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**IS INDIA FIT
FOR
SELF-GOVERNMENT?**

**WITH A CRITICISM ON
THE WHITE PAPER**



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A. DORASAMI



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WITH A CRITICISM ON
THE WHITE PAPER

BY
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"THE VERDICT OF HISTORY UPON THE BRITISH RULE
IN INDIA", "QUO VADIS, MOTHER INDIA?", ETC.

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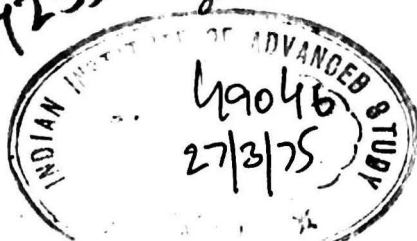
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(Burke-French Revolution).

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INTRODUCTION

"The day shall come, that great avenging day
Which Troy's proud glories in the dust shall lay,
When Priam's powers and Priam's self shall fall
And one prodigious ruin swallow all."

(Pope's "Iliad")

The restless agitation which characterises the political India of to-day is unprecedented both in intensity and volume. Almost every section of educated classes is madly rushing to an end which would fain evoke the day of desolation which fell upon ancient Troy and its glories. And none, indeed, there is that is racing for the ruin half as frantically as the Indian National Congress under their leader, an extraordinary man, who fancies he is all India himself and, parading with fast and penance every act of his, even the most grotesque, at "the call of God" as a pious weapon to goad people into rebellion against authority and make them demonstrate his creed of non-violence by wide-spread lawlessness, disorder and even murder, expedites the advent of that fateful day under the spurious title of Swaraj. Moreover, the country is being torn by factions, embarked as she is on a scheme of Constitution which would tear her from the supreme protection of an Imperial power and place her under the bogus protection of what are called 'leaders'. It is well to recall here that, in all her history, India

never knew any such thing as leaders of people. She had as super-autocrats Kings and Emperors who ruled with iron will. But the introduction of the strange element of democracy amongst a people blighted with illiteracy has, as a concomitant evil, created leaders who, during the period of transition at least, are far from being genuine copies of those of the West. Properly appraised, they would be found mostly to be counterfeit, though they advertise their false position very much in the role of uninvited guests. It behoves, therefore, at this momentous juncture, every citizen of the Empire to come out and express his mind freely on the great move which political India, taking full advantage of the times created by the bomb-shell of the White Paper, is making for the attainment of Swaraj or Self-government. And if I have to speak, though with painful feelings, in unvarnished and well-merited denunciation of the subversive tactics of revolutionaries, let no one be wroth at it. It is pure history. Let him but dive in himself and ponder. "With desolation is all the land made desolate, because there is none that considereth in the heart". Go then my little book; wherever you roam and whatever people you may address, deliver your message in no faltering voice. Duty knows no fear.

San Thome, }
MADRAS. }

A. D.

CHAPTER I.

INDIA AS SHE IS.

The political unrest which convulses India at the present day offers me an opportunity of writing on a theme which has been the inspiration of many a statesman and many a politician in this country and in England. And if I have the privilege to do so, it is not to earn distinction in life, for that is impossible with my feeble powers, but only to fulfil what I hold a sacred duty to my Motherland. I am not going to speak against my countrymen or any body else, who are entitled to their opinion regarding the great problem of India. I am not going to speak about our eminent leaders touching their personal accomplishments and their intellectual splendour; but, in common with the saner section of the political bodies in India, in union with those of a mentality which cannot be reproached for the rabid stretch of political extremism, and with the spirit of the great mass of people in whose grateful hearts is enshrined the silent but sacred instinct of loyalty to the British Throne, I am going to speak of the realities of Indian History as reflected in the conditions of her peoples to-day. In this, I shall make no compromise with false patriotism. Neither will I barter away the living truths of India for the plaudits of a blatant populace. Readers of politics have almost invariably been accustomed to listening to the theme of India sung to them by eminent Indians in one particular key.

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But this time they must be pleased to listen to the same theme rendered by me, an unknown, little Indian, in a different key. It is not in the furore of a rhapsody demonstrated in the lime light of polished classics, but in the pathetic strain of a tragic reality that forms the burden of the song of India, and is now heard in the rumbling echo of a thunder storm all the world over. I disdain appearing in the rags of cheap patriotism posing for a great champion of India's liberty by exposing to the world a whole catalogue of magnified injustices India suffers at the hands of the bureaucracy, but, armed with the blunt truth and sincerity, and looking upon Britain as a Nation in whose hands is placed by the undeniable facts of history and, I would say, the inscrutable designs of Providence, the destiny of this great Empire of India I, *a voice from the voiceless*, solicit their special attention, as I attempt, in these pages, to place before the world, the home truths of India; for, I believe, she is far more likely to be benefited by having her case, intricate as it is, sifted in the light of truth, pure and simple, than by plausible subterfuges and calculated misrepresentations advanced in the prejured name of honour and justice.

Before entering upon a rapid survey of the social and political India, as demanded by the exigencies of the hour, let us, for a moment, look back and take a snap-shot of a scene which is of a different character and laid in a different part of the world, when a handful of English traders landed upon the western shores of India and were just pushing into prominence. Europe then hardly recovered from the shock of a great war of a spiritual

character, which altered the destiny of the world. The Reformation—that mighty conflict between the old Church with its unyielding orthodoxy and the new spirit, a burning spirit of revolt for liberty which burst through every restraint of the spiritual domination of a thousand years, flung open the doors of an unbridled freedom to a bewildered humanity. And the great nations of Europe like England and Holland who were drenched to the full in that terrible spiritual storm, without waiting upon the will of the Vatican whose word was, till the Reformation, practically the law of Europe and which had erstwhile given away by a single wave of its hand, the Eastern and the Western Hemispheres to Portugal and Spain respectively as an Apostolic legacy, embarked on ambitious adventures. And India, of whose wealth and glory sang the minstrels of ancient and medieval Europe upon their ravished lyres, became the magnet of their ambition. At that time, she was in the throes of a great moral and political catastrophe. The great Hindu Kingdoms which had flourished for ages in the proudest displays of human glory were swept away by the volcanic irruptions of Islam. The incomparable Vijianagar—the greatest of the medieval Hindu Empires lay entombed in the dust of the Earth as an abiding witness of the terrors of the conquering Crescent. Even the great Mogul Empire and all the Mahomedan Kingdoms, unable to withstand the ravages of the Mahratta hordes and dwindling down to insignificance, were struggling pathetically to survive the universal lawlessness and wars that were fast lashing the country to an inevitable desolation. She was one vast scene of disorder, crime, bloodshed, anarchy

and chaos. Here is the penpicture of Lord Macaulay of this time (from his essay on "Clive"). "Such or nearly such was the change which passed on the Mogul Empire during the forty years which followed the death of Aurangazeb. A succession of nominal sovereigns, sunk in indolence and debauchery, sauntered away life in secluded palaces, chewing bang, fondling concubines and listening to buffoons. A succession of ferocious invaders descended through the western passes to prey on the defenceless wealth of Hindustan. A Persian conqueror crossed the Indus, marched through the gates of Delhi and bore away in triumph those treasures the magnificence of which had astounded Roe and Bernier, the Peacock throne, of which the richest jewels of Golkonda had been disposed by the most skilful hands of Europe, and the inestimable Mountain of Light which, after many strange vicissitudes, lately shone in the bracelet of Ranjit Singh and is now destined to adorn the hideous idol of Orissa. The Afghan soon followed to complete the work of devastation which the Persian had begun. The warlike tribes of Rajaputana threw off the Mussulman yoke. A band of mercenary soldiers occupied Rohilkand. The Seikhs ruled on the Indus. The Jauts spread dismay along the Jumna. The highlands which border on the western sea-coast of India poured forth a yet more formidable race which was long the terror of every native power and which, after many desperate and doubtful struggles, yielded only to the fortune and genius of England. It was under the reign of Aurangazeb that this wild clan of plunderers first descended from their mountains and soon after his death every corner of his wide empire learned to tremble at the mighty name of

the Mahrattas. Many fertile viceroyalties were entirely subdued by them. Their dominions stretched across the peninsula from sea to sea. Mahratta captains reigned at Poona, at Gwalior, in Guzarat, in Berar and in Tanjore. Nor did they, though they had become great sovereigns, therefore cease to be free-booters. They still retained the predatory habits of their forefathers. Every region which was not subject to their rule was wasted by their incursions. Wherever the kettle-drums were heard the peasant threw his bag of rice on his shoulder, hid his small savings in his girdle, and fled with wife and children to the mountains or the jungles, to the milder neighbourhood of the hyæna and the tiger. Many provinces redeemed their harvests by the payment of an annual ransom. Even the wretched phantom who still bore the Imperial title stooped to pay this ignominious blackmail. The camp-fires of one rapacious leader were seen from the wall of the palaces of Delhi. Another, at the head of his innumerable cavalry descended year after year on the rice-fields of Bengal. Even the European factors trembled for their Magazines. Less than hundred years ago, it was thought necessary to fortify Calcutta against the horse men of Berar; and the name of the Mahratta ditch still preserves the memory of the danger."

Thus, torn into the very shreds of her tragic existence by the unmitigated horrors of constant invasions and massacres, internecine wars, misrule, tyranny and universal blackmail, added to the heinous crimes and outrages committed day and night by organised gangs of bandits like the Pindaris, the condition of India

must have been too horrifying indeed ! She was in the grip of a catastrophe whose consequences no one could foresee. It was necessary at that critical period of her existence that a power must arise to save her from a complete collapse. And such a power did, indeed, in the designs of a merciful Providence, arise. It was Pax Britannica.

But for England, India would have been parcelled out among the hosts of European powers that had come down upon her as she lay prostrate, bleeding and helpless. They could have made her another Africa. There could now be, for instance, a Portuguese East India, a Dutch West India, an Italian Central India, a French South India and an English North India. But England performed a double feat. She drove them all out and, by taking the whole of India under her rule of Imperial guardianship, she not only saved her from being reduced to political extinction, she not only saved her from being swallowed up into European Colonies, but she has preserved her national identity intact. India to-day is the home of Indians only with a handful of Britishers who are here as sentinels of a city, as birds of passage though rulers of the land. I would go a step further. Apart from being annihilated into political nothingness, India could not have retained her ancient faith either. If, for instance, the Portuguese, the French and the Dutch Governments, influenced by their respective nations in whose bosom the instinct of religion predominates every other feeling, enacted that all the offices in the State should be filled by Christian converts, how much of Hinduism would remain to-day, with Islam taking over 70 millions to its fold ?

It is well over a century since England has firmly established herself as the paramount power of India, which was not done until she had bled herself profusely in the momentous struggles with the great warlike races like the Mahrattas, the Sikhs, the Jats and the Rohillas. Since then her genius, her tenacity, her stratagem, her philanthropy and her Imperial ideal have, in their clever combination, made a clean dash through the Indian history ; and by the stupendous reforms she has effected in the social, economic, intellectual and political life of the people, she has pulled up the India of the past dying amidst the decay of her ancient culture and civilisation and the wholesale destruction of the persistent inroads of Islam, and put her on her firm feet to speed along her safe and solid path of progress. It is nothing short of the marvellous how Britain could have accomplished so much in the regeneration of India in her state of unfathomable social prejudices, bitter religious antagonism and political wilderness. This slight reference to the past is necessary for us to push onwards in our consideration of India's present which does not roll on smooth grounds. Especially at a time when impatient spirits both here and in England, goaded on by ideas of revolution, delight in painting the character of the British Rule in India as hideous as possible, when they exploit the candour of the British public there to benefit a handful of discontented, self-seeking, irresponsible clique of Indian extremists, and at a time when a false step of Britain might mean the eternal ruin of this great sub-continent, it behoves every Indian who carries in his veins the courage of conviction to speak his mind freely out on the great problem of India.

While a section of educated Indians, either actuated by the ambition of ruling the country themselves or seized with the frenzy of Red Communism, rend the political sky of India with shouts of Dominion status and Independence, we, the mass millions, enjoying and appreciating in mute gratitude perfect peace and the security of our honour, life and property, do demand the continuance of the British rule in India. While the priestly and the political classes pretend to ignore the terrific waves of crime and disorder that had been sweeping over India through her unquiet life of twenty-five centuries, we whose forefathers were the unhappy victims of those crimes and disorders and were living in an unbroken agony of human life, cannot afford to forget what India was in the past and what she is to-day. We cannot afford to forget that, from time immemorial, she was a vast field for the free, widespread, persistent perpetration of dacoity, thuggee, highway robbery, pindarism, kidnapping of children, suttee, human sacrifice, piracy and other crimes which, flourishing under the aegis of powerful protection and the patronage of deities, kept the people in eternal terror. We cannot afford to forget that, in those days of deified injustice, when rulers were gods and people were dirt, the poor subjects were so little thought of and their honour was held at such low discount that the country was absolutely reeking in slavery. The Code of Manu under the Hindu rule and the court and mansion life of the Mahomedan rule tell the tale of the universal servitude that had been disgracing the country all along. We cannot afford to forget the thousand woes and miseries which the mass millions, helpless and terror-stricken, must have been writhing in consequence

of the constant invasions by foreign foes and continuous wars between Hindus and Mahomedans consigning cities and provinces to wholesale plunder, massacre, rapine and lust and sweeping away kingdoms, thrones and sceptres in rivers of blood. We behold, too, in the British Rule the Finger of Providence. The world in its antiquity, the world in its marvels and mysteries, has, for the first time, beheld this vast continent of India, in the long role of the three or four thousand years of her checkered history, welded into a compact political unity under the flag of a little unknown Island, the Ultima Thule of Julius Cæsar. We could ever have dreamt that the little band of merchants from that far off sea-girt Isle, who landed on the rocky shores of Western India some three hundred years ago were the pioneers of a power which, in process of time, incorporated into their small kingdom the magnificent Empires of the Hindu and the Mogul and evolved an Empire of their own which is far more stupendous and more mighty than that over which the Roman Eagle ever soared in the giddiest height of its glory.

And now that this magnificent Empire, reared by the genius of England is, in consequence of the virulent agitations incessantly carried on by powerful revolutionary forces as well as by the immoderate impetuosity of the so-called Moderate parties in India on one side, and the socialist generosity and liberty-loving friends in England on the other, to be speedily supplanted by another power marking time, and since Lord Sankey, as Chairman of the Federal Structure Committee of the first Round Table Conference held in London has said, "Let us

grant a Federal Constitution to India, and let our hope be that everything in it may be ordered and settled on the best and surest foundations, so that peace and happiness, truth and justice, may flourish as abundantly in India as they have done at home", it is well worth our while to sound the great foundations on which the stupendous continent of India in her social, intellectual, and political status, rests; which will enable us to catch a glimpse of the glorious vision of the noble Lord beholding India transformed into another England in the abundant enjoyment of peace and happiness, truth and justice, though I may be pardoned for stating at the very outset that it is difficult to believe that the foundations which have stuck their soil with the firmness of the Himalayan rocks through all the vicissitudes the great country has passed in the long role of her wonderful existence, are likely to crumble to dust to make room for foundations of a different order at the mere touch of the Federal or whatever gorgeous and weighty superstructure that may be designed for the future destiny of the Indian races, or that the superedifice in contemplation or in actual preparation to be imposed upon existing foundations to placate, in the main, the angry elements that are daily and hourly gathering in intensity and volume to burst over the Empire, is likely to escape the inevitable collapse. But hoping against hope, let us go on.

Remarkable as it is that, amidst most adverse circumstances brought on by social, religious and political tangles of no mean consequences, Britain has evolved a condition that has so markedly changed

the face of India, still, socially, in the surging millions as well as in the educated classes, she has not changed much. It rains, it flashes, it thunders and smites its main upon the mountain top. It streaks a stream and studs some patches of emerald green; but the barren rocks and the virginal forests are there untouched by the flash and the fury of the heavens. Likewise, from the summit of human activity and enlightenment as manifested in the marvels of the arts and sciences, and in the intellectual and industrial developments of the West, have come upon India in torrents those mighty forces which have rocked the foundations of society, altered the destinies of nations, swept away sceptres and thrones and Empires and materially changed the face of the world. And how have those forces affected India as a whole? Of a truth, there is no nation under the Sun at the present day that is so hopelessly chained down to predeluvian habits and prejudices of a most detrimental character, as the ancient, cultured, spiritual India. Her social system in a sink of abominations. We are blind to our own faults; and to none is that blindness so palpable as to those who have travelled a bit in the world and feel the hilarity of caste-free lands as contrasted with the despondency of caste-fettered India. They will not meekly take in the idea that that rubbish of social structure called caste which serves but to pander to the pride and the voluptuousness of the so-called high-caste people is the established order of the land and, therefore, all those who come within this species of barbarism must take to it as they had done for scores of centuries. But the British Rule, silver-lining the dark clouds of the age-long poverty and intellectual and moral degradation of

the people, makes them look back upon the long night of their past history, and they feel within them the moving of a spirit which urges them to rise and revolt. And hence the strange scenes of a social India at the present day.

It is not true to say that the rigours of the caste are dying out, that the sting of caste prejudices has lost its venom upon the people and that all the races and communities of this great country are only actuated by a united will to attain their highest political freedom called "Swaraj". The old Nick himself never uttered a more damnable falsehood. Patriots might, from the depth of desperation, spout out that untouchability, for example, has become as extinct as *dodo*, though, as a matter of fact, the salvation of that untouchability lies in such patriots becoming as extinct as *dodo*; still, to-day, this very hour, as sure as the organs of the human body have not changed their places, so sure is it that the multitudinous clans and creeds and colours have neither changed their social prejudices nor their antiquated notions and customs. The rural parts which form more than nine-tenths of India are the strongholds of social oppression and religious bigotry. Even in large cities and towns where the stress of circumstances slackens social stringency, the effect produced by such forces of public necessity is of little consequence, considering the fact that it can hardly make headway against the deadweight of social and religious intolerances which form the very life of the people. In spite of the most meritorious services rendered by the Christian missionaries, the Servants of India Society, the

Arya Samaj and other organisations engaged in the Divine work of social reform, the antiquated, unreformed, malformed India is still there, a giant rock unmoved by the severest storms of revolutions that have burst over her. You have merely to open your daily papers and your whole soul is, at this hour of the world's boasted progress and civilisation, surfeit with disgust at the scenes enacted, notably in Southern India, the hot-bed of Brahmanism, of strifes and riots and bloodshed, not only between Hindus and Mahomedans, but among Hindus themselves of different castes and sects, caused sometimes by the gods being taken in procession through streets inhabited by celestial Brahmans, or sometimes by a community of an inferior order trying to force entrance into temples or other sacred places monopolised by long-sustained bigotry, and hundreds of similar scenes running up their climax in the most unpleasant and oft occurring Hindu - Muslim clashes, which are set in the eyes of the world as signal posts which warn them not to be easily taken in, in the great problem of India, by the siren seductions of false patriots who, in very truth, are political vultures sniffing for the day when India will be lying a dead carcass rotting amidst universal lawlessness and anarchism.

By far the most atrocious crime with which social India stands condemned before the tribunal of common justice is the tragedy of a reprobation which overwhelms a community of 60 millions. In the ensemble of the ages of oppression and injustice, there shoots up, in the full gaze of the world, a race at the sight of which civilised humanity coils back in shame and horror, the abiding

monument of the depravity of the human heart which has been exalted above the heavens by the sanction of religion, put away from the habitations of men like festering lepers, destined to eke out their accursed lives in putrid, pestilential sties of tattered huts, thrown about amidst surroundings as horrid as death, victims of an iniquity of 4,000 years, still carrying in their daily life through every detail of it the impress of the blighting hand of a persecuting religion and an enslaving social law which could inflict upon them the most appalling acts of cruelty imaginable with a complacency of mind and a delight of the heart at which the very devils in hell seem surprised. Denied the right to express to any one the thousand woes and maledictions that haunt them at every step, enduring them all in dumb-fated silence and in desperation of spirit, deprived of even the barest necessities of life as a drop of water, begging, as it were, at the hands of their fellow-country men, leave to live on this God's Earth in company with dogs and asses and pigs, ignorant, illiterate, superstitious and poverty-eaten beyond belief, the living history of a by-gone rule, the glorious old Swaraj which took it as its sacred duty to pounce upon these unfortunate beings, to gag their mouths, to bind their hands and feet with the manacles of a most loathsome servitude imaginable, to hunt them like wild beasts, to deny them the solace of religion, nay, the very thought of God, beasts of burden born to toil for their tyrants all the days of their life and die in misery, sickness, poverty and humiliation, unblest strangers to the joys of life,—even so are the 60 million slaves in the British Empire, the untouchable outcasts of India.

Let us hear also what foreign observers of Indian customs and manners have to say about these untouchables. "Considered as if sub-human, the tasks held basest are reserved for them; dishonour is associated with their name. Some are permitted to serve only as scavengers and removers of night-soil; some, through ignorance to which they are condemned, are loathsome in their habits, and to all of them the privilege of any sort of teaching is sternly denied. They may neither possess nor read the Hindu scriptures. No Brahman priest will minister to them, and, except in rarest instances, they may not enter a Hindu temple to worship or pray. Their children may not come to the public schools. They may not draw water from the public wells, and if their habitations be in a region where water is scarce and sources far apart, this means for them not greater consideration from others, but greater suffering and greater toil. They may not enter a court of justice, they may not enter a dispensary to get help for their sick. They may stop at no inn. In some provinces, they may not use the public road, and, as labourers or agriculturists, they are continually losers, in that they may not enter the shops or even pass through the streets where shops are, but must trust to a hap-hazard chain of hungry go-betweens to buy or sell their meagre wares. Some, in the abyss of their degradation, are permitted no work at all. They may sell nothing, not even their own labour. They may only beg, and even for that purpose they dare not use the roads, but must stand far-off unseen and cry out for alms from those who pass. If alms be given, it must be tossed on the ground well away from the road, and when the giver is out of sight, and the roads empty,

then and not till then the watcher may creep up, snatch and run away " (" Mother India " by Miss Mayo).

If the God of England held her up to-day and asked her to render an account of the role she played in India being all supreme for a century and a half in the uplift of that species of humanity whom the law of their country has flung down to the level of the most degraded beasts on earth, what answer could she give her Lord and Master ? Could she lift her head to Heaven and say, "I have done my part well"? I am afraid, no ; but rather she would, in the spirit of the publican in the Bible, beat her breast and say, "Lord, have mercy on me, for I have sinned." But she will not go easily justified. And why ? Because, since the day she took the reins of the Government of the country firmly in her hands, wielding supreme sway over her millions with an infinite command of moral and material resources, she has not, to any appreciable extent, used them for the betterment of that unhappy people. She has spent millions of pounds in erecting great colleges and universities and schools innumerable ; and although these institutions are supposed to be open to all classes and creeds alike, still it is mostly the priestly, the aristocratic and some of the middle classes that have been benefited. Poverty, social prejudices and religious bigotry have stood as an insuperable barrier for the lower orders to enter them. In fact, England has, in the main, educated the already educated classes, and left the huge bulk of the depressed and the downtrodden millions absolutely in the old morass of moss-grown ignorance and superstition. And what is the net result ? These

educated classes, especially the highly-educated Brahmans, fully conscious that they were the masters of the country prior to the British Rule which they ruled with unparalleled despotism, and feeling the craze to rule again, are seriously engaged in marshalling the powers of intellect, the powers of economic unrest, the powers of political agitation and conspiracy and keep crying from house-tops and by every nook and corner of the country, "You Britishers, clear out of our country bag and baggage; we want to rule; we want Dominion Status; we want Independence." Of course, England now knows, rather late, that she is reaping as she has sown.

It is regrettably clear that, blinded by the brilliancy of the Indian Intelligentsia who are the product of English education imparted to them in the great universities and colleges maintained at an enormous cost, she has lost sight of the fact that it is the sweat that drips down the burning foreheads, and the gaping cuts and bruises of these poor people labouring in British farms and factories, on their Railways, on the construction of public roads, canals and bridges, and on other great works in India that raise all that mass of gold which pours into their exchequers, fills their pockets and swells the greatness of their great Empire; and that these very downtrodden creatures, drafted into their armies, that fought side by side with British soldiers, and won in all the great wars that they waged in India and Burma. And what has the Imperial Britain done to this mass of degraded humanity? Nothing, indeed, worthy of her Imperial greatness. No doubt, she has given absolute protection to all the peoples of India and perfect

immunity from foreign invasions, internal wars and disorders; she guards the sanctity of their homes and altars, administers an impartial law to all her races. She has built great cities and provinces and, by gifts of high-strung political constitutions, infused a spirit of fresh vitality and courage into her drooping vein and, with no-faltering hand, points to the glorious destiny she must, in due course, attain in the Parliament of man and the Federation of the world. Great as are these achievements, the greater, aye, the greatest is yet to come, that which will bind to the brow of Britain the laurel of everlasting glory and draw down from Heaven untold blessings upon her nation. It is her moral victory over the powers of darkness in India, which will rise like the sun-bathed pyramid upon the emancipation of a fallen humanity, the downtrodden millions from an everlasting doom. The elevation of the 60 million despised outcasts of India by the moral support and philanthropy of British Rule as well as by strenuous legal enactments from their deepest degradation to the noble height of free-citizenship in the vast Empire of God shall be a monument in the history of mankind which will add glory to the most glorious nation on earth, a monument which will add to the most brilliant and the most romantic traditions of Britain the splendour of an achievement which, in the sight of God and man, will be more dazzling than any that is recorded in the proudest pages of her incomparable history.

And that history says that about the year 1832 an English sailor, Jenkins by name, suddenly appeared before the House of Commons and produced from a box one of his ears which, he said, had been cut off

seven years before in wanton cruelty by a Spanish coast-guard in the West Indies; which so provoked the Parliament that, in an outburst of indignation, they declared war on Spain to avenge the wrongs done to an Englishman by another man. Now, before the self-same Parliament and before the self-same British Nation, there now appears an army of countless millions of mutilated forms emerging from their mouldering graves of by-gone ages. And on them is depicted the tale that tells through the blood-stained pages of 4,000 years of Hindu-Raj, the tale that tells of the tyranny and the destruction that had been wreaked upon them by the immutable injunction of a social law called the Code of Manu which forms part of divine religion, the tale that tells of the murderous floggings, the corroding chains that bound their necks to the feet of their high caste masters, the amputation of their ears, arms and legs, their foreheads branded with red-hot iron; their tongues slit with a flaming knife and a host of similar atrocities which could chuckle in savage glee over the groans of those poor wretches as they lay crushed under the iniquitous laws of the old Swaraj. But the champions of Swaraj might turn round and say, "Well, those days are gone, and there is little chance of their recurrence in modern times. Hindu society must move with the times." True, Hindu society must move with the times; but it does not. Certainly, those atrocities will not be permitted now; but the spirit is there awaiting its chance like a snake in the grass, the spirit that delights even now, this very hour, in subjecting these poor outcasts and other low-caste Hindus in every part of India, in every village, in every hamlet which flies

the flag of caste, to a treatment which kills them and their very human nature in the lingering tortures of an unbloody persecution.

Social and other forms of oppression have, at all times, existed among the nations of the world; but they have changed and disappeared before the dash of reason and liberty. Thus, the Greek and the Roman Empires saw their oppression swept away by the assertion of popular will. In modern times, Japan has changed; China has changed; Turkey has changed; but Hindu India will not change. In all other countries, social oppression existed as such and formed no part of religion. And it was, therefore, possible to stamp it out by popular might. But, in India, the case is different. Social laws and customs do not stand by themselves. They are intimately dovetailed with religion. They form part of religion. And it is why untouchability has fared the worst of all human wrongs. Hinduism, with Brahmanism as its infallible papacy, has pronounced an eternal anathema upon it. And that curse has stuck to it like the original sin of the Bible for the past 40 centuries of Indian history. And these 40 centuries have seen these unhappy people wallowing, like human worms, in the lowest depths of a degradation than which history records nothing viler, nothing more brutal. The Sun that is set in the heavens to brighten human life has risen and set upon the world, witnessing the rise and fall of many a nation. As a figure of the Divinity, it shone all the brighter as it beheld nations rising from the darkness of slavery to the glory of liberty. But the Sun of India has risen and set.

upon her for the past 4,000 years only to behold these victims of injustice sink deeper and deeper in the night of humiliation, too deep indeed to behold the light of day. But still they had a ray of hope in the British rule; but that ray is soon to disappear and bury them in gloom again. That is certain. If their redemption could come from their countrymen at all, it should have come by now. No time, no opportunity could be more auspicious than the British Raj. And the British Raj could, by means of education and other moral influences, only assist in the creation of good-will in the strong to reclaim their fallen brethren. It has done that; but the good-will never came. How could it? The high caste people, with all their education and enlightenment, are in the grip of a social law which they dare not break without, at the same time, turning reprobates in the eye of their religion which tells them that the untouchable outcast is born in that curse owing to his evil deeds in his past life and that it is sin to put him out of that curse. It is why the poor outcast of India has, since the beginning of Indian history, survived all the revolutions that have convulsed humanity and sticks his fate like the fate of death.

No doubt, social reformers have set themselves up against this plague, but they are powerless to stem the torrent of popular prejudice and arrogance. Therefore, the real key to the emancipation of these social slaves of India lies in the fact that, by some power or other, they must be fitted up with a strength of their own, resting on moral, material and intellectual grounds, so as to be able to rise up against the tyranny



of ages and free themselves from it. Could their high caste countrymen constitute such a power? Atrocious! When they could not under the British flag, surely they would not under the Swaraj flag. In spite of the loudly-boomed fundamentals of the Swaraj Government, caste will then reign with an unfettered ferocity and, among other evils, untouchability, which has now the temerity to try to lift its head, will be relegated to the gutter again with a kick at the back of it. Will Britain, then, under the plea of political generosity, give India a constitution which will leave the despised and the down-trodden millions to the sweet mercies of their high caste countrymen who are so much pining for self-government? Oh England, as a world-power, can your sense of Imperial responsibility for India allow you to leave these poor helpless people in the lurch and clear out of the country, simply because a powerful political organisation is making it too hot for you to remain? Mark my word: If the blood of the British soldiers who have fought and died in all your wars in India was shed merely to procure you a material Empire and that for your own benefit, you may go. You have had enough of it. But if, as a Nation of true-hearted Englishmen, you believe that it was shed also in the great cause of humanity, then pull up your failing grit and stay in the country till the last vestige of the infamous humiliation that attaches to the lower orders of Indian society is battered out.

And now, travelling in the same boat, and subjected to all the unjust treatment that is meted out to the untouchable outcasts, debarred from residing in Hindu streets and Hindu quarters, denied the use of public wells and tanks, shut out from public cafes and restaurants,

looked down upon with eyes of consuming hatred and contempt in all their intercourse with caste Hindus in private or public, persecuted in a hundred ways in this holy land of the gods, sometimes whole villages of new converts boycotted, insulted and even assaulted by their powerful neighbours, and, in fine, suffering endless hardships for the crime of their faith, are the five million Christians of India. Christianity "the religion of the pariahs" is a proscribed religion and socially it is put on a par with untouchability. For Hinduism, in spite of its lofty ideals as a religion of ethics and philosophy, is intolerant, not only to the untouchable lot within its own fold, but it is intolerant, with the additional rancour of religious bigotry, to Christianity which it fancies is a foreign religion. Lord Buxton is reported to have stated in July 1931 that "there are five million people in a state of servitude at present in China, Abyssinia, Liberia and Arabia." I would respectfully ask his Lordship to include in his list of slaves the 5 million Christians and the 60 million untouchable outcasts of India. True to the glorious ensign of the Union Jack which is there as a symbol of liberty and civilisation, Britain has carried on a crusade against many a people on behalf of the helpless and the forlorn and sternly vindicated her sense of universal justice by tying down the hand of persecutions upon the world. Now, I don't ask Britain to wage a holy war on the Hindus. But, in the name of humanity, I would implore her to institute a commission, however small, to enquire into and report to Imperial Parliament and the British Nation, on the foul treatment and the disabilities which Indian Christians suffer at the hands of the Hindus in His Majesty's dominion.

In every race it can be observed that religion plays the most remarkable role in the making of that race, in the forming of its character, in the toning up of its system, in the bracing up in that race of all that conduces to its moral greatness and worth. It is none the less true that, more often than not, religion is made a tool with which those that exercise the function of that religion, moved on by interested and base motives, carve out the moral degradation and the spiritual servitude of people under their authority. They put the Eternal God in the background of religion and, taking up His place in their preposterous claims and priestly arrogance, they not only erect for themselves the highest pinnacle of human glory verging on the divine, but, as a necessary corollary to their perpetual adoration, they consign, under the penal enactments of a persecuting religion, the great mass of subject people to the ignominious status of bond slaves with no higher mentality than that of irrational animals who exist merely to cater to the insolence of their spiritual tyrants. And this wickedness in religion is nowhere asserted with such monstrous malignity as in this most spiritual land of India. The Code of Manu which was the statute book of the old Swaraj whose spirit still pervades the entire system of Hindu society and which is still venerated by the higher castes as the most sacred of books, is the embodiment of that spiritual tyranny. Whatever useful purpose it might have served in the past, it has certainly contributed to the most withering social degradation, the moral collapse and the downfall of the Indian society. It has cut up the unwieldy fabric of Hindu India into four groups which, in turn, divided and sub-divided themselves into

hundreds and thousands of the most unsympathetic and warring groups with such scrupulous and invidious distinctions as to make them appear before the rest of the world as the inmates of a huge lunatic asylum. It has degraded labour beyond belief. Holding under deep contempt the honourable trades and professions of man, it has very conveniently exalted the ignominious priest-begging as a most honourable and divine calling. It is difficult to conceive how a people, such as this, could ever hope to recover from the rueful effects of centuries of humiliation and slave mentality though they might come under the most beneficent agencies of humanity.

Another group of suffering humanity which social India claims for its victims is its women. It is needless to dwell at any length upon the harrowing conditions under which they pine and perish as an output of social and religious bigotry. In presenting her book to the world, Miss Mayo could have no other motive but to open wide the eyes of India and Britain alike towards finding drastic remedies to the evils exposed in it. It is a cap of truth spun by a moralist of a distant land which fits not indeed every head, but certainly many a head in India. Political leaders, not to belie their profession, ranted and raved and damned that book, whereas social reformers, while diplomatically keeping up the second fiddle, have waked up to the reality of the situation and set themselves in dead earnest to work for the eradication of those evils. It may be interesting to know how the political and social India go about their business. When, for instance, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the well-known poetess, politician and ex-president of the Congress,

visited America recently, she, of course, condemned Miss Mayo's "Mother India." She said, "Miss Mayo's book is trash. It is a filthy book and describes only the sewers and blackspots of India." And, whistling in the same tune, the Chairman of the Reception Committee to greet Mrs. Naidu in America, said, "And may I also hope in the name of our countrymen that your very presence here will give the Western world a proper conception of the divine place that womanhood holds with us in our Hindu scheme of social organisation." And what that "divine place" is can be best judged by a reference to the following extracts, revealing a condition which is as true to-day as it was centuries ago:—

"There is no other god on earth for a woman than her husband. The most excellent of all the good works that she can do is to seek to please him by manifesting perfect obedience to him. Therein should be her sole rule of life. Be her husband deformed, aged, infirm, offensive in his manners; let him also be choleric, debauched, immoral, a drunkard, a gambler; let him frequent places of ill-repute, live in open sin with other women, have no affection whatever for his home; let him be blind, deaf, dumb, or crippled, in a word, let his defects be what they may; let his wickedness be what it may, a wife should always look upon him as her god, should lavish on him all her attention and care, paying no heed whatever to his character, and giving him no cause whatsoever for displeasure.

"A wife must eat only after her husband has had his fill. If the latter fasts, she shall fast also; if he touch not food, she also shall not touch it; if he be in

affliction, she shall be too; if he be cheerful, she shall share his joy. . . . If her husband flies into a passion, threatens her, abuses her grossly, even beats her unjustly, she shall answer him meekly, shall lay hold of his hands, kiss them and beg his pardon, instead of uttering loud cries and running away from the house." (Abbe Dubois in his "Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies.")

