare and educational enlightenment, that enactment will have been passed; or where money furnished from the State Treasury has been needful for some work of sanitation or agricultural development or inquiry or education, the British will have made the required disposition of public expenditure. At all stages where British technical experience could furnish useful advice, this will have been given. This is where some Indians express doubt. They foresee the need for this or that action on the part of the State arising-the need to pass a law, the need to repeal a law, the need to allocate money to such and such an objectand the Government, controlled by the British, refusing. If that happens, it will certainly be very serious-a far more serious grievance, as has been said, than any wrong

action of the Government which has a merely temporary effect. For the important thing in conjuncture, if one may be allowed to repeat it, is not who passes the laws, Englishmen or Indians, but that the right laws should be passed—the laws really best adapted to make India, in fact, more healthy, more wealthy, more wise. Even without desirable laws, well-organized efforts of Indians in the field of private endeavour could do a great deal; but their work would be hampered by bad legislation, and it would be the one unpardonable sin of the British-controlled Government to hamper the progress of India to health and wealth and wisdom.

In this connexion I remember something which Mr. C. F. Andrews once told me. There was a moment in the past, he said, when Mr. Gandhi was in doubt whether to co-operate with the Government or not, and the decision hung for him upon the question whether the Government would or would not pass certain legislation in regard to the sale of alcohol. He sent a message to the Government-to the Viceroy of the time, I thinkstating his position, and it was only when the Government refused to pass the legislation he believed to be required that he decided not to co-operate with it. I do not know whether Mr. Gandhi was right or wrong in believing that the legislation in question would have been advantageous, all things considered; if the Government refused, I imagine that there must have been something to be said on the other side, and since I do not know the arguments for and against, I cannot express any opinion. Details in the India situation, as the Preface explained, are beyond this little book's range of vision;

but I am quite sure that here was another case in which you see Mr. Gandhi act on precisely the right principle, some principle which he apprehends more clearly than anyone else. The thing which really for Indians makes co-operation with the Government possible or impossible is whether the Government will make the legislative arrangements needed for an actual increase in the health, the wealth, and the intelligence of the population of India.

Only, if Mr. Gandhi was right in believing these particular legislative arrangements to be required, I think he gave up too soon. If the arguments in their favour were so strong that they were bound to convince all men of good will, once clearly set before them, he ought to have been able to get his demand on the Government for this particular legislation backed by a large and unanimous volume of Indian public opinion. But if any demand for legislation required for the sake of the physical and moral health of India were backed by a large volume of public opinion in India, one can say with confidence that it would also secure the support of the best part of public opinion in England, when once people here were made acquainted with the case. The Government in India could not, even if ill-disposed, withstand such pressure of public opinion from two sides.

I am convinced that there is no legislation required for the progress of India in substantial good which Indians cannot get passed under present conditions, provided that Indians are of one mind in asking for it, and provided that it can be shown by sound arguments to be

calculated to improve Indian public health, or raise the economic condition of the people, or advance useful education. This does not apply to the demand for the withdrawal of British control, as has been already explained. I do not think there is any prospect of inducing the British people to surrender the supreme power to India, as India is to-day; but it applies to all legislation which bears directly on the physical, economic, and mental improvement of India, on making a better India, to which England could ultimately surrender the control.

How much Indians can do to get the Government to act in the way required for these ends, if they go the right way about it, has been exhibited before my eyes by the case of my friend Professor N. Gangulee. His own studies had convinced him that Indian agriculture would be substantially improved if a number of important questions relating to it were illuminated by a Royal Commission. When carrying on research in England he set himself to move British public opinion in this direction. Continually in various papers one saw letters over his signature forcibly explaining the agricultural situation in India and arguing that a Royal Commission was required. So far as I could see he was carrying on this campaign quite without support from any other Indian, just himself alone. Even so, in the end he carried his point! The Commission was appointed. I believe it is now generally agreed that the result of its inquiry has been exceedingly valuable and that the actual yield of the Indian soil in the future may be expected to be greater or better in consequence. This is a bit of solid good gained by the initiative of one Indian for his country under present conditions.