"In the Puranic Code, great stress is laid upon the duty of the wife to her mother-in-law. Upon this foundation rests a tremendous factor in every woman's life. A Hindu marriage does not betoken the setting up of a new homestead; the little bride, on the contrary, is simply added to the household of the groom's parents, as that household already exists. There she becomes at once the acknowledged servant of the mother-in-law at whose beck and call she lives. The father-in-law, the sister-in-law demand what they like of her, and, bred as she is, it lies not in her to rebel. The very idea that she possibly could rebel or acquire any degree of freedom has neither root nor ground in her mind. She exists to serve. The mother-in-law is often hard, ruling without mercy or affection; and if, by chance, she is slow to bear children, or if her children be daughters, then, too frequently, the elder woman's tongue is a flail, her hand heavy in blows, her revengeful spirit set in clouding her victim's life with threats of the new wife who, according to the Hindu Code, may supplant and enslave her."

"The widow becomes the menial of every other person in the house of her late husband. All the

hardest and ugliest tasks are hers ; no comfort, no ease. She may take but one meal a day and that of the meanest. She must perform strict fasts. Her hair must be shaven off. She must take care to absent herself from any scene of ceremony or rejoicing, from a marriage, from a religious celebration, from the sight of an expectant mother, or of any person whom the curse of her glance might harm. Those who speak to her may speak in terms of contempt or reproach ; and she herself is the priestess of her misery, its due continuance is her one remaining merit." (" Mother India " by Miss Mayo).

Now, let us read, side by side, with the pathetic outburst of patriotism in foreign lands, the public confessions which social reformers make in the land of their birth. The Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Social Reformers Conference of South India held in Madras in November 1928, said, "I have read with shame the much maligned book of Miss Mayo, and although I could not appreciate it as a work of art, I could not, at the same time, challenge its position as a regard of facts, however unseemly and unedifying they may be. I wonder if any defender of the orthodox faith can possibly pick up the gauntlet she has thrown down and meet her squarely." And the President of the same Conference, speaking on the same subject, said, "The next thing that the social reformers should devote their attention to is that of the relationship between man and woman. In our society, our women are treated worse than untouchables. Women are considered to be slaves to man by God's decree and so are they treated.....Especially in our country the position of our women is the worst

that could be thought of. As a result of the slavery of women, their children have been bred up as slaves and the country is under slavery. If we are to be free, we must free our women first." The grave lesson that emerges from between the lines of these little extracts and which cannot be ignored by straight-thinking people is that there is no salvation to a race which chooses to shut its eyes and ears against the vices and weaknesses that are fast eating into its national life, foolishly gloating over the glories of a past which are enshrouded in the mists of antiquity, and would not take in good parts the disinterested and well-intentioned exposure even by foreigners, and strive on for its regeneration. India is a land where the proud and the prudent minds meet from opposite directions and they clash leaving her an eternal cripple.

Let social India close on a little scene. If we picture to ourselves the strange spectacle of a thousand people standing in blocks one over the head of another, we have, then, in a miniature, India as she is. If we survey the picture from bottom up, we start with, what is called, the submerged sixth and its kindred groups, all crushed deep down in the darkest depths of untold tyrannies of social barbarism. Above this gasping carcass of humanity rises, under oppression also, another portion reeking in inferiorities of their own. Covered with intellectual darkness, it is a seat of perpetual professional clash. The clamour of social warfare that is, in the ordinary run of life, provoked in the assertion of the superiority of one caste over another, however bitter, has, with time, become a routine of life. Above

this, again, is the group of warrior races, the bravest and the noblest of India, in whose hands rested, before the advent of Britain, the honour and the safety of the country and which had hardly a day's rest during the 800 years of Moslem rule. Surmounting all these and maintaining their position with a tenacity that passes all credence as the supreme source from which has flown down the ages of Indian history the highest intellectual glory as well as the deepest social and political, moral and intellectual degradation of the people, are the theocratic Brahmins, the Neros of India.

Such indeed is Mother-India. In spite of her boasted culture and civilisation, she is diseased from head to foot. The intolerance of her religion is an insult to humanity, while her social system has made her a hideous leper. She cannot move with the healthy nations of the world. It is a matter for surprise how she could have found a place in the League of Nations. It is this "Nation" that is now putting up a desperate political strife that it may shine forth in purple and gold with a crown of freedom!

CHAPTER II.

POLITICS IN PAROXYSM.

Of all the phenomena that agitate human mind at the present hour of the world's existence, none indeed there is that is half as meteoric as the political upheaval of educated India that is being lashed almost to a tempestuous fury. While the great bulk of the population that covers this immense Empire of the East are

still sunk in the slumbers of the old antiquated notions and customs, a section, a mere fragment, actuated by the progressive influence of Britain, have created such a spirit of activity, have taken such a plunge into the unfathomed depths of politics and all this with such a lightning speed that it furnishes no parallel at all in the political evolution of any other race on earth. Now, in a great continental region like India, composed of the most heterogeneous races and creeds and tongues, we must naturally come across a great diversity in character, habit, dress, thought, culture, civilisation and, in fact, in everything that makes up the life of this world of varieties, from the most polished Maharaja seated upon his throne like a star in his State, down to the clowniest of clowns walking the earth like a sub-human in the simplicity of pre-historic barbarism. There must, likewise, be a great diversity in the field of politics, a great diversity of opinions ranging from the summit of lofty ideals to the grovelling pit of perversity. Even to a casual observer it is patent enough that politics in most Indian hands has become a sport which they indulge in with the lustiness of school boys dashing into the foot-ball field regardless of consequences. And so, it becomes tempting enough to spare a few moments to witness this novel game that is being played under the umpireship of Britain with so much pleasure, profit and even peril.

In the first place, backed by the stern realities of history and by the remarkable changes that have come upon India, an impartial student of history is bound to look upon the British Parliament as the supreme source and the inspiration of all she enjoys in the acquisition of

her vast political rights. Notably from the day that the Government of the country passed from the Company to the Crown, Parliament, as the accredited representative of a Nation which holds the great Empire of India and her teeming millions in sacred and solemn trust, has marched her through practical, prudent steps, though at times on hard flinty paths, from a defunct Panchayet to a form of Government where the mind of the people becomes the arbiter of their own destiny. Here I should do an act of injustice to my country, and inflict an injury to my own feelings if I failed to mention that in all those chivalrous dealings of Parliament with India, the great patriotism, zeal and enthusiasm of Indian stalwarts of the type of Raja Mohan Roy, Dadabhai Naoroji and Surendranath Bannerjea, who were, in those magnificent days of national upheaval, stars in the firmament of politics, contributed not a little as forces of inspiration. But those days are gone, days when politics wedded to practical prudence led the country through storm and stress upon a well-laid path of loyalty, progress and civilisation. And what is the picture of political India of to-day? The main spring that moves the political machine of India at the present day is a constitution known as the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms which purport to take India—a land that is buried in the deepest depths of social and religious conservatism, by transitional steps, in the ideal of Western democracy to her final goal of complete self-Government. But how magnanimous so ever may be the motives which prompted the authors of the Reforms in endowing India with it, it is generally admitted that the gift was rather a premature one. In fact, it was wrested from Britain

by the Home Rulers of the day headed by an Irish lady who suddenly sprang into this queer role at a time when the arm of Britain was sorely tried. The Great War stimulated political expediency. They could have waited a little longer, during which time the mind of the people should have been prepared by the diffused enlightenment of education, at least to some appreciable extent, as a necessary step, before launching the hundreds of millions on the novel course of a Parliamentary system of Government, absolutely unknown to Asiatic nations, Japan excepted. Even now, less than 1 per cent of the population in India could read and write English; and of those who could pretend to political knowledge, the percentage is, of course, very much smaller. It is difficult to understand the idea of running the Government of India on democratic lines when there is hardly the barest spectre of democracy in this land which is still reeking in the foulest exhalations of centuries of despotism. Over 90 per cent are illiterate and are governed in their daily life by social and other customs which are far more ancient than the Egyptian mummies. Haste is waste. And, in the case of India, it is doom. I would give here a concrete example of how grossly popular ignorance could be exploited by political hirelings to serve their purpose. When, urged on by political unrest, Mr. Montagu, the late Secretary of State for India, visited this country and came over to Madras, men were seen busy going from door to door getting a mass of people to sign the papers in their hands, telling them that they were petitioning the Secretary of State to lessen the burden of taxation. Thousands, of course, gave in their ready names. And these were all submitted

to Mr. Montagu as so many signatories for Home Rule. Again, in the last election, about 6 millions out of 250 were on the Voting Register; and of these, less than half the number went to the polls. The Legislatures are formed of members chosen by an electorate many of whom, being unable to write their own names, had to give their votes by means of their thumb-impressions in favour of those whose political trend and capacity they are supposed to probe into by the flash-lights of ignorance. This is democracy with a vengeance! And, as if to break the record of political buffoonery that is being acted upon the mimic stage of bogus democracy in India, our great leaders, as formulated in the Nehru Report and further endorsed in the fundamentals of the Karachi Congress of 1930, insist upon adult franchise. They would put a telescope in the hands of the blind to read the stars. And they advance it as an argument that, because England did not wait for the electorate to get educated for the introduction of the Reform Bill of 1832, India could do the same. But this is a fallacy. England, even then, a hundred years ago, was, from the standpoint of education, much better situated than India, even in her present rapid progress, is likely to be in another half a century. Again, the Reform Bill in question affected one single nation; and India will never be that even after ten thousand years. Further, in England as in every other single country, there may be diversity of opinion, diversity of interest; but they could be adjusted by its statesmen in the best interest of the nation and the country for which they possess a united, common love. The present National Government of England is a case in

point. But India being a continent by itself with hundreds of races and creeds and tongues of a most conflicting nature, opinions and interests that are diametrically opposed to one another and often clash themselves to death, it defies the very conception that what might apply to England would apply to India also.

It is upon such a land, parched with universal illiteracy, though to some extent verdant with the wild growth of educated impatience, that the Montagu-Chelmsford Reform has been planted; and, naturally enough, it has borne its fruits. It has raised up community against community, race against race, religion against religion, interest against interest, administration against administration. The fears which were at the very outset entertained regarding the beneficial working of the Reform, became unfortunately too true. The disturbing of the placid, pathetic contentment of the people, which is the main policy of the Reform, has, for the first time in the history of India, so well succeeded in lashing the deep waters of Indian society with its novel democratic ideals that it has raised up, in less than ten years of its working, the formidable tidal waves of immediate Dominion Status and Independence which threaten to drown India in a flood of revolution. An Englishman, writing in England, on communalism puts it so graphically when he says, "Religion in these contests is nothing more than the flag under which rival sections of the upper and middle classes fight for the distribution of posts and offices. Theology has no place in these contentions. The absconding concern of each communal party is to secure for its co-religionists as high a proportion as

possible of jobs, large or small, ranging from ministerial portfolios down to the humblest appointments in the customs, the police, the post office and the railways. Where entry is by examination, the struggle is transferred to the schools and colleges, and Moslems, who are in the mass rather poorer and much worse educated than Hindus, will fight to secure the reservation of a fixed percentage of places irrespective of merit in every governmental training college. Not only must there be a Moslem member in every ministry, one-third of the students in a veterinary college must also look to Mecca for salvation." To be candid, India is the very last place in creation which can suffer the experiment of democratic ideals upon its people. Democracy in England, as in the rest of Europe generally, is the accumulated result of one continuous mighty struggle between people and power, a struggle which originated upon the slushy plains of Runnymede and went on in a perfect *crescendo* through eventful centuries till that democracy, palpitating in the heart of the people, became the impregnable fortress of Britain as a world power. And is it not a disastrous blunder to press it of a sudden on a people whom the wildest type of oriental despotism has been keeping in chains for ages in the darkest dungeons of social and political thralldom? And, as though this blunder had not been blunder enough, Britain, in a spirit of exhilaration, has now invited All-India to join with her in an unprecedented venture to embark on a most perilous constitutional game. But, call it federal or whatever you may, if it is meant to be democratic, then the people whose lips are locked in the silence of ages and whose minds are a world of void, formed of the vast

agricultural community and the mass millions in general must, in common with the more advanced classes, enter into it, though it may of necessity involve time, intelligently, vigorously and democratically. They shall not be left behind in the scramble for post and power. They must be made active partners in the great act of shaping the destiny of their Motherland. It must be a constitution which will comprehend, in the first place, the safety and the intellectual and industrial progress of mass India and then the satisfaction of the advanced political classes in as far as it may not clash with their general welfare. It will be a catastrophe, unprecedented in the history of the modern world, if the powers that hold the rudder of India's destiny pass it off under pressure or persuasion or threats of revolution or rebellion or whatever cause, to the restless bands of agitators who pose for champions and leaders of the people with hardly a scrap of any sort of credential to back their pretence to rule, consoling themselves with the notion that India, in her most complex and bewildering character, will be quite alright in their hands. The British Nation, the British Parliament and the Government of India are surely not so blind as not to perceive in that case the mine of disaster that will be sunk beneath the sacred rights and the safety of the multi-millions, helpless, speechless, poverty-eaten and down-trodden as they are, in whose bosom heaves the life-breath of the great Empire of India. Oh, that those mighty millions could find a tongue to talk ! What would Britain hear from them ? Pressed by the resistless conviction of their souls, they would cry out and tell her, " Wait a minute ; don't rush your Reforms on India with a breakneck speed. She is

in the tender womb of an embryonic democracy; she cannot stand your well-intentioned but over-hasty hustle; it will be disastrous to her. Wait till we, who are in the dust of the earth, crippled victims of the tyranny of ages struggling to rise under your guidance and inspiration, attain a little at least of the glorious throb of national life which bursts the hearts of the leaders, so that we, who form the greater India may, in the heroic act of the country's fight for freedom follow the lead, not like commissariat mules carrying provisions for their generals and their armies, but like intelligent, capable men and gallant soldiers marching with our leaders, in the fullness of time, with firm steps right on to the goal of self-Government." And till then, the Swaraj impatience must find a salutary pause and the generosity of our Rulers, too, to grant India her full-blown self-Government straightaway, partly to placate the persistent clamour and agitation of irresponsible political bodies and partly to give a practical but dangerous demonstration of the spirit that generally governs socialist nations, must put a prudent restraint upon itself. Until the time comes when the stage of self-reliance through diffused education and enlightenment is attained by the general run of the people, the infliction on India of a self-Government on Dominion lines will have the same effect upon the country as the old man upon the back of Sindbad the Sailor. Fields, though extensive and well laid out, cannot be expected to benefit by the purity and freshness of the spring water if it is allowed to flow through salt and acid lands. A constitution fraught with the most elaborate and lofty ideals of democracy will be to 99 per cent of the Indian peoples

at the present day a weapon of gilded tyranny ; for it must pass to them through an oligarchy whose mental soil, though excellent in its intellectual fertility, is, nevertheless, vitiated to a large extent by mutual jealousy, racial and religious rancour, social tyranny, official autocracy, bribery, corruption and hosts of kindred evils which form the standing damnation of India.

It is vain that Britain gives India a constitution ever so glorious which the most brilliant minds of her statesmen and those of India could design. It is vain that she puts into that constitution the grandest ideals of freedom and the proudest displays of democracy in the fond hope of achieving the crowning act of her statesmanship and rule in India by welding together the hundreds of heterogenous races and tongues and creeds and the ruling powers into a grand confederated political unity which would bring unmeasured happiness and prosperity to the great Empire of India. So long as social tyranny remains in the virility of its youthful wickedness ; so long as the mass millions are there irretrievably crushed in the most abject form of servitude under the iron heel of a persecuting religion absolutely incapable of fighting the pharisaic oppression of ages ; so long as the popular mind, swayed by meaningless sentiment and superstition, easily yields to the seductions of sanctimonious appeals ; so long as political duplicity thriving upon its exploitations on a world of ignorance and illiteracy poses to champion the social and political advancement of those very people, Britain is simply pouring her best champagne into a bottle without a bottom. Already the Montford Reform and the Simon

Report have run out. And she is now trying to pour Federation into it, with the desire of treating both the princes and the people to a booze. But it may be said with little doubt that this also will find the same way out. Assuredly there are other things which must go forth as pioneer forces before the sudden attainment of self-government or responsibility at the centre which is so much coveted by Indians ambitious of power. All that India needs to-day and a good while to come is to put her house in order which, among other things, consists chiefly in the great majority of our politicians learning to sacrifice self-interest and self-advertising patriotism upon the altar of a principle which shall be, at all times and in all places, indestructible and divine. It consists in the vast proportion of educated Indians, who form the salt of the soil, making use of the great blessing of English education not so much to stuff their stomach and bloat their purse as to form character, true, solid, sterling character, as the only possible basis on which to build up national greatness. It consists in our great leaders and patriots deflecting their course from the restless pursuit of malpolitics in a wild goose chase of dreamy damnations towards the intellectual and moral regeneration of the masses, and to break once for all, with a determined effort, the shackles of supersition which keep crushing to death the whole fabric of social India in the very abyss of desperation. It consists, above all, in utilising the best minds and the best hearts of the country in an honest, persistent, divine work of effecting a lasting reconciliation between the two great races in whose bosom there rankles a religious and a political animosity which is as strong, as bitter and violent

to-day as it was centuries ago and renders the very idea of Swaraj or Dominion status a mockery of reason and a magazine of destruction to their common Motherland.

But despising these essentials to form any sort of nationalism, spurning the counsels of prudence and ignoring the frightful conclusions of history but madly borne upon the wings of impatience is an association of men of every rank and character who have embarked upon the wild adventure of fetching the Greek fire for Mother India. It is the Indian National Congress. It may not be out of place here, therefore, to take a short review of the daring adventures of this political body.

It was to the inspiration of an Englishman and a Member of Parliament Mr. Hume, that it owes the inception of its organisation. From a spectacular beginning it became very soon the un-official Parliament of India, being the assemblage of the grandest intellects of the country, meeting periodically at some great centre and indulging in all the grandeur of eloquence and in the voluptuousness of phillipics against the Government of the day, but never swerving from the path of loyalty to the British Throne. In fact, one of its greatest pillars, Surendranath Bannerjea expressed himself in its early days in most emphatic terms to the spirit of loyalty which was the corner stone on which they meant to put up the great structure of political India. "We are loyal," he said, "We are loyal from sentiment; we are loyal from conviction; we are loyal from immemorial usage." And this supreme loyalty was the landmark which inspired them to march straight on in the path

of political progress mapped out by practical prudence which, in spite of the coldness and even the opposition of the Government, in spite of the poor response from a large section of educated classes who very often gave empty applauses to their burning appeals, they never lost sight of, and steadily worked their way to universal recognition as the greatest political body of India. The Congress of those days might have been called the 'watch dog' of the Government; but, anyway, it made them keep their eyes sharp about. And the fact remains that the Congress, as it stood then, was the great anvil on which Indian Nationalism was forged, if by nationalism is meant the political unity of educated classes. Now, the Great War came on; and Madam Besant, the Irish firebrand and a great intellectual prodigy of modern times came upon the scene and agitated for Home Rule. It started in Madras. She had the whole Hindu-priesthood and the Congress at the back of her. And at a time when Britain was badly hit in the war, she wrested from Britain the first instalment of a democratic constitution known as the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. And whilst the country was still unrecovered from the shock of the war and still in the sensation of this novel reform, there appeared, like a comet in the political horizon of India, the African celebrity Mr. Gandhi. It may be observed here that, by her untiring advocacy, literature and experiment of the Civil Disobedience movement, Madam Besant had trained political Indians in the art of revolution, however mild; so that when Mr. Gandhi left Africa and alighted upon the shores of India, he found, to his immense delight, a well-paved royal road to revolution. But he could not

unfurl his standard of revolt against the Government. He had to count his time. Above all, he had to measure himself with a great Bengal patriot, the late C. R. Das, leader of the Swaraj party who possessed such a magnetic personality and a power of oratory that he carried the whole country with him. But in the prime of manhood, the great leader passed away; and Mr. Gandhi was left the supreme dictator of the Congress. And very soon he started his campaign of non-Co-operation which, under his immediate guidance, played the very devil in India for two disastrous years. Chauri Chaura—the crowning tragedy of a series of violent acts committed under the blood-stained banner of non-Violence, sent Mr. Gandhi to his confinement and his Congress to retirement. The country was so disgusted with it that all parties of moderate opinion and even the less rabid of extremists made their final exit from it. It became a defunct factor. And so marked was it that when, in the year 1927 it met in Madras, its President in his official address lamented over its fate when he saw that, maddened by its extreme policy, distrusted by its old compeers, discredited by loyalists, elbowed out by Moslems, Christians, Parsis, depressed classes, by all parties of moderate opinion and by all men of practical wisdom and experience, fallen from its high estate, warring in a fit of desperation against those who advocated caution, bereft of its past glories, and cut up by internal factions, mutual recriminations and jealousies, it was reduced to a phantom of a power it once was. So the learned Doctor prescribed Hindu-Muslim unity as a tonic against its endemic. But the Hindu-Muslim unity never came; and it is not easy to believe that,

even with the aid of ten thousand Gandhis, it will ever come at all.

But things in India are marvellous; and Mr. Gandhi—the phoenix of Gujerat, rose from the ashes of Non-Co-operation. And the Congress too, coming to life again, found in him their power-house. In an atmosphere of tense excitement, they met at Lahore and passed a resolution in favour of complete Independence. And under the guidance of their old chief Mr. Gandhi they declared in a tone of jubilant threat that if Britain refused to grant Dominion Status by the 31st of December 1929, they and Mr. Gandhi with his “military cabinet” would at once start their activities towards Independence. And Mr. Gandhi, as the leader and exponent of the Congress mind, lost little time in forwarding an ultimatum in the form of a letter which was couched in a glaring breach of official etiquette, commencing and ending with “Dear Friend”, and “yours truly”, to His Majesty’s August Representative in India in the person of Lord Irwin, Governor-General and Viceroy of India. And His Excellency too, in the spirit of the Gospel, both acknowledged it and sent him a reply expressing, of course, the firm attitude of the Government in case there was lawlessness and defiance of authority. Mr. Gandhi became impatient. Having diligently prepared the country for a full harvest of troubles, he started on 12th March 1930 his memorable march from Ahmedabad to the Western coast to break the salt law and defied the Government to arrest him. But the Government seemed to have lost their nerve. New Delhi and Whitehall put their heads together and knew not what to do

with this man who, with hardly a quarter-yard of country cloth around his waist, a rosary in one hand and a pilgrim staff in the other and a retinue of a few village folks was marching for days through towns and villages, practising piety, preaching rebellion, proclaiming the dawn of Swaraj. The Government, for two solid months, dared not touch him but let him have his full swing in the political spree. And those two months of dangerous suspense tolled the death-knell of the prestige of the Government and the pride of the bureaucracy in that the Congress and all the latent forces in the country took courage in their hands and developed such forces of lawlessness and open defiance of authority as were absolutely unprecedented as a mass movement in the entire record of Indian history. Instead of a few hundreds coming, as heretofore, to give sporadic demonstrations of hooliganism, it became a matter of thousands and tens of thousands who, under a Government of confounded counsels, took it as a sort of sport to turn up in terrific numbers to the sea-shores to witness a few daring spirits making salt, and enjoy the discomfiture of policemen breaking ovens and pots and carrying the offenders in police vans either to the station or letting them off on the way. Those two months constituted, since the beginning of Indian history, a period—a most fatal period when mass allegiance was transferred from the Crown to a popular leader. Mr. Gandhi stood supreme and defiant, so that, under his inspiration and guidance, as it occurred during the palmy days of his Non-Co-operation, Agra, Benares, Mirzapore, Cawnpore and other parts of India became centres of conflagration.

If, in this connection, there is some truth to be told, it is this. There is no living authority under the Sun that, at this critical moment, served to heighten the popularity and greatness of Mr. Gandhi so much as the ex-rulers of Whitehall and New Delhi. They may be absolutely right in their official capacity knowing the inner secrets of the political situation in India to have allowed Mr. Gandhi to go ahead in his unbridled racing for revolt for two whole months. But I am here concerned in disclosing its effect upon the popular mind. In a land that it is avowedly given from time immemorial to hero-worship and whose masterminds have at all times consecrated their genius in giving India and the world monumental legends of such worship told in the wildest flashes of imagination and devoured wholesale by the people, the Government, no matter of what race, creed or colour, must strike, if strike they must, at the evil and snap it on the spot. But they demurred, evidently non-plussed as to what to do with this bogey of the British Empire. The phrase, "the dogged perseverance of the Englishman" has become proverbial. And so, even in the matter of letting things go from bad to worse, the Englishman seems to show the same tenacity. But this ill-timed diplomacy in the impolitic patience with Mr. Gandhi had a dangerous repercussion on another side. It simply intensified the mass faith in the superhuman powers and almost divine personality of Mr. Gandhi. Tales went so far and millions believed it to say that there was a flash of light around his body which awed his enemies out of his holy presence. And so, during the interval that lapsed between his first step in the salt-making march and the hour of his arrest, forces of

anarchy and rebellion gathered sufficiently thick and strong to bully any Government and beguile any people. The Congressmen were burning busy by day and by night marshalling the powers of disaffection, the powers of landed property and industry, the powers of hamlets and villages and, above all, that most dangerous of all powers, the power of mass ignorance. Even women, attracted by the novelty of patriotism and the vanity of cheap martyrdom, spurned their age-long boredom of seclusion and came out freely in the open to become the boredom of the police. Thus, the people of India, who had been for ages living behind the purdah of politics, men and women, boys and girls, classes and masses, towns and villages, all, all, drawn by the Gandhi glare, sallied forth and constituted a force that became too unwieldy for Government. They were easily out of control. They had no Government but Gandhi. His word was law. Just then the great leader was arrested at Poona; but it was too late. The spirit of Gandhi was allowed to take complete hold of the masses. Even the manner and the time of his arrest which were no doubt adopted to avoid unnecessary turmoil and bloodshed were construed by them as a further evidence of the timidity of Government to arrest the omnipotent Mahatma.

And now, to placate the implacable political India and to prove to India and the outside world their honest and a thorough good will to lift her to the greatest height of political freedom, the Government proposed and held the Round Table Conference in London towards the close of the autumn of the year 1930. But, at the very outset, they deflected from their original

plan to a course of action which, in place of placating revolutionary elements of India, hardened them in their implacability. They shelved in the Simon Report, a report in two volumes congested with materials which were gathered at an enormous cost of time, talent, travel and labour ranging over a period of two years, and all that under the Royal Warrant and Commission. This was a great triumph of the Congress, who gloated over the idea that their non-participation in the Conference thrashed it down. This was an additional gain to their cause and a further momentum to their agitation. All the time that the Commission was in India, the Congress was shouting "Simon, go back"; but they could not send them back. But the Government by thus ignoring the monumental labours of the Parliamentary Commission did in less than half a second what the Congress was not able to do in two years !

The Round Table Conference which sat in deep deliberations over every phase of Indian problems with a view to unifying Indian States with British India by the endowment of a federation, finished their first labours in January 1931. The Indian delegation came back. But Mr. Gandhi and his Congress "martyrs" who were in confinement would not as much as look at them. The Government was in a dilemma. Who is to deliver the goods? They did not believe in piece-goods merchants. So, unsolicited, Mr. Gandhi was released, and along with him his compatriots. Then it was Mr. Gandhi, smuggling the Sermon of the Mount into his politics, enacted a drama which made him the immortal hero of India. Spurning all official etiquette he shot

like an arrow into the Viceregal Palace as he would enter a peasant's hut, half-naked indeed, but armed, head to foot, with popular power. For in that act of his, silly as it may appear, he blew to the winds the prestige of Britain in India. The impression that was created in the minds of all classes of people by the queer, unprecedented, unofficial, defiant way in which Mr. Gandhi entered the Viceregal Palace and was received by His Excellency who held long private negotiations with him in and out of hours, even sending away two Governors of Provinces who had been waiting upon the Viceroy, and full half an hour before the appointed time, and what transpired later as the outcome of what is known as the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, was that, at the mere approach of the Mahatma, the Government of India was cowed down into signing away the truce, its terms being dictated by Mr. Gandhi as the king of the Congress to His Britannic Majesty's August Representative in India. This was the first great testament of triumph which he gave to the people of India. And this was the signal too for the people to chuck away from their hearts the long-cherished faith in British prestige and British Sovereignty. He took up that place himself, from which it will not be easy to shake him out.

It must be remembered here that, since the beginning of her history, India has been a land of peculiar temperament, whose races, through all the vicissitudes of fortune which has been sweeping over her with the fury of tempests, have had their fate permanently settled in the rigidity of a conservatism, born, nurtured

and matured in the grip of a despotism before which every other power in the land quaked and melted mute in the terror of authority. The ruler, a veritable autocrat, whether King, Emperor or Nawab, was the god of the people whose person was sacred and upon whose will hung the fate of millions. Living in palaces of gold and marble, they worked the imagination of their subject people to such a pitch of awe and reverence that they dared not lift their heads up if he happened to pass through their streets on a royal visit tossing upon the gold decked elephants, with a retinue of royalties, amidst a flourish of trumpets which proclaimed the march of the mighty one. A spirit born in a people that have been groaning under an autocracy of thirty centuries cannot be expected to vanish like the mist before the sun. A sudden change wrought upon such a people by the application of the spirit of modern socialism, especially in those grave concerns that lie between the ruler and the ruled, quickly tends to explode their mind. Little wonder then that what transpired at the Viceregal Palace between Mr. Gandhi and Lord Irwin as between Sovereigns of equal status, created in the minds of all classes of people a glare of Gandhism strong enough to blind them against consequences. To gibe, to sneer, to hoot at the Government became a matter of sport. The "half-naked fakir." became in the eyes of the people, the uncrowned Emperor of India; and his invisible sceptre of authority became all the more attractive and powerful when the Government hugged on to him for days and weeks imploring him to attend the second Round Table Conference to be held in June 1931. But Mr. Gandhi, stiffening in his mood,

said with the rigidity of Rome, "Non-Possumus"; and the Government had to postpone the Conference from June to September to accommodate the will and the pleasure of the Imperial Mahatma. During this interval, the omnipotent mind of Mr. Gandhi held the Empire in breathless suspense when it was oscillating with a malicious swing like the pendulum of a troublesome clock between "I may go" and, "I may not go." And finally there was one more surrender to make; it was done. Britain bowed over Bardoli. And then the great Mahatma condescended to go. Here, all India may feel justly proud of Mr. Gandhi; but, speaking from the stand-point of political history, I should say that King John placing the Crown of England at the feet of Pope Innocent III begging for the continuance of his reign was not a greater humiliation for England as a ruling power. Now that the Government have rolled like a mighty avalanche of the Alps dashing down to the depths of destruction, it would be too much to expect from the 350 million loyal hearts even a-hundredth of that deep, enthusiastic devotion they had always entertained towards the British Throne.

From all this, it is clear that it is not the Congress, but Mr. Gandhi that is *the* power of political India of to day. Going over to London as the sole plenipotentiary of the Congress, he dictated, in its name, his terms with Britain. He addressed the Parliament; he addressed the British public; he addressed the Round Table Conference; he tried in that unknown distant land Hindu-Muslim unity with a different object; he mesmerised the American people through the radio; he went to

Lancashire to see himself in the mirror he has made; he received ovations from those very people, good-natured souls!, he met his counterpart in fame—Charlie Chaplain, and failing to take his range on Britain, he came away with an empty bag. And, as a last attempt, he made overtures to go to Delhi that he might scratch an old head and eat up the brain. But he soon found out that it was placed on young shoulders. So, in his disappointed fury, he has once again raised his standard of revolt. And, like the Kali of political India, he demands one million lives to be sacrificed upon the altar of freedom!

Now let us halt for a moment to take a rapid survey of the man who, assuming the spectre of a bugbear in the field of politics, so well succeeded in pitching the popular mind given up to hero worship to a frenzy that he has placed them all upon the brink of a precipice for a mad jump into the abyss of Independence. The world will hesitate little to accord Mr. Gandhi absolute credit to the disinterestedness that characterises everything he does or speaks, to his honest endeavours in the social uplift of his degraded countrymen, to his phenomenal achievement in the boycott of foreign cloth, to his extraordinary personal influence that has saved the warring elements of political India from mutual destruction, and, among other feats, to his inimitable subtilty in using what he calls his soul-force to marshal every available force in the country, to scatter to the winds the long sustained pride of the bureaucracy, nay, to bring the most powerful Government of Asia to bow to his will. In vain would you search into the records

of history for a parallel to the achievement of this extraordinary man who, with hardly a piece of rag to cover his naked form, without surrounding himself with the mighty ones of the world, without the imposing personality of a born leader, without the aid of a sword, not even wielding a blade of grass has, like an unbloody Nana Sahib, shaken the British Empire to its very foundation.

Let not the halo that surrounds Mr. Gandhi at the present moment so blind our eyes as not to see the terrible, tangible, ponderous realities that lurk behind the lure. And I would, therefore, with the reverence that attaches to his exalted position, as a unique figure of the British Empire, dissect Gandhi—the great Bell of India. This god does neither drink, nor eat, nor even talk at times, but stands there, amidst a worshipping crowd, as a symbol of saintliness and sacrifice to whom his devotees from every part of the country offer the fat of the land in every form which is freely partaken (for the benefit of the country of course!) by the Congress priests and their parasites who scramble for it by the subterranean passages of Sovietism, Bolshivism, anarchism and Swarajism. Even the rulers of the Empire are afraid of this deity. But, without unnecessarily suffering ourselves to be weighed down by the universal superstition that keeps adoring it, we shall try to see what the *man* is really like. Of a truth, there is no living Indian at whose hands has India suffered a greater set back than at the hands of Mr. Gandhi. There is no living Indian who sways his countrymen with a power and popularity which, if seriously utilised as they are at the

present day, are more likely to drift them into doom rather than lead them on to salvation. By his far too antiquated economic ideals which would turn India back to the day when Adam delved and Eve span and his so-called non-violent, but, in reality, a most dangerous form of violent and pernicious propaganda in politics, he has abused his immense personality not only to pervert the political prudence of educated classes, not only to blight the budding minds of the Indian youth, the hope of future India, but to alienate the sympathy of our British Rulers,—no mean asset to India,—who, whatever be their faults, do link the chain of statesmen and benefactors of the country like Bentinck and Dalhousie, a compact society of men who carry in their arms a power and in their conviction a courage which attest that they have not ceased to continue the noble traditions of the British Rule in India. Goaded on by a patriotism which he has attuned to a breaking pitch, he has clutched at the fatal belief that the salvation of India lies in the destruction of the British Rule. And, therefore, consummate master as he is to readily avail himself of the opportunities that drop in his path, and to turn to account the mentality of a people whose adoration of the religious is proverbial, he, a non-Brahman, has, by public demonstrations of penance and piety, seated himself in the land of Brahmans upon the highest pinnacle of spiritual fame, and from that quasi-religious calculating eminence he has sent forth his clarion, at whose call have mustered round his banner all those who are seized with the ambition of ruling the country, with the inordinate anti-British feeling and the wild desire of acting the revolutions of other nations. With these

flaming elements as the torch in his hand to set the country ablaze in revolution, with the pilgrim staff in one hand and a rosary in the other, and covered only with a quarter yard of country cloth around his body that is almost bare and emaciated by fasts and vigils, Mahatma Gandhi—the hermit Peter of India, issued forth from his Engaddy in Northern India and was, for long months, flitting about the country through hill and dale, by creek and corner, preaching a crusade and leading it himself against, what he avers, the official insolence of the bureaucracy, the audacity of Manchester to clothe his countrymen with machine-made stuffs, the iniquitous attempts of Britain to continue her rule in India, the criminal act of a large section of educated Indians in the Provincial and Central Legislatures to co-operate with a Satanic Government, and above all, with the crowning object of recovering the holy land of India from the ungodly possession of Britain. To achieve these ends he made, in March 1930, as we have seen, a desperate dash into civil disobedience, and filled the land with its disastrous consequences. Chittagong, Sholapur, Punjab, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, and other hotbeds of revolution, with their inevitable results of bleeding heads and broken bones, educational ruination, economic disaster and wanton poverty telling upon every vein of society and holding the innocent millions in the jaws of starvation—these indeed are the first fruits of his crusade. Two years have hardly passed when he has started the same old game again. And what does it mean?

A small serpent in the midst of a vast crowd is enough to scare them away. Civil-disobedience, Gandhi's

cobra before which he keeps playing the flute, is frightful enough for the people when it starts hissing out its poison in a delirious dance. How sincere so ever Britain may be in satisfying the just aspirations of educated India, how magnanimous so ever she may be in receding before the onslaughts of political ambition, yet, in the interest of the mass millions who are quite incapable of protecting themselves against lawlessness and other baneful tactics which are being adopted, and in the stern exercise of her trusteeship over all her races, she must not suffer the disgrace and the violence of 1921 and 22 to get hold of the country again. Somehow the cobra has been allowed, during all these disastrous months, to get into the people and play deadly havoc on them, so much so, that the Government have been forced, much against their will, to use the 'big stick' to crush its head. If Mr. Montagu were alive, I would tell him, without fear of contradiction, that, if India is to-day in the throes of unrest, dissatisfaction and revolution, it is all due to his miscalculated zeal to march a crippled continent of a hundred warring races and creeds under the banner of a blazing democracy. The curtain of India's stage has been lifted for the third time within ten years for the unpleasant scenes of mass civil-disobedience. Speaking about India's freedom, Pandit Motilal Nehru from his place in the Legislative Assembly said, "If Mahatma Gandhi is given a free hand, India will stagger the world by the magnitude of her suffering for freedom." Well, Mahatma Gandhi was given a very free hand; and how did India "stagger the world with the magnitude of her suffering for freedom"? It is told in the vast amount of suffering which the ill-disciplined, dissip-

ated "national volunteers" aided on by fanatic mobs and hosts of covert politicians with their dupes at their back, who formed the grand army of General Gandhi, inflicted upon innocent, peaceful, law-abiding people, inciting them to riot and revolt against the Government, molesting them in a hundred ways for not co-operating in their anarchic hooliganism, picketing "peacefully" cloth and liquor-shops which generally resulted in serious affrays, paralysing trade, penalising shop keepers, making people suffer patriotic starvation, cutting down poor palmyra and cocoanut trees for the sins of the Government, burning letters in post-boxes, stopping public conveyances, subjecting harmless citizens to all hazards and inconveniences, derailing railway trains, murdering Englishmen in the performance of their duty and perpetrating similar scenes which, spreading like wild fire, made India groan aloud under the terrors of unbridled lawlessness and defiance of authority. Had the Government not come to her rescue in time and arrested the march of destruction by sending to jail the 50,000 "martyrs" who were a perfect pest to 350 millions of people, the whole of India would by now have succumbed to a fate which culminated in the tragedy of Bombay. Such indeed was the magnitude of suffering with which India shocked humanity when Mahatma Gandhi was given a free hand. A hand of benediction indeed!

Now it may be asked, Mr. Gandhi being neither a great lawyer, nor a vigorous orator nor an acute politician, what is it that draws all the people to him like a magnet and makes them pin their faith on whatever he says? I answer, it is the martyrdom he underwent in

South Africa; the spirit of humility which pervades all his words and actions, his constant appeal to the Divine inspiration which, he says, he receives from above,—a most powerful and dangerous factor which could sway the mind of a highly spiritual people like Indians and make them run after him with a blind infatuation; his public penances and holy silence which he observes even in public political gatherings; and, above all, that little piece of hermit-cloth that covers his groins and signifies a life of sacrifice embodying the deep subtlety of dovetailing political pranks with penitential sanctity. Whereas in other parts of the world, such a demeanour, such an appearance in public especially of a man of culture would provoke repulsiveness, in India it acts otherwise. The more the nudity of a religious man, the greater his sanctity. Before the British Rule, India was a scene for ages of the most shocking obscenity. Thousands of Sanyasis or hermits used to roam about the country in stark nakedness, commanding unbounded reverence at the hands of princes and people. No wonder that Mr. Gandhi, though tossed and hustled and thrown overboard so often in his political career, has clung to that hermit rag of his as his saving plank. But a man who is not blindly swayed by religious sentiments or superstition, but looks at things from a practical stand point would naturally ask: If there is indeed a real value in his fasts and mortifications which he publicly inflicts upon himself for the political salvation of India; if the spiritual force to which he so frequently appeals could exert its infinite superiority over the hard, matter-of-fact, material affairs of this world, then Mr. Gandhi as a sincere man must be a conqueror right

through. But has he been that? Here are a few facts that offer themselves for consideration. Twelve years ago, he started Non-Co-operation, collected tons of money which was drawn into his coffers by the magnet of his saintly pose; let loose the forces of lawlessness upon the country, which was covered with revolutionary acts, and all this to bring the Government to his feet and drive the British out. He failed. Instead of driving the British out, he drove himself to a different place. He tried his hand at the Social Reform. Touring the country from place to place, he nobly preached and besought the people to give up caste prejudices and other forms of social tyranny; he pleaded for the removal of untouchability; in fact he prophesied its complete removal in the year 1921; he pleaded for the emancipation of Indian women; he even asked school boys to marry widows. But all his noble endeavours have borne no fruit. The goodness of the man only betrayed his powerlessness to move mountains. His soul-force has no meaning for these. The demon of caste is there; the accursed untouchability is there; the unblest colony of 30 million widows is there; and the whole country is, as usual, swimming in a sea of social persecutions. He entered the Congress and stalked there like a Goliath bringing the whole weight of his influence and authority to bear upon that political body in the full expectation that the God-protected loyal India would surrender to its imperious demands and merge in it. But his entry and his mighty pose have not prevented it from cliquing into an isolated extreme Hindu opinion. He gloried in the palmy days of his Non-co-operation that he was able to achieve the impossible task of effecting the Hindu-Moslem unity. But,

before the last word of his pious boast died away upon his lips, he had the humiliation of seeing them fly at each other's throat under his very nose; and it is being continued ever since. Again, glutting over the ten million rupees he collected from the people, he promised them Swaraj, and fixed one after another in a glowing, disappointing, humiliating succession, four different dates, namely, September 1st, October 1st, October 30th and December 31st, all in the year 1921, on each of which he predicted the long expected millennium would boom upon India. But those dates have come and gone; the fateful year has gone too; all the gold has melted away; and the blooming Swaraj is still coming. The prophet has absolutely belied his word. Any other man of his position and responsibility would, after throwing away the ten million rupees, all public money, as it were, in a gutter of disappointment and from a sense of human dignity, have left the field of politics. But there he is, the naked idol of India, surrounded by a world of admirers who never cease to look upon him as the saintliest of saints and as the greatest political figure of the world! It is this Mahatma supposed to be in direct communion with God Himself as he constantly refers to his inner voice which he consults in all his undertakings, that has now unfurled the standard of revolt and civil disobedience and leads the fight for the immediate establishment of Swaraj or Independence, smacking the while for a million lives and preparing a vast suttee for poor Mother-India. Is India lost? Let the inevitable tell the tale.

There was a time not long ago when the whole of educated India, intoxicated by the oratorical effusions of

Surendranath Bannerjea, the "Father of Indian Nationalism," sat in unspeakable admiration at his feet. A little nod of his head meant a code of laws to that great political organisation, the Indian National Congress, which he created and became its proudest pillar. And the great Babu lived to see an adoring country turn its back upon him in scorn as he ventured to express his disgust and alarm at the dangerous pranks of frivolous politics which was swamping the land in his latter days. Quite recently again, India could behold no sublimer soul than Madam Besant—a brilliant star of Ireland and the founder of the Home Rule movement in India. For over half a century, day after day, in all the big cities, thousands of educated men and women hung in mute wonder upon her lips as they burst in torrents of eloquence upon Hinduism, Theosophy and politics. Her worshippers literally fell at her feet and offered incense to her as the modern Saraswati—goddess of learning, and Lokamada, the mother of the Universe. And there she lives to see those days when she shone forth as the glory of Hinduism and the citadel of politics, passed away like the dream of a midsummer night. Still alive, she lives in the memory of her worshippers but as a relic of the past. And to-day, there is arisen in the same firmament another phenomenon that is undoubtedly the most amazing that has yet appeared to marvel the minds of men. It is a shooting star that dazzles but to die. The idol of the day has thrilled the imagination of his countrymen by his queer combination of nudity, piety and politics. With this triple fire he means to burn up the British Rule to death and upon its ashes to rear his magnificent edifice of Swaraj. Now, what is India's

salvation in this most anxious period of her political adventure? Is it the political wisdom of India as displayed by all sections of moderate opinion? Yes, but that is not all. There is something higher, something more transcendental, more dazzling. What is it? Looking back upon the path of history that is strewn with the flowers of chivalry and wisdom which have, on most critical moments, saved Europe and the rest of the world we find that it is the genius of England. And now when political impatience, spurred on by a most virulent type of Anglophobia, delights to run its race for a curse; when political organisations choose to ally themselves with hired conspiracies of foreign countries with the avowed object of destroying law and order by the overthrow of the present Government and substituting it by a reign of terror; when anarchism and unrighteousness, goaded on by the greed of plunder, are emerging from the dungeons of sedition; and when a bloody revolution under cover of non-violence is creeping to blow up the British Empire and bury a whole continent of 350 millions in the ashes of a universal desolation, what is it that must come to the rescue of India? The genius of England!

CHAPTER III.

DOMINION STATUS.

In this Chapter we enter upon a most amazing aspect of the great question of India. It is the inevitable conclusion of English education as foreshadowed by the famous Educational Minute of Lord Macaulay. But, unfortunately, that conclusion is sought to be established

through intrepid haste and unsavoury methods upon the quicksand of political perversity and social and religious intolerance by a band of politicians who represent every shade of opinion, from the dreamiest castle-building of Independence upon the ruins of the British Raj to the sudden rearing of the mighty fabric of Dominion Status as it were under an electric current. But amidst the flashes of impatience which seem to blind the political mind of India at the present day, amidst the feverish activities of professional agitators and purblind patriots who seek to attain national freedom at once and at all costs as manifested by the Civil Disobedience campaign of lawlessness and disorder everywhere, a thoughtful soul, a soul that does not allow itself to be easily swayed by the frivolities of a flippant political glamour, a soul that does not smart under deep anti-racial feelings, but tries to get at the reality of things with a calm, clear, unbiased mind, asks, "Is India fit for Dominion Status or Home Rule?" Now, the establishment of a Home Rule necessarily postulates the existence of a home. Is India then a home, this warring world of multimillions, this eternal battle field of Asia, wherein are encamped hundreds of races and communities, hundreds of tongues and creeds, who are forced into a truce, rather a long beneficent truce, under the Imperial control and genius of a foreign Rule? From sunrise to sunset, the Indian who bears for his Motherland a true, rational love hears the pathetic cry rising to the heavens from the bleeding heart of India, "Lead Kindly Light amid the encircling gloom, lead Thou me on. The night is dark, and I am far from home." Verily, India is far from home, because the night is upon her, the night

of social oppression and servitude, the night of religious rancour, the night of political blindness, the night of illiteracy enveloping the mass mind in the darkness of ignorance and superstition. A convalescent through the ages of bloodshed and oppression, she is steering under safe guidance upon a sea of roaring elements on her homeward voyage experiencing tough weather. In possession of unknown political rights which are intended to roll her long night of despotism, she is being steadily ushered by the headlights of British Rule from the dawn of Western enlightenment and liberty to the full blaze of a democratic day. But the adverse current of political machinations and imprudence and the bad weather of her social conditions retard her progress, and the home is not within easy reach, though not out of hope.

And now, rendering to God the things of God and to Cæsar the things of Cæsar, an impartial student of history is bound to declare that, in the nature of things, it is not possible for any power on earth to accomplish in the case of a dependent race more than what Britain has done for India. If India stands to-day before the full gaze of humanity purged of the mountains of social crimes and injustices and religious persecutions which formed the unbroken tragedy of her life for centuries; if, apart from the material and political achievements that form the brightest page of Indian history, this stupendous land of 350 millions enjoys the unprecedented blessings of a permanent peace, the safety of their honour, their lives and their property, as well as absolute immunity from foreign invasions with their terrific

consequences, is it not all due to the stern devotion to duty, the chivalrous maintenance of principle, the spirit of philanthropy and the splendour of administration that characterise the handful of Britishers thrown upon a boundless soil to guide the destinies of its unwieldy population? But Time, the destroyer of things, has, under the guise of national pride, come out again to lay its blighting hand upon their achievements to make room for a new order of things, about which the vast concourse of her races still in the grip of untold injustices of old have little reason to feel sanguine. True it is that among the hosts of politicians who keep the country ever on the go, there are admirable characters as brilliant of intellect as generous and sacrificing in the great cause of India. And it is equally true that infinitely greater is the number of those whose public acts and utterances are a convenient dodge to cushion their real mind which is a sink of self-interest and political dishonesty. It is why in spite of countless clubs, associations and institutions organised for the general uplift of India, the condition of the great bulk of her people remains little improved. Mr. Gandhi himself has, in the columns of his "Young India," been profuse in his condemnation of the besetting sin of Indian politicians which is want of straightness, want of sincerity, want of political honesty. And what did the late Lajput Rai, a great Congress leader write on the subject through his political organ, the "People," just a week before his death? "There are Indian leaders," he said, "in all parties who are, in their heart of hearts, Imperialists. If you judge them from their professional conduct, you can find them amidst the members and officers of the

Independence Leagues too. They curse British Imperialism, because it is foreign. Some of them hanker after a position under that Imperialism if they could get it. In the absence of it, they pose as democrats because that pose gives them a position and keeps them before the people's eyes. These leaders are to be found in all provinces. They are not confined to any one place or group." Again, we often read in the Journals regarding the leaders of people that they don't mean what they say, and don't say what they mean. To illustrate that their heart and tongue are not always true friends, I shall cite just an example. At a large public meeting held in Madras in July 1929, a prominent leader and editor of an influential organ in South India, addressing his audience on a subject entitled, "Political Orientation," said, "Let us go back to the days of the Simon Commission. You were told at the time that there was no one who dared to stand on any public platform and say he was willing to give evidence before the Simon Commission. You were told at the time that it was only the people who had the slave mentality, who were bereft of all sense of respectability, who had no self-respect of any kind that would go before that Commission and give evidence. Boycott of the Simon Commission was preached far and wide; and, in the earlier days at any rate, I was one of those who joined in the boycott movement as vigorously as anybody else. It is no secret that, at a later stage, I changed my attitude. I changed it because I felt not merely that there was a response of some kind to the demands that have been made from Indians but also because I felt that there was an undercurrent of co-operation all along in those who stood for

boycott. They did not mean what they said. While lip homage was paid, the heart was rebelling against that lip loyalty. In the secret corners of their heart there was a great deal more of co-operation than we gave credit for from quarters the most unexpected. Subsequent events have justly confirmed those fears and apprehensions which some of us felt." Such, indeed, is the testimony which an Indian gentleman of no mean political standing has given in respect of those legions of champions and leaders of the people whose rosy mouth serves but to betray the dishonesty of their mind.

There is another phase to this mentality too glaring to be passed over. It is indeed a very bitter and melancholy task imposed upon me by the urgency of the hour to be compelled, purely in the interest of the mass millions which counts most, to bring out the general trend of the political picture of India. Undoubtedly there are noble minds, those admirable figures who form the substance of India. But the main factor remains, the muck of India who make the most noise and the most mischief. Personal animosity, mutual hatred and jealousy, self-interest and self-exaltation seek and find a following which is freely used to serve one's own purpose and to vent one's spleen upon his adversary in the field of fame; and all this under the hypocritical garb of patriotism. Nor is the Indian intellect so very supple as to follow the lead of a higher intellect. It would lead, but never would brook the slightest idea of domination by a superior mind, be it ever so beneficial to the country. And this accounts for the fact that in India the number of political parties is greater than that

of the whole world put together. There are to-day the Swarajists, Loyalists, Democrats, Conservatives, Liberals, Labourites, Congressists, Constitutionalists, Monarchists, Anarchists, Socialists, Communists, Republicans, Justicites, Independents, Home-Rulers, Dominion-Rulers, Nationalists, United Nationalists, Independent Nationatists, Moderates, Extremists, No-changers, All-changers, die-hards, and legions untold with labels of their own which are far more numerous than those upon bottles in a variety pickle shop. It is upon such a soil, sinking under political dishonesty and disintegration, self-interest and impatience and clogged with the wild growth of universal illiteracy and ignorance that the champions of India's freedom stand, sworn to to the teeth, to impose the mighty structure of Dominion Status.

Now let us, with an unbiased mind, regard this claim and see how far it is feasible, and to what extent a Dominion Rule is likely to benefit India in her present state. In the first place, let us know what is meant by a Dominion. The Imperial Conference which met at London in 1926, defined 'Dominions' thus: "They are autonomous communities within the British Empire equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations." It is, therefore, an alliance between the white races of those Dominions and Britain, centering round the Imperial Crown, in which the coloured races under their subjection carry little weight. Under this

definition come Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, where the all-powerful ruling races, most of whom are British settlers, have naturally an inalienable sympathy for their Mother country, which is a factor strong enough to bind them, in spite of secession theory, in an irrevocable union with the Imperial centre. And now, the new claimants of Dominion Rule are of a land with a population nearly twenty times that of all the Dominions together, and of a most heterogeneous type, alien in race, religion, character, colour, language, culture and civilisation, which, under the impulse of certain powerful organisations claiming to represent what is called Indian nationalism, is sure to secede from Britain and establish complete Independence, running whatever risk it may. The English education, which has brought into being a political India composed of a handful of Indians and enlightened them with Western ideals in that line, has produced leaders who have grown clever enough to urge Britain at the gun point of Gandhism to grant India Dominion Status without delay. And right enough about 3 years ago, more as a challenge to Lord Birkenhead's misgivings as to Indians' united capacity to draw up a constitution for India, a galaxy of patriots and politicians met at Bombay and drew up the famous Nehru Report on the model of what obtains in Canada and other Dominions. And I venture to think that I shall not be far from correct when I say that that Report would, in the main, stand as the exponent of the political mind of India driving at Dominion Rule. And so it may not be out of place here to consider some of the significant phases of that Report as bearing upon India.

It is essentially a constitution fit for a country where democracy has, to some extent, established itself. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that, by trying to foist upon India in her present conditions, a constitution of that temperament, the authors of the Report do mean exceedingly well her. But mark, it is all in anticipation. This Report evidently means to say, "Give India Dominion status out of hand, smarting as she is under conditions which render the practical realisation of the ideals formulated in the scheme a hopeless dream for half a century at least to come. And under the control and guidance of patriots like Punditji and Gandhiji, India will so quickly regenerate herself in the mass millions who have been a sleepy lot under the British Rule and so cleverly adjust herself to the conditions of the outside world as she will turn out a lightning millennium in which the hundreds of races inhabiting the vast volcanic area will, at the talismanic touch of a Dominion Constitution, merge their differences, however long standing, however bitter and ferocious, in mutual felicitations and bask in an unclouded happiness under the full blaze of Swaraj. There is so much to be admired in our great leaders for their ardent longing for immediate Dominion Rule, as pictured by the Report. But, it must be admitted, at the same time, that the road to Swaraj is reversed. The carriage is put before the horse. I am here reminded of a little episode in the life of a would-be prodigy which I beg leave to narrate. A youth of sixteen was one day suddenly seized with the ambition of becoming a great violinist. So, he at once bought a beautiful violin, a grand tutor and other things relative to his musical accomplishments and then, shutting them all up in a

box, kept quiet for eighteen months. And what do you think he did in the meanwhile? He allowed his hair to grow, and when he satisfied himself before a mirror that he looked a perfect Paganini he took out his violin and started the A.B.C. on it. But a few weeks' painful experience on the hardest of instruments made his ambitious hair get back from the shoulder to the top again. And, likewise, under Dominion Status, that is to say, under the flag of Swaraj when India will have been put upon the wheel of experimental progress, turned on by the hand of Independence, which implies that the sun of British justice has set upon the Indian horizon, she will find herself very soon upon the rack of reverses and our great leaders will, to their horror and confusion, find their beloved country rolled back to the day when the Mogul and the Mahratta, the French and the English, were tearing a blood-stained land to pieces in their ambition to plant their flag of supremacy upon a delapidated soil. It is a hazardous speculation to attempt Dominion Rule at once. It is really a betting game. You could bet on horses but not on human destiny, especially when it means the destiny of 350 millions. It is why His Excellency Lord Irwin, speaking at the European Association in Calcutta towards the close of the year 1928 brought home to the mind of the doctrinaire politicians the danger of involving an Empire like India in speculative politics. He says, "A constitution must be framed to fit the facts and is not a thing to be laid down *a priori* in the hope that the facts will, somehow or other, fit themselves in behind." And not content with obtaining Dominion Status at a near future, our leaders insist on its immediate

attainment. India is game any day. According to them, she is fit enough or must be thought fit enough to jump at once into Dominion Rule like Australia and South Africa where the all-powerful white people rule over the coloured races whom they have conquered and practically enslaved, subjecting them to endless disabilities and humiliating distinctions. In like manner, if Dominion Status is to be India's immediate step, it follows that an oligarchy of autocrats will conduct the Government of the Indian Empire, working their absolute will upon the vast concourse of Indian races formed mostly of illiterate, poverty-eaten, helpless millions. The claim for Dominion Status does not consist so much in the capacity of a few experts to rule the country as in the capacity of the countless millions of subject people to understand their position and to stem the torrents of injustice which will overwhelm them on all sides. If Dominion Status is really meant to be a Democratic Swaraj within the Commonwealth of the British Empire, then our leaders and patriots and Britain too must wait till the masses get the mastery of the situation. It is not the British people, it is not the British Parliament, it is not the Round Table Conference, it is not the Congress with its kaleidoscope fundamentals, it is not the unholy application of the Sermon on the Mount at the Viceregal chamber where authority and rebellion were locked in the amours of political convivialities; but it is the mass mind of India that must in the fullness of time frame a Dominion Constitution for her. Therefore, Britain's inexorable task is not to heighten the political classes but to lighten the ignorant masses. One more point, and I shall have done with it. The Dominion

champions believe in no half-wayhouse. For, says the Nehru Report, "The real problem to our mind consists in the transference of political power and responsibility from the people of England to the people of India." I, for one, am naturally inclined to feel quite proud of such a thing. But the voice of history, the gruff voice of Indian history crying out from the depths of its experiences denounces it. For, it plausibly means to say that India's destiny will be thrice blessed and assured when its shaping is transferred, from the people of England who are responsible for all the blessings of peace and prosperity which India has enjoyed for the past one hundred and fifty years, to the people of India, a huge mass of heterogeneous races of a most unsympathetic nature, over 90 per cent of whom are absolutely illiterate and whose past political records are written in rivers of blood and mountains of tyrannies which still keep them crushed in a hopeless doom. This way of acclaiming the golden era of Swaraj under the untenable designation of Dominion Status is pure wool-gathering. It is an academic hoax intended to cover a scheme which is as flattering to national pride as wide of its realisation. Where is the ground on which to base our confidence in the honied assurance of the Dominion champions that the fate of the depressed and the downtrodden millions and the rest of India will immeasurably improve under the Swaraj flag of Dominion Status, when, with the extinction of British influence and British protection, she will be the victim of the foulest exploitations of unscrupulous, place-hunting, pocket-filling patriots and their parasites let loose upon the country like herds of elephants upon sugar plantations,

and when she will be a target to surrounding nations ever ready to pounce upon her with the ferocity of Russian wolves? If they could effect the regeneration and advancement of the country then, why not now, now that they enjoy under the British Rule perfect immunity from foreign interference and the rigid maintenance of law and order and internal safety, when the seeds of progress and enlightenment sown upon the rugged soil of India are springing up into promising plants, when they don't feel the fangs of the Moslem tiger upon them enclosed as it is in the Imperial cage of British protection and yet impatiently roaring for a jolly jump out into the open field? Does the British Rule place a machine gun before them when they try to extinguish the frequent irruptions of those two great volcanic communities of India,—the Hindus and the Mahomedans? Does the British Rule chop off their legs when they hie to the rescue of young women and even pretty little children who may have the misfortune of falling into widowhood, and spare them the mockery, the agony and the galling humiliations to which they are subjected by a social custom of the worst type of human tyranny? Does the British Rule tie up their hands when they are stretched to burst the chains that fasten the necks of 60 million untouchable outcasts to the infamous stake of social servitude; when they are stretched to throw open public wells and tanks to these children of misfortune to whom the iniquity of a social law denies even a drop of water and suffers them, in the name of religion, in the boasted name of culture and civilisation, to endure the torments of thirst under a cruel blazing Sun which is there as an eternal witness

in the presence of God to this species of atrocity unknown in any other nation, age or people. If history has a meaning for humanity, if Indian history could read out a lesson to those who would not deliberately shut their eyes against it, it is that the granting of immediate Dominion Status to India is just placing a wolf to guard a flock of sheep.

And when we consider what particular sort of people keep aiming at it with the vigilance of a Roman soldier at his post, the wolf turns into a tiger. It is the Hindu Mahasabha which, standing on communal basis, forms a separate entity in the field of politics, and purports to embody the religious, social and political aspirations and ideals of Hindu India. On embarking for England from Bombay in August 1931, to attend the Round Table Conference, Dr. Moonje, as its leader and president, put it emphatically before a press representative that the Mahasabha at the Round Table Conference would accept nothing less than Dominion Status and full responsible Government. And the same gentleman put it equally straight while speaking at Burdwan at the Provincial Bengal Hindu Conference about the same month when he declared that Nationalism and Hinduism are two names for the same thing. The world hears so much of Indian Nationalism, and, in the simplicity of its heart, believes that it means the awakening of all the creeds and communities of India towards the attainment of Swaraj or complete self-Government which will be the accredited custodian of the honour, the safety and the well-being of all the peoples of this great continent, irrespective of caste, creed or colour. But Dr. Moonje, a Brahman of Brahmins, the militant champion of Hinduism and

leader of Hindu thought and culture, on whose shoulders, fortunately, the mantle of sanctimonious duplicity has not fallen, is quite candid and precise in his conception and definition of Indian nationalism. There is no shilly-shallying about it. He tells you straight from the bottom of his fearless soul that Hinduism and Indian nationalism are identical terms. They both mean one and the same thing which means again the absolute sovereignty of Hindus, composing, as they do, three-fourths of the whole population of India, over the Indian Empire when they get Dominion Status. Their will must prevail. What then will Hindu rule mean? It will mean what it means now though greatly muzzled by the present rule and surely what it meant in its glorious past with a fresh vigour and venom. It will mean the revival of Brahmanism with its stern re-assertion of its long-declining priestly prestige and class superiority; its relentless oppression of the lower orders of Hindu society through every detail of their priest-ridden existence; the fulmination of its anathemas upon the ill-fated, poverty-stricken, helpless, starving, illiterate, untouchable, unapproachable, submerged trembling masses flung back to their old sewers and gutters; its lion-paw everywhere of authority and government, and the greedy, unscrupulous monopoly of places of emolument which might requisition the play of intellect and cunning and its open war on all creeds and races that may not pander to its voluptuous supremacy; the unmasking and the immediate operation of the malignant forces of religious revenge and social persecution upon individuals and communities which may happen to fall under its high displeasure, meting to them all the horrors

of the old Swaraj, before which the tales that are told of the terrors of the anti-God and anti-Christian Soviet Russia are as a drop in an ocean. And there can be little doubt too that Hinduism in general will follow suit. But Mr. Gandhi and his Congress might point to the fundamentals as formulated by the Karachi Congress which stood for Independence. But the living page of Indian history compels me to say that these fundamentals and other legal enactments of Congress Government will, if it comes at all, be in practice more like the coloured lights in chemist shops kept there for show and not for sale. I point to the spirit, the living eternal spirit, of religious bigotry and social persecution crushing the masses down to moral and intellectual debasement that characterises, as it did characterise for scores of centuries, this great religion of India. Hinduism, as a religion pure and simple, is worthy of the highest respect and admiration of the world. As a system of religious philosophy, it holds the topmost place in the realm of ethics. But I am here disclosing its terrors as a social and political weapon. I am holding up for review the world of millions who have fallen and are there lying moral carcases under its terrific paw. And that paw is the spirit of intolerance whose fangs are so deeply driven into every phase of the social, religious and political life of the Hindus that they cannot easily extricate themselves from them. It is not only intolerant to its own followers whom it has cut up into endless sects and castes flinging the whole lot into an abyss of degradation, it is intolerant to Muslims and other minorities in India and to every other race and creed on earth with whom it will not deign to eat or intermarry, or even suffer their very look

upon their food which is supposed to get polluted and must be thrown out. It is intolerant, in a marked degree, to the Christian community in India. To the Hindu mind, Christianity is western and therefore a proscribed religion. By the public promulgation of its creed, the Hindu Mahasabha has banged its door against Christians and Muslims alike whom they regard, by reason of their religion as aliens and not Indians like themselves. Therefore, they have put them both out of their idea and definition of Indian nationalism. Christianity in India as we have seen is placed on a par with untouchability, and the five million Christians are treated as the outcasts and pariahs of the country. Even a Brahman, the moment he embraces this forbidden faith, is turned out of the pale of Hindu society and persecuted by his nearest and dearest relations as an untouchable outcast. The Aryan becomes an Adi-Dravida. No wonder Mr. Gandhi, the idol of Hinduism, has proclaimed war upon Christianity and its Missionaries in his Swaraj Government, even before its faintest shadow is thrown upon the country. Such is the venom lurking under virtue and such the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi, "the living Christ" who kicks at Christianity. And, by the way, may I ask what harm do these poor missionaries do in India to justify the Imperial condemnation of the Mahatma? Apart from expending their own money which they bring from Europe or America in educating, prudently or imprudently, and in very many cases free, Hindu boys and girls along with the children of their faith, and with what return of gratitude they alone must know, their chief work is to get to the poor, ignorant, superstitious masses rotting in slums under conditions

too horrifying for any pen to disclose, and, by the generous distribution of material charities, try to improve their condition in every possible way. And this naturally leads to some conversions. But Mr. Gandhi says, "No, they must be left alone. You may stuff their stomach, well and good, but dare touch their soul!"; which means that it will constitute a crime in the eye of law under his Swaraj Government for Christian Missionaries to try and shed a ray of Divine light upon the darkened souls of these poor wretches, a world in themselves, sunk in ignorance, superstition and immoral practices, whom Hinduism, Mahatma's own religion, has, at all times as provided by the Code of Manu whose spirit particularly in villages,—and what is India but a continent of villages relieved here and there by a few cities and towns, pervades the land as universally as the atmosphere that covers it—, treated as so many unclean, untouchable wild beasts. Why should Mr. Gandhi grudge these downtrodden "subhuman" Indian masses a ray of spiritual light which is freely and at incredible sacrifices given to them by Christian Missionaries when he himself had to go for his own light and leading to that very faith which he now grown giddy with too much power and popularity tries to stamp out? I refer to "Young India" dated, 25th February 1920. Writing to Rev. S. W. Climes, he mentions the names of three books that had shaped his life and thought. "The Bible, Ruskin, Tolstoi". And speaking of the Bible he says. "There have been many times when I did not know which way to turn. But I have gone to the Bible and particularly the New Testament and have drawn strength from its message."

On the political count also Hinduism stands condemned before the tribunal of Justice. It has, from the very commencement of its supremacy, organised a system of Government which is a sink of corruption and tyranny, a gigantic grinding machine. There is the Code of Manu which, in the eye of history, stands and will stand for all times as a most monstrous gibbet on which millions upon millions of persecuted souls have been immolated as victims of social and religious atrocity. "A Brahmin is the chief of all created beings; the world and all in it are his; through him, indeed, other mortals enjoy life; by his imprecations he could destroy a king with his troops, elephants, horses and cars; could frame other worlds and legions of worlds and could give being to new gods and new mortals. A Brahmin is to be treated with more respect than a king. His life and person are protected by the severest laws in this world and the most tremendous denunciations for the next. He is exempt from capital punishment even for the most enormous crimes. His offences against other classes are treated with remarkable levity, while all offences against him are punished with ten-fold severity.

"The King must have a Brahmin for his most confidential counsellor and by Brahmin is he to be instructed in policy as well as in justice and learning. The whole judicial authority (except that exercised by the King in person) is in the hands of the Brahmins and although the perusal of the sacred texts is not withheld from the two nearest classes, yet the sense of them is only to be obtained through the exposition of a Brahmin. The interpretation of the laws is expressly confined to the

Brahmins; and we can perceive from the Code itself, how large a share of the work of legislation was in the hands of that order.

"The property of the sacred class is as well protected by the law as its power. Liberality to Brahmins is made incumbent on every virtuous man and is the special duty of a King. Sacrifices and oblations and all the ceremonies of religion involve feasts and presents to the Brahmins and these gifts must always be liberal. The organs of sense and action, reputation in this life, children and cattle are all destroyed by a sacrifice offered with trifling gifts to the Priest. Many penances may be commuted for large fines which all go to the sacred class. If a Brahmin finds a treasure, he keeps it all; if it is found by another person, the King takes it but must give one-half to the Brahmins. On failure of heirs, the property of others escheats to the king, but that of Brahmins is divided among their class. A learned Brahmin is exempt from all taxation and ought, if in want, to be maintained by the king. Stealing the gold of Brahmins incurs an extraordinary punishment which is to be inflicted by the king in person, and is likely, in most cases, to be capital. Their property is protected by many other denunciations; and for injuring their cattle, a man is to suffer amputation of half his foot.

"The duty of a Sudra is briefly stated to be to serve the other classes, but it is more particularly explained in different places that his chief duty is to serve the Brahmins; and it is especially permitted to him in case of want of subsistence and inability to

procure service from that class, to serve a Kshatria; or if even that service cannot be obtained, to attend on an opulent Vaisya. It is a general rule that in times of distress, each of the classes may subsist by the occupation allotted to those beneath it, but must never encroach upon the employments of those above it. A Sudra has no class beneath him; but if other employments fail, he may subsist by handicrafts, especially joinery, painting and writing.

"A Sudra may perform sacrifice with the omission of the holy texts, yet it is an offence requiring expiation for a Brahmin to assist him in sacrificing. A Brahmin must not read the Veda, even to himself in the presence of a Sudra. To teach him the law, to instruct him in the mode of expiating sin, sinks a Brahmin into the hell called Asamvrita. It is even forbidden to give him temporal advice. No offence is more repeatedly or more strongly inveighed against than that of a Brahmin receiving a gift from a Sudra; it cannot even be expiated by penance until the gift has been restored. A Brahmin starving may take dry grain from a Sudra, but must never eat meat cooked by him. A Sudra is to be fed by the leavings of his master or by his refuse grain, and clad in his worn-out garments. He must amass no wealth, even if he has the power lest he become proud and give pain to Brahmins. If a Sudra uses abusive language to one of a superior class, his tongue is to be slit. If he sits on the same seat as a Brahmin he is to have a gash made on the part offending. If he advises him on his religious duties, hot oil is to be dropped into his mouth and ears. The proper name of a Sudra is expressive of

contempt and the religious penance for killing him is the same as for killing a cat, a frog, a lizard and various other animals."

The law of Manu prescribes special severity for "Chandalas" or untouchables. "The abode of a chandala must be out of the town. They must not have the use of entire vessels; their sole wealth must be dogs and asses. Their clothes must be the mantles of the deceased, their dishes of food broken pots; their ornaments rusty iron; continually must they roam from place to place. Let no man who regards his duty, religious and civil, hold any intercourse with them; let their transactions be confined to themselves and their marriages be only between equals. Let food be given them in potsherds, but not by the hand of the giver and let them not move about by night in cities and towns."—(Elphinstone).

And among hosts of other evidences that prove the same thing, the most palpable is the living reality that abides in the poverty and the degradation of the masses whom India's religion has, in the name of Heaven itself and through the bleeding centuries of her existence, been scourging to death with the lashes of her infernal laws. But now that our great leaders of the type of Mr. Gandhi and Pandit Jawarlal have made it their business to bamboozle popular mind by holding up the British Government to their detestation and fear with exaggerated stories of their exploitation in this country, with the implication that India in their hands as rulers of the Congress or Swaraj Government will be an

economic paradise, and when political madness runs amok among all classes of people, it may not be unprofitable to take a short peep into the old Swaraj, or Hindu Government; for some knowledge of the past might quicken our minds into realising what the future will be. And, in this connection, I cannot do better than quote a few pages from the first of a series of lectures, entitled, "India, past and present." (Methodist Press, Madras), delivered some years back by Lady Benson.

"Let us now take up the question of *taxation*, and see if there is any truth in what many Hindus and others declare, i.e., that, under their old chiefs, the people were less heavily taxed and in themselves the taxes were less burdensome and less irritating. On this subject the historical evidence is so rare and what exists proves so diametrically the opposite of this erroneous popular belief that it is impossible to account for the belief in any other way than that the wish is father to the thought in the minds of mischievous persons.

"We shall find out what was exacted under the Chola dynasty, which had its capital at Tanjore. It was a dynasty with a long life, and so it will yield on excellent picture of Hindu government. On the walls and and gate-way of the great temple at Tanjore has been sculptured a very lengthy series of royal grants and royal edicts of the best days of the Chola Kingdom. These have been carefully translated by Dr. Hultsch. We have a list of taxes, due by the inhabitants of a village and made over by a royal grant to certain persons in the 11th Century, A.D.