Further, a Commission of this kind shows us Indians and Englishmen working together with the single object of furthering India's welfare. Such co-operation, extended and diversified, would give bright hopes for India's future. I do not think of co-operation between British and Indian members of the Government only. I am sure that if Indians in the days to come make corporate and systematic efforts to build up the new India we have seen in vision, they would find many Englishmen not connected with the Government, experts in different fields, glad to give what help they could. Nothing would tend to remove the disagreements between the two peoples like such co-operation. What I observed in regard to the antagonism between Hindus and Mohammedans-that I doubted whether it would ever be cured till some task were found, some common interest, which overrode the differences-applies here too.

To build up a nation is a task so vast and splendid that if men once set themselves to it, grappling, by individual and by corporate effort, with all the difficult and complicated questions it involves, with the mass of practical arrangements which may have to undergo continuous modification to meet changing circumstances, they are likely to find the interest of the great end in view leave little room for petty squabbling. And as they find the others working with them share their own enthusiasm, mutual suspicions cannot but fade away. Hindus, Mohammedans, Indian Christians, English Christians, English non-Christians, would share the same per-

plexities and anxieties while some problem refused to yield to treatment, and the same happiness and gratification when some experiment was crowned with success and another stage registered in India's progress. Indians who found Englishmen, in the Government or detached from the Government, really keen that the population of India should win by this arrangement an increase of physical health, by that other arrangement an increase of economic prosperity, by that other arrangement again a better mental outlook, could hardly go on suspecting these Englishmen of wishing to keep India back in servitude. And the English, on the other hand, who might have felt doubts whether the Indians, left to themselves, could grapple with all the difficulties, could hardly go on doubting if they found Indian suggestions, in the common work, pointing out the best road of advance, and Indians dealing efficiently in practice with the parts of the great task to which they set their hand.

I sometimes wonder whether an Indian who has spent his life in political agitation, when he is at the end of it all and looks back over past years, will feel that it has all been quite worth while. He will see a vista of enthusiastic meetings, of crowds swaying in excitement; he will remember the many occasions when, as he stood to speak, the words surged up within him as a flood, when he saw their effect in the eyes and gestures of the thousands listening; the noise of their applause will be again in his ears; he will see himself over and over again, surrounded, led in procession, garlanded. And yet it may be difficult to think of any one of his fellow-countrymen who, as the result of all that, is healthier, anyone who is better

provided for, anyone who is better educated. I wonder whether he might not wish for a moment that he had been at least a doctor, who could look back on some scores of Indians freed from physical ills by his labours, or even a tiller of the Indian soil—some increase of solid good to India, even if a small one.

In this connexion we may note again how right Mr. Gandhi is in seeing the kind of thing wanted. His campaign for the spinning-wheel may not take account of all the circumstances, and here, too, it may not be wise to follow his actual proposals. But he has declared the true principle, that for a renovation of India politics are not enough; measures must be taken for an increase of solid good in the life of the people, and taken now, under the present regime; the work of making the masses healthier, better furnished with the means of life, must be set about at once. So far as the gospel of the spinning-wheel means that, it means something vital. Other Indians with more thorough economic knowledge may reject the proposal as unpractical and unsound; but it is not enough to take up a merely negative attitude to it; proposals in that field are really required, and it is no use to turn down Mr. Gandhi's unless you are prepared to put forward a better plan for beginning at once to increase the health and wealth of the people.