“ Here is the list :—

“ All kinds of revenue (laya) including the tax in money. Two taxes in Tamil, but the meaning is not yet known.

Tax for village watchman.

Tax for the village accountant.

Tax for unripe fruit in the month of Karthikai.

Tax for looms.

Tax for oil mills.

Tax for trade.

Another un-translatable tax.

Tax on goldsmiths.

Tax on animals.

Tax on tanks.

Tax on water-courses.

Tax on horse stables.

Tax on rice for every platter.

Tax on potters.

Tax for maintaining police.

Tolls :—Another untranslatable tax.

Tax on weights.

Fines for selling rotten drugs.

Tax on shops.

Tax on salt.

Tax on elephant stalls.

Tax on weddings.

Tax on washerman's stones.

Rent for use of water, collections on leaves
brokerage.

Tax on neatherds.

Fees on documents.

A special tax per head on all belonging to the Jain religion.

"Perhaps you will think this must have been exceptional. Perhaps the Chola Kings were more grasping than other rulers. But to show you that this system of taxation was not exceptional, we shall quote what the taxation of the Indian citizen appears to have been when the Greeks visited India in B.C. 300; and also what it was shortly before the English took over the administration of the country, so that we shall obtain an insight into its condition in all ages.

"We find from the description of Pallibothra (modern Patna) given by the Greek traveller Megasthenes that the citizens of that town must have been greatly harassed by the provisions enforced by their ruler in order to fill his treasury. At that early date, there was a regular Government registration of all births and deaths for purposes of taxation. The buyers and sellers of goods in the bazaars were not left to themselves as they are now, but a state officer was appointed to watch all transactions, however petty, and seize for the state one-tenth of the price of everything sold.

"Fraud in the payment of this tax was punished by death. Other officers, in the nature of police, exercised general supervision. Megasthenes tells us there were officers of state appointed to superintend all arts and sciences to prevent idleness on the part of the artisans, in order that the profits on the sale of the completed articles might be great. We will glance at the system of another Hindu ruler, Chika Deva Raya of Mysore,

two centuries ago. He maintained not only all the old taxes at that time existing, but actually invented 20 new ones! All this lasted down to the times of the English. In the Coimbatore district in 1799, Major Macleod found the following imports in full force and effect :—

“ Over and above the Land Tax.”

1. Tax on potters.
2. Tax payable by persons wearing caste marks on their foreheads.
3. Fees levied on stalls at weekly fairs.
4. Tax on dyed stuffs.
5. Tax on ghee.
6. Tax on tobacco.
7. Tax on grain shops.
8. Tax on chunam.
9. Tax on taliyaris.
10. Tax on agricultural watchman (nirzahtis).
11. Tax on keepers of pack bullocks.
12. Tax on dancing girls.
13. Tax on overseers of labour (maistries).
14. Tax on immoral persons.
15. Rents for lotus leaves.
16. Rents for gardens in back-yards of houses, and in plantations on river banks.
17. Fines on cattle grazing in fields.
18. Rents for young palmyra nuts.
19. Rents for tamarinds.
20. Rents for use of soapstone or potstone.
21. Rents for betel nuts.
22. Rents for the measurements of grain necessitated by the sharing system.

23. Tax on offering at a sacred temple.
24. Levies made for the poor, or poor rate.
25. Taxes on agricultural hoes.
26. State exaction of a portion of the fees paid by villagers to their village officials. (This is in itself another well recognized tax).
27. Tax on sale of cattle.
28. Tax on cattle stalls.
29. Tax on water-lifts.
30. Tax on fisheries.
31. Tax on looms.

All these fines are old Chola taxes as well as many others which survived through the intervening centuries.

32. Levies made on ryots for the expenses of the Tahsildar.
33. A tax-cash payment per plough all over the country.
34. An additional payment on every ryot for his first payment of instalment of land revenue.
35. Tax on houses.
36. Tax on shops.
37. Tax on carpenters.
38. Tax on goldsmiths.
39. Tax on blacksmiths.
40. Tax on paper-makers.
41. Tax on dyers.
42. Tax on shoemakers.
43. Tax on barbers.
44. Tax on washermen.
45. Tax on oil mills.
46. Tax on pack bullocks.

47. Tax on salt pans.
48. Tax on salt manufacturers.
49. Tax on iron smelters.
50. Tax on indigo makers.
51. Tax on drawers and distillers of fermented palm juice.
52. Tax on boatman.
53. Tax on carts.
54. Tax on manufactures of beaten rice.
55. Tax on basket makers.
56. Tax on pedlars.
57. Tax on cattle and sheep per head.
58. Tax on blanket and carpet weavers.
59. Tax on mat makers.
60. Tax on stone masons.

“There is no space in this short review to describe all the tricks, and fraud, and oppression that these vexatious taxes involved. It was found that taxation rested chiefly on the poorest, who could not sufficiently bribe the tax gatherer and village official, the richer people in great measure escaping. The tax on shops was made so comprehensive that even women who squatted by the road side, selling betel, tobacco and petty wares in baskets were taxed at rates varying from Rs. 3-8-0 (a star pagoda) to 92 annas. Here is a still further list of taxes found in the Government office at Bellary :—

1. Taxes on the occasion of marriage—
(a) From bride. (b) From bridegroom.
2. Tax for erecting marriage pandal.
3. Tax called woodeky on widow's re-marriage.

4. Tax called Bediki on marriage of women to men while their own husbands are still alive.
5. Tax collected from persons breaking the rules of their caste.
6. Tax for re-admission to caste after having been expelled.
7. Tax leviable on appointment of a person to be a priest of the Gangam caste.
8. Tax called Pattan Kainki, leviable on a person succeeding to the office of a priest.
9. Tax leviable from people of the Satani caste who perform worship in lesser temples.
10. Tax called Guggalim on pilgrims who return successfully from pilgrimages and perform their vows.
11. Tax on ovens used by washermen.
12. Tax on Government lands held on favourable tenure.
 - (a) Tax at $2\frac{1}{2}$ seers of rice for every crop irrigated.
 - (b) Tax for a bundle of rice straw in grain for every field under tanks.
13. Tax on toddy and arrack.
 - (a) on the stalls (b) on the retail shops.

"In the year 1853, the Madras Native Association presented a petition to the Committees of the House of Commons appointed to inquire into Indian affairs, and implored that the people might be relieved from at least one branch of this gigantic taxation which was then called Moturfa, a name received from the Mahomedans, "a tax on trades and occupations, embracing weavers,

carpenters, all workers in metals, all salesmen, whether possessing shops (which were also taxed) or vending by the road-side."

But the 'patriots' of India might flare up and say, "Such things existed long ago; it is silly to talk about it now." But I say the spirit of extortion, the spirit that lives on the blood of its fellowmen, has not died out. It is alive, it is but too woefully alive in every place and in every branch of administration where it can thrive with impunity. Conscience is out of the question; character is out of the question; humanity is out of the question. Fill up the pocket: that is the great question. Municipalities, District Boards, and administrations manned by Indians purely furnish ample evidence in this connection. Some of these, through inefficiency, bribery, extortion and misappropriation of public funds, have disclosed such scandals that the Government have been forced, on such occasions, to close them down and place them under state control.

Bribery, which is downright blackmail and blood-money which cries to heaven for vengeance, has become the universal barter and the curse of India. Mushrooms do not spring into existence half as quickly as those legions of Indians in power or in office to opulence. Is it not taxation on the sly? Is it not exploitation in the guise of official robbery? And those who are familiar with the hundred and one ways in which money is tricked from the needy and the poor down into the pockets of the blood-suckers will have little scruple in saying that, for every penny that goes to Britain from

her exploitation of India, there is a guinea in gold shining in the pocket of the grabbing Indian as a prize of his unscrupulous, clever and tyrannical exploitation of his brother Indian. A battalion of Gandhis and Congresses with their cartloads of fundamentals will not be able to kill this dirty spirit. If it can walk in the day, surely it will stalk in the night; and that night is India under Hindu flag. God help the minorities!

Taking into serious consideration the extent of illiteracy, ignorance and helplessness that form the melancholy feature of the great bulk of the Indian races, the bitter antagonism that pervades every vein of social and political condition of the people and the instinct of oppression that, as a rule, is in the very nature, in the very blood of the Indian in power, would it not be a most egregious folly on the part of Britain to dump Dominion Rule on India as the next immediate step in the vain hope of placating the angry demand of one particular section of political extremism for what they call a full, responsible, democratic, self-Government on Dominion lines? Indeed, such an act is destined to roll India down like a boulder perched on a high mountain struck by lightning, from one depth of tyranny and corruption to another till she finds herself in the abyss of democratic damnation. And still, in the face of such harrowing conditions, Congressmen, speaking in the Legislative Assembly at Delhi and elsewhere, have been pleased to say, "When people are suffering from destitution, there is fundamental error in the Government of the country, and as Abraham Lincoln said, 'For a nation to rule another nation is a tyranny'". These

are remarkable words indeed and they tell us that all the misery and poverty of India are caused by British Rule and that, the moment she is placed in the hands of Indians themselves, she will at once turn from pandemonium to paradise. But, scholars and patriots as they are, these Congress gentlemen and others of their tribe must know and they do know to their hearts' content that there is no country in this wide world that affords such faithful illustration of the dictum of Abraham Lincoln as their own dearly beloved Mother-land. Was it not tyranny for the priestly class of a most bigoted type to have ruled India for forty centuries under the old Swaraj with a heart of stone and a hand of blood, and even now domineering in their social and religious dealings over the rest of the Hindu society of 250 millions with an arrogance and cruelty unheard of in the wildest records of human barbarity? Is it not tyranny for the 200 million caste Hindus to spurn from their presence and purlieus the 60 millions of despised classes, their own countrymen, their own brethren in religion, as so many untouchable, unapproachable dirty dogs of India? Is not tyranny for the heartless autocrats of Indian capitalists, big or small, to feed so fat upon their underpaid, half-starved, half-naked labourers or coolies as they are called, men, women, and children, whose burning sweat and belaboured toil in their fields and farms, added to their servile conditions, go to pile up their fortune and bloat their pride and vanity.? It is a crime to father upon Britain all the poverty and misery of India which are but the accumulated curse of the misrule, anarchy and oppression that were convulsing the country for centuries prior to British Rule, and the

abominable social system which gives a man no chance to lift his head above the low level of heredity, no chance to crawl out of the grave of degradation dug out for him by the tyrannical hand of caste. The great patriots and champions of India's freedom piously shut their eyes and mouths in diplomatic reticence and will not express either in the Council halls in India or in England their honest condemnation of the mountains of tyrannies which Indian communities and individuals inflict one upon another but could only find prolific expressions to denounce the British Rule in India as a power for tyranny and injustice. It is a crime to quote Lincoln in respect of India. His doctrine may hold good in the case of single nations who can govern themselves. But India is a world of unyielding tyrannies absolutely incapable of governing herself. And if to-day her countless races and creeds and tongues are spared the tragedy of mutual slaughter, massacre, persecution and the unbloody social cannibalism, the voice of fearless truth proclaims that it is entirely due to the sovereign presence of a power that has unfortunately and to the great detriment of the country become the target of the imprudent condemnation of every reckless, irresponsible, petulant politician of India. People and Parliament of Britain, allow me to tell you this. Give India Dominion Status to-day and you will have put a rope round her neck and, at the same time, purchased Macaulay's New Zealander his passage for England straightaway. And yet the Right Hon'ble Ramsay MacDonald, presiding at the British Commonwealth Labour Conference at London in July 1928, has said, "I hope that within a period of months rather than

years, there will be a new Dominion added to the Commonwealth of our Nations, a Dominion of another race, a Dominion that will find self-respect as an equal within this Commonwealth, I refer to India." Yes, this indeed is a lofty sentiment worthy of a lofty soul. But I beg to say that the Prime Minister's great mind missed the fact that when Britain gained a Dominion, the world would lose an Empire.

And this consideration takes me to a famous passage in a speech delivered by the late Mr. C. R. Das, leader of the Swaraj party, in the Bengal Provincial Council: "Indeed" he says, "The Empire idea gives us a vivid sense of many advantages. Dominion Status is, in no sense, servitude. It is essentially an alliance by consent of those who form part of the Empire for material advantages in the real spirit of Co-operation. Free alliance necessarily carries with it the right of separation. Before the war, a separatist tendency was giving up in several parts of the Empire; but after the war, it is generally believed that it is only as a great confederation that the Empire or its component parts can live. It is realised that under modern conditions no nation can live in isolation; and Dominion Status, while it affords complete protection to each constituent composing the Great Commonwealth of Nations called the British Empire, secures to each the rights to realise itself, develop itself and fulfil itself; and, therefore, it expresses and implies all the elements of Swaraj which I have mentioned. To me, the idea is specially attractive, because of its deep spiritual significance. I believe in world peace, in the ultimate federation of the world;

and I think the great Commonwealth of Nations called the British Empire, a federation of diverse races, each with its distinct mental outlook, if properly led with statesmen at the helm, is bound to make a lasting contribution to the great problem that awaits the statesman, the problem of knitting the world into the greatest federation the mind can conceive, the federation of the human race. But only if led with Statesmen at the helm—for the development of the idea involves apparent sacrifice on the part of the constituent nations and it certainly involves the giving up for the good of the Empire idea with its ugly attribute of domination. I think it is for the good of India, for the good of the world that India should strive for freedom within the Commonwealth and so, serve the cause of humanity." This, indeed, is a remarkable utterance of a glorious son of India. But the profound significance as embodied in this magnificent passage from the great patriot's speech so pregnant with the ideals of freedom, has, undoubtedly, as great a bearing in its application to India herself considered as an Empire as upon the Great Commonwealth of Nations called the British Empire. For what is sauce for the gander is sauce for the goose. Before the Great War, the need for Indian unity was sporadically spouted from platform, or floating in the air. Politicians excepted, the various nations of the great subcontinent of India lived indifferently as to their future, not seriously waking up to the consciousness of the ominous fate awaiting them as the result of their political sleepiness. But after the Great War, and especially owing to the shake up given to the country by the Montford Reforms, a mighty consciousness has come

into being, at any rate, with the educated classes, of the inexorable fact that the Indian Empire as a whole and the various states and peoples forming its constituent parts cannot, in the face of a world so treacherous, self-seeking, inflammable, revolutionary, godless and materialistic, hope to live except by 'a rigid maintenance of concord among the hundred different races and creeds and tongues, merging their great and petty differences in the stupendous act of mutual understanding and sacrifice worthy of a great country. Only if the rudder of her destiny is held with strong and willing hands by statesmen and politicians possessed of the noble attributes of the highest integrity, lofty ideals, genuine character and patriotism at the helm can the Indian Empire hope to steer, through adverse currents and storms, right on to her haven of a great Commonwealth as an integral part of a greater Commonwealth. As a firm believer in the peace of her own world of millions and as a powerful contributor to the eternal cause of humanity, she must, at all costs, emerge from the moss-grown swamp of mutual oppression, religious intolerance, Hindu-Muslim clash, caste prejudices and other superstitions and rise forth before a civilised mankind as a free, comely, healthy people. If she would ill-brook the idea with its ugly attribute of domination by others, she must then in fair play and common justice and in the interest of her own stability and salvation, put an end, once for all, to the most damnable of all dominations on Earth, the accursed untouchability which holds down the 60 millions of her children in the grip of an eternal slavery and makes the world look upon the most spiritual and cultured Mother-India as

the basest and the deadliest of tyrants; and thus establish a Dominion concord on the basis of religious and 'social harmony within her own Empire before aspiring to attain at once Dominion Status within the British Empire.

CHAPTER IV.

SWARAJ.

THE DRAGON OF INDIA.

Arrayed against the tragic realities of India which form the insuperable barrier to her progress, even like the barren rocks of the Eastern ghats that shoot up blocking the passage of the monsoon clouds that would dash across to fertilise a parched land, stands a political organisation which, filling hill and dale, town and village, highway and by-way, howling its threats by boycott, agitation, rebellion, picketing, preaching, prowling, rioting and raving in restless activities through press, platform and literature, has raised a cry, a cry for the very curse, a cry which it raises in the name of patriotism and self-respect, to free the country from a "foreign yoke" and create a political paradise wherein the 350 millions of a great continent may dwell in the raptures of Swaraj bliss. And who are they that aspire to put up an Empire of their own upon the ruins of the British Raj and rule it with the prowess of Asoka and Akbar? Is it the sturdy race of Gurkhas, those mountain warriors of an abiding fame who, in the Great War, moved on like a phalanx of breathing howitzers to victory or death right against the terrific sweep of the

German artillery? Or, is it the stalwart sons of the North, the progeny of the mighty warriors who, about twenty-five centuries ago, held at bay the greatest general of the world and evoked from his chivalrous breast unbounded admiration for the giant fighters of India, the lion-hearted Sikhs and the inheritors of ancient chivalry who but a while ago marched to the bloody fields of France to measure themselves with the stately Prussian Guards and struck terror into the heart of Kaiser, the war god? Or, is it the race that produced the great Sivaji, set up the present ruling houses of Hindu India and made England herself, on many a glorious field, honour their name and their sword, the chivalrous Mahrattas? None of the sort. But who are they that thirst for imperial power and aspire to put up a mighty dominion in the twinkling of an eye? With my profound admiration for their political enthusiasm, I should say that the would-be rulers of India to-day are a group of intellectual gladiators which, till very recently, was preponderated, manned and manœuvred by a class who never, in their history of 4000 years, wielded a blade of grass in defence of their country but depended for their very existence upon the chivalry of a race whom they had set apart by the convenient dodge of religion as a fighting body and, to this day, carry in their head a brain which could, under any means whatever, grab and monopolise to themselves everything that is of power, wealth and glory; but now, through the wonderful activities of one whom India adores as a 'Mahatma,' it has infused its seditious spirit into every creed, class and community so that, drawn by his personality and blinded by the glamour of his 'saintliness,' they have mustered

in large numbers under his banner. Such is the Indian National Congress which, standing shoulder to shoulder, thinking nothing in this world too great for sacrifice, and by rebellion, revolution, and other subversive methods, seeks to destroy the existing Government and deliver India from the domination of Britain. All glory to the Congress which alone, of all the political bodies in this country, has the admirable chivalry to put forth its ambition to rule the great Empire of India! But what are their credentials? What are the moral grounds on which they base their claim to take the reins of the Government from Britain into their own hands? As an Indian I have every right to ask this question, at any rate in self-protection. But they say, "Place India in our hands first and then we will prove our capacity to rule." That won't do. The mud horse, placed at the bank of a dashing stream, might as well say, "Get on my back and I will carry you to the other side". No doubt, under a parental Government who protect friend and foe alike unless provoked beyond bearing which then calls for the stern exercise of duty and whose great magnanimity has now, be it said to the utter shame of India, been turned into a razor to their throat, they are able to erect themselves into a fortress of defiance of authority; they are able to act as a vacuum-brake in council chambers and bring administration to a standstill; puffing juvenile heads with piquant patriotism, they are able to pull out boys from schools and colleges, offering them no better alternative than the street; they are able to play upon human pride and vanity and make lawyers boycott courts of justice till hunger-

pressed they steal back to their profession again; they are able to fondle the police and plague them to death; they are able to pull the women out of their purdahs and make them plat their political pranks with the crown of cheap martyrdom; under the scientific genius of a great hermit, they are able to make salt; they are able to starve Lancashire by clothing India with a stuff which would seem to drift her towards the Abyssinian coast; they are able to make British capitalism gasp for very life. All this is destructive game. The Congress is supreme there. But capacity to destroy does not necessarily stand for capacity to construct. It does not constitute genius to pull down an edifice however large. A machine gun in the hands of a Tommy can do that in the twinkling of an eye. But it requires a master mind to design and construct a palatial structure embodying the latest mavel of the science of engineering. Likewise, the Congress, under a destructive force like Mr. Gandhi, can put forth no claim to political genius if, as it is doing now, it can only organise itself into a power to bully the Government and butt any and everyone that comes in its way. In fact the Congress is the embodiment of the very antithesis of constructive genius. It is a proclaimed defaulter in all those things which form the vital elements necessary to quicken India into a nation at least in a political sense. An assemblage of political intellects of no mean calibre but intent on a perverse course, they failed during all these grand years of their existence to establish their claim upon the confidence of Indian races as a great political factor which, apart from the great hub-hub they are creating all over, could carry with it potentialities

strong enough to effect the social, moral and political redemption of this great country. They failed to concentrate their energy, their talent and all the available resources at their command to lay the foundation commensurate with the greatness of the superstructure of Swaraj they have been aiming at all along. They failed to exercise their moral influence to bridge the impassable gulf that exists between communities and individuals, created by racial, social and religious animosities, thus rendering their restless attempts at national unity absolutely futile, a mere farce in the eye of reason. They failed to employ the tons of gold which they have been collecting since their inception as a political organisation to enlighten the mass population, enveloped in the impenetrable gloom of ignorance, insanitation and superstition, by erecting elementary schools in villages clustering the country all over as a necessary prelude to their political advancement on the lines indicated by their paper policy. They failed, by their blind tenacity to political extremes and in spite of their bitter experiences in the past, to reconcile the conflicting elements of the various schools of thought into a common opinion and interest conducive to the good of the country, but rather chose, in the stubbornness of heart, to dash political India into smithers, worse in their consequences than the social system of caste. They failed to turn to account, in a statesmanlike manner, the good side of the British Rule; but rather preferring to conjure up to the popular mind a hideous picture of that rule, concentrated their entire mind and utilised every nerve and fibre of their energy in wanton vindictiveness upon misrepresenting, abusing, and black-

mailing every word, every act and every honest attempt of the Government for the well-being of India, and thus, organising themselves into a power for destruction, reacted on the progress of the country and made the people who came under their influence, a restless, revolutionary lot. They failed to prove to their countrymen whom they so vauntingly declared in their public sessions to be under their undisputed jurisdiction in all their social, political, racial and religious dealings one with another and therefore their final tribunal of arbitration in India, their capacity to bring about even a single act of reconciliation between the two great communities, the Hindus and the Muslims, in the hundreds of riots which so violently and so frequently burst between them entailing serious consequences, which made it so disgusting to the latter that they had to run away from this organisation as, in reality, it constituted a grave menace to their very existence in the Empire which was once their own. They failed to create a happy rapprochement amongst the hundreds of tongues and creeds which seem to flourish on a conflict of perpetual venom and virility. They failed to create character in the political leaders and their parasites who are the very leeches on their purse. They failed to reclaim their fallen brethren whom social arrogance stigmatises as untouchable outcasts, but, arms-folded and in deliberate mockery, passing paper resolutions for the removal of the curse, keep on looking at the unfortunate people in an air of cold indifference and even antipathy, as they lie before their eyes writhing in the pool of stigma as woefully, as helplessly and as loathsomely as they have been all the persecuting ages of the old Swaraj. They failed to stamp out

the curse of curses that afflict the human race, the curse that has convulsed India through the long centuries of her boasted but barbarous existence in the throes of national humiliation, the accursed system of caste. They failed to dispel suspicion and arouse confidence in the minds of the multitudinous races and peoples living in a Babel of creeds and tongues, making that the motor-power to move the hope and the aspiration of Indians towards the final goal,—the freedom of the country. Having failed in all these paramount achievements towards national unity as the indispensable pre-requisites of the grand political ideal which lures their fancy from a distance, they hang on to a leader, the most dangerous, untrustworthy and dreamy designer who, after exhausting them for the past fourteen years in their mad march in the wilderness of Civil Disobedience in quest of the fabulous bubble of Swaraj, finally fell upon the disgraceful scheme of selling the "premier political organisation in the country" to dishonour by declaring in their conference at Parnakuti that, "I will make desperate efforts for peace with the Government," for which he was cringing for an interview with the Head of the Government who, not to be constantly bored and fooled by him, sternly refused the request. Can we imagine a greater humiliation for the Congress brought on by Mr. Gandhi who has, after all, served to reduce the great organisation which was once the pride of India and the English-speaking world to a status that would suit none but Indians who are completely lost to all sense of shame? Is it not shocking to think of an Empire placed in such hands?

The secret of all this trouble is the hallucination which the Congress mind suffers from their unconscionable belief that because they, who form but a drop in the vast ocean of the Indian population, can be brought together in their periodical sessions and made to feel like a united people, India is a nation. But it may be safely affirmed that, as long as the world will last, it will be but an idle fancy to imagine the countless races and communities that compose the great sub-continent of India to form a nation. If by a 'nation' is meant a family of people or peoples having a common head, a common religion, a common language, a common culture and civilisation, a common interest and a common aspiration, then there is only one country in the world that stands completely out of that definition, that cuts itself completely out of the very idea of a nation; and that is India. If it cannot be conceded that Europe with twenty different nations and twenty different languages, with one colour, with one religion though of diverse opinions, with political ideas, institutions, culture and civilisation having much in common, and imbued with sentiments of practical advance in every walk of life as a result of universal education, could ever form a nation, would it not be a travesty of human reason to suppose for a moment that India could ever knit herself into a nation, this mighty region of great countries and provinces and 700 States with a history at the back of them all written in blood, with 222 distinct languages, and scores of religions with their interminable differences of no mild nature, with a social system governing 250 millions which is at once an outrage upon the Goodness of God and a disgrace to humanity, and with

two great communities who never, in their intercourse of 800 years, met each other save by wading through rivers of blood and whose hereditary animosity even now so frequently jets out like flashes of fire from a rumbling volcano? I would go a step further and say that the Hindus themselves do not form a nation either. It is a mistake to suppose the Hindus as a majority and the Moslems as a minority race in India. The Koran, by virtue of the catholic principle it inculcates and the fiery spirit it infuses into its followers, has cemented the martial race of Moslems, whatever may be their social and political conditions, into a compact body of believers whose unity, formed of faith and fanaticism, could hardly be wedged through by the sharpest attacks of humanity. Their achievements which blaze forth upon the historic fields of the world from Lisbon to Hong Kong and from Mongolia to Java amply bear out this statement. Therefore the 70 million Moslems in India, followers of the Prophet and adorers of one only God form one unit; whereas the Hindus, professing a prolific pantheism which cuts them up into as many sects as there are gods in their pantheons, with a world of differences in their manners, culture and civilisation, and suffering, at the same time, from the chronic cancer of caste which enjoins upon them the strictest obligation of despising, distrusting and hating one another on social and religious grounds, are located in hundreds and thousands of isolated camps, each keeping a vigilant watch over the other. Thus there are the 14 million Brahmans, disjointed by a thousand differences of a most scrupulous nature, deities in human flesh! who cannot be approached, much less touched by

mortals; the Kshatrya races like the Sikhs and the Rajputs who form just a handful upon a boundless soil; about 200 million Non-Brahman races, living in a world of war and lost in the subterranean labyrinths of social and religious distinctions whose number and invidiousness no man can tell; and, of course, there are, within the definition of Hinduism but outside the pale of Hindu society, the 60 million untouchable outcasts. Viewed from the standpoint of fighting capacity, the disunited Hindus, with the noble exception of a couple of millions of warrior races, are a big cipher. And socially too, as we have seen, they are as hopelessly divided to-day as they were in the horrid day of Manu Rule. The French and the Germans, the Poles and the Russians may be more rationally considered as a national unit on the ground of their being Europeans and Christians than the Hindus in their interminable divisions and subdivisions merely because they are Indians and profess Hinduism.

If, to-morrow, Britain withdrew from India and, in consequence of the removal of the strong arm of protection, a mighty conflict ensued between these two races, what would be the result? As sure as fate, the Moslem community, inspired by the traditional glory of the Crescent in every part of the world where Islam has reared its kingdoms as much by the ardour of its faith as by the terror of its sword, fired by its ambition to re-establish its Imperial sway over the races of India, leagued with the great Mahomedan powers of Asia and Africa and not improbably led on by a Turkish or an Afghan Napoleon, would present a phalanx of such strength and

solidarity that it would be insane to suppose that the Hindus in a divided camp, hissed off by the accumulated execrations of 60 million insulted souls, unaided by the gritless Brahman and Non-Brahman races and throwing the whole weight of their strength upon a few millions of the Kshatrya races, would put up any but a poor show. Ten to one, the Moslems would be the masters of India. In less than twenty-four hours they would put up an Emperor of their own upon the Throne of Delhi. It is why the President of the Hindu Mahasabha put it so bluntly when he spoke these words at a public meeting in Madras recently. "The present day Brahmans are only fit to perform pujas (or sacrifices) and in their utmost to give their blessings *gratis*. The Vaisya whose one aim in life is to amass wealth will merely be quaking in his shoes at the sight of a glittering sword. The Kshatryas, no doubt, are still able to give battle, but they are only a handful. The only remaining community is the untouchables. If you go to Malabar, you will see the Tiyas, strong and sturdy, ready to offer their services in defence of Hindu religion and culture. Would not the high caste Hindu consider the seriousness of the situation and remove the curse of untouchability and thus attain Swaraj?" So, the redoubtable champion of Hinduism has proclaimed before the world in public meeting that the Hindus, as a body, have not a drop of fighting blood in them, that they shiver in their shoes at the sight of a sword, and that their only hope to save themselves, their religion, their nationality, and their culture and their civilisation palpably against the inroads of Islam and to attain Swaraj or Hindu Raj is to reclaim, mind, not from a

sense of justice and righteousness, not from a love of humanity, but from utter selfishness, from the frightful consciousness of their total incapacity to guard themselves against a powerful enemy, a class of people whom they and their religion have held for thousands of years down, down in the deepest depths of social, political and spiritual servitude and assigned them a place in creation before which the veriest swine in their sties are happier and more fortunate creatures. This gives us a further insight into the political morality of our leaders.

In approaching the mighty problem of India, every serious politician, every far-seeing statesman knows that it is dealing with a world of varieties and contrarities, a world of social tyranny and social slavery, a world of illiteracy and ignorance, a world of superstition and other evils held in religious veneration, a world of political perversity and ambition too gross to be of any use to anybody, and a world too of a perpetual warfare amongst its multitudinous races and creeds and tongues. To frame a constitution that will cover the safety and the well-being, the progress and the civilisation of the countless millions of this immense Empire is a task which will requisition the combined efforts of the mightiest brains and the stoutest hearts of Britain and India alike. And does it not tantamount to playing with fire that the Congress should, in their session of 1929 at Lahore declare their will for the establishment of what they called, "Complete National Independence," which means putting India away from the tried guardianship of the mightiest power on earth and placing her like a foot-ball

in the field of political game to be kicked and tossed about by every invader, by every tyrant, and by every military robber in the world? Anthony Froude, the English historian referring to the political stand of the Irish people towards the close of the eighteenth century says, "The Irish people, instead of demanding from England a redress for their grievances, insisted upon their national and Parliamentary Independence. And they were fools in this, for that very Independence led to national contention, from contention to conspiracy, from conspiracy to rebellion and from rebellion to tyranny." If that was true of a small island with a handful of people, what will be the picture of India when she rolls from one tragedy to another if, in place of attaining political freedom under the ægis of Britain, she rushes like a goat into the shambles of Independence? Who can portray the fate of this unhappy land as she rolls from racial contentions to conspiracies, from conspiracies to wars, from wars to invasions, from invasions to massacre, from massacre to cataclysm, and from cataclysm to hell?

India can ill-afford to spurn the tutelage of Britain. If, to-day, she withdraws from India, what will be her fate? What will the fate of the Railway train if it is derailed while whirling in mad speed along the steel road? Even so will it be that, if India which speeds along the mighty economic and political path of the great Commonwealth of Nations called the British Empire, slips off Britain and is thrown out of her course of political safety, not only will she be dismembered into ten thousand fragments of hostility and bloodshed, not

only will she find herself dashed headlong down the cataclysm of anarchy and terror, but will, in all likelihood, create in Asia a condition which will be, in a tenfold degree, the repetition of the history which tells the tale of Europe on the break-up of the Roman Empire.

If any power arises claiming to rule the great Empire of India, that power must, in the genius and capacity to rule, be commensurate with the greatness and the complexity of the country. Now, looking back upon the visions of India's past through the long role of three thousand years of her marvellous existence, what do we behold? We behold rulers like Asoka and Harsha and recently Akbar peeping out from the past in the full blaze of immortal glory. They were born sword in the hand and genius in the head, conquered the great world of India, at least a very great part of it and ruled it with the might of royalty, and their achievements, whether in peace or war, will go down to posterity to the last hour of the world's existence. There is yet another power, a power of the day that has outshone those great stars in the firmament of sovereignty, that, arising from the far-West with the radiance of human rights and liberties, has dawned upon the mystic land of the orient, and there, penetrating every part of it, even the wildest bushes of barbarism, has, for the first time in the memory of man, given even the lowliest of races absolute protection against the tyranny of ages; a power that, by the irresistible influence of its just, peaceful and philanthropic rule, has infused into the hearts of millions, whom the cruel laws of their countrymen have pent up like so many unclean beasts in the very styx of

social infamy, a sense of self-respect which, if nurtured to perfection under the progressive genius of the self-same rule,—it is not possible otherwise, will go down to posterity upon the trumpet tone of glory as the most thrilling achievement that has been performed upon the earth by any nation, ancient or modern; a power that, by a clever combination of the prowess of the sword and the genius of statesmanship and, by bringing its vast, priceless, accumulated experiences of government over a thousand races and tribes of every conceivable colour, creed, tongue, culture and civilisation thrown upon every part of the globe, to bear upon its administration of the great continent of India, has enforced peace upon her races whose life for nearly 800 years was one continuous agony of war and bloodshed, evolved order out of chaos, blessed her millions with a long, unbroken, unprecedented peace, progress and happiness, and, pulling up the bleeding India, tottering amidst the decay of her ancient culture and civilisation brought on by her internal rottenness, fratricidal wars and invasions, to the India of to-day, youthful, buoyant and chivalrous, her soul burning with the spirit of the liberty-loving West and her heart throbbing with the noblest ideals heaving unto national freedom, and, in fine, organising herself under the inspiration and guidance of that very power, into a grand confederated Empire of the East, undreamt of in the wildest dreams of her past history. And what power is it, if it be not Britain?

Will it not constitute the rankest of political profligacies to hand over, no matter under what pressure or policy, the shaping of the destiny of 350 millions of

a great Empire, now vested in the hands of a Government that has stood its strength through a period of a hundred and fifty years of no mean trials and turmoils, founded as it is upon the rockbed of an administrative genius and capacity that brooks no parallel in the annals of any other nation on earth, to a political organisation that has not a drop of pretence to back their claim to rule this stormy ocean of Indian population; no sure ground to rest on, no firm conviction to be guided by, shifting like a weather cock, hour to hour, from one creed to another, from one political garb to another, turning their backs in the evening on the principles they affected to profess in the morning, constantly changing their tactics to serve the purpose of the hour, now demanding Dominion Status, now ranting for Independence, now, like naughty little children in the kindergarten crying for the University cap and gown, yelling and roaring for a thing called Swaraj, in fine, making themselves appear before mankind more as a vast clique of visionaries and revolutionaries out for destruction and nothing else, rather than as a galaxy of statesmen who could command the confidence of a great country and lead her on prudent and practical lines to the consummation of her political glory.

But Mr. Gandhi, in the fullness of his righteous indignation, might flare up and say, (Reference, for instance, to his address to the Sikh community in February 1931), "Oh, our Swaraj will be a kingdom of justice, a kingdom of righteousness, in which every race, every creed, every community, every individual, man, woman and child, will be quite happy, contented and

secure." Good God! Such a declaration, if it came from any other man, could be dismissed for a bluff. But coming as it is from no other than the great Mahatma, let us, with the reverence that is due to his character and position which command the veneration of the world, consider his "Kingdom of Justice" in the light of existing conditions which are the beaconstarlights of India and Britain alike. The idea of Swaraj as a 'Kingdom of Justice' postulates the transformation of India as she is now and was for four thousand years to a state wherein the Brahman will get down from the high pedestal of priestly power and prestige which he has been enjoying with incredible exclusiveness and glory since the beginning of Indian history, look upon the meanest in the land as his brother and give him fair and just treatment in all his dealings with him; the highcaste non-Brahman Hindu will relinquish his high prerogatives of caste and become a thoroughbred cosmopolitan in his social ways, customs and thoughts; the Hindus and the Muslims, sheathing their swords, will eat and drink and dance in each other's embrace in a perfect political and religious conjugality; justice in all public courts will be administered by judges of spotless integrity and righteousness to people of whatever caste, creed or colour with such scrupulous care and impartiality as will elicit the envy and the admiration of Angels in Heaven; bribery, corruption and official oppression of the poor which have, at all times, formed the most glaring attribute of Indian administration in pre-British rules, and even at the present day under the autocratic Indian officialdom, will vanish as if by magic from this vast continent; the police will be quite immaculate in the discharge of their

duties and keep their hands as pure as snow; the Zemindars and other landed proprietors will be so swayed by the sanctity of law that they will not, even if they can, bring their paw of extortion to land heavily upon their tenants; the hawk and the dove will be sitting side by side chirping and making honey-moon all the days of their lives in this "Kingdom of Justice". Baron Munchausen sinks into a shade before the glowing picture of Mahatma Gandhi!

The Congress again might point to the "Fundamentals" as formulated in their Karachi session which form the "declaration of rights" under Swaraj Government. Hang those fundamentals. It is the spirit of the people, which is but the reflection of the eternal curse of a social system and religious bigotry that must be tackled. To make the "fundamentals" have any real import in the eye of educated India, there are, to my mind, at least four pre-requisites which must be called into being and established on a solid and permanent basis; otherwise, the attempt of the Congress, however sincere and honest to force people's belief in those fundamentals, is tantamount to flouting popular mind with the glow of a distant vision, just like holding a kaleidoscope of brilliant colours and pictures before children to amuse their fancy and there it ends. And those pre-requisites are (1) Destroy caste; hang every Indian who calls himself a high caste man: Untouchability goes with it; (2) create a common creed, (3) create a common tongue, (4) destroy the spirit of greed, tyranny and corruption which is only too deep-rooted in the very nature of the the Indian. This is achieving the impossible! That

being so, to believe in a kingdom of justice under Swaraj. Government is to imagine the existence of a paradise while pandemonium reigns.

But don't the Congress, by tickling the imagination of the people with their fundamentals commit themselves *in their own leader*, a furnace of blast and counter-blast in himself, to a position which is as untenable as ridiculous? Hear him through his fuse, the "Young India". (1) "Swaraj is unattainable without the removal of untouchability as it is without Hindu-Muslim Unity". (January 1921). Then what is the fun of unfurling his standard of revolt against the Government now? (2) "We are guilty of having suppressed our brethren; we make them crawl on their bellies; we have made them rub their noses on the ground; with eyes red with rage we push them out of Railway compartments. It is idle to talk of Swaraj so long as we do not protect the weak and the helpless; or as long as it is possible for a single Swarajist to injure the feelings of any individual. Swaraj means that not a single Hindu or Muslim shall, for a moment, arrogantly think that he can crush with impunity meek Hindus or Muslims. Unless this condition is fulfilled, we will gain Swaraj only to lose it the next month. We are no better than brutes until we have purged ourselves of the sins we have committed against our weaker brethren". (27th April 1921). Now these conditions remaining to-day as unaltered and unalterable as they ever were, the Mahatma has started his Civil Disobedience for a third time within the brief space of ten years in order to attain Swaraj. Is it not for the benefit of

the "brutes"? (3) Again on the same date, Mr. Gandhi says, "The Hindus are not sinful by nature; they are sunk in ignorance". And since, in the Swaraj to come, the Hindus will, by reason of their numbers, vastly preponderate in every branch of administration, it follows that the Swaraj Government which will be "a government of the people, for the people and by the people," will be a government of the ignorant, for the ignorant and by the ignorant and all groping in ignorance. (4) Writing on Civil Disobedience, he lectures: "We have more to fear from ourselves than from the violence or mistakes of the Government; our own violence or untruth will be veritable death for us. If we are not able to set our own house in order we shall certainly destroy ourselves." (23rd February 1922). Well now, Mr. Gandhi and his Congress have, during all these days of their chameleon existence, shown their utter incapacity to set the house of India in order in as much as they, after the most strenuous efforts desperately put forth in the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity, the removal of untouchability and other curses of caste, have now given them all up as a lost game. And as regards Hindu-Muslim unity, they have declared repeatedly and solemnly before mankind that it would be worse than useless to try to attain Swaraj without that essential requisite and that, if the Hindus and the Muslims could not by their own effort and in their own country effect that unity, it would be most disgraceful on their part to appeal for help to their "enemies" namely the British Government, towards that end. Now, in the teeth of these damning declarations which were so frequently trumpeted through press and platform, is it

not damaging beyond disgrace that those very people, Mr. Gandhi and his Congress, should have gone to London and approached those enemies, those "Satans" imploring them to effect the long-sought and long-failed concord between them—Hindus and Muslims, what for? that they might, in their united strength, drive the British out of India and take the country in their own hands? It was with this object that Mr. Gandhi went to London, apparently to attend the Round Table Conference, but avowedly to load his double-barrel gun to bag Britain. But the old Shikari came away with an empty bag. And here is something more to his taste. Considering the attainment of Swaraj in the light of the social conditions which throttle the ambition of political Indians, he says grimly, "So long as untouchability disfigures Hinduism, so long do I hold the attainment of Swaraj to be an utter impossibility. Supposing it were a gift descending from Downing Street to India, that gift would be a curse upon this land if we do not get rid of this curse (of untouchability)" Well, the social condition of this unhappy land has changed little and the accursed untouchability remains in its eternal reprobation as hideous and loathsome as ever. And in the face of his own public utterances regarding untouchability, does not Mr. Gandhi, by now hoisting the standard of revolt against the British rule upon the caste-ridden soil of India towards the establishment of Independence as a full-blown Swaraj, commit himself to an attitude which is at once a crime upon his conscience and a treason to his country?

CHAPTER V

FRESH DEVELOPMENTS

THE COMMUNAL AWARD. HINDUISM "PURIFIED"

On the 16th of August 1932, breaking the deep anxiety and suspense of the politicians and the people of the Empire,—those whose minds were predisposed to receive it with deep suspicion and the consequent vehemence of a foul attack and those who could probe into the best intentions of the Government bent on distributing loaves and fishes to a great mass of people that were collected in the arena of Indian politics, came the Communal award from the Prime Minister himself with a personal explanation on the crucial task forced upon the Government as a result of the endless quarrels, bickerings and gladiatorial feats indulged in by the members of the Round Table Conference held in London during the autumn of 1931. The text runs as follows:—

(1) In the statement made by the Prime Minister on the 1st December last, on behalf of His Majesty's Government at the close of the second session of the Round Table Conference, which was immediately afterwards endorsed by both the Houses of Parliament, it was made plain that if the communities in India were unable to reach a settlement acceptable to all parties on the communal questions which the Conference had failed to solve, His Majesty's Government were determined that India's constitutional advance should not, on that account, be frustrated, and they would remove this obstacle by devising and applying themselves a provisional scheme.

(2) On the 19th March last, His Majesty's Government having been informed that the continued failure of the communities to reach an agreement was blocking the progress of the plans for the framing of the new Constitution, stated that they were engaged upon a careful re-examination of the difficult and controversial questions which arose. They are now satisfied that without a decision on at least some aspects of the problems connected with the position of the minorities under the new Constitution, no further progress can be made with the framing of the Constitution.

CONDITIONS UNDERLYING SETTLEMENT

(3) His Majesty's Government have, accordingly, decided that they will include provisions to give effect to the scheme set out below in the proposals relating to the Indian Constitution to be laid in due course before Parliament. The scope of this scheme is purposely confined to the arrangements to be made for the representation of the British Indian communities in the provincial legislatures, consideration of representation in the legislature at the Centre being deferred for the reason given in paragraph 20 below. The decision to limit the scope of the scheme implies in no way failure to realise that the framing of the Constitution will necessitate decision on a number of other problems of great importance to the minorities, but has been taken in the hope that once a pronouncement has been made upon the basic questions of the method and proportions of representation, the communities themselves may find it possible to arrive at a *modus vivendi* on the other com-

munal problems which have not as yet received the examination they require.

(4) His Majesty's Government wish it to be most clearly understood that they themselves can be no parties to any negotiations which may be initiated with a view to the revision of their decision, and will not be prepared to give consideration to any representation aimed at securing a modification of it, which is not supported by all the parties affected. But they are most desirous to close no door to an agreed settlement should such happily be forthcoming. If therefore before the new Government of India Act has passed into law, they are satisfied that the communities who are concerned are mutually agreed upon a practicable alternative scheme either in respect of any one or more of the Governor's provinces, or in respect of the whole of British India, they will be prepared to recommend to Parliament that the alternative should be substituted for the provisions now outlined.

GENERAL FEATURES OF THE SCHEME

(5) Seats in the Legislative Councils in the Governor's Provinces or in the Lower House if there is an upper chamber, will be allocated as shown in paragraph 24 below :—

(6) Election to the seats allotted to Mahomedan, European and Sikh constituencies will be by voters voting in separate communal electorates covering between them the whole area of the province (apart from any portions which may in special cases be excluded from the electoral area as "backward").

Provision will be made in the constitution itself to empower revision of this electoral arrangements (and other similar arrangements mentioned below) after ten years with the assent of the communities affected, for the ascertainment of which suitable means will be devised.

(7) All qualified electors who are not voters either in a Mahomedan, Sikh, Indian Christian (see para 10), Anglo Indian (see para 11) or European constituency, will be entitled to vote in a general constituency.

(8) Seven seats will be reserved for Mahrattas in certain selected plural member general constituencies in Bombay.

(9) Members of the "depressed classes" qualified to vote will vote in a general constituency. In view of the fact that, for a considerable period, these classes would be unlikely, by this means alone, to secure any adequate representation in the Legislature, a number of special seats will be assigned to them as shown in para 24 below. These seats will be filled by election from the special constituencies in which only the members of the "depressed classes," electorally qualified, will be entitled to vote. Any person voting in such a special constituency will, as stated above, be also entitled to vote in a general constituency. It is intended that these constituencies should be formed in selected areas where the "depressed classes" are most numerous and that except in Madras they should not cover the whole area of the province.

In Bengal, it seems possible that in some general constituencies, the majority of the voters will belong to

the Depressed Classes. Accordingly, pending further investigation, no number has been fixed for members to be returned from the Special Depressed Class constituencies in that Province. It is intended to secure that the Depressed Classes should obtain not less than ten seats in the Bengal Legislature.

The precise definition, in each province of those who (if electorally qualified) will be entitled to vote in the special Depressed Class constituencies has not yet been finally determined. It will be based, as a rule, on the general principles advocated in the Franchise Committee's report. Modification may, however, be found necessary in some provinces in Northern India, where the application of the general criteria of untouchability might result in a definition unsuitable, in some respects, to the special conditions of the province.

His Majesty's Government do not consider that these special Depressed Classes constituencies will be required for more than a limited time. They intend that the Constitution shall provide that they shall come to an end after twenty years if they have not previously been abolished under the general powers of electoral revision referred to in para. 6.

(10) Election to the seats allotted to Indian Christians will be by voters voting in separate communal electorates. It seems almost certain that the formation of Indian Christian constituencies covering the whole area of a province is impracticable and that accordingly special Indian Christian constituencies will have to be formed only in one or two selected areas in a province. Indian Christian voters in these areas will not vote in a

general constituency. Indian Christian voters outside these areas will vote in a general constituency. Special arrangements may be needed in Bihar and Orissa where a considerable proportion of the Indian Christian community belong to aboriginal tribes.

(11) Election to the seats allotted to Anglo-Indians will be by voters voting in separate communal electorates. It is at present intended, subject to the investigation of any practical difficulties that may arise that the Anglo-Indian constituencies shall cover the whole area of each province, postal ballot being employed; but no final decision has yet been reached.

(12) The method of filling the seats assigned for representatives from the Backward Areas is still under investigation, and the number of seats so assigned should be regarded as provisional, pending final decision as to the constitutional arrangements to be made in relation to such areas.

VOTES FOR WOMEN.

(13) His Majesty's Government attach great importance to securing that the new legislatures should contain at least a small number of women members. They feel, at the outset, this object could not be achieved without creating a certain number of seats specially allotted to women. They also feel it is essential that women members should not be drawn disproportionately from one community. They have been unable to find any system which would avoid this risk and would be consistent with the rest of the scheme for representation which they have found it necessary to adopt, except that

of limiting the electorate for each special woman's seat to voters from one community, subject to the exception explained in para 24 below. Special women's seats have accordingly been specifically divided as explained in para 24 below between the various communities. The precise electoral machinery to be employed in these special constituencies is still under consideration.

REPRESENTATION OF INTERESTS.

(14) Seats allotted to "Labour" will be filled from non-communal constituencies. Electoral arrangements have still to be determined, but it is likely that in most provinces Labour constituencies will be partly trade union and partly special constituencies as recommended by the Franchise Committee.

(15) Special seats allotted to Commerce and Industry, Mining and Planting will be filled by election through Chambers of Commerce and various associations. Details of the electoral arrangements for these seats must await further investigation.

(16) Special seats allotted to Land-holders will be filled by election by special Landholders' constituencies.

(17) The method to be employed for election to University seats is still under consideration.

(18) His Majesty's Government have found it impossible in determining these questions of representation in the provincial legislatures, to avoid entering into a considerable detail. There remains, nevertheless, the determination of the constituencies. They intend that this task should be undertaken in India as early as possible.

It is possible in some instances that delimitation of constituencies might be materially improved by a slight variation from the number of seats now given. His Majesty's Government reserve the right to make such slight variations for such a purpose, provided they would not materially affect the essential balance between the communities. No such variations will, however, be made in the case of Bengal and the Punjab.

(19) The question of the composition of Second Chambers in the provinces has so far received comparatively little attention in the constitutional discussions, and requires further consideration before a decision is reached as to which provinces shall have a Second Chamber or a scheme is drawn up for their composition.

His Majesty's Government consider that the composition of the Upper House in a province should be such as not to disturb, in any essential, the balance between the communities resulting from the composition of the Lower House.

(20) His Majesty's Government do not propose, at present, to enter into the question of the size and composition of the Legislature at the Centre, since this involves, among other questions, that of representation of the Indian States which still needs further discussion. They will of course, when considering the composition, pay full regard to the claims of all the communities for adequate representation therein.

NEW PROVINCES.

(21) His Majesty's Government have already accepted that Sind should be constituted a separated

province if satisfactory means of financing it can be found. As the financial problems involved still have to be reviewed in connection with other problems of Federal Finance, His Majesty's Government have thought it preferable to include at this stage figures for a Legislature for the existing province of Bombay, in addition to the schemes for separate Legislatures for the Bombay Presidency proper and Sind.

(22) The figures given for Bihar and Orissa relate to the existing province. The question of constituting a separate province of Orissa is still under investigation.

(23) The inclusion in para 24 below of figures relating to the Legislature for the Central Provinces including Berar does not imply that any decision has yet been reached regarding the future constitutional position of Berar.

ALLOCATION OF SEATS IN PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURES.

(24) The following will be the allocation of seats in Provincial Legislatures (Lower House only):—

Madras: General seats: 134 (including six women) Depressed Classes: 18; Representative from backward areas 1; Mahomedans 29 (including one woman); Indian Christians 9 (including one woman); Anglo-Indians 2; Europeans 3; Commerce and Industry, Mining and Planting 6; Landholders 6; University 1; Labour 6. Total 215.

Bombay (including Sind): General seats: 97 (including five women); backward areas 1; Mahomedans 63 (including 1 woman); Indian Christians 3;

Anglo-Indians 2; Europeans 4; Commerce, etc., 8; Landholders 3; University 1; Labour 8; Depressed Classes 10. Total 200.

Bengal: General seats 80 (including 2 women); Depressed Classes blank; Mahomedans 119 (including 2 women); Indian Christians 2; Anglo-Indians 4 (including 1 woman); Europeans 11; Commerce etc., 19; Landholders 5; University 2; Labour 8. Total 250.

United Provinces; General seats 132 (including 4 women); Depressed Classes 12; Mahomedans 66 (including 2 women); Indian Christians 2; Anglo-Indians 1; Europeans 2; Commerce, etc., 3; Landholders 6; University 1; Labour 3. Total 228.

Punjab: General seats 43 (including one woman); Sikhs 32 (including one woman); Mahomedans 86 (including two women); Indian Christians 2; Anglo-Indians 1; Europeans 1; Commerce, etc., 1; Landholders 5; University 1; Labour 3. Total 175.

Bihar and Orissa: General seats 99 (including three women); Depressed Classes 7; Representatives from backward areas 8; Mahomedans 42 (including 1 woman); Indian Christians 2; Anglo-Indians 1; Europeans 2; Commerce, etc., 4; Landholders 6; University 1; Labour 4. Total 175.

Central Provinces (including Berar), General seats 77 (including three women); Depressed Classes 10; Representatives from backward areas 1; Mahomedans 14; Anglo-Indians 1; Europeans 1; Commerce, etc., 2; Landholders 3; University 1; Labour 2. Total 112.

Assam: General seats 44 (including one woman); Depressed Classes 4; Representatives from backward

areas 9; Mahomedans 34; Indian Christians 1; Europeans 1; Commerce, etc., 11; Labour 4. Total 108.

North-West Frontier Province: General seats 9; Sikhs 3; Mahomedans 36; Landholders 2. Total 50.

Seats are also allocated for Bombay without Sind and for Sind as follows:—

Bombay without Sind: General seats 109 (including five women); Depressed Classes 10; Representative from backward areas 1; Mahomedans 30 (including one woman); Indian Christians 3; Anglo-Indians 2; Europeans 3; Commerce, etc., 7; Landholders 2; University 1; Labour 7. Total 175.

Sind: General seats 19 (including 1 woman); Mahomedans 34 (including one woman); Europeans 2; Commerce, etc., 2; Landholders 2; Labour 1. Total 60.

As regards seats for commerce and industry, mining and planting, it is stated that "composition of bodies through which election of these seats will be conducted though in most cases either predominantly European or predominantly Indian will not be statutorily fixed. It is accordingly not possible in each province to state with certainty how many Europeans and Indians respectively will be returned. It is, however, expected that initially the numbers will be approximately as follows:—Madras, 4 Europeans and two Indians; Bombay (including Sind), 5 Europeans and three Indians; Bengal, 14 Europeans and five Indians; United Provinces, 2 Europeans and one Indian; Punjab, one Indian; Bihar and Orissa, 2 Europeans and two Indians;

Central Provinces (including Berar), one European and one Indian; Assam, 8 Europeans and three Indians; Bombay (without Sind), 4 Europeans and three Indians; Sind, one European and one Indian."

As regards general seats allocated to Bombay whether inclusive or exclusive of Sind it is stated seven of them will be reserved for Mahrattas.

As regards allocation of seats for Depressed Classes in Bengal this number which will not exceed ten has not yet been fixed. The number of general seats will be 80, less the number of special depressed classes seats.

As regards Landholders seats in the Punjab, it is stated one of these will be a Zamindar's seat. Four landholders' seats will be filled from special constituencies with Joint Electorates. It is probable from distribution of the electorate that members returned will be one Hindu, one Sikh and two Mahomedans.

As regards allocation of one woman's seat among general seats in Assam, it is stated this will be filled from a non-communal constituency at Shillong.

PREMIER'S EXPLANATORY STATEMENT.

"Not only as the Prime Minister, but as a friend of India who has for the last two years taken a special interest in the question of minorities, I feel that I ought to add a word or two of explanation to the extremely important decision on communal representation that the Government are announcing to-day.

We never wished to intervene in the communal controversies of India. We made that abundantly clear

during both the sessions of the Round Table Conference when we strove hard to get Indians to settle this matter between themselves. We have realised from the very first that any decision that we may make is likely, to begin with any rate, to be criticised by every community purely from the point of view of its own complete demands, but we believe that in the end considerations of Indian needs will prevail and all communities will see that their duty is to co-operate in working the new constitution which is to give India a new place in the British Commonwealth of Nations.

SETTLEMENT SUBJECT TO REVISION BY ARRANGEMENT.

Our duty was plain. As the failure of the communities to agree amongst themselves has placed an almost insurmountable obstacle in the way of any constitutional development, it was incumbent upon Government to take action. In accordance, therefore, with the pledges that I gave on behalf of the Government at the Round Table Conference in response to repeated appeals from representative Indians and in accordance with the statement to British Parliament and approved by it, Government are to-day publishing a scheme of representation in Provincial Assemblies that they intend in due course to lay before Parliament unless in the meanwhile the communities themselves agree upon a better plan.

We should be only too glad if, at any stage before the proposed Bill becomes law, the communities can reach an agreement amongst themselves. But guided by the past experience, Government are convinced that no

further negotiations will be of any advantage and they can be no party to them. They will however be ready and willing to substitute for their scheme any scheme, whether in respect of any one or more of Governor's provinces or in respect of the whole of British India, that is generally agreed and accepted by all the parties affected.

THE CASE FOR SEPARATE ELECTORATES.

In order to appreciate the Government's decision, it is necessary to remember the actual conditions in which it is being given. For many years past, separate electorates, namely, the grouping of particular categories of voters in territorial constituencies by themselves have been regarded by minority communities as an essential protection for their rights. In each of the recent stages of constitutional development, separate electorates have consequentially found a place. However much Government may have preferred a uniform system of joint electorates, they found it impossible to abolish the safeguards to which minorities still attach vital importance. It would serve no purpose to examine the cause which in the past have led to this state of affairs. I am rather thinking of the future. I want to see the greater and the smaller communities working together in peace and amity so that there will be no further need for a special form of protection. In the mean time, however, Government have to face facts as they are and must maintain this exceptional form of representation.

THE POSITION OF THE DEPRESSED CLASSES.

There are two features of the decision to which I must allude. One has to do with the depressed classes

and the other with the representation of women. Government would be quite unable to justify a scheme which omitted to provide what is really requisite for either.

Our main object in the case of the Depressed Classes has been, while securing to them the spokesmen of their own choice in the legislatures of the province where they are found in large numbers, at the same time to avoid electoral arrangements which would perpetuate their segregation. Consequentially, Depressed Class voters will vote in general Hindu constituencies and an elected member in such a constituency will be influenced by his responsibility to this section of the electorate, but for the next 20 years there will also be a number of special seats filled from special Depressed Class electorates in the areas where these voters chiefly prevail. The anomaly of giving certain members of the Depressed Classes two votes is abundantly justified by the urgent need of securing that their claims should be effectively expressed and the prospects of improving their actual condition promoted.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

As regards women voters, it has been widely recognised in recent years that the women's movement in India holds one of the keys of progress. It is not too much to say that India cannot reach the position to which it aspires in the world until its women play their due part as educated and influential citizens. There are undoubtedly serious objections to extending to the representation of women the communal method, but if seats are to be reserved for women as such and women

members are to be fairly distributed among the communities, there is, in the existing circumstances, no alternative.

With this explanation, I commend the scheme to Indian communities as a fair and honest attempt to hold the balance between the conflicting claims in relation to the existing position in India. Let them take it though it may not for the moment satisfy the full claims of any of them as a workable plan for dealing with the question of representation in the next period of India's constitutional development. Let them remember, when examining the scheme, that they themselves failed when pressed again and again to produce some plan which would give general satisfaction.

COMMUNAL CO-OPERATION A CONDITION OF PROGRESS.

In the end, only Indians themselves can settle this question. The most that Government can hope for is that their decision will remove an obstacle from the path of constitutional advance and will thus enable Indians to concentrate their attention upon solving the many issues that still remain to be decided in the field of constitutional advance. Let leaders of all Indian communities show at this critical moment in India's constitutional development, their appreciation of the fact that communal co-operation is a condition of progress and that it is their special duty to put upon themselves the responsibility of making the new constitution work."

Its publication simultaneously in England and India was the signal for educated India to rise and revolt.

The Press set up a howl of execration; platforms thundered in a roar of disapproval; orators exhausted themselves in raging phillipics. Madras and Lahore, Calcutta and Bombay, Delhi and provincial towns, carried away as usual by a passing sentiment and eager to be reckoned among political flails, recorded their note of dissent and said that it was all in the interest of Britain and the minorities. It could never find favour with the majority community—the Hindus. The Government, too, were not unprepared for the storm. Verily, if God Himself came down on earth and gave India a constitution, every community in it would be up against it; it is our curse. What course then is open to the Government to follow? Turn to Poona, and behold there a frail figure which, in the strength of its feebleness, undoes in no time the designs of the Government by a course of action which any where in the world would consign the man to the gallows. But Mr. Gandhi, shrouding himself in pious politics, goes on a fast; it is a fast to a finish.

He has reached the end of the tether; he has championed the cause of the Hindus and the Depressed Classes all his life. He has hoped to merge the one into the other and present the admixture that has not mixed for four thousand years as a pure nectar. He has been waiting for his last chance, and the Communal Award has given him that. He knows how easily India could be moved by mere sentiment, however silly it may be. He knows, too, what an asset his life is to her; and Britain, oh, how hard it is to get her round to bow to his will. Why not knock blood out of stone; now or never.

And while he fasts, the Bible in the heart and Gita in the hand, to melt out the overdone abomination of Hinduism by the lava of the Mount, India enacts a scene of her tragedy. Cities, towns and villages lament the self-inflicted fate of their Guru; shops remain closed; taverns would fain to starve. Some wells, eating-houses and temples in the North are thrown open to the Depressed Classes; meetings are held in all places, some to condole with the passing soul and others, how best to avert this national calamity; leaders, borne upon the wings of lightning, meet in conference; they are unable to talk, their wide-open eyes press one against the other sadly, silently, amazingly as if to ask if the world is coming to an end. Finally, they get huddled up, the oppressors and the oppressed, at Poona where the Mahatma is holding his fast in the Yerrowada Jail, the one to save the life of the great man at any cost, and the other to make hay when the sun shines. After much quibbling and wrangling, all done in a hurry, on the sixth day of fast, while the precious life was all but gone, the leaders reached an agreement which was at once telegraphed to the Prime Minister and the Government of India; and the Prime Minister too immediately wired back his approval. Mr. Gandhi's life is spared! The text of the Agreement runs as under:—

(1) There shall be seats reserved for the Depressed Classes out of the general electorates seats in the Provincial Legislatures as follows:—

Madras 30;
Bombay with Sind 15;
Punjab 8;

Bihar and Orissa 18 ;
 Central Provinces 20 ;
 Assam 7 ;
 Bengal 30 ;
 United Provinces 20.
 Total 148.

These figures are based on the total strength of the Provincial Councils, announced in the Prime Minister's decision.

(2) Election to these seats shall be by joint electorates subject, however, to the following procedure:

All the members of the Depressed Classes registered in the general electoral roll in a constituency will form an electoral college, which will elect a panel of four candidates belonging to the Depressed Classes for each of such reserved seats, by the method of the single vote; the four persons getting the highest number of votes in such primary election shall be candidates for election by the general electorate.

(3) Representation of the Depressed Classes in the Central Legislature shall likewise be on the principle of joint electorates and reserved seats by the method of primary election in the manner provided for in Clause two above, for their representation in the Provincial Legislature.

(4) In the Central Legislature, eighteen per cent. of the seats allotted to the general electorate for British India in the said legislature shall be reserved for the Depressed Classes.

(5) The system of primary election to panel of candidates for election to the Central and Provincial

Legislatures, as hereinbefore mentioned, shall come to an end after the first ten years, unless terminated sooner by mutual agreement under the provision of Clause six below.

(6) The system of representation of the Depressed Classes by reserved seats in the Provincial and Central Legislatures as provided for in Clauses 1 and 4 shall continue until determined by mutual agreement between the communities concerned in the settlement.

(7) Franchise for the Central and Provincial Legislatures for the Depressed Classes shall be as indicated in the Lothian Committee Report.

(8) There shall be no disabilities attaching to any one on the ground of his being a member of the Depressed Classes in regard to any elections to local bodies or appointment to the Public Services. Every endeavour shall be made to secure fair representation of the Depressed Classes in these respects, subject to such educational qualifications as may be laid down for appointment to the Public Services.

(9) In every province out of the educational grant an adequate sum shall be earmarked for providing educational facilities to the members of the Depressed Classes."

["The total number of Depressed Class pupils reading in all kinds of institutions in the remaining seven Provinces (Assam and Burma excluded) was 1,035,883 during 1929—30 as compared with 1,005,125 in the previous year. This figure represents 3·60 per cent of the total estimated Depressed Class population of these

Provinces, as against an All-India figure for all communities of 5·05. Much leeway, of course, has still to be made up, and in all Provinces except Bengal, the number of Depressed Class children who reach the secondary and University stage is regrettably small." ("India", 1930—31). The million expressed here is meaningless from a political stand point. This, however, gives us a feeble idea of the enlightenment of the community which rests on a rock-bed of illiteracy. By the 71 seats allotted to them by the Communal Award in the system of separate electorate, Britain has proved her generosity, but not commendability. But, by the 77 extra seats seized from the Hindus in the joint electorate, will the Depressed Class leaders employ them to advantage and credit to themselves, or make the so-called Indian democracy a goose to lay them golden eggs, or worse, a breeding-machine for the plague of vicious and ignorant politics ?]

So, the leaders of the Depressed Classes, to whom the British Government have at all times been parental—and even the separate electorate preferred by them in the Communal Award was designed with the best of intention for their special good, (oh, the thankless nine!) have suddenly become turncoats and eagerly snatched at the bait thrown to them by their caste brethren for their elevation from the sphere of sub-human wherein they were herding for four thousand years of Indian history, at a thoughtless moment of silly felicitation. For, one of them, the foremost is reported that when, on the question of the "referendum" as the turning point, they rushed to Yerrowada jail to put it

before Mr. Gandhi, he was so completely taken in by the mastercraft of the arch-siren as the latter addressed him in these terms, "I am proud of you. I always listened to your speeches with admiration", that he forthwith ceased to press for it. Just a while ago, speaking on Mr. Gandhi's fast, he impugned and ridiculed it, bragging, "I don't care for these political stunts. This threat of Mr. Gandhi to starve himself to death is not a moral fight, but a sheer political stunt. . . . I can understand a person honestly trying to negotiate on equal terms giving his opponent credit for honesty, but I would never be moved by such stunts. My decision stands". And so soon the 'stunt' became a volume of history for him. There is admiration for Dr. Ambedkar as a man, but not as a weakling. Helpless untouchability, in such hands, may drift to any direction and get stranded on a shoal of sugary deceit. Only a strong wind is needed. Anyway, this agreement, mutually formulated at Poona may be embodied in the new Constitution. For better or worse, they must abide by it, though it is generally believed to be a rehearsal of the fable of the fox and the crow.

Has untouchability gone or is it likely to go by the political courtship contracted between the two antipodes of the Hindu community? How long will the exuberance of love and neighbourly charity which have burst upon them in the giddy hour of excitement just to save a man's life last? Mr. Gandhi is old and is not immortal. If he kicks the bucket to-morrow, will the Depressed Classes remain without being carried away with the bucket? No doubt, they have acquired at the threatened

sacrifice of his life some more political rights in the electorate in common with the caste Hindus. But, will that enable them to sit and eat and worship on terms of equality in all places outside the council chambers? Will they be considered at all as freemen? What glory is it to them to sit as peers in councils and to be treated all over country as dirty dogs of the street?

As regards the temple entry by these classes, the 'Nationalist' newspapers have broken all previous records by the publication of deliberate, barefaced, glaring falsehoods to be contradicted by those very journals the next day. "The wave of enthusiasm to do away with untouchability" has evoked a counterwave, a tidal wave of resistance which, in its swollen fury, would wash out the outburst in its favour rolling it back to the sea of its humiliation. Here is a specimen of the wave of enthusiasm: (The "Hindu", September 28, 1932) "Within the twinkling of an eye, age-long prejudices have been conquered and buried five fathoms deep never, I hope, to raise their heads again. The Hindu community has proved to the world that it is not unworthy of its glorious past. To-day is a day of rejoicing for all Indians, because the greatest curse of India, untouchability has been removed within a bewilderingly short period of four days". A language, to be sure, not heard even in the wildest roar of Bedlam! As a damper on the outburst, follow news of events which are a scathing denunciation of the wide-spread newspaper bluff. "But to us, in South India, the picture is yet to be completed by the vast rural population feeling the force of the terrible injustice and giving it a quick riddance The first

step for us and that which would indicate surely enough the motives which actuate us will be the throwing open of all public instructions, streets, schools, wells and temples and the sharing on equal terms of education, religious worship and the common amenities of citizenship". (Sunday Times", October 2, 1932). The first step is *yet to be taken*; and so will it be to the end of the chapter. And how about the urban areas? The following gives the answer. At a meeting held at the Tilak Ghat, Triplicane, Madras, attended by over eight thousand people to hear the addresses on "The Poona Pact", "the speakers made stirring appeals to the Hindus to remove the blot of untouchability from Hinduism and to give to the Depressed Classes the right to worship in temples". In the course of the address, the chief speaker said, "I plead that it is the duty of the caste Hindus to-day to show a change of heart and treat their Depressed Class brethren on equal terms. If you treat them on equal terms, if you invite them to your houses, to the festivals, I know temples will be bound to be open to them soon. You can throw open to them the temples of heart and home. I tell you the question of temple-entry will become easy of solution if you open out your heart to our brethren in right earnest." (The "Hindu," October 10, 1932). After this "stirring appeal," to the Hindus, imploring them to allow the Depressed Classes into the temples on platform tickets how many of the great temples in Madras opened their doors to these unfortunate people? Not one.

Again, there comes a chill blast of protest against temple-entry from a city which is considered as the

citadel of Brahmanism in the South. "Kumbakonam, October 9. To protest against the proposed entry of untouchables into temples, a meeting was held last evening in the Dabir bathing ghat under the auspices of the Tanjore District Brahmana Sabha. The meeting, while recognising the need for steps to be taken to ameliorate the condition of the so-called depressed classes, was firmly of opinion that the attempts made to gain entry of the untouchables into temples, which had been founded according to the Agama Sastras and which existed for the benefit of the classes who formed their present worshippers, were not justified as such entry was against long-standing usage and well-established rights, and should therefore be discontinued. It specially deprecated the forcing of a wrongful innovation by organised coercion, which was sure to lead to bitterness and strife. The meeting reiterated its opinion that the Congress and Mahatma Gandhi should confine themselves to politics and not interfere with religion and declared that Mahatma Gandhi could never be an authority on matters of religious faith or practice. It also expressed its strong disapproval of the efforts made to secure legislative coercion for the purpose of forcing temple-entry and requested the Governor-General in Council to withhold permission to the introduction of any bill for such a purpose either in the central or provincial legislatures.

By another resolution, the meeting insisted on the insertion of a fundamental clause in the new constitution to the effect that the Government and the legislature would not interfere with the religion, religious practices

and culture of any community whatsoever, and declared that no reforms would be acceptable without such safeguards in the constitution." (The "Hindu," October 11, 1932).

And on October 24, 1932, "a long memorial for protection against temple-entry by 'untouchables' has been conveyed to H. E. the Viceroy" from Benares, the Rome of Hinduism. It states, "The forces of a nationalist political body like the Congress have been requisitioned in an essentially internal and religious matter of one community. False importance is given to bodies like the Hindu Mahasabha by Arya Samajists and Brahma Samajists like Dr. Moonje and Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, who are really against image worship altogether, and the threat of Gandhiji fasting again to death is held out to coerce people into acquiescence.

"The memorial regards temple-entry by the "Untouchables" as against the religious practices and the Shastraic injunctions of the Hindus.

"The memorial submits statements to this effect from the authorities of sixteen important local temples including the Viswanath golden temple and the Annapurna temple and thirty-nine Shastris and Pandits of Benares, and fifty-five temple-goers of the orthodox Hindu community. The statement of Ramgarib Dusabha of Lachiman Garb and twenty-nine other orthodox Hindu "Untouchables" is also attached to the memorial, and the following sentences will give some idea of this statement: To enter the sacred temples is against the Hindu Dharma and religious commands. We do not wish to enter them because by doing so, we would be

going to Hell. We, people, can secure the merit of darshan, puja, etc., of the gods by the very dharshan of the Shikara (summit) of the divine temples."

"The memorial seeks protection against religious interference under the Royal Proclamation of 1858 of Queen Empress Victoria." (The "Hindu," Oct. 25, 1932). Space will not permit the publication of hundreds of such protests made in meetings, by deputations and demonstrations all over India in consequence of the undue importance given to temple-entry by interested persons and political bodies.

Whilst mankind is witness to untouchability reigning in the daily life of the people as uncompromisingly and as savagely as ever, does it not, apart from the grave issues involved by maliciously propagating this sort of deceit, amount to making fun of a great man in whose name such fooleries are indulged in. Never was the art of dissimulation practised so widely on the credulous mobs as at present. Never was a time when politics assumed such a gigantic proportion for fraud and foul play. Never was Britain so malignantly sought to be hoodwinked with lies forged upon the anvil of black dishonesty while the grim devil of untouchability is sitting, as immovable as ever, upon the ruins of India and Hinduism alike.