Indian extremists, who want an immediate withdrawal of all British control, picture themselves doing a great work of nation-building—Indians alone, when the British are gone. The point of this little book is to urge that Indians need not wait till the British are gone, that if the essential part of the work must anyway be done by

Indians apart from Government action, it is open to them to make progress with the work whilst the Government is still controlled by foreigners. But, further, there are reasons why it is even an advantage that the work should be done before the foreign control is withdrawn. There are two obvious ones. In the first place, it must be, even from the most extreme Nationalist view, at the least very doubtful what would happen if the foreign control were withdrawn suddenly. Indians know, at any rate, what existing conditions are; but what the conditions would be if British rule were suddenly withdrawn is a matter of conjecture, and Hamlet's words about the ills we have and the ills we know not of come to mind. Practically all Englishmen acquainted with India, as was noted earlier, believe that the result would be such confusion and internecine fighting that any idea of setting about the work of building up the new Indiaa work which demands stable and orderly conditionswould have to be relegated to a future quite out of human ken. Even if order and unity did not disappear altogether, the work of building the new India would be undertaken under far more difficult conditions, inasmuch as the whole mass of complex problems would be thrown upon Indians at once. They would have to think how to arrange military and naval defence at the very same time that they were thinking how to improve the physique of the people, and so on-a mass of problems to be tackled all together by people coming to them without preparation and experience. On the other hand, since the work of a Government is in any case mainly to hold the fence which keeps free from disorderly inter-

ference the field of personal enterprise, it is a considerable advantage if the British for the time being retain the responsibility for this, so that Indians can give their minds and energies undistracted, both in the field of personal enterprise and in Government bodies, to the work of building up India's inner strength. They are not then obliged to take up more problems simultaneously than they have capacity for. That was the idea underlying diarchy-the transference of the power to Indians by departments; and whether the particular scheme of diarchy instituted in 1919 was fortunately conceived or not, it is certainly true, when one takes the whole range of problems which Indians have to consider-not only those dealt with by Government action, but those which must be dealt with by the activity of private individuals and groups of private individuals-that it is an advantage not to have to wrestle with too many problems at once.

In the second place, even supposing Indians could do the work of building up the new India all by themselves, it cannot be questioned that the British may make useful contributions from their special experience and practical judgment which may expedite the work and save a certain amount of time wasted in experimenting.

But there is yet a third consideration. We have to speak here of a possible contingency which one hopes will not be realized. When ancient Greeks and Romans had to do that, they threw in a saving phrase—"which thing may the gods avert!"—it was dangerous even to describe in words a dreaded contingency; to speak of it might cause it to come. We have not such fears to-day:

on the contrary, it is safer to look the worst contingencies in the face at the outset. It is possible that the attempt to build up the new India may fail. What is true of optimistic anticipation in regard to the future of mankind on this planet as a whole is true of optimistic anticipation in regard to India. The confident optimism which was common in the nineteenth century, as if there were some automatic law of progress which made it certain that the world would go on growing better and better, has no sound basis. There is no such law; whether the world grows better or not depends on what voluntary choices men make, and men may choose wrong. On the other hand, the pessimism which rules out the possibility of things being made better is equally at fault. There seems no limit to the improvement possible in the world, if men choose right. Through a defect in the wills or the minds of men the great enterprise of building a new India may fail. It would be a mistake to embark on that enterprise without realizing that fully at the beginning. The work will certainly not go forward with perfect smoothness and ease. There are bound, in any case, to be disappointments and failures in the course of it, the strain of labour which may long seem fruitless. The enthusiasm and excitement of the earlier stages can hardly last; at the stage when their place should be taken by the steady, resolute interest which carries on through the continuous everyday task, that steady interest may fail to emerge and the enterprise may peter out. Those who have watched young Indians for any lengthy period can hardly doubt that they need as much as any people to beware of trusting to the enthusiasm which flames high

at the beginning of new enterprises. There may be many men who start on such a work with grand visions and noble ardours. When the novelty is gone, when disappointments come, when the terrible and cruel heat of India's summer lies heavy on the spirit of men, they may find gradually the old apathy, the old world-weariness, the old fatalism creep over them. The antagonisms between different communities, the personal enmities and jealousies between man and man, all the little selfishnesses and vanities which were suppressed at first by the common enthusiasm binding the workers together, may reassert themselves as that enthusiasm dies down; new quarrels and suspicions may bring the work to a standstill. But even if the reforming band retain their zeal and resolution they may spend themselves in vain; for to build a new India means to bring about a new direction and strength in millions and millions of individual wills; and since no man can make another man will in the way he desires, since in that sense, at any rate, the wills of men are free, it must always be a question beforehand whether the most well-conceived propaganda, the most impassioned appeals, the most cogent arguments, will succeed. Think, for instance, of the reform of those social customs which depress the vitality and energy of India-the great multitude of individual wills which have to be brought into line if anything effectual is to be accomplished!

The reformer may break his heart charging that great mass of apathy and selfishness and fail to move it. If I might make the conjecture, the thing most likely to frustrate attempts to build a new India is not active

hostility from reactionary Indians, not mistakes on the part of the British Government, which could not really do much to stop the work if Indians as a whole were in earnest about it, but just the *vis inertiae* of millions of people who will not move from their old ways, their old narrow, selfish outlook. Like charging a haystack, we say in England—no hard object that strikes back at you, but a soft, dead weight that just takes your impetus into itself and stops it.

In forecasting the future one must look squarely at what seems to be the fact, that the transference of power departmentally to Indian Ministers has not so far resulted in noticeably greater efficiency. In some respects it has resulted in less. Education, as we have recognized, is one of the things on which the progress of India most depends. If Indians are going to build up for themselves a new India, education, expressing the best mind of India, would have to be a principal means; and it might have been hoped that as soon as the control of education passed to Indians it would begin to show a better understanding of India's needs. But in some parts of the country, at any rate, what education does show since the transfer is a noticeable decline in efficiency. An old Oxford friend of mine had for many years an important post in India connected with education. He told me, when I met him the other day, that since the transference of education to Indian Ministers has taken place he has been receiving heart-breaking accounts of the condition into which education has fallen over a great stretch of country. If one took this as an indication of what the final result of swaraj, extended to all departments of

Government, would be, the outlook would be very grey. Lower efficiency in each department would necessarily mean that the several needs of the nation would be less well met than they are to-day: we should have an India *less*, not more, healthy, *less* economically prosperous, *less* educated.

But, even if the experiment of transference has resulted so far in a decline of efficiency, various considerations may be urged in favour of the transference. There are Nationalists so rabid as to maintain that even if swaraj meant a loss of all other good to India they would still choose swaraj. I think one may admit that an Indian may reasonably wish for swaraj even if its result would be a general decline of other good, provided that the decline did not go too far. He might feel that the gain in dignity and self-respect brought by self-government outweighed a certain loss to the nation in health, prosperity, and education. I judge by what my own feelings would be in regard, let us say, to a government of England by Germans. Even if it could be proved to me that the people of England would enjoy better health, be richer and better educated under German rule than they are to-day, I should prefer to have a somewhat lower level in these goods together with independence. If, on the other hand, one had to choose between a state of things in which the level in health, in wealth, and in education was very much lower than to-day-let us say, a state of things produced by native British Communists -and a government by Germans which kept things at their present level, or raised them above it, I should prefer the German rule.

Even if you give up the bright hope of building a better India and merely anticipate a state of things under *swaraj* in which India would be rather more subject to disease, rather poorer, and rather worse educated than it is to-day, it might still be reasonable to choose *swaraj*. And so far as I can gather, many of the British who are in favour of completing the transference of power to Indians do take it as certain that India, governed by Indians, will for as long a time as can be foreseen have less and not more of the goods we have been considering. But they think that, even so, Indians should be allowed to govern themselves, if they wish to do so.