"Speaking as a Hindu, striving to find and live up to the very essence of it, I say without the slightest hesitation that God will be installed in the idols of the temples, only if they are thrown open unreservedly to outcasts. To-day, with human outcasts, God Himself is an outcast." So wrote Mr. Gandhi on the sixth day of his fast in his appeal to South Indians. And his

satellites too, taking the cue from their Guru, is preaching this strange Gandhi-gospel, telling the people that God was standing all these years outside the temple walls unable to get in, till the Mahatma showed Him the way. Almighty God is very much obligated to Mr. Gandhi for fitting Him up with this extraordinary power! So, the temples were without God for the past four thousand years, and the Brahman priests were practising this huge fraud upon the poor, ignorant people and the rulers as well with meaningless mantras, poojas and ceremonies and were making the godless religion a subterfuge for their vile lucre or worse; and thousands of ancient shrines were erected by the munificence of Kings and Emperors merely that people might, like drivelling idiots, adore stocks and stones adorning them with jewels and precious stones and carry Satan in their souls, and for nothing else. The whole of India was thus a victim, throughout the long ages of her existence, to this species of deception practised by the Brahmans which, in point of time and treachery, is unparalleled by the wickedmost records of hell! It comes to this, or the Hindu leaders who, well-read scholars as they are, possessing the ken of an eagle in all such matters, have given expression to this vulgar obscenity in religion, are a pack of hypocrites and suppressors of truth. The truth is, not that God is not in the temples for, to a devout soul with a clean heart going to worship Him in a spirit of humility and truth He is there as well as any other place, but the Swaraj-god has entered into them along with the untouchables. The political saints know their god, and it is this god they advertise in another garb. It is downright swindling of public conscience, in the name

of God, just to smuggle in Swaraj. India is none so poor for brains as not to detect the snare of honeyed perfidy lurking beneath religion. Nor are the Brahmins a race of such simpletons as could be easily doped into this den of political gambling. "The leader of orthodox Brahmanism", actually sent a cable to the Archbishop of Canterbury imploring him "in the name of Christ" to join in the political 'possession' which throws India in hysterics. Pundit Malavaiya has evidently forgotten that when, a couple of years back, the non-Brahmins literally consigned the Code of Manu to flames as a book which perpetuates the tyranny and the servitude of Sudras, he, at a public meeting in Madras, extolled the virtues of Dharma shastras and called it "the greatest book of India", a book which stigmatises the Sudras as a spurious race and the untouchables as 'Chandalas' (villains). Now this Congress veteran, like an old bandicoot in the gutter rollicking in dirt and smell, tries to wash it out by flushing it with politics. It will be seen, therefore, that these leaders scruple at nothing, however sacred and divine, if they could but employ it to pander to their profane cause which has suddenly burst from their wily hearts the all-embracing love for the untouchables, alas! too good to be true. God, the Creator of Heaven and earth, is made to enter the temples by the back door, while the devil, forgetting in a hurry to hide his tail and the cloven foot, decked as he is with the gaudy garb of Gandhism, is entering by the front. Behold already the activities of corrupt Hinduism flirting with the merry-go-round "Nationalists" of other religions for the wicked purpose of selling away faith and fatherland for a mess of prostituted politics. The

bounties of Heaven and the services of religion are thus, in a most irreverent way, requisitioned for the profligate impostures of Swaraj.

They now strike their breast and shed crocodile tears that Hinduism is unclean and requires purification. And yet, when Miss Mayo exposed in her "Mother India" with the chivalry of a knight the mountains of dirt that have accumulated on Hinduism with the avowed object of tilting them out, even as Mother Ganges washes away their sins into the sea, the Hindu leaders raised a savage yell and condemned the book wholesale calling her the "scavenger of India". And now, stimulated by political intrigue, they piously seek the immediate removal of one of the curses enumerated in the book—untouchability. In doing so, do they not in turn most invidiously, most unblushingly, become the scavengers also? Strangers prepare the path and the leaders enter in and walk straight on. They arrogate to themselves easily what in common decency belongs to foreign inspiration,—the creation and the accomplishment of social reforms. Is it not a base burglary?

Untouchability is a mighty citadel reared by the genius and wickedness of Brahmanism to stand for all times for its own deification and glory, "A tower of strength which stands full square to all the winds that blow." And it is not likely to fall by a clay bullet from the fast of Mr. Gandhi. This social curse, grown adamant with age, will not be killed out by political fasts. One could sooner fast for the removal of poison from the snake. In place of fasting, it must go on feasting, eating and drinking and getting fat at the ever-

flowing fount of the British Rule so that, grown stronger day by day, it can in the plenitude of its strength, face the civilised world and say, "Lo! we were in the dust of the earth for forty centuries; we were treated worse than brute beasts; we were hunted away from the haunts of men; we had to live on the leavings of our tyrants which were pitched upon us. But, through the force of enlightenment and education which gave us the consciousness of our being, we threw our oppressors overboard and have grown up into a society of men which can no more be trifled with. We now breathe the breath of freemen in the vast Empire of God." They can sing with Tennyson :

If twenty millions of Summer
Are stored in the sunlight still
We are far from the noon of man,
There is time for the race to grow.

But that "noon of man" is not to be expected from a man in the moon.

This straight talk, however, is least likely to satisfy Mr. Gandhi. He will have the mixture of the two commodities of his political venture at once and has, consequently, given notice that if, within six months, that is, from September on, Hinduism does not wipe out untouchability,—a threat to a faith which has swallowed many such goblins, he would start his fast, also to a finish, as if the fate of this ancient religion hung upon the caprice of a single individual non-Brahman. Political Hinduism may yield, but not the Hinduism that is grown upon the faith and the spirituality of the people.

The root-cause of the agitation which convulses Hinduism at present is the vulgar faith of the mob and the mopish Indians in the "soul-force" of Mr. Gandhi whose hollow deception is disclosed in an "open letter," which appeared in the "Madras Mail" on October 8, 1932, addressed to him by Mr. M. K. Acharya, Member of the Legislative Assembly and leading exponent of orthodox Hinduism. With due deference to the author and the paper, I beg to quote a few passages therefrom :

"Can self-deception if not dissimulation—can ignoring unpleasant facts, if not deliberate falsehood—can political bargaining and newspaper bluff be evidence indeed of soul-force or the call of God? So far you have been only an emotional patriot who, formerly at least, was against all western civilisation—against mills and factories industrially, against the "sterile prostitute" of the British Parliament or any copy of it in India. So far you have been only an experimenter in making Passive Resistance or Civil Disobedience a mass weapon for fighting economic or political grievances. How can all this make you a God-seer? On the other hand, in your experiments at mass civil disobedience you have in your own words committed "Himalayan blunders" on several occasions. God-seers do not commit any blunders, nor do penance for them. Do they?

(3) On September 26, similarly, a joint protest against the implications of the Poona Pact was issued by a dozen of the Orthodox Hindu Deputationists to the Viceroy on that day. I myself handed in the statement to the A.P.I. on the 26th evening. Why did it not appear in any paper? A Calcutta journalist, on the 1st

of this month, sought to justify this suppression of views by pleading that if all this had been duly published, "Mahatmaji would not have broken his fast on the 27th." Thus your admirers have been more loyal to you than to Truth.

(4) On the other hand quite exaggerated, if not altogether false, reports have appeared in almost all papers of countless Temples having been thrown open to the Untouchables in places where there are perhaps no very sacred temples at all;—and this forsooth to demonstrate the triumph of your Soul-force!

(5) Similarly the most false impression has been circulated that the Poona Pact was a most voluntary response from Caste Hindus to your Mahatmaic call. Can you say who were the recognised Caste Hindu leaders who had gone or had been even invited to the Poona Conversations? Were Tagore, Sapru, and Jayakar, or Rajagopalachari and Rajendra Prasad, or Birla and Purshottamdas Thakurdas—however excellent and eminent they might be otherwise—were these the recognised leaders of Caste Hindus all over India, of those Hindus who at Poona were required to make large concessions in favour of the Depressed Classes? Was this the triumph of your Truth and Non-violence that without the barest farce of any consultation with Orthodox Hindu leaders the false cablegram was sent to England that all Hindus, not the heterodox minority only but all Hindus including the Orthodox majority, had agreed to the Poona Pact?

(6) The crowning demonstration came of course in the manner—the theatrical manner again in which you

chose to break your fast. In my opinion you undertook the fast through dire self-deception; and I was glad you soon found cause to end it. But can you imagine, dear Mahatmaji, what bitter tears I shed when I read in the papers how you chose to call on God's name to witness the "fashionable hysteria" of the week, or the huge bluff of the Poona Pact? Alas! how cheaply you claimed: "The hand of God has been visible in the glorious manifestation throughout the length and breadth of India during the past seven days"! how, in your supreme self-deception, you demanded that "caste Hindus" must "carry out to the letter and spirit every clause of the settlement with all its implications" carry out indeed every clause of a settlement to which they were no parties at all!

Is it right of you, dear Mahatmaji, that you should seek to force your wrong method on unthinking people by claiming to be acting under the call of God? How can any accept your claim without satisfactory credentials? If indeed you be a Messenger of God; if indeed by your Soul-force you can touch and illumine the hearts of thousands; if you possess any such special Soul-force, for in a general way there is soul-force even in minerals and plants,—if in a word you be an Avatara or special incarnation, as your admirers claim you are: here is my open challenge. Convert me by your soul-force to your way of thinking; and I will be your apostle to the unconverted."

But, suppose Mr. Gandhi succeeds in gaining his point charging Hinduism by the bayonet of his death-fast, what then? Hinduism is confined and its death-

knell is already heard ! Has he not, while speaking on the Poona Pact, said that it is the "beginning of the end." Perhaps he uttered this significant expression in spite of himself. For, by letting in untouchability as it is, before equipping itself not alone in political rights, but moral, intellectual and social as well, before it can come up to a decent standard, it will go to make Hinduism still more unclean, deranged, sickly, lifeless, baseless. But says Mr. Gandhi, "The Hindus are sunk in ignorance." If so, will it be an improvement on the Hindu mind if untouchability is grafted on ignorance? Diamond cuts diamond ! But anyway, caste goes and untouchability has touched at the right spot. And the Hindus—a new race born of a melo-dramatic accident, thus released from the shackles of an intolerable system which held them fast for thousands of years and fearing no more the dread of being stigmatised as apostates and outcasts, will be free to choose any faith, Islam, Christianity or any thing. What is there to prevent them from doing so? They still remain Indians, though not the old Hindus. A little preaching, or persuasion or an offer of emolument and the like may induce them to renounce the faith of their fathers and bedeck themselves with new feathers. The world will witness (I am speaking possibilities, not fancies) the exodus of "purified" Hinduism, an exodus which, in its unprotected state, swelled Islam till it could count 50 or 60 millions and stopped with the advent of England. Mr. Gandhi will go down in history as one who consecrated his life by fast and penance for the eradication of untouchability and therein the purification of Hinduism and developed such a mighty force that, in his intrepid zeal to level up

Hinduism, has levelled it otherwise. The saviour became the slayer.

Untouchability has but two ways of working out its salvation. It must either be as a separate entity standing on its own legs, without being forced to break through the iron-fence that orthodoxy has thrown around Hinduism; or, if it choose to remain as part of it, though its tail-end, then it must be on the basis of social reform sanctioned by the toleration of Brahmanism. But it has been found that, falling foul with the spirit of the times, this curse of four thousand years is unable to cleanse itself quickly as with the baptism of regeneration, while on the other hand, the devil is too strong to be exorcised by the latter process. Therefore Mr. Gandhi, no doubt listening to his "inner voice", though ridiculously out of place being a non-Brahman to stamp it out with any show of authority, and too small for it, as we have seen, as a social reformer, has come out, under an elastic Christian Government, with the strange weapon of politics as a convenient poppy to plant it on Hinduism and thus give life to his rotten undertaking. And he has some political Brahmans in his camp claiming to be very "orthodox" whom he employs to water it with the tears of hypocrisy and keep it growing, little dreaming that, if he persists in his madness to save untouchability at this cost, he and his Congress friends will, as sure as fate, be damned by Hinduism and be left, in their naked revolt against spiritual authority, perhaps as communists raving to death in the wilderness of politics. Expressed in other terms, religion stands firm purely on moral grounds. It:

is then unassailable. But, by adulterating it with politics, and that too of a vicious character just as the Brahmans did to the social system and created untouchability, Mr. Gandhi has evolved an untouchable, political Hinduism, a short cut to Paradise! Hindus might sooner hope to go to Heaven by the under-drains in the streets than by the covert path of Gandhism. By the unholy alliance of caste with non-caste, he hopes to give India, in this age of irreligion and materialism, a communist form of Government called Swaraj which she will spurn *in toto*. To the serious student of politics, Mr. Gandhi is disclosed as a force of moral destruction. The Aryan and the Harijan (untouchable), in their respective status, if fanatically combined, will make a wicked medley. It is a bad bargain for Swaraj. It is gross innovation, not reformation; and, viewed from the standpoint of orthodoxy, it is heresy. Therefore, in the hands of Mr. Gandhi—the inventor and propagator of this heresy, Hinduism which never knew politics to run in its veins, when muddled with unrefined, corroding, accursed untouchability, must, in a double damnation, speedily disrupt, decay and die. Very true is the expression, “the beginning of the end”. And so will it be.

CHAPTER VI.

POLITICAL HINDUS.

It is indeed a travesty of fate that, while the great bulk of the people, Muslims, Christians, non-Brahman races, the whole body of the so called untouchable community, Parsis and others would not as much as think of

seceding from Britain and her magnificent Empire, the Hindus alone under the Congress banner and the leadership of a political 'saint' who, as every one knows, breathes heaven and hell in the same breath, should look upon Britain as their worst enemy and try to get rid of her. In support of my statement, let me quote from a "Manifesto" issued to the British Press in England through His Highness the Aga Khan in June 1932, by the Muslims of India, claiming their proper place in the future Constitution of India.

(2) "The Muslims took little part in the Congress campaign of 1930, save in the North-West Frontier Province where the "Red Shirts" were regrettably duped into accepting the Congress banner for a struggle begun independently of Congress, and now ended in the triumph of justice over Congress intrigue. In the present Congress campaign, the Muslims have been openly hostile to the seditionists on more than one occasion, and fewer Muslims than ever before have been overtly sympathetic with their activities.

To claim special consideration on this ground alone might seem to be priggish; but, for our own part we assert that the Muslims' abstinence from Congress politics has been inspired not by hopes of gain therefrom—for bitter experience gives us a contrary lesson—but chiefly because they have equally nothing to gain from the substitution of a Hindu Congress despotism for the present regime, and they recognise that Congress politics only spell the economic ruin of India, Hindu and Muslim alike.

(3) Not one of the "Political" murders or attempts to murder committed in any of the Governors' Provinces throughout the last two years or more has been done by a Muslim. The three murderers of Mr. Saunders and Channan Singh in Lahore were Hindus. The murderers of Mr. Lowman, Col. Simpson, Mr. Garlick, Mr. Stevens, Mr. Peddie and Mr. Douglas were Hindus. So were the criminals who attempted the lives of the Governors of Bombay, the Punjab and Bengal, Mr. Villiers, Mr. Cassells and Sir Charles Tegart. All the suspects mentioned in connexion with the attempt on Lord Irwin's life, the murder of Mr. Peddie and a host of similar crimes have been Hindus. The Chittagong Raiders and Khan Bahadur Ahsanullah's murderer were Hindus.

A study of political agitation and crime even during the period 1907 to 1917, when Muslim feeling was more than once aroused against the Government, shows that the proportion of Muslims to Hindus notoriously involved was about 1 in 30. Nor can we recall that a single Muslim newspaper ever ventured a word of sympathy for any of the political murderers of the last two years' whereas the Hindu Congress Press for several months indulged in systematic glorification of every such criminal when he met his deserts.

We recapitulate these well-known facts for the reasons already given, and for one other. We believe that if the alternative to British rule were the ubiquitous supremacy of Hindu rule, the mass of our Muslim brethren would prefer the former not only because of the safeguard offered by its impartiality, but also because

under the alternative system there would be hideous strife between the virile and martial Muslim races and those many Hindus in whom the Congress's left wing has sown the seed of insidious conspiracy and rebellion, blood-lust and lawlessness. But if it is the purpose of His Majesty's Government to give India federal responsibility with an equitable and just distribution of power and some guarantee of stability, if the determination of the various communities' political rights is a matter of great complexity and delicacy, as we know it to be, and if the British people value the friendship of at least one-fifth of the peoples of India, then we suggest that when the rival claims of the two great communities are weighed against one another, His Majesty's Government and people should also weigh in the same scales the communities' relative merits of loyalty and stability as proved by the facts of recent Indian history."

There breathes not under the Sun a nation that has been, since the beginning of their existence, so grossly subjected to the abominations of incessant invasions, massacres and the foulest outrages of national humiliation as the Hindus. And it is equally true that no other people owes to a foreign power the preservation of their culture and civilisation and their very existence half as much as the self-same Hindus to the British Rule. Hinduism that had to give up to Islam a-third of her territory and a fourth of her population and suffered indescribable atrocities in the destruction of thousands of her ancient shrines and temples and the loss of immense treasures stored in them and other untold miseries in myriad ways, enjoys immunity from all those

terrors so much that, from the day that the British supremacy was firmly established in India down to this, neither her temples, nor her faith, nor her culture and civilisation nor any thing she holds dear and sacred, has been allowed to be tampered with. Is it not, then, an act of treason that this very Hinduism which, in the light of a living history, is laid under an infinite obligation to the British Rule, now feels so weary of its long repose and safety under it that it is desperately seeking in the name of a united nationalism to make common cause with their old friends to drive the British out and flourish in the Paradise of Hindu-Muslim Unity? Is this not a deceptive gleam that flashes across the murky night of political India piloting the thunder-storm that bears its destined destruction in the howling clouds madly dashing for their prey below? The laws of physics are not more true, the deductions of Mathematics are not more correct, the stars in the firmament are not more faithful in the performance of their mission upon earth than the conclusions, the awful, inevitable conclusions of human history that are engraven not upon pillars and rocks that may crumble to dust but upon the mouldering tombs of Empires and upon the ashes of thrones and sceptres that dazzled in their day and disappeared in darkness and death. And the thrilling conclusion of Indian history that is read through the bloodiest horrors of 800 years of invasions, wars and massacres and upon the tragic tomb of the incomparable Vijianagar is that the moment the British flag disappears from India, all that still remains of Hinduism, of its ancient culture, its civilisation, its just pride in the glories of its past Empires and its present ambition and

machinations to rear its head again from the present level of a common nationality to the giddy height of its former glory, all will be swallowed up in a sea of its own blood. For, (I am speaking pure history), Islam means the dreadful irruption which, like the volcanic lava in its deadly sweep, devastated all Asia, Europe and Africa, a fire that set the whole of Christendom in a terrific conflagration for well-nigh ten centuries, and whose embers are still alive in many a country including our own, requiring just a spark to put them all again upon a roar of flame; whereas Hinduism, looking no doubt magnificent from her glimmering past and keeping safe behind the rampart of Britain, is but a mass of disintegration facing a hurricane of fury and fanaticism, ready for a burst any day. Thus, confronted by an Ismalic world, it can only be safe in a shelter; and that shelter is the British Empire. It passes human understanding how a faith, such as this, could wage a deadly war on Britain. No doubt, weak points there are in the British Rule. There are black spots in the Sun; still it shines supreme in the heavens. When we know that mountains have been cleared, we can rest assured that little moles will disappear in time.

Joining the ranks of the enemies of Britain's greatness and India's safety and welfare, they pivot the commonplace argument that for a nation to be governed by another nation is servitude and, therefore, they piously moot out that Britain must take her hand clean off her. But the voice of truth asserting itself through a living history proclaims that the British Rule, placed side by side with their own former rule, is a rule of righteousness, philanthropy and progress and the very school

of freedom. Let Mr. Gandhi and his Congress and the rest of the world know that it is under the British flag that the lowliest, the poorest and the most despised Indian who, for the very crime of his caste or creed or calling, has nowhere to lay his head on except among the brute beasts of the fields and forests and in the outskirts of villages, finds his shelter in the majesty of law against the malignity of his own countrymen. It is under the British flag that the injustice of the old Swaraj whose rule of life was the enrichment and deification of the sacerdotal and the aristocratic classes on the one hand, and, on the other, oppression and spoliation of the poor, and whose permanent glory lay in its exultation over the groans of millions chained down to a state which, in the sight of God and man, is the basest, the most withering and the most shocking form of iniquity recorded in the annals of helotry, that world-old injustice is giving way slowly and with deep reluctance before the supremacy of justice which, by its intrinsic merit and its impartial administration has, to a great extent, healed the deep wounds of India, toned her up to a strong sense of moral awakening and taken the 350 millions of God's people under its stern and inviolable protection. It is under the British flag that the vast millions of Non-Brahman races, formed of the depressed and the down-trodden caste and non-caste peoples, find in the supreme sense of duty and philanthropy of the Government their greatest weapon with which they fight their tyrants, despise their despisers, fling their taunts in their teeth, and protect their honour, their hearth and altar against the onslaughts of social and religious persecution. It is under the British flag that the immense population of this

continent of India who had been, from time immemorial, victims of atrocious crimes like thuggee, decoity, infanticide, human sacrifice and the horrible suttee which made Heaven groan and hell itself shudder, and hosts of other crimes oftentimes perpetrated as acts of religion and under the patronage of potentates and the deities of the land now completely wiped out by the rigid application of British justice, enjoy absolute protection from those horrors and feel life worth living. It is under the British flag that the great mass of humanity who, through the long role of the old Swaraj of forty centuries, had been held down under the infamous epithet of Sudras and remained the veriest wretches and slaves of their Brahman masters, appear in a fresh existence, invested as they are with the prerogatives of a new Regime under which they not only maintain their honour and self-respect against the tyrants of old, but by virtue of their education and integrity climb up to the highest rung of social independence and prosperity. It is under the British flag that the downtrodden out-casts of 60 million wretches find protection against the kicks and blows of their high caste countrymen and have begun to emerge from the gutter of infamy to which the powers of darkness had flung them in the past and to assert themselves and their manhood in the teeth of priest craft and social hooliganism. It is under the British flag that, during the awful periods when cholera, plague and famine break out with a sweeping vengeance, the despised and the poverty-stricken people whose lot it is in this blessed land of social damnation to live segregated like the plague-stricken in squalid hovels unfit even for beasts and whom their own countrymen

regard as a lump of dirt and would not in the best of days deign to cast even a passing look upon, experience the benignity of a Government who, armed with nothing but the sacredness of duty and the solicitude for those entrusted to their care, hurry to the spots where the ill-fated fall in heaps under the stroke of the epidemic and, spending lakhs of rupees, rescue the terror-stricken from the jaws of death, afford relief to the needy and the starving, brace up the crawling multitude, allay public anxiety, arrest the march of destruction, render the last aid to the dying, and all this amidst scenes which madden the mind of man with an indescribable shock and fear. It is under the British flag that the world witnesses the greatest of political feats performed by any nation on earth in the creation of a concord of brotherhood that exists among the Indian princes, the security of their thrones and their inalienable rights and prerogatives assured in the splendour and the might of the one supreme central power, and the happiness, contentment, prosperity and sound administration that obtain in their States, as contradistinguished from the misrule, disorder and discontent that heretofore prevailed in them, coupled with the deep antipathy and endless quarrels among the princes which so long brought discredit upon their rule. It is under the British flag that millions of people who, through long centuries of the Hindu and Mahomedan rules, had not an atom of right, social, political or moral, crushed as they were under their grinding laws and whose sole anxiety was to keep their lives and property secure from universal lawlessness and terror, enjoy the great boon of democracy which is being driven down their throats that they

may, through their elected representatives, sit in council halls and shape the destiny of their great country.

These facts drive us to the conclusion that, if the India of to-day mirrors the British Rule as a great civilising factor of humanity, if the India of to-day bears the unmistakable evidences of the great reforms which, as attested by a living history, have been achieved by Britain for her imperishable good; if the India of to-day stands as the Parnassus of British statesmanship from which has flown down to all her races the moral regeneration as well as the social and political inspiration and wisdom, those who denounce the British Rule in India are unconscionable prevaricators of history and the worst enemies of mankind; that, in the interest of her races and her masses in particular, the continuance of her rule is a stern political necessity, and consequently she can morally claim the right to remain in India and shape her future destiny. Hear the testimony of President Roosevelt, the illustrious cousin of the present Ruler of the United States of America:—He says, "India affords the most colossal example in the history of successful administrations by men of European blood of a thickly populated region in another continent. It is the greatest feat of the kind that has been performed since the break up of the Roman Empire. Unquestionably mistakes have been made; but the fact remains that the successful administration of the Indian Empire by the English has been one of the most notable and most admirable achievements of a white race during the past two centuries. On the whole, it has been for the

immeasurable benefits of the natives of India themselves ; and, if the English control were now withdrawn, the whole peninsula would become a chaos of bloodshed and violence. All the weaker peoples and the most industrious and law-abiding would be forced to submit to indescribable wrong, and the only beneficiaries would be the lawless, violent and bloodthirsty men. The great salient fact is that the presence of the English in India has been for the advantage of mankind. Every true friend of humanity should realise that the part which England has played in India has been to the immeasurable benefit of India, for her honour, her profit and her civilisation. We should feel profound satisfaction in the stability and permanence of British Rule ”.

The day that the great bulk of the Indian people steeped in illiteracy, ignorance and superstition which are the abiding relics of the past, rise forth in the glory of education, enlightenment and civilisation ; the day that the immense colony of social slaves, the 60 million untouchable outcasts stand firm upon their legs to spurn their degradation in the teeth of their tyrants and assert their place in the realm of man ; the day that the warring religions, casting away their swords, put their shoulders together to the mighty wheel of the social and political advancement of their common Motherland, that day can Britain proudly face the world and say, “ Now has come to pass the consummation of my great mission in that most marvellous of lands called India.” For, indeed, on that day shall be realised the romantic ideal of history which says that Britain's mission in Asia is similar to that which Rome fulfilled in Europe. And

till that day comes, and by the Blessing of God it will, Britain must on no account sever herself from India.

But it may be asked, "Is it not slavery for India to remain under the domination of Britain"? I answer: Is it slavery for India to be spared the agony and the horrifying scenes, which made her bleed from every pore for scores of centuries, of being pounced upon by hordes of barbarians who, rolling down the Himalayan passes with loot and lust in their hearts, massacred her inhabitants, drained her astonishing wealth and carried off her children to distant lands in chains of captivity? Is it slavery for Indians whom social tyranny has kept through untold ages in the very drains of degradation, to sit as judges of the high courts of judicature as colleagues with British judges of the highest integrity and accomplishments, and to be entrusted with the most responsible, confidential and lucrative posts in the administration of the country? Is it slavery for Indians to be raised to British peerages and to the various orders of Imperial dignity? Is it slavery for Indians to be appointed Governors of Provinces with a whole galaxy of British officials of no mean distinction in life to serve under such exalted Indians? Is it slavery for Indian women, whom all the gods of the land and the powers of perverseness had, from unrecorded times, decreed to do nothing but slaving till doomsday to the comfort and concupiscence of men, to shine forth, under a flag that flies for light and liberty, as teachers and doctors, lawyers and politicians, judges and councillors? Is it slavery for Indians to be accommodated, irrespective of their stations in life, in a palace of the King Emperor

and there to sit at Round Table Conferences as peers along with the nobility and the great statesmen of Britain for the high office of getting up a Constitution which is to guide the destiny of their great country? So long as Britain treats India, as she does, with such regard, justice and equanimity, and especially now that, through the gigantic efforts which Parliament and British people are putting forth for the widening of her political liberty to build up her highest hope for the future, she has no reason to bemoan her place in the political world. In very truth, the slavery of India does not come from Britain. It comes from her own self.

Well then, what is her future to be? Quo Vadis, Mother-India? The answer is in the choice she makes of prudence or imprudence. She is distinctly placed by the progressive genius of the British rule upon a path which leads by sure, successive steps, to a goal which will be the grandest consummation of the aspiration of prudent and loyal India, a goal wherein 350 millions of people, scattered over an immense area, no matter of what race, creed or colour, will find themselves as a happy family, knit together by a bond of fellowship, breathing the breath of a strong, healthy, united nation and exercising their rights as free citizens of the great and glorious Empire of Britain. This is the Royal road worthy of an Empire like India which is hallowed by the glories of her past and pregnant with potentialities of the present, to walk on with her absolute loyalty to the British Throne as her guiding star. There is another, a bye-lane, a side-track which is designed by the mind of waywardness and laid out by the hand of sedition,

strewn with pitfalls and snares, covered over with the roses of a dreamy Swaraj, reeking with an atmosphere of poisonous patriotism, and leading to anarchy, bloodshed and death. And we may depend upon it, India with her past experience will never venture into this fatal region although she is desperately pulled into it by the dragon of the day whose tongue is coated with venom, whose hands are smeared with blood and wings spotted with deadly impatience.

Now that the great Constitution as advanced by the White Paper is, like "Coming events cast their shadows forth" agitating Parliament, the British Nation and India alike with an unprecedented vigour, it behoves every citizen of the Empire who has the courage of conviction to speak his mind boldly out on the great issue and state whether the proposed scheme reflects the mind and the genius of Britain.

CHAPTER VII

THE WHITE PAPER.

In this and the following Chapter, I shall confine myself within the bounds of my theme throwing as much light and interest as possible. At the very outset, I beg to tell Britain to whom I shall more particularly direct my remarks on the White Paper scheme, that she was listening in raptures for weeks and months as Indian gentlemen, gifted with the power of swaying her mind with lures of India shining in the splendour of freedom, poured out at the Round Table Conferences and elsewhere their very souls in torrents of eloquence. She was

listening all the while to the melody of India sung by those eminent politicians in the major key. But now, for once at least, she must be pleased to listen to the malady of India intoned by me in the minor key—a key that is best employed to convey the depth of emotions in melancholy Music. It is by listening to both the keys that she will be adequately possessed of materials to compose her constitutional theme. Else it will be one-sided.

Lord Sankey, presiding at a lecture on the third Round Table Conference said among other things, "My only fear for the future success of this endeavour is delay. Indian people have waited a very long time and might well ask: 'how long will you abuse our patience?' Unless we get a move on rapidly, I fear we shall have great difficulties, because India will say, 'We have again been put off'". May I respectfully ask, what does the noble Lord mean by the Indian people? Does he mean the Saprus and the Jayakars and a few more of lawyer politicians snatched up by Government to tell their tale of India in a right legal fashion and easily get a favourable assurance of some form of Dominion status in the near future, as if the rest of India were a negligible quantity? Or, is it the less than 1 per cent of educated Indians who are led in an uproar of blind enthusiasm by the Congress and other revolutionary bodies like so many goats into the shambles of political slaughter? Or, is it the 99 per cent of the Indian population who are sans teeth, sans eyes, sans ears, sans everything in politics and could hardly tell a B from a battledore, that have been waiting so long and so anxiously and are asking in a perfectly Ciceronian style whether Britain is going to confer

Provincial autonomy and Responsibility at the Centre and whether the Princes are shrewd enough to join or not to join the conglomeration of confusions called Federation? Anyway, a Constitution has been framed confronting us with its dubious blessings palpably substantiating the remarkable utterance of the noble Lord when he said as Chairman of the Federal Structure Committee of the first Round Table Conference, "Let us grant a Federal Constitution to India and let our hope be that everything in it may be ordered and settled on the best and surest foundations, so that peace and happiness, truth and justice, may flourish as abundantly in India as they have done at home." Here again, may I enquire into the real vision of India as she presents to-day which will justify us to catch a glimpse of the glorious picture of India which enraptured the mind of Lord Sankey as a distant attraction when she will be transformed into another England in the abundant enjoyment of peace and happiness, truth and justice? What is the vision that Britain beholds in that great Dependency of hers? What is the vision which must guide her through the stormy path of administration? Is it the vision as presented by the Indian National Congress with its glorious achievements of Civil Disobedience, whose 'fundamentals' and 'declaration of rights' make one dream again and again and whose idea of ruling the vast Empire of India seems to be as pleasant as children playing at ducks and drakes? Or, is it the vision that the Indian Press exhibits by removing the crutches from the cripple of India and, in her tumbling state, makes her, by false and vicious rumours of revolutions, by the persistent attack on the Government and

by fabulous reports of a united Indian Nationalism hanging in mid-air like Judas Iscariot, seemingly run the suicidal course of Dominion Status and complete Independence? Or, is it the British Press, beguiled by goodwill and ignorant of the real situation in India, that scares her with reports diligently fabricated here of great unrest and discontent of educated classes whirling the mass-millions in a bloody revolution and forces rash and undue constitutional advances much against her conviction? That is not India. It is a fiction that can be read along with the romantic tales of the Arabian Nights.

I shall presently lift the veil which political ruse has flung around her. A vast continent comprising an area of 1,800,000 square miles inhabited by no less than 353,000,000 peoples, India presents such a bewildering mass of humanity as hardly to be met with in the whole world: an immense congregation of races inhabiting the great countries of the Punjab, Bombay, United Provinces, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Rajaputana, Central Provinces, Gujerat, Hyderabad, Mysore, Madras and Travancore, differing in dress, manners, physique, culture and civilisation, speaking as many as 222 distinct languages totally unintelligible one to another, professing scores of religions which never meet each other but at daggers drawn and a social system called caste which glories in its proud achievement of creating 2300 main splits of a great community and holds down the 250 millions who have fallen victims under its terrific paw, layer and layer, of ignominy, servitude, tyranny, oppression and every sort of humiliation which the villainy of the human heart could devise to degrade human nature

till it is lost in the instinct of the brute-beast. In this vast expanse of continent are planted patches of towns, some of them large and some very small; and the rest is a world of void covered with the wild growth of villages which form more than nine-tenths of India, so that only some 35 millions out of 353 may be said to live in urban areas. Since we are considering the constitutional issue, it is just and reasonable that we should, first of all as a starting basis, be acquainted with the working of the urban Government variously called the Local Self-Government, Municipality or Corporation which guides people under their control in economic and political concerns. The first Governor-General to infuse into it political consciousness was Lord Ripon. It was he that placed it on a strong and widening basis so as to make it an instrument in the hands of the people to carve out their political destiny. Full fifty years have now elapsed, and what picture does it present to our view?

There are to-day 777 Urban Municipalities in British India with 19 million people living under their jurisdiction with an aggregate income of 18 crores of rupees. And there are others, called District and Sub-District Boards which carry on Municipal functions on a smaller scale. Of these there are 5744 with an income of 16 crores. We shall enquire how these local bodies live up to the ideal which the Government holds out before them in a clear-cut manner. To avoid complexity, let us confine ourselves to the two main items of Municipal administration, namely, Sanitation and Public Funds. I put these as of paramount consideration, because the one is a life-preserving agency, the principle of health which gives a

nation its manhood without which that nation is dead. We hear now-a-days of serious attempts being made in the direction of nation-building. No nation can aspire to be built up without its manhood being preserved. And to no other administration is entrusted the great work of promoting and preserving that manhood but to the Municipality, the nursery of nation-building. In "Young India", of September 29, 1925, Mr. Gandhi writes: "Some of the national habits are bad beyond description, and yet so ingrained as to defy all human effort. Wherever I go, this manifestation obtrudes itself upon my gaze in some shape or another. In the Punjab and Sind, in total disregard of the elementary laws of health, we dirty our terraces and roofs, breeding billions of disease-producing microbes and founding colonies of flies. Down South, we do not hesitate to dirty our streets, and, early in the morning, it is impossible for any one in whom the sense of decency is developed, to walk through the streets which are lined with people performing functions of nature which are meant to be performed in seclusion and in spots which human beings need not ordinarily tread. In Bengal, the same tale in varying form has to be told; the same pool in which people have washed their dirt, their pots and in which cattle have drunk, supplies drinking water No institution can handle this problem better and more speedily than our Municipalities. They have all the powers they need in this direction and they can get more if necessary. Only the will is often wanting." Well, "our" Municipality or local self-Government has been in existence markedly from Lord Ripon's time, and is to-day completely Indianised; with what result? In the face of such

gross instances of Municipal mal-administration the reading of which is enough to nauseate one's feelings, will any one dirty his head with thoughts of Swaraj except those who would wish to see this country converted into a public house for 'private' functions? Lord Curzon, speaking of the filthy condition of some Chinese streets in his travels, says he had to perform acrobatic feats while passing through them. And the Indian administration has improved on it, and forces one to take aeroplane walks in the streets. Some 30 or 40 years ago when it was in the hands of the much-maligned foreigner, it worked infinitely better. People in those days were afraid to throw the sweepings of the house recklessly into the streets, lest they should be summoned to court and fined. But now, with the satisfaction of political ambition in this line, the administration has sunk below the freezing point of decency. It has literally deteriorated into piggishness, nothing short. There may be Municipalities and Boards that have escaped the foul contagion. I don't dispute it; but they only serve to place in greater relief the condition of the generality of them which is bad beyond belief.