Yet to give up the hope of a better India would be grievous. And, one may ask, Does the apparent loss in efficiency resulting from the partial transference so far show what the ultimate result of transference will be? I do not think we are compelled to believe that. In the first place, it may be taken into account that people coming new to a particular kind of work often at the outset do it worse than those from whom they took it over, but later on acquire the ability to do it well. It is unfair to judge their real capacities by their first attempts. In the second place, one has to remember that the Indians from whom Ministers and administrators can be chosen to-day by no means represent all the talent of India. From the fact that a good number of the ablest Indians have taken the line of non-co-operation, all this sum of ability is diverted from helping the State in work for the solid good of the nation, in the various ways we have surveyed, to agitation about the political machine and

controversy with other Indians. If all the available ability of India were concentrated on the work of building up the nation in these different kinds of good, things might go forward much quicker. And thirdly, one has to remember that, as has been said, the work of government in a self-governing country depends essentially upon public opinion. It works, not in a vacuum, but in an atmosphere of public opinion which gives it energy or fails to give it, which stimulates it to take a right course or to take a wrong course. If the work of education ever really goes forward in India and produces a nation truly educated in the right way, it will have to be, as was said before, to a large extent by private initiative apart from Government action; but so far as Government action is required, that action will be energetic and well-directed only when there is a large volume of unanimous public opinion on the subject of education amongst Indians, and that can only be when Indians have given more of their thought to the really difficult problem of Indian education in the twentieth century; when there has been more research, more general argument and discussion, by which the essential requirements can gradually emerge and command general acceptance, and the false tracks be gradually marked as false. Such a volume of unanimous public opinion would not tolerate a Government which in the matter of education was slack and incompetent.

Yet although the discouraging result of transference at the outset need not make us abandon the great hope, it ought to dissipate that foolish optimism which supposes you have only got to transfer the direction of things to

Indians for everything automatically to shoot forward in the desired direction.

No easy hopes or lies Shall bring us to our goal, But iron sacrifice Of body, will, and soul.

I think it is better for everyone, even in the first moment of hope and enthusiasm, to put the possibility of failure before himself, so that, whatever the apparent result of his effort be, he may have a heart steeled not to give up. But if the attempt to build a new India does fail, the consequence will be less disastrous if it has been made when there is, at any rate, a foreign Government to prevent things getting too badly out of gear, than if it fails when India stands alone by itself among the nations, and chaos would put it defenceless at the mercy of any intervention. If Indians really cannot build up a healthy, strong, intelligent people, a fairly decent foreign Government is the lesser evil. It would remain perfectly true, as was said at the beginning, that no condition of India could be regarded as satisfactory in which the affairs of India were not settled by Indians as freely as the affairs of China are settled by Chinese. Only one would have to say that the ideal condition was for India unattainable. To have a foreign Government would not be satisfactory, but it would be less unsatisfactory than anarchy or despotism of the barbaric type.

The same thing applies to despotism or dictatorship as it exists in Europe, and may exist in the future. Despotism is an evil; but it is not the worst of evils. Anarchy

is worse. Under certain conditions an individual may have no choice between supporting a despotism or furthering anarchy. Under such conditions a wise man would choose despotism; for despotism, whilst it limits the freedom of an individual in certain directions-compelling him to obey a number of laws which he has no share in making, to pay a portion of his wealth in taxes without his having any voice in the matter, and to refrain from criticizing the Government-may at the same time leave a great part of life quite open to his free choice. He may use his time and his money and choose his occupations at his own discretion. Anarchy, on the other hand, makes the whole of life so uncertain and uncomfortable that in no direction can a man make plans with any security. We see, as a matter of history, how peoples which have had some taste of anarchy have acquiesced in despotisms as a relief: the Romans, after the Civil Wars, in the despotism of Caesar Augustus; the French, after the violences of the Revolution, in the despotism of Napoleon. And although it is not quite true to say of Italy to-day that Mussolini saved it from the anarchic Communism which followed the War, because, as a matter of fact, order had been restored before the Fascists seized control, it is probably quite true to say that it was their brief experience of anarchy which made so large a part of the Italian people welcome the despotism of Mussolini. These despotisms are, of course, not the rule of foreigners. But even when a country is governed by foreigners without popular control, a great field of free action, as we have seen, may be left open for the individual. There may even be more freedom for individuals

under a despotism or a foreign rule than under some popular Governments; for a popular Government may interfere more in the affairs of daily life, and individuals who object to its proceedings may find their liberty of choice more restricted than it is under some despotisms.