Now, an English doctor comes to our aid by throwing in more light on this dusky subject. Dr. Rutherford in his "Modern India" says: (Reproduced from my book "Quo-Vadis, Mother India?") "Being a doctor most interested in humanity, I should lead him (Lord Birkenhead) straightaway to the homes of the poor who have long been the special subjects or slaves of British solicitude and British conception of sanitation. There the picture of dirt and disorder, of wretched hovels and

indescribable horrors, without drainage or sanitation, or adequate scavenging, with human excrements in every narrow alley, filling the air with foul stench worse than any stygian pool, a beautiful breeding ground for pestilence and disease, of groups of men and women and children sitting on cleared ground away from their inhospitable huts, rudely huddled together which were used as crowded shelters at night, of children emaciated from malnutrition, demands a Dante to depict." Yes, but why great Dante? Little Dorasami would do. The cannibal who, after feeding on the head of his victim, a fellow-man, reclines on the mutilated bleeding trunk and snores away with the happy thought of another good feed the next day, has not in the sight of God committed a more egregious crime than the man, supposed to be highly cultured and civilised and profoundly learned in his sacred profession, who has framed a law and devised means by which he has reduced 60 millions of God's creatures on earth into so many vermins to wallow, through endless times, in a cesspool of social and moral filth, indelible reprobation stamped on their foreheads, accursed, unclean, untouchable, unapproachable, unworthy even to crawl at the feet of high castes; and all this opprobrium, all this riotous injustice and iniquity upheld and practised in the name of religion! A God of Infinite Justice is thus made a party to human crime and wickedness! This irremediable, inconceivable and most deplorable condition of the out-castes has been brought about by the legal enactments of the progenitors of those for whom Dr. Rutherford, the doctor of humanity in his unbounded sympathy for the Indian poor is so vehemently pleading

in his book of slashing denunciation of the British Rule in India with the desperate object of getting them self-government for India as the only panacea for the mighty ills that keep eating into the entrails of the depressed classes . . . Is the learned doctor not aware that by his glowing description of the Indian styx he has turned the pistol upon himself? He ought to know that it is the Indian Self-government called Local or Taluk Board and not the British Bureaucratic government, that is really and directly responsible for the havoc of insantiation that pulls Whitehall to the hovel. We Indians asked for Self-government and have it in as complete a manner as possible in our Municipalities, District Boards and Union Committees. We have drawn the picture and it is reserved for the glowing pen of the Doctor-champion of India's Self-Government to describe its abominations that disfigure one part of it."

Let us now consider Public Funds, whose administration mirrors personal honour, political honesty and national character. There is no department which furnishes such a striking illustration of the mismanagement, inefficiency and swindling of public money, money which the tax-payer raises with the sweat of his brow as the Indian Municipality. If bribery and corruption reigns with an unbridled supremacy, if officials on retirement sit at home quite complacent with their pouches full of dirty gold, if damning instances of incompetency and irregularity often occur which compel the Government to close down those myriads responsible for such shameful and criminal conduct and place them all under state control, it is in the Indian

Municipalities. Lest I should be deemed exaggerating, let me put the facts of the case as stated by gentlemen of the type of the Right Hon'ble V. Srinivasa Sastri who believes in straight talk. Speaking on the 25th September 1932, in the Council Chamber at Coimbatore (a district that escapes his rebuke) he says: "For, believe me, no school is so good a preparation for the work of the national and provincial legislatures as the work that we do in places like these. If this is ill, if the best work is not turned out here, if miscarriage, frustration, disappointment attend your daily operations, Mr. Chairman, allow me to tell you that it is idle to expect that your representatives in the provincial or in the central sphere will be any improvement upon yourselves. What is in the foundation will come up in the superstructure. Lay your foundation then well and truly there. Do honest work, study the interests of your rate-payers, do not complain against the fetters of the wicked Government, do not say that you have not enough money for this or that, those evils are there and will be there till the end of time. But examine yourselves and see whether within the limits within which you can move, you are moving for the benefit of those whose interests are committed to your charge. I now come to mention the point about which I made an apology in advance. My friends and brothers in public service, those who have watched local self-government institutions like these are now filled with the utmost anxiety as to their condition. Within recent years, as I said before, your powers have been enlarged and your liberties added to in great measure. A responsible Minister has taken charge of this department. And in every province, believe me,

whether you take the proud province of Bengal, or the tiny province of Assam that lies close to it or go to the west or come down south, everywhere the fear is that the standards of purity and efficiency are somewhat in danger. The monies raised from the rate-payers do not go back to them in the shape of efficient and satisfactory service. Our elections, ah ! they have become a byword not merely for expensiveness, the charge I originally made, but for undue influence, for illegitimate possession, and for the giving and taking of pecuniary satisfactions."

Reviewing on January 6, 1933, the Report on the working of the Local Boards in the Presidency of Madras in 1930-31 which was just then published, the "Hindu" writes as the leader (from which the following passages are extracted for our elucidation)— "That the boards cannot be too vigilant in this respect (Finance) is evident from the complaint of the Examiner of Local Fund Accounts that certain boards were guilty of irregularities such as failure to invite tenders for the execution of work, rejection of lower tenders and acceptance of higher ones without adequate justification, over-payments, execution of work on lands not vested in local boards and payment to contractors at rates higher than those agreed upon. . . . Taking education, for instance, one finds that, according to the estimate given in the report under reference, so high as 56 per cent. of the boys of school-going age and 85 per cent. of the girls of the same age did not attend any school in the local fund area of the Presidency as a whole. In certain districts as much as 70 per cent. of the boys of school-going age receive no education at all.

In the case of girls, the position is worse. As much as 95 per cent. of the girls of school-going age do not know what a school is. Nor does one find this widespread evil of illiteracy is being blotted out at any satisfactory pace. The increase in the percentage of those receiving education was but one in the year under review. An even more regrettable feature is that it is not all those that receive education who benefit by it. There seems to occur considerable wastage in educational effort as is evidenced by the fact that the percentage of children reading in the first two classes to the total number in all the five classes of the average elementary school exceeded 60 in all the districts in the case of boys and 80 in the case of girls. Regarding medical relief, we are yet far from the ideal standard. There is but one medical relief centre in the Presidency for every 117 square miles and for every 35,900 persons of the population. . . . The fact that the death-rate in the province rose from 24.5 in 1929-30 to 25.2 in the year following shows that the local authorities could not be too vigilant in safeguarding public health, both by curative and preventive action. That cholera was allowed to increase its toll from 14,616 in 1929-30 to 30,627 in the year under review is a warning that the local authorities in whose jurisdiction the disease worked havoc should bestow greater attention on their water-supply and general sanitary conditions."

Here is a contribution to the "Madras Mail," dated 4th March 1933, on "Communalism in Local Board politics" by an Indian gentleman which gives us a further insight into the rottenness of our Municipalities.

. . . . Mr. Conran Smith's (the Commissioner of the Corporation of Madras) lecture on the problems of the Local Self-Government is an admirable performance. He has fairly dealt with all the present day problems. His official position could not have obviously permitted him to do anything more than he has done. Faction is not a new feature in the municipal life of this Presidency. . . . The supersession of a municipality was then (25 years ago) considered as an extraordinary event in those days. But to-day the supersession of the Municipal Councils by the Government has become an ordinary event, which does not attract notice. As for corruption, it also existed at the time when Mr. Bannerjee was writing on municipal problems. But it was nothing as compared with the prodigious dimensions of corruption to-day. Mr. Conran Smith could not obviously have dealt with the responsibility of the Ministry for the deterioration in the administration of local bodies. The manipulation of local elections by leaders of Legislative Council parties with a view to creating an electoral organisation in the districts in their own interests is one of the notorious features in the present situation. . . . Apart from the growth of money power in politics, class feeling has been stirred up for some years to such an extent that at the present day, however regrettable it may be, we have to recognise this feeling as a working factor in the elections. A Kamma for a Kamma, a Kapu for a Kapu, a Vellala for a Vellala, a Brahmin for a Brahmin, a Nadar for a Nadar, a Mudaliyar for a Mudaliyar, a Gounder for a Gounder, these and other slogans have come into vogue during the last 10 years and it is difficult to say when they will disappear. . . .

But at the present time communal feeling runs so high that the administration must seriously suffer unless there is a change. Mr. Conran Smith has done a public service in inviting attention to the present state of things. Everybody who knows anything of them will entirely agree with him in the summary of the present position. He says: 'The position and privilege attaching to membership in such councils had too often attracted the wrong type of men. Men who were unsuited to hold responsible office, unsuited both by educational attainments and in economic and social standing came forward to contest elections and introduced into those elections an atmosphere which deterred responsible and respectable citizens from participation in such contests.' This is perfectly true. We find some men at the present day with no acquaintance either with English or with the educational systems of the country elected as the presidents and members of educational councils. We have to-day members of the Senates of the Universities in this Province who are not acquainted with the English language or with the educational problems of the day. We have also elected Presidents of Local Boards who are so ignorant that they have entirely to rely upon their ministerial officers. Some of them have to be told where they should put their signatures. Instances are not wanting where the Vice-Presidents of some of the District Boards have been elected because they belong to a particular community which it is necessary to conciliate, and not because they have any ability or aptitude for work. How can we ignore all these facts? How can a high standard of efficiency be maintained under these conditions? . . . But the most

unsatisfactory feature of the situation is the position of the public services under the Boards. At the present time it is common knowledge that some of the presidents of the Local Boards have employed all their staffs from village schoolmaster right up to the Engineer in canvassing at the time of elections. Local Board servants who refuse to fall in with the election programme are harassed or sacked. The man who happens to be in office as the President has a distinct advantage over the rival in commanding the services of all these men and in other ways. . . . In existing circumstances it makes a great deal of difference to the chances of success of a candidate whether he happens to hold office or not at the time. The introduction of communalism among the services has worsened the situation. It is believed that sometimes transfers of officials, who do not fall in with the views of candidates, have been made to suit the convenience of the candidates. . . . The deterioration of standards is due largely to the extension of the franchise to voters who have never hitherto had any idea of civic responsibilities, and the selection of the chief officers of the Board more or less on party lines, irrespective of ability and efficiency to manage the affairs of the board is the result."

Now hails a Province from the North to join in the pageanty of bribery and corruption passing before Parliament and British Nation. Under date July 29, 1933, the "Madras Mail" publishes: "Simla, July 28. Charges of increasing bribery and corruption in India before the Parliamentary Select Committee by Sir Michael O'Dwyer and Sir Patrick Fagan and indignantly

and hotly challenged by Indian delegates, find considerable support in the Punjab. In the Punjab Legislative Council yesterday, an elected member, Khan Bahadur Habibullah, moving a resolution suggesting the appointment of a senior officer to report on the best means of maintaining a closer touch between officials and the general masses of the population, asserted that bribery and corruption had largely increased in the Punjab. Sir Henry Craik, Finance Member of the Punjab Government, said he was glad that the charge of bribery and corruption had come from an elected member at a time when similar statements made by Sir Michael O'Dwyer (an ex-Governor of the Punjab) before the Parliamentary Select Committee had been challenged by many high authorities, including ex-Viceroy. Sir Henry added : I am told by visitors who see me from all districts of the Province that this statement is true. It is regrettable and is a very grave reproach on the administration that in these days of education and greater enlightenment the system should get worse."

If it were possible for the ex-Viceroy to get down in spirit from the supreme height of power and opulence to the level of poor people who are forced at times by circumstances to go to a money-lender that they may raise at an exorbitant interest some four or five hundred rupees to bribe the heartless beast in some office and get a job on twenty or thirty rupees, then they would realise that it is a crime to deny the dirty practice of bribery and corruption in India which are as prevalent and impenetrable as the fog in London. Deny the one and you deny the other. It is well and good to

join the Indian delegates who are snubbed by the bitter truth flung in their faces and get drenched in the storm of a fierce controversy raging in the Parliamentary Select Committee. But do they know that thereby they unconsciously strengthen the hand of the assassin,—for the bribe-taker is that scarlet assassin who lives on the blood of his fellow-man?

And now comes the proud Province of Bengal with a record of its own that lends lustre to Lord Lloyd's encomiums on Indian administration when he says that there is no Municipality in India that has not crashed into bankruptcy over and over again. Let us hear the "Statesman" on this point which, at a glance, reveals the preposterous claim for self-Government. "Dislike to meeting the cost of Municipal amenities or paying for fresh improvements is deep seated in Indian society. It is the general rule for arrears of municipal taxes to go on mounting up, one of the worst offenders in this besetting vice being the Calcutta Corporation. In thirteen years, arrears in Calcutta have increased from a little over £ 200 to £ 155,000." Enough.

It is sickening to deal with the subject of Municipal administration in India. So I shall dismiss it making but one general observation. And that is, when so much is disclosed of utter discredit and bankruptcy in petty popular administrations, I cannot understand on what grounds are great constitutional advances demanded by political India and as freely met by inadvertent Britain. Official burglary and incompetency seem to be the real

merit to push the case of India for the attainment of Self-Government. But then, are we not forcibly reminded here of the famous dialogue between Socrates and Glaucon? Its moral holds true even after three thousand years. It would seem as though the Athenian sage had in his prophetic vision the political India of to-day when he reached the climax of his conversation saying "What a dangerous thing it is for a man to meddle in big affairs with no understanding whatever, when he is incapable of managing small things." During the debate in the Lords on the White Paper, Lord Reading is reported to have said that 'it was not armed force which had given us power in India, but the character of the British and the reputation for honest and fair dealing and for the carrying out of their promises.' True, it is upon these sterling attributes more than anything else that the British rule in India has been built as upon a rock, and it stands to-day as firm as ever, unshaken by the severest storm of Civil Disobedience, the terrors of the anarchist movement and other forms of revolutions. But before advocating the transfer of power, the noble Lord must establish that a similar case exists in respect of Indians. Without taking it for granted, he must substantiate it with living proofs that they too possess all those characteristics which make India place herself wholeheartedly in the hands of the British. So far, as evidenced on all sides, Indians in power have, as a rule, developed a character for corruption, a character for grinding well, a character for self-interest, a character for public dishonesty, a character for administrative incompetency. Are these the qualifications that the White Paper emphasises for the transference of power?

We must now turn to the rural area. India is justly called a continent of villages, for most of the people, that is, more than 90 per cent. live a village life. It is of this India, enveloped in intellectual darkness and pre-historic habits, that statesmen who have contributed to the greatness and stability of the Empire warn Britain against her blind generosity to rush upon them the great boon of a democratic constitution when they say that, of all the forces of destruction, the ignorance of the Indian masses constitutes the greatest menace to the Empire. It is this ignorance that must appeal to the present day statesman of the type of Lord Irwin who seems captivated, as was so noticeable in the Lord's debate on the White Paper, by the glossy subtilty of political Intelligentsia which, when brought to play upon the vast field of ignorance and illiteracy, would employ all its faculties for the promotion of its self-interest and self-aggrandisement and be a proclaimed curse upon the masses. It is this ignorance that the Congress has converted into a citadel from which it emerges to carry on a guerilla warfare with the Government. It is this ignorance that Mr. Gandhi counts upon to serve as a mighty force of fanaticism wherewith to destroy, to the spurious lure of Swaraj, law and order and everything which a beneficent hand has erected for the welfare of the people by the terrors of mass-rising. It is this ignorance that played a very prominent part recently when the pied piper of India, marching to the Dandy beach, played upon his weird instrument of non-violence and gave out three sharp shrill notes saying, "awake, arise, revolt," when,

" Out of the houses the (village) rats came
tumbling

Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,
Families by tens and dozens.
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives,
Followed the Piper for their lives.
From street to street he piped advancing,
And step for step they followed dancing,"
Until the great magician
Led them off for a fatal bath
In the sea of Civil Disobedience.

One could see how easily village instinct can be flared up into mass-rebellion by professional agitators, and how mad it is on the part of authorities to experiment on a world of gross ignorance and illiteracy a high-strung democratic Reform which has virtually transformed many a fair country in Europe into a cemetery of starvation and strife.

There is yet the great region covered by the Indian States both Hindu and Mahomedan which are 700 in number ranging in size and splendour from the great Kingdom of Hyderabad down to a petty principality of a few thousand acres ruled by a little autocrat. As every one knows, before the advent of England, the history of these States or Kingdoms were written in the desperate wars which they had been waging among themselves for centuries inflicting incalculable harm to the progress of the country. and in the streams of invasions washing away kingdoms and thrones in their swollen fury, which

dealt such deep and ghastly wounds upon the country that they could not be healed even under the soothing influences of the present rule. If to-day they are prevented from a recrudescence of their past history, it is because the invulnerability of their States and the security of their thrones are assured in the splendour and might of the paramount power that overhangs them. But the proposed Federal scheme seems to 'pull them into the pool of democratic strangulation. It is no wonder that most of the Princes evince great hesitancy in getting into it, just as a prudent man feels before jumping into the dark. The following peroration, worthy of a great Prince and scholar, that appeared in the "Madras Mail" of July 26, 1933, gives some idea of the fears that the Princes entertain regarding the scheme :

"At the special request of a reader, we publish below the latter part of the last speech of the late Jam Sahib of Nawanagar, who was universally known as "Ranji."

It will be recalled that the Jam Sahib, as Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, rose in the Chamber on March 25 to report on the work of the Indian States delegation to the last Round Table Conference.

He quoted the opinion of Professor Berriedale Keith that the safeguards were valueless, and was going to speak with "grave disquiet" of "the difficulty of the Crown retaining in future any effective sovereignty in India" when the Viceroy who presided called him to order.

In deference to His Excellency, the Jam Sahib sat down with his speech unfinished. He died within a week of the incident.

The undelivered portion of his speech contained a warning to his fellow-Princes and to the British Government. It read :—

Your Excellency and your Highnesses, I have already reviewed in great detail at our informal meetings the degree in which the proposed federal constitution falls short of the Safeguards and *sine qua nons* which we laid down last year. It is for your Highnesses to decide how far the proposals of His Majesty's Government satisfy our minimum requirements. That decision will not, I imagine be long delayed.

Your Excellency, your Highnesses, I have made this statement with a full sense of my responsibility. If, in these words, I may appear to have said anything contrary to the personal advice which you, your Excellency, have given us, I am more than sorry. But I have no choice in the matter. My sense of duty urges me on. My term of office expires within a few days; and this frank estimate of this present crisis will be almost the last duty I shall be called upon as Chancellor to render to my Emperor, my country, and to my Order.

In this grave and decorous assemblage, where controversy rarely finds utterance, I should, had I been free to follow my own inclinations, have spoken merely smooth words; for I am of an age when my natural disposition

in favour of peace has been powerfully reinforced by advancing years and impaired health. But I cannot evade my duty.

For at this juncture, as it seems to me, we have to think, not of ourselves, but of those who will come after us, of future generations of Viceroys, of future generations of Princes; and, perhaps above all, of the future of the British connexion. Believe me, your Excellency and your Highnesses, when I say that it would have been so much pleasanter, as well as so much easier, for me to disguise my apprehensions. If I had spoken in general terms dutifully praising the Federal scheme, and expressing pious hopes that in the future all will be well, with the Crown, with British India and with the Indian States I could have gained an easy popularity with all sides.

A PASSIONATE APPEAL.

But the result of the six or seven hundred hours of close study in the company of some of the most eminent constitutional authorities in England has been to show me that the time has come to speak frankly. The cold logic of the situation has convinced me that the present scheme is dangerous alike to the States and to the British connexion. If in this conclusion I am mistaken, no one will be happier than I myself. But until I am convinced of a miscalculation, I must put forward, as frankly as I can, the grounds upon which my conclusion is based.

I would appeal to you, your Excellency, than whom the States have no better friend, to spare, despite your many preoccupations, a moment to reflect upon the consideration I have ventured to put forward. I would

appeal to you, your Highnesses, to consider whether the interests of your subjects, of your Governments and administrations, and of your dynasties, do not demand utmost caution at this juncture. In your Excellency's own wise words: "Unrest and unsettlement is evident on all sides: so much that has appeared unshakable has crashed into ruin."

I would appeal to those British statesmen who look upon the Indian States as the strongest link in the British connexion to put themselves in our position and to ask themselves honestly whether my apprehensions are not justified; and whether the Princes of India will not be up-holding their traditional loyalty to the Crown more effectively by counselling caution than by involving themselves in entanglements which future generations may condemn as destructive of their power to assist either the Crown or themselves.

I would appeal also to the leaders of British India and ask them to view my position with understanding. If I find myself, as I and some of my friends do, unable to accept the present Federal scheme, it is not by any hostility to British India that we are animated; but by the simple instinct of self-preservation. I wish British India all good luck in its endeavours; but its problems are not our problems; and no good will come of trying to confuse the two. The real truth is—and no one who has made a careful study of the proceedings of the three Round Table Conferences can honestly deny this fact—that the kind of Federation of which in 1930 our representative Princes signified their provisional

approbation was very different indeed from the kind of federation which now holds the field.

SAFEGUARDS DENIED.

We were prepared to consider in all friendliness a working arrangement between British India, the States and the Crown, limited to certain specified functions, within which a scheme of central responsibility would operate. Everything outside this arrangement was to remain as before. Defence and Foreign Relations, as well as our relations with the Crown were to be excluded from the scheme; they were to be Crown subjects. We were not federating for these. But what do we now find? We are asked to help in the creation of a succession Government to the present Government of India; we are told that this Government will be deeply concerned with Defence and Foreign Relations; we gather—in fact it is an open secret—that this new succession Government will gradually but inexorably take over complete control of these subjects.

We find that the safeguards upon which we have endeavoured to insist, pitiful as they are, have been denied to us; that our claims, alone among minority claims, have been subjected to ridicule. We have been told that we are over-expensive partners; that British India will never consent to become an appendage to the States. Your Excellency, your Highnesses, I for one should be the last to thrust myself where I am not wanted. I prefer to remain as I am, and to take my chances either of surviving or of perishing honourably.

I have spoken as my conscience and not as my interests dictate. I apologise to you, your Excellency and to your Highnesses, for the demands I have made upon your time and patience; and I earnestly pray that the Divine Wisdom will guide us all in the momentous choice which it is now the responsibility, as well as the right, of every one of us here to exercise. As your Excellency told us in your opening speech, it is for us to decide."

In a continent so vast and varied, inhabited in most parts by people who are easily roused to provocation by trifles, we cannot expect smooth sailing all along. So there arise very frequently indeed communal feelings lashed into a tempestuous fury especially among Hindus and Mahomedans. They indulge in riots or civil wars in miniature which form the most sanguinary page of modern history, where the combatants fly at each other's throat and freely give vent to their fury by looting, lusting, burning houses, destroying property, desecrating mosques and temples and creating all the panic of a city given up to a general massacre, which forces the authorities at all times to keep the police and the military ever in readiness, just as fire-engines are kept in perpetual vigilance all through the summer months in a city of wooden structures. Cawnpore, Sholapur and Bombay where the ugliest scenes of communal riots were enacted,—whole streets gutted with the victims of the sword, children, even feeding babies, cut to pieces and thrown into thoroughfares, the brains of people scattered on the floor, and similar scenes of atrocity, will stand for ever as witnesses to the dreadful carnage of Civil

Disobedience perpetrated under the foul inspiration of a man who, cloaked as he is in his mysterious fasts and penances is withal courting slowly but surely the awful retribution of Divine Justice which will overtake him when he will have exhausted the patience of God. "Oh Lord, how long?"

We now stand on an elevated soil,—India ruled by Parliamentary system of Government by the Act of 1919. In introducing the Bill in the Lords, Lord Sinha said, "The Bill will not and is not intended to set up a final permanent constitution for India. It provides for a period of transition. How long that period will last I make no effort to forecast; but, while it lasts, we have to provide a bridge whereby India may pass from an autocratic and bureaucratic form of government which guides her destinies *ab extra* to a form of government by which she will control her own destinies." And this transition of India, according to Sir Verney Lovett, a well-known authority on Indian affairs, means, "the intellectual effort of Indians to understand and assimilate to itself the highly developed moral and political thoughts and movements of the West. Parliament has launched India's hundreds of millions on a parliamentary system. A successful parliamentary system is conditional on a great educational and industrial advance."

We shall try to gauge the intellectual progress which India has made since the introduction of the Reform. As, at the time of writing, the figures of literacy for all India according to the Census of 1931 are not available, we should be satisfied with the Census of 1921, according to which the number of persons in

India 'Literate' in the sense of being able to write a letter and read the reply was 22·6 millions, amounting, if children under five years of age are excluded, to 82 in every 1,000 of the population. Of males, 139 in every thousand at age of five and above are literate, the corresponding proportion in the case of females being 21. In the whole of India, 2·5 million persons or 160 males and 18 females in every 10,000 persons of each sex aged five and above can read and write English. Again, from the "Indian Year Book" we learn that in 1921-22, out of a population of 247,003,293 in British India, the total number of scholars learning in all the Institutions (recognised and un-recognised) was 8,381,401. And in 1930-31, out of a population of 271,788,382, the total number of scholars in all institutions was 12,689,016. But the number of scholars in the primary department which is 7,381,199 may be dispensed with as valueless, as most of them leave school before reaching the fourth class and revert to illiteracy. Thus, taking liberally 30 millions as literate in British India, there are still 242 millions sitting in the shadows of illiteracy. It is this society that the White Paper Reform enfranchises to the extent of 14 per cent of the total population and 27 per cent of the adult population.

I am painfully forced to observe here without meaning the slightest offence to anybody, but only speaking broadly from a political stand that, apart from the enormous expense entailed upon the Government by such an elaborate machinery which could be best utilised for the promotion of industry, education and sanitation as they form the vital concern of the people rather than

push them in their unfit state into the pernicious path of politics as their last penalty for having remained so long in mute wonder under the British rule, the country would turn out direct from the wilderness of ignorance a huge army of the blind, the deaf and the dumb who would, by means of thumb-impressions, nodding of the head and other devices invented to enable a dummy express its political mind at the polls, return honourable members to Indian Parliaments. And these, forsooth, would ever more be styled the true representatives of the people! Is this the kind of democracy which Britain intends smelting in India after boiling in the furnace of the Round Table Conferences for three solid years? If so, it is dummy pantomimed into democracy. The Chinese, it is said, have a way of walking their dead to the grave yard. And Britain, by her long association with China, evinces a fascination for outdoing her in the art. So, raising India dead in her millions by the ingenious contrivance of a constitution which is high-pitched with the ideals of the cultured West, she means to walk the constitutional corpse along the novel path of political reforms till, with the failing of the machine, it drops to the ground and gets buried in a political grave with this inscription on the tomb-stone: *India done to death by the White Paper.*

Not content with suffering some 40 million blind to be groping about India like "the six blind men of Hindostan who went to see the elephant," our eminent leaders recommend adult suffrage even to women. Here is a paragraph culled from the report of a Memorandum submitted to the Lothian Central Committee. "It

would seem difficult, if not impossible, to do justice to the claims of Muslims, women and the depressed classes without universal suffrage. Women want it for purposes which need not be elaborated to an English Parliament." So goes the evidence before a Commission. But evidences by some infatuated minds form no criterion of electoral fitness and are, for the most part, an academic affair. Why seek evidence in the case of Indian enfranchisement? The evidence is there, stretched out before our eyes at every step throughout the country of the utter gloom that covers it. No amount of evidences would enable stone-ignorance to produce a gleam of political light. And, as a diplomatic move, they point to the English Parliament which permits adult suffrage to women. But here, with my utmost deference to the womankind of England, I should say that Parliament itself needs Reform in this line. When I was in England some ten years ago, the Labour Government came to office. How? The Labour candidates invaded the desired quarters and told the housewives that if they would instal them in power by returning them to Parliament, they would get cheap bread, cheap butter and cheap everything. And the housewives did not care to know that beyond cheap bread and cheap butter, there are the grave national concerns of the Dominions, the great Dependency of India and the heavy responsibility attaching to them of an Imperial character which, when disturbed, might cost them very dear indeed. And so, regardless of consequences and liberally responding to their inviting appeal, they got the Labour candidates cheap into Parliament. And very soon there comes a tremendous reaction on the

cheap commodity. Government begin to fraternise with Soviet Russia. Socialism is thrown off its guard. The loyalty of the Navy of England is tampered with by seditious pamphlets shoved surreptitiously into their pockets. Zinoviev comes upon the scene with his 'Red-letter' conspiracy. If England was saved from a serious catastrophe she owes it, if I am not mistaken, to the "Daily Mail" which was able to get to the bottom of the conspiracy, divulge the whole secret, gave chase to the Russian wolves and sent them back to their holes. Thus, with the speedy fall of the Socialist Government, the lure of Labour was gone and the Empire is safe. So too, if adult suffrage were granted to India, the women of India would place no bar to their achievements. They need only to be told that Mahatma Gandhi would give them cheap clothes, cheap rice and cheap *pansupari*, and they would instantly leave the thumb to men and come out with their little toe, by the impressions of which they would plump their fellows to Councils, who would do anything for them. Who could help it? They would be driven to these extravagant conclusions by an extravagant Reform.

Our politicians, unrestrained by so much constitutional farce, would go much farther and arraign Britain for not speeding up towards complete self-Government. They say that she belied the pledges she gave to the people of India. And what are those pledges which are so frequently and artfully used as a bait for Britain? They are expressed in the Preamble of the Act of 1919 which runs as follows:

"Whereas it is the declared policy of Parliament to provide for the increasing association of Indians in

every branch of Indian administration, and for the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible Government in British India as an integral part of the Empire :

And whereas progress in giving effect to this policy can only be achieved by successive stages, and it is expedient that substantial steps in this direction should now be taken :

And whereas the time and manner of each advance can be determined only by Parliament, upon whom responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples :

And whereas the action of Parliament in such matters must be guided by the co-operation received from those on whom new opportunities of service will be conferred, and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility" From this it is perfectly clear that the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples towards which all administrative endeavours must inevitably converge form the supreme concern of Parliament, and that any constitution that is susceptible in the least of injuring or counter-acting or militating against that great and solemn duty is plainly out of the question. We have seen so far that an increasing association of Indians in the administration of the country deflects from its high purpose in the direction of incompetency and unreliability, which fact is enough to disqualify them in their own eyes to the progressive realisation of responsible Government. Political India

may cry itself hoarse. The more it cries, the more does it betray its bankruptcy in the soundness of administration. It is too premature to think of an India governing herself. She is not ripe yet to get into the hands of her sons whom she does not trust. Neither are they trusted by Britain. Although the White Paper hugs on to the pious hope that "The present proposals in general necessarily proceed on the basic assumption that every endeavour will be made by those responsible for working the Constitution to approach the administrative problems which will present themselves in the spirit of partners in a common enterprise," still the fact that this Constitution is overloaded with safeguards and special responsibilities betrays, not unjustifiably, the deep mistrust that she has in the competency and reliability of Indian Ministers, that it is evidently wrested from a well-intentioned but compromising Government by the impatient and intriguing politicals of India, and that, therefore, it does stand as a free and spontaneous expression of the political mind of Britain. It is a poor consolation for India with a glorious heritage at the back of her to stoop down and receive a gift under so many humiliating shackles. Nor does it redound to the glory of Britain to confer upon her a constitution of this temperament. And what does it all show? It shows as clear as daylight that India is yet to march with the aid of British torchlight. She is yet to lean on Englishmen for her guidance in polity and administration. She must disillusion herself of the idea which is thrust into her head by some fanciful Englishmen that her affairs could be best managed by her own sons. She must believe it as an article of faith that there does not exist in the world

a greater enemy than her hasty and perverted political children. She must always bear in mind that the presence of Englishmen in India is the Inchcape Bell of this rock bound stormy land and that she finds her Ralph the Rover in the White Paper. If she desires to be great, as undoubtedly she deserves to be, she must give up her platform froths and newspaper bluffs and, without unnecessarily puffing up with political gas, earnestly begin, under the progressive inspiration of the present rule, to clean up in everything with solid achievements before marching to the conquest of freedom as a disunited, demoralised rabble under the leadership of unsophisticated cracks and religious maniacs.

As regards Co-operation which alone can vouch for a further constitutional advance, Mr. Gandhi, as the sole dictator of the Congress, could give a most satisfactory account of it when it entered the Councils of Central Provinces, Bengal, Bombay and the United Provinces, assuming a defiant attitude, taking absolute delight in wrecking the constitution out and out and bringing the administration itself in the eyes of the people to ridicule and shame. And how about the remaining Provinces ? Although these Councils, true to the framers of the Montford Reform, are beautiful training grounds for the development of faculties required for Parliamentary work, still how many of them can escape the scrutiny of an impartial criticism whether in political or fiscal honesty ? It may be that so far, being in existence only for the past 12 years, they have not put in records of public dishonesty so glaringly as to merit wholesale condemnation. But, all the same, the fact remains

obviously enough that they are not many who can be said to serve the country with a clean hand and a clear conscience. How many of them with truth upon their lips could say they have snatched their seats in Councils without unscrupulously employing the foulest means of corruption as an inducement to the hungry poor? How many of them have not played out an ignorant electorate with a lot of dirty lies stuffed into their ears and on tickets as false as they, worked their way into the Councils? And after stealing their places, have they proved true to the professions of their creed? These things time alone will solve when it shall have laid its blighting hand on all that is roguish and rotten to the core. But now, as they are, they must be left to account for themselves.

During the period under review of which we are taking administrative stock to enable us to ascertain if we could place fresh orders with Parliament, the same Congress waged desperate wars with the Government, launching its Civil Disobedience movement upon the country which practically meant a great deal of needless anxiety to Government in trying to keep the administration alive, to guard the people from unbridled lawlessness and disorder and from heading to a state of anarchy and chaos. This state of affairs naturally called for a halt; so the Labour Government tried to pour oil on the troubled waters of political India whose current was fast drifting to an unfathomable destruction in the high sea of Swaraj. The Act of 1919 was to be revised before the time. In vain did the sober elements of Britain strike a warning note against her precipitous act of

rushing into reforms at the dictate of the impatient politicals of India. In vain did the redoubtable Englishman who is no more, the great Lord Birkenhead thunder in the Lords touching the Preamble of the Act, "We shall not be diverted from its high obligations by the tactics of restless impatience. The door of acceleration is not opened to menace, still less will it be stormed by violence." But the Government, desirous of peace in the country, sent a Royal Commission under Sir John Simon with a view to shower greater political blessings on the people, and, for that end, summoned three Round Table Conferences in London, the outcome of which is the White Paper. Therefore, my present purpose is to enquire into the promptings which actuated Britain to conceive and bring forth this mal-formed monster. There must be some grounds for her to accelerate this helter-skelter Reform. Can it be that she is so fed up with the administration of India which gives her no chance of rest, no peace of mind and so cowed down by the counter-blasts of the Congress and other revolutionary bodies that she is hurriedly throwing away her heavy responsibilities on Indians before fleeing from the field? I will be the last person to accede to this infamous proposition. So, I will dismiss it with scorn. Can it be that she is mightily charmed with the clever performance of the political jugglers at the Round Table Conferences where they suavely put up an imaginary bridge to span the gulf existing between the old bureaucracy and the embryonic democracy and virtually hoisted the false flag of intelligent democracy on the other side in deliberate violation of the spirit and the letter of the Montford Reform which provides against the possibility of the bridge being

swept away by the swift current of impatience and intrigue, while the masses are there still groping in the darkness of illiteracy and ignorance? I have no time for constitutional jugglery. Can it be that she is so enamoured of the power of brain as displayed by the political intelligentsia in Councils and Conferences that she is tempted to bless the people with a constitution which is fraught with the high ideals of the western nations in the fond hope of transforming India into another England while her hopeless conditions which keep strangling her to death have not improved with the time? I fear, continental Europe would sneer at the idea of saddling so much illiteracy with a heavy Parliamentary system which might tumble down the moment it begins to trot. Or, perhaps she is committing herself to the super-specimen of a constitution by her great faith in the mass-confidence in their leaders. Well, I cannot find that confidence aroused in the people anywhere except it be their misplaced or rather their misguided ignorance which is led by the nose by the Congress and kindred bodies to the dungeons of disloyalty where the activities of the leaders are manufactured in the name of the people to serve their nefarious purpose of subverting the lawfully constituted authority and substituting it with a reign of bloodshed and terror, and in the manifestation of Civil Disobedience where one man engineers the whole fraud of discontent levelled at the Government, thus placing, to the fabulous phantom of Swaraj, a blind country on the brink of a precipice. Or, can it be that she has such implicit faith in the fellow-feeling and mutual co-ordination of Indians that she is perfectly justified in satisfying the inordinate greed

of political India with this generous Constitution? Ah, if there is a place on earth that is marked with misanthropy of the most atrocious type and lies like a rotten carcass for greedy vultures to feed on, it is poor India. Go where you will, travel the whole length and breadth of the country, one thing that obtrudes itself violently on your notice is injustice. Visit public offices, visit municipalities and other places of emolument, and you will invariably find that blood-money is squeezed into the pockets of the dacoits in power from their oppression of the poor. The one universal cry that is heard, though it is tried to be hushed by the roar of the Congress jargon, is that it is better to serve under a sympathetic Englishman than the unscrupulous belly-god of an Indian. And that cry is a damning denunciation of the Indian administration.