It ought not to be necessary to point out that when we speak of a country as "free" we may mean one of three wholly different things. We may mean that (1) individual freedom within the country is subject to the minimum of control by the Government or by popular convention, or (2) we may mean that the Government is set up by, and can be overthrown by, the votes of the majority, or (3) we may mean that the Government is not subject to the control of any outside Power. And these three kinds of freedom by no means necessarily go together. In a satisfactory state of India, Indians would have all three kinds of freedom; but it is not at all certain that if India had the second and third kinds of freedom it would have more of the first kind than it has to-day.

In the rhetorical fervour of the platform an Indian orator may declare that he desires *swaraj* under any conditions, even if the absence of the British meant a universal breakdown of political and social order; but we may be pretty sure he himself would hesitate, if it came to practice, and we may be quite sure that very few people in India would really prefer *swaraj* with unlimited disorder to order under foreign rule. But to have to make a choice between those two alternatives would be melancholy, and to-day, when the building up of a new India, healthy and free, seems a possibility, it

would be miserable to give up in despair and not use every power and resource we have to make that possibility a glorious fact.

There seems nothing in the situation to forbid hope, but whether such co-operation in the great task as I have seen in my vision ever comes about probably depends on whether, at the critical moment, the man is found, or the men are found, whose personality gives the electric thrill required to set the wills of men in motion. Probably it just depends on that. If it is true, more or less, all the world over that the emergence of the magnetic personality determines the course of things more than impersonal processes, it is more abundantly true in India. Will there be anyone now, whose voice is heard over the confusion, to lift men's hearts above the petty quarrels about the political machinery, and fire them with the common desire to work at building up India in all the various kinds of solid good we have surveyed? It might be someone on the British side who was able to convince Indians that the great vision was really his, as well as theirs, and that he would bring the British in earnest to contribute all they had to give to the work. Lord Irwin's utterances have come so near to saying this that it seems not unreasonable to hope he may be the man of the hour. Or it might be someone on the Indian side, someone whose sagacity seized what was essential and who was able to convince the British that the way of advance he saw was the true road, and to draw together the divergent wills of his countrymen to the common end. When we look back in history and see the effect produced by great personalities at particular

moments of time, it is generally possible to point out how the situation was prepared for them and how the effect was in that way produced by earlier processes. Hence there have been theorists who denied the importance of personalities in history and made it all a matter of process. Yet the fact remains that the situation seems sometimes to call for the great personality, and the great personality does not come. Then all the processes that went before fail to produce the effect. If the right man is there at the critical moment it is the gift of God.

Only by such Divine grace can anyone now arise great enough to deliver us from the suggestion of the past; for it seems as if one of the things which most hold men back from progress to better things is just taking it for granted that they must do the same kind of things which men in apparently similar situations have done before. The history books we read establish a kind of convention which we obey because we fancy we must. In the past nations have sometimes won their independence by a bitter struggle against alien rulers, and so it seems the inevitable way for any foreign rule to end, if it does end. But if men knew their inner freedom, they would not be so dominated by the suggestion of the past. The great man is he who understands this freedom and in a conjuncture can call men to act in a wholly new way, to mark a new epoch in mankind's progress by doing what men have never done before. There never really has been a situation in history quite like the Indian situation, and there is nothing really to prevent, if they will, the two great peoples involved in it from finding the way by common thought and common labour instead of de-

grading the future by the wastefulness of contention. If, as we have seen, the British, even for self-regarding motives, desire that India should be healthy and prosperous, and if to make India healthy and prosperous would be the best way to induce in the British the will to retire, it should not be impossible for a *modus vivendi* to be found for action on either side in the immediate future.

Indians may have made mistakes, but we are bound to ask ourselves whether mistakes on the British side, too, are not in part the cause of present troubles. My impression is that what has mainly been deficient on the British side is friendliness. I think British officials, as a whole, have had a high sense of duty and done what they saw as their duty with admirable conscientiousness. Yet I think it is due to something lacking that there are so many Indians whom they have failed to convince of their good will. Friendliness means something more than performing conscientiously professional services to other people. It means entering into their interests. Individual Englishmen in India, I know, have had this friendliness in full measure, but the British Government as a whole has not succeeded in making Indians feel that it is as keen as they are to build up a better India. It has been content just to do the task of the day and not look ahead. Defence of the British rule is often made to rest on the assertion that it is marked pre-eminently by justice. It shapes and administers the law, we are told, in a way to hold the balance true amongst all the conflicting interests of castes and communities and races in the country. That is no doubt a great thing, if it is true. And yet, when one takes into account the Indian situation, how inade-

quate! Certainly justice is a principal thing, and no kind of government can be good without it, but how can you satisfy men, afire with hopes for the future, by merely carrying on justly the existing regime? Every bit of life gets its interest and its pleasurableness from the future to which it is thought to be leading; we live by our hopes. Men who have visions of a great day coming. a new India-perhaps often wild and inconsiderate visions-can hardly be drawn away from them by the promise of a careful justice in the old order. If Indians are ever to give up unwise visions of the future, it will only be because they have got better visions, ones nobler in quality, ones more in contact with sober fact. And it is only when they believe that the British Government, too, looks forward and presses forward that they can feel a community of spirit between it and themselves.

For some Indians the suggestion that a work of inner renovation should come before the final transference of power by the British appears a mere design for prolonging British rule by diverting Indians from political agitation. Undoubtedly, as has been said, if you attach a purely negative meaning to *swaraj*, it is true that, if the British were willing, *swaraj* might come at the end of this year. But if by *swaraj* you mean, not a mere absence of foreign control, but a healthy, prosperous, united, well-educated, as well as a free India, then, so far from an immediate withdrawal of British control being the quickest way to it, an immediate withdrawal of British control might postpone the attainment of it to a much more distant future, perhaps indefinitely. Since the weakness of India is the cause of the foreign government,

and not the foreign government the cause of the weakness of India, by making India free, in the negative sense, you do not thereby make it strong, whereas by making India strong you do of necessity make it free. A new India, such as we have seen built up in vision, simply could not be under any foreign control. If the British took willing part in the building up of such an India, they would be working for their own elimination as rulers far more securely than if they evacuated the country to-morrow; for if they evacuated the country to-morrow and India fell into chaos, it would be easy for them to return, should they want to do so, whereas if they had helped to build up a strong India and then retired, they could not return against the will of India. And no other stranger could set up his banners in such a land

I am writing in the midst of an English spring. All round me there are the tiny immature green leaves pressed together in the brown sheaths which have been holding them confined since last autumn. Of late, the green leaves have been swelling within the sheaths: many of them have burst the sheaths and begun to spread themselves out in the free air. There is nothing beautiful about the brown sheath. Undoubtedly the beauty and perfection of each tuft of leaves demands the sheath's disappearance; but if I began pulling off any brown sheath while the leaves were still tender, that bud, exposed to the air, would never come to maturity it would die altogether or show a miserable and stunted growth. Let the leaves remain yet for a little within the sheath, growing bigger, growing stronger day by day,

and a week or two hence we shall see them there fully developed in their greenness and beauty, spread out free and unconstrained, not fearing the air, not fearing the great winds even; and if you look for what remains of the sheath you will find nothing: it will have quite gone.





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