Again, our politicians, in their unwarranted ambition to establish Dominion Status, hold Britain pinned to the Declaration of 1917. But in all fairness, that the Declaration may have a moral binding on Britain, the other side must stand true to its obligations. Let us see. In one part it says, "The conception of British Government as a benevolent despotism was finally renounced; and in its place was established that of a guiding authority whose role it would be to assist the steps of India along the road that, in the fullness of time, would lead to complete self-government within the Empire." Well now, the Congress, as the most articulate and powerful organisation in the country has again and again in their official sittings declared their unalterable decision that India should secede from Britain at the

first opportunity and be completely independent. And, as recently as April 1st 1933, the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Congress which tried to hold its session in Calcutta, in the course of his unread speech which was distributed in the streets, said, "We shall be satisfied with nothing less than Government by the people and for the people. If we have not yet succeeded, it is only because we have not been able to put on the requisite pressure. And that pressure revolt. For an unarmed nation like India, Civil Disobedience or non-violent revolt is the only weapon in our hands to compel the Government to our demands. We can on no account abandon the weapon. The next step is complete non-co-operation with the present administration including refusal to serve in the Army and Police, non-payment of taxes including rent and boycott of all British goods and foreign cloth. It will involve terrible suffering. At present, we may not waste our time over the White Paper, but concentrate our energies on the vigorous prosecution of the Civil Disobedience campaign." And the Liberals and Nationalists too in full sympathy with such a Congress openly commit themselves to an attitude of duplicity. This fact alone entitles Britain to ignore the said Declaration. Moreover, has India gone over all the steps "along the road that, in the fullness of time, would lead to complete self-government within the Empire"? Could hardly 1 per cent of English and still less of political knowledge satisfy the minimum required for the wildest political ambition to run a Dominion Government? Does the short period of 12 rowdy years constitute the plenitude of time as indicated by the Declaration of August 1917? I fail to find a spark of

wisdom in the present policy of Britain which spurs poor lame India to run the constitutional course with the breakneck speed of a race horse.

Therefore, without the necessary outfit for embarking on the perilous venture of Dominion Government and eager only to grab it at once and at any cost so that the few Indians in power constituting an oligarchy may rule or rather misrule the vast concourse of races inhabiting the Indian Empire with an absolute will of diabolic despotism, the Liberal Federation—a drop in India, which held its session in Calcutta on April 15, 1933, expressed itself in these glowing vapours which reveal at once the hollowness of their claim and the preposterousness it covers. It says, "The only way in which these pledges can be carried out is to give us a constitutional charter which, while recognising the status of India as equal to the other self-governing Dominions, would provide us with the structure of a constitution which would finally establish the same form of Government as prevails in the self-governing Dominions without a periodical examination by Parliament of the Indian problem." So, this grand Federation aims at a constitutional charter for a Dominion Government conveniently brushing aside Parliament, the Parliament which is the life, the very hope and salvation of India; the Parliament which could look back with a just pride upon the history of British India for the past one hundred years through those stupendous Reforms which have made the India of to-day, reforms accomplished under British inspiration and on British responsibility and conscious too of its position as the embodiment of the

prestige, justice and genius of Imperial Britain; the Parliament that has laid out the path she must pursue to achieve her political salvation, warning her of the causes that retard her progress in the path and her inevitable plight if abandoned, by some cause or other, by the powerful arm of Britain; the Parliament that created the illustrious order of the Indian Civil Service whose men, like the Roman Pontiffs of the ancient Church who were indefatigable in their marvellous work of reconstituting on a permanent and Christian basis the Roman Empire which had been consigned to ashes by the irruptions of the Huns, the Goths and other savage hordes, dug out as it were from the depths of desolation the Indian Empire which was a helpless prey for centuries to invasions, wars, lawlessness and crimes, by their tireless devotion and enthusiasm to duty dictated by a policy of disinterestedness and motives of philanthropy by which they evolved order out of chaos and gave law and government to a lawless and disordered country by a series of reforms which mark them out as the grandest and the ablest administrators in the world. If Britain really means to do good to the people of India and therein preserve the traditions of her noble and righteous rule, I would earnestly ask her to begin from twenty years back continuing to be the Headmistress of the kindergarten of all India instead of posing, as at present, as the Chancellor of a University giving away caps and gowns to a few Indian graduates.

But the White Paper comes upon us as a direct challenge to the wise and prudent course herein advocated. And, in furtherance of its cause thereof,

Mr. Baldwin is reported to have said that "he believed that by going forward boldly with India, we might keep her within the Empire, and as further advances were made, she would be as loyal as any other part of the Empire; but if we did not advance to her the generous right hand of friendship within the life time of many of his hearers, we would lose India for ever." I wish such a language were uttered by some other statesman. So it comes to this that, in order not to lose India but to keep her at any cost within the Empire, the abdication of power is advocated bearing in mind more the bluffs and the threats of political India with its boundless ambition for power which it could hardly sustain on any tangible proof of its capacity to rule, rather than a wise and orderly Government which could, with rock-like certainty resting upon a hundred and fifty years, stand for the safety, stability and well-being of the Indian Empire. Such a language too hurls an unconscious threat at our existence as we contemplate that enlightened Englishmen and the enlightened British public and Parliament listen with complacent ears to the audacious demands of our hereditary tyrants for the insidious Swaraj or self-Government peeping through the White Paper; and our conception of the British rule fails as we are driven to the lamentable conclusion that they whom Providence has ordained to be the champions and protectors of the poor, ignorant masses and the down-trodden millions of India have, in their complacency, encouragement and advocacy, become deliberate partners of an iniquity which in its realisation would bring down as much curse upon their country as upon our own. But we need not fear the catastrophe.

There is a power that is neither Conservative, nor Liberal nor Labour; a power which, transcending all such manœuvres of party politics and dissociating itself from the artful diplomacy and compromising attitude, knows only the stern performance of its duty, however hard and insurmountable it may be. To that power do I appeal.

I appeal to British greatness which the world recognises in her genius to explore untrodden regions, to conquer the mysterious heights of Everest which stood in unconquerable majesty defying the conception of man since the beginning of time; to found colonies of great continents; to make large acquisitions of countries as much by the prowess of conquest as by the loftiness of statesmanship; to cement the thousand races inhabiting every part of the globe, no matter how diverse they are, no matter how varied their culture and civilisation, into an Empire of her own which is beyond doubt the mightiest and the most colossal known to humanity, and to rule it with an administrative skill unsurpassed by any other nation on earth, ancient or modern. I appeal to British conscience which, like a luminous star of the heavens, guides her in the conduct of government 'as to the best course adopted to do away with crime and injustice wherever they may flourish; to make by laws and regulations the vast concourse of peoples under her sway feel the righteousness of her rule; to swell to the fury of the tempest in quelling down rebellions and other untoward happenings in her boundless Empire, or to calm down in peaceful times to the soft zephyr wafting them along the unruffled path of progress,

prosperity and civilisation; and to protect them at all costs against human wolves in the clothing of sanctity prowling for prey and seducing the credulous and the ignorant into the wilderness of anarchy and bloodshed. I appeal to British responsibility as wide as the blue vault of day which she has contracted as an impregnable covenant between the God who has raised her from the insignificance of a petty island-kingdom to a prodigy of an Empire and herself to carry the light of liberty and civilisation to the farthest ends of the earth, to redeem races pining in the dungeons of slavery and in the shadows of death; a responsibility which, in the case of India, she has signed, not upon a perishable parchment that is read out to a passing pageant and thrown away, but like edicts hewn upon everlasting rocks, promulgated in the abiding achievements of her rule by which she has taken in solemn pledge the 350 millions of an immense continent under her Imperial trusteeship which she has never betrayed even when placed so often under the severest trials set on foot by the best organised conspiracy and rebellion; a responsibility which, resting as it is upon the imperishable foundation of her honour and glory, she will yet roar out, if need be, from the muzzle of her savage guns.

CHAPTER VIII

THE WHITE PAPER—(*concluded*).

In the last chapter I think I have brought out sufficient internal evidence that proves conclusively the futility, not to say the danger, of foisting upon India a constitution such as the White Paper advances, even as

the octopus stretches out its feelers for the prey. It was made abundantly clear that, by madly rushing India which is now in the inevitably slow but prudent process of evolution from darkness to light, she is flung back, with no appreciable difference, upon the day when she was a helpless prey to the wiles and whims of autocrats, call them kings, governors or chieftains. The proposed scheme which purports to lead her by over-hasty steps in democratic ideals, places her millions under the control and guidance of an obligarchy which is supposed to be imbued with the generous spirit of the West in the government of the country. But Britain must guard herself against the sweet deception imposed upon her that the so-called leaders and representatives who will be the sole beneficiaries of the Reform will, when placed in power and authority, care to teach the people the rudiments of democracy or work for their welfare. I tell her, they will mind their pockets and not the people. When she know it for a dead certainty that even in petty popular administrations manned by Indians purely, there is disclosed an unfathomable amount of selfishness and a woeful lack of efficiency and public honesty, would it not be criminal on her part to place those hundreds of millions still writhing in ignorance, misery, poverty, and helplessness at the muzzle of injustice and corruption letting the trigger in the hands of unscrupulous autocrats on the plea of a great constitutional advance? The framers of this fatal constitution may, indeed, go down in history as great statesmen; but it is we, the poor illiterate masses unable to protect ourselves in the wild hunt that must endure all the terrible consequences that this Reform certainly entails. If Sir Samuel Hoare were a street-trotter like

myself, he would not inflict upon India a constitution which he has framed in the aroma of Whitehall. And Lord Irwin too, wrapped up as he is in the reveries of New Delhi, would not have protested against Mr. Churchill's reference to the politicals of India as "quite unrepresentative, thoroughly disloyal and subversive politicals" and characterised his speech as "mischievous, ungenerous and untrue." But I beg to state that for every hundred and thousand Indians who, according to the noble ex-Viceroy, collaborated with Britain in politics and administration, I could point to the hundreds of millions who are too ignorant and too illiterate to understand either the self-appointed leaders, or the appreciative Englishmen or to collaborate with her in politics or anything. And so, if the case of India is impartially weighed in the scales of truth, we know on which side the foul charge lies.

And who are the 'representatives' of the people that were instrumental in getting up the White Paper which is to the Indian masses more a cobweb than a constitution? They are lawyer-knights who would fight shy of anything that was not in the true interest of political ambition. But if the learned Secretary of State would rack his brains a little, it would not be difficult for him to perceive that their efforts, like those of the Congress to bring about a political condition in India so fanciful, so piquant to national pride and so flattering to their wild goose chase, are like the performance of a man who shrewdly takes you to the seashore and gets your eyes blinded by the sprays of the breaking waves so that you come away in a hurry, drenched as you are, without

caring to behold what happens in that mighty expanse of waters stretched behind as far as the horizon where, in one place, may be seen a sudden storm lashing an angry sea to the skies and threatening destruction to anything that comes in its way; in another place, currents and counter-currents may be observed to cross each other springing up in their swiftness terrific whirlpools, the graves of many a sailing boat; while in others, whole kingdoms of its waters repose in placid serenity wafted by the gentle zephyrs whose breath blows the melody of freshness and joy. Similarly, Britain seems so completely taken in by the rhapsodies of the Round Table and so blinded by the flashes of eloquence that she is not worrying much about the awful condition of the mighty expanse of the Indian population presenting the picture of varied interests that clash themselves to desperate ruin with currents and counter-currents of caste, creed and community, running layer under layer of discord and enmity till they find themselves sustained in the rock-bed of disunity where pandemonium reigns; all of which she leaves to be settled by the 'representatives' of the people who, it is needless to reiterate, when called upon to exercise their office, would play the shaggy gentleman in the fable settling the dispute between two mewling ladies over a piece of cheese.

To the British people I must reveal all these things because they hold the key to India's salvation. I have not a word against my countrymen, the political Intelligentsia who are naturally anxious and clamorous for more power. You could sooner deny children their avidity for sugar than put a plug to educated ambition.

And yet, it is not the ambition for power that must come first; but, as bitter experience in the experiment has clearly betrayed, it is how that power would be exercised towards the well-being of the people as a whole that counts. I cannot sufficiently stress the fact that, without considering the amount of ignorance and illiteracy that govern mass India but mainly actuated by the display of statesmanship by a few eminent lawyer politicians, Britain has toiled all these years to hammer out a shapeless and unmalliable constitution which gives autonomy to Provinces and Responsibility to the Centre. It appears very plausible indeed at first sight and all glory to the constitutional blacksmiths who produced the White Paper. But reason will naturally ask: Can it evoke a corresponding volume of response from the muck of ignorance which forms the main body of India in the midst of which the constitution must drift and work? Has it got the miraculous power to say, "Oh cripple, take up thy bed and go thy way in peace?" It is easier to make a cripple walk than quicken India at this stage of her evolution in the path of high democratic ideals which this constitution offers. The Constitution of England, I beg to observe, is the legacy left by Rome in a manner that was most pronounced of all the nations of Europe to the Mother of Parliaments and has been forged into its present form, the most glorious in the world, through long and eventful centuries by her patriots and martyrs behind the prison bars, by the executioners axe at the scaffold, by the burning blood of her gallant sons on many a valiant field, and by the incredible sacrifices of a whole nation in the cause of liberty. Does it redound to the glory of England or to

the well-being of India to drop it of a sudden, like a bolt from the blue, on a people who are just emerging from the rueful effects of the past? Will they be able to understand and use it profitably to themselves? Will they be able to appreciate the giver along with the gift? You have merely to recall the humiliating treatment accorded just a few years ago to the Montford Reform by the Congress entering the Councils and playing the very devil with it till the Reform came to be regarded as the laughing stock of India. Why? Because they got it so cheap, not even for an asking. And if they used it badly, it is not their fault; it is Britain's fault.

In speaking so candidly, let me not be misconstrued into asking Britain not to countenance at all the aspiration of political India thirsting for power. I don't stand for political stagnance. Nor do I, in the least, plead for retrogression in the prudent step which Britain may take in constitutional advance. I merely purport, in my humble capacity, to serve as a warning to those in authority against a headlong rush into reforms which might hurl the great Empire of India into an abyss of disaster, and more particularly against the thoughtless exhilaration of the people which makes them, rather sportively, run after the Dragon of Swaraj which keeps prowling about by day and by night switching its tail of apparent patriotism, but designing all the while to turn round in time for a wholesale devour. Urged on by the stern conviction of my soul, I would tell this to Britain: Don't be so obsessed by bluffs of fast and penance and other acts of superstition, by threats of revolution and by the siren seductions of Round Table Conferences as

to grant political concessions which cannot stand the test of justice and prudence. Don't dump upon India a Constitution which would transform a favoured few into a powerful oligarchy who would use their power and position in a proverbially autocratic fashion which is ingrained in their very nature to grind subject peoples for their own interest and aggrandisement, a Constitution that would leave a vast world of the ignorant millions to the tender mercies of the official Neros before equipping those helpless people, no matter how long it might take and Britain is no slave of time, with a powerful weapon in their intellectual, social and industrial uplift wherewith they would feel strong enough to resist the tyranny and oppression which might burst on them on all sides. In this connection I must pause for a while to disclose the mental calibre of the chief contributors to the Reform undergoing our test. These are, as we are aware, Indian lawyers, mostly Brahmans, who would have saved a multitude of murderers from the gallows by their legal acumen capable of turning and twisting the British law to a point of nicety. And it is strange that Britain, unknown to herself, has engaged those very lawyers in serious consultation to frame a Constitution for India, by which they have virtually placed in power an oligarchy blinking in democracy who would in their own way oppress to death the poor Indian multitudes who might happen to be under their authority. In days of yore when the mass of people were considered little more than dirt, the Brahmans, as priests and legislators, instituted a law called the Code of Manu which, for three thousand years of Indian history, was a huge machine for grinding and humiliating the people,

whose dirty spirit has but little died out even under the British rule. And now Britain, evidently relaxing in her duty to guard the people from the rapacity of ravenous politicals of India, devolve that great responsibility upon their shoulders with a British Code of Manu which she very magnanimously calls a democratic constitution. But if she does not really mean so, if she would ill-brook the domination of a devouring oligarchy, then let her give us time to grow, grow by education, by economic independence, by the forces of civilisation and by political wisdom, into a society of men capable of understanding her Parliamentary system of Government and run it ourselves democratically and not, as it must inevitably happen now, by a suspicious body of men by proxy. If Britain continues her love for us and we don't doubt it for a moment, let her wait doing her duty to us, and in time we will fix up our country with a constitution of our own. In the meantime, we implore her not to subject us to the iniquities of a representative constitution and inflame our feelings.

But the framers of this inauspicious reform might appeal to the Legislative enactments in it and say they cover the safety of the mass India. What can legislation do? It cannot go far to protect the poor, ignorant people against universal oppression if the hearts of the tyrants get their momentum for injustice from the unquestioned sanction of their social law, religion and custom. British justice in India, for example, can assert itself only within the four walls of a judicial court. It can only give legal protection against cases of clearly proved injustice which are very often set at naught by

the ingenuity of a clever lawyer, and India is notorious for it, who can wrap up his brief with the fine subtleties of British law. And very few indeed can afford the expensiveness of law suits. Outside the court, the poor ill-fated Indian finds himself at every step of his in the meshes of humiliation which has been spun for him by social and religious malignity. But the White Paper comes forth in the glossy garb of democracy. If so, does democracy crouch for shelter under law? The truth is that, as it often happens that the makers of law are also the breakers of it, England which is the parent of modern constitutional reforms based on the principles of democracy is guilty of imposing upon India a highly democratic constitution without evolving an intelligent democracy in the country, that is to say, a democracy that flourishes upon a people who form, to some appreciable extent, the counter-part of the British people, running the Government themselves of which they would constitute the main stay. Has India grown up to that standard? Could barely 1 per cent English and 10 per cent vernacular make up the minimum required? And what about the remaining 90 per cent lost in the dumb desert of illiteracy? Therefore, the Constitution that is held up for admiration is, in the nature of things, calculated to accelerate an oligarchy with the same velocity as it would attenuate democracy. In other words, power is transferred from a white bureaucracy to a brown autocracy, the people's heart throbbing in the throat.

But if Britain is so determined as not to allow the people time to grow in mind and have a cogent voice

in the deliberations of the Councils, if she wants them to be no better than belaboured mules to carry the up-keep and the maintenance of a few Indians in power, if she insists upon running the administration of India with a constitution replete with democratic ideals but absolutely no democracy to bear it, then let her call it a Reform for an obligarchy to deform the country, or by any other name which would carry with it the stamp of truth. For Heaven's sake, let her not call it a democratic constitution. She might as well call a hopping bird a flying eagle. I would call the White Paper not a constitution but a conspiracy, because it practically conspires against the true interests of the people; it conspires against their safety and well-being; it conspires against their steady growth into an intelligent democracy which is an essential condition if they must guide their own destiny. Above all, it conspires against the safety of the Indian Empire by educated impatience and intrigue aiming at Independence which will find its power-house in mass ignorance which they will control.

There is nothing in the affairs of the human race so unthinkable and so dangerous as on the part of political intrigue and greed for power to put forth its invidious claim for the government of an Empire like India with its unproven capacity to give her security and progress all round, and equally so on the part of Britain if she is seriously prepared to meet such a grotesque and dangerous demand, thus plunging at a stroke of inexpediency born, of course, of incapacity to continue her moral responsibility a whole continent into incalculable disaster. I ask: Is it for this wicked purpose that she took India,

destroyed her Royal houses wherever possible and placed her peoples in the clap-trap of a democratic constitution where every Tom, Dick and Harry calling himself a patriot and leader of the people assumes, though practically an uninvited guest, the responsibility of ruling, supposed to afford them protection of their honour, lives and property but more seriously intent on filling his own private purse? If Britain wants to give India before the time a constitution which places us in our utter helplessness in the hands of the Drakons in authority, then, in the name of British justice, we earnestly implore her to re-create those Royal houses which have disappeared under her hands and place us under our respective monarchs. What right has she to do away with our sovereigns whatever they might have been, take us under her protection for a time, then place us again under unknown hands and well-nigh clear out of the country leaving us in the lurch? To say the least of it, it is a great political crime. We prefer to be ruled by our own kings though under their grinding laws if Britain evinces signs of her incapacity to sustain her rule, to being tossed and tortured in myriad ways on the plea of a great constitutional reform in a democratic hell by our own men who may be the old thugs in ruling robes. But the knights of the Round Table might flare up and ask: What right have you to speak in this strain to Britain? Are we to wait till the muck and the mud of India get enlightened enough to reach our status and understanding? I answer: With what right you have to be heard by Britain as you brandish your capacity to rule, with the self same right I claim to be heard by the same Britain as I state my unwillingness to be ruled by those whom

I don't know. And as for the second part of the question, can I not retort by asking: Are we, the muck and the mud of India to be led like a flock of sheep through unknown paths of pitfalls and snares possibly to a slaughter-house by the Swaraj shepherds in British clothes who are provided with a constitutional knife for our throats? Britain might as well hand over the Government of India to a man who may be seen masquerading in the streets of London with a poster on his back which says, "I am the Emperor of India." Verily, the White Paper is such a poster.

Not satisfied with stirring up the deep waters of British India with a constitution which splashes with democracy of a high water-mark designed to disturb still more the placid pathetic contentment of the people as the late Mr. Montagu would put it, Britain in a spirit of exhilaration is pulling the Princes into the bargain which she calls a Federation that they too might become scape-goats and wear a crown of thorns instead of their ancestral diadem of royalty. But I beg to state that filtration must precede Federation. Before enticing the Princes into this Federation which, to all thinking minds, is the hall-mark of uncertainty, she must assure herself that she has filtered India of all the impurities that had been collecting for ages in the wide expanse of her population. No doubt, for the past eighty or hundred years, she succeeded wonderfully well in draining the country of deep-stained social and moral dirt such as suttee, pinda-rism, infanticide and similar evils. But has she yet filtered India of those impurities that overflow the land in an air of decency, the impurity of hypocrisy running

in the veins of self-styled patriots ; the impurity of self-interest throwing out its stench in the ambition of politicians who are not ashamed to parade in the purple robe of patriotism ; the impurity of oppression and injustice floating beneath official robbery ; the impurity of bribery and corruption swelling the pockets of blood-suckers who, under official mask, are as numerous as the dacoits of old ; the impurity of social and religious persecutions which the low caste suffer every moment of their existence at the hands of the celestial caste ; the impurity of jealousy which like the corroding cancer is eating into the very entrails of national life ; the impurity of political dishonesty which is being savagely belched out by a frothy platform and a mercenary press and renders it impossible to build up national character as the only basis on which political greatness can hope to rise ? And what can ooze out from a Federation of such impurities ? Nothing but dirty water. Is India to bathe in it to make herself clean ? Are the Princes to atone for the iniquities of British India ? To change the figure, without the necessary scaffolding, is Britain going to raise the stupendous fabric of Federation with responsibility at the centre on such a sinking foundation little realising what a crash it will be when it tumbles down hurling the princes and the people alike into the abyss of their common ruin ? Show me a building that has been constructed from top to bottom, and I will readily believe in Britain's capacity to raise India on this topsy-turvy constitution. Has the Nation that has been the pattern of Europe in the art of constitution-framing given the lie to the world's belief in the genius of the Anglo-Saxon race for Empire-building and Empire-holding ? Ah, if

only England cared to rummage her history she would find what a hard fight she had to put up for centuries with an unbending aristocracy to forge her people into power, which would certainly preclude her from pursuing a policy in India which is the very reverse of what she pursued at home.

The next fling in the Comedy of Errors in Defence. The chief actors in this rigmarole are our own gallant patriots. They say that the responsibility at the centre would evaporate into a constitutional sham if they did not grab at the gate, and they seem to be worried about their rupees, annas and pies. Since I am too feeble to handle this tough subject, I would quote from "India in 1930—31," pages 41. . .

"But it will perhaps not be out of place if we indicate briefly some of the outstanding points which are raised, by no means exclusively on the part of officials or recognized supporters of the existing administration, in opposition to the line of argument we have hitherto been summarizing. The first point put forward is that the dangers which the defence forces are intended to withstand are very much more serious and substantial than opponents of the Government are wont to assert,—a contention whose justification the reader will be able to appreciate by referring to the general description of the geographical aspects of the defence problem which is set forth in the earlier part of this Chapter. And apart from the peculiarities and magnitude of these dangers, it is argued on general grounds that an expenditure of Rs. 54·30 crores, or under £41,000,000, on the defence of a territory as large and populous as the whole of Europe excluding Russia, is not in the face of it excessive when

compared with that of other countries." The corresponding expenditure during 1930-31 of France, Italy and Germany, for example, amounted to £89,000,000, £50,000,000, and £34,000,000 respectively; the United States, with a population amounting to only about 120 millions as against India's 353 millions, and with land frontiers whose liability to violation is negligible, spent £172,000,000 on her defence forces during the same period; and the expenditure of Soviet Russia, whose total inhabitants, despite her geographical immensity, do not number much more than 140 millions, amounted to no less than £119,000,000. . . . If, therefore, the existing arrangements for the defence of India were to be seriously impaired, she would not only be deprived of the means of coping with external foes, but might quite conceivably disintegrate into a number of mutually hostile units, which would necessitate the maintenance of armaments on a much larger scale than at present. And further, were the connection with Great Britain to be forfeited, so would be the protection afforded by the British fleet, for whose upkeep the contribution India makes is so small as to be utterly disproportionate to the services she at present can obtain from it; and in view of the natural vulnerability of her coasts, to which attention has already been drawn, she would consequently have to face the prospect either of attack or of heavy expenditure in this direction also. Thus it is contended that there is no question whatever of the expenditure on defence being designed, by its magnitude, to starve the "nation-building" services, and that the plain fact is that were the military budget under present circumstances to be reduced substantially below the

existing level, all prospect of building a nation, or even of maintaining a reasonably efficient and satisfactory administration of any kind, would be jeopardized to an extent which would constitute a complete abnegation of statesmanship and sanity on the part of those at present responsible for the welfare of the Indian masses. . . . Supporters of the military authorities would urge that a country so profoundly divided within itself as India still is, ought on principle to have within her borders some such impartial co-ordinating force as the British Army provides; and that in relation to the country's total population the actual establishment maintained cannot reasonably be considered excessive, since as a rule, it does not amount to more than 1 British soldier for every 6,000 inhabitants. In times of internal disturbance it is a generally admitted fact that British troops prove of the greatest assistance to those responsible for the preservation of life and property, since the conflicting parties recognize that there are no reasons whatever why forces imported from without should tend to favour either of them; in consequence, it has become increasingly the custom, when serious communal disorders take place such as the country has been afflicted with in recent years, that the British troops, rather than units from the Indian Army, should be called in to deal with them."

The plausible charge that is levelled against Britain is that she is emasculating Indians. Let me ask: Is it the Muslim community that is rendered emasculate? Is it possible to conceive that that great race can ever be devoid of the fighting blood, a race which could behold

with enthusiastic pride in the vast field that stretches from one end of the world to the other their imperishable monument of chivalry and conquest raised by a blood that was shed at the mere call of the Crescent, a race which, enclosed as it is within the iron cage of the British rule, would impatiently dash out into the open field to assert which be the master of India, the Hindu or the Moslem? Or, is it the stalwart Punjabis, the lion-hearted Sikhs or the mountain-conquering Gurkhas whose heroism was at all times the admiration of the world, and whose services are even now requisitioned by the Government in every place? No; but is it the Brahman and non-Brahman races who form the major bulk of the population that deserve the charge of emasculation? To hold the British rule responsible for it is carrying coal to Newcastle. A slight reference to the Code of Manu and other statutes of the old Swaraj which for scores of centuries held these races as specimen eunuchs in the art of fighting would amply convince even the most sceptic of the utter want of sincerity in laying this foul charge at the door of the British rule. On the other hand, that very rule which is the target of the stupid condemnation of lying politicians, is mainly responsible for the exuberance of manliness now observable in these effeminate races. From the time that young Cassim planted the fiery Crescent upon the soil of Sindh till the time when young Clive floated the luminous Cross on the field of Plassey, the one predominant feature of India was emasculation. But England by giving India her own education has made her imbibe the spirit of her ennobling religion, the spirit of heroism as displayed by her gallant sons in the vast field of chivalry, the spirit of

her literary stalwarts, the spirit of European revolutions, the spirit of Greece and Rome. She has thus proved herself to be the very school of freedom and heroism. If not, is Mr. Gandhi launching his Civil Disobedience on India drawing his inspiration from the Code of Manu which would sink him and his tribe in everlasting ignominy to the level of a bondsman enchained to the feet of his Brahman masters gasping for very breath? Has the Congress come into being shaped by demons, Rakshasas and other evil spirits that fill the Indian lore? Has the Indian woman ceased to look upon man as her only god and begun to claim her rightful place in the social and political world plucking courage from the Padmapurana? Have the Depressed Classes and other downtrodden despised millions begun to crawl out of the gutter of humiliation being enlightened by the sacred canons of the old Swaraj which kept them through all the long ages of their vile existence in pre-historic barbarism like brute-beasts in the jungle of ignorance, immorality and filth? Political intelligentsia may rage and gnash their teeth at me for recounting these humiliating facts. But truth must be told.

Now, let us go to Mr. Gandhi for fresh light. Refuting the fear of an Englishman who warned him against the fearful consequences that might follow on the evacuation of India by the British if Non-co-operation succeeds, Mr. Gandhi writes in "Young India" in December 1920, "He (Mr. Stokes) conjures up before his mind the picture of India invaded by the Afghans from the North-west, plundered by the Gurkhas from the hills. For me, I say with Cardinal Newman, "I do not want to see

the distant vision, one step enough for me." The business is essentially religious. The business of every God-fearing man is to dissociate himself from evil in total disregard of consequences. God does not permit him to peep into the future. He follows truth, and although the following may endanger his very life, he knows that it is better to die in the way of God than to live in the way of Satan. Therefore, whoever is satisfied that the Government represents the activity of Satan has no choice left to him but to dissociate himself from it. However, let us consider the worst that can happen to India on a sudden evacuation of India by the British. What does it matter that the Gurkhas and the Pathans attack us? Surely, we would be better able to deal with their violence than we are with the continued violence, moral and physical, perpetrated by the present Government. Imagine however the worst, Japan overwhelming us from the Bay of Bengal, the Gurkhas from the hills and the Pathans from the North-west. If we do not succeed in driving them out, we make terms and drive them out at the first opportunity. This will be a more manly course than a helpless submission to an admittedly wrongful state? If India returns to her spirituality, it will react upon the neighbouring tribes. She will interest herself in the welfare of these hardy but poor people, and even support them if necessary, not out of fear but as a matter of neighbourly charity. She will have dealt with Japan simultaneously with the British. Japan will not want to invade India if India has learnt to consider it a sin to use a single foreign article that she can manufacture within her own borders. (We Indians, are extremely obliged to our political Moses for

his holy fervour to add one more commandment to God's ten, namely, 'Thou shalt not use a single foreign article,' as if the ten were insufficient to enable us to go to heaven which henceforward would not open its gate to us till it saw us tip-top with Gandhi cap and gunny shirt on. The law-giver goes on) We become prey to invasions if we excite the greed of foreign nations by dealing with them under a feeling of dependence on them. We must learn to be independent of every one of them." Bravo, Mahatmaji! But, I am sorry to say, he will not know the effect of his preaching in this brain-cracked fashion till he has fled in terror before the enemy whom he would feed and clothe out of neighbourly charity leaving his loin-cloth behind which is supposed to signify, under the spell of the British rule, a life of sacrifice and holiness and, in its appalling superstition, is responsible for placing no limit to his befooling a whole continent of people. Is the safety of India to be entrusted to the ravings of a man who is, as his own writings disclose him to be, the most dangerous and the most impracticable of visionaries that ever played out the human mind with wild and vicious fancies cloaked under religious fervour. For the dissipation of the scheme of destruction hatching in his head, I would request the British Government to take Mr. Gandhi and his admiring friend, the Rev. Mr. Andrews, in an aeroplane and show them round the borders of India so that they might see for themselves the kind of people perched on the cliffs of mountains marking time for a jump into India; and, beyond these, what powerful nations there are, armed with the fierceness of tigers, growling, watching and waiting for the moment when the Lion would say, "Good-bye" to India.

This leads us to conclude that we cannot possibly attach too weighty a consideration on the stern inevitability that is thrown upon the shoulders of the present administration. So far, our politicians, whether in Councils, or in their public associations, or in their press or platform or anywhere else, have not manifested their unquestionable loyalty to Britain so as to create confidence enough to associate Indians in this most responsible department of Indian administration, namely, Defence. The Congress with its stubborn attitude of opposition to Government by Civil Disobedience and other secret and subversive activities, and the Liberals and the Nationalists in fast sympathy with that rebel body, have forced upon Britain the vote of 'No confidence' in Indians in this grave matter. I repeat, so long as political ruse, by pulling the Congress wire in the name of a united Nationalism, throws dust in her eyes with sweet speeches which palpably cover their sinister motives, it is idle to expect her to suffer Indians to lay their hands on the gate.

What, dyarchy in Defence? The wildest political pervert with a heart for ruin could hardly conceive of a more dangerous design which would convert India into a limitless hunting ground for the ever-vigilant tigers abroad to spring in and have a free game. Has not Britain learnt a deep lesson from the immense havoc it worked in Provincial Legislatures particularly by Congressmen who automatically threw overboard every Government measure that was brought up with the wicked purpose of wrecking the constitution and for nothing else? To put it in a nut-shell, the dyarchy in

Defence, so vehemently urged by Indian delegates at the Round Table Conferences in London and the same reiterated with stronger emphasis in their public addresses in India, will be composed of two groups, the British and the Indian. The former, having the safety of India and the wider interests of the Empire at heart would naturally press for a measure requiring the immediate sanction of the Central Legislature, while the latter, just to show off that their voice must prevail and without the least scruple or consideration of the sanctity of the measure which calls for their urgent support might oppose it with a diplomatic glee and refuse to co-operate. And between the two stools, is India to come to the ground? Has not the Indian temperament given sufficient proofs of its non-co-operation on several occasions when the safety of India was at stake? What assurance is there that it will co-operate? On the India Safety Bill, the Finance Bill (1931), the Press Ordinance and Ordinances for crushing the Civil Disobedience Movement brought up for discussion before the Assembly, the rabid spirit of the Congress lurking in dubious loyalty manifested itself and was indulged in with the full vehemence of a foul attack on the Government. From these few instances, which could be multiplied if necessary, it is plain that unless and untill political honesty throwing aside the dastardly garb of duplicity expresses itself in clear and emphatic terms in the Central Legislature, it is sheer suicide on the part of Britain to associate Indians in the matter of Defence. An open enemy is more welcome than a false and calculating friend. There is respect for the Congress in its open hostility to Government, but not for the white-

caps who, like white-ants which eat up the entire plank leaving the upper board intact, enter the Councils with perjury upon their lips and perverseness in their hearts intent on the destructive tactics of undermining the authority of the Government in every possible way.

In spite of the boasted awakening of India supposed to lead to a united nationalism based on mutual trust, it is no secret to reveal that rich Indians keep their wealth in the custody of the Imperial and other Government banks, being sure that their money cannot be in safer hands. They have so much confidence in Indian banks! When such is the case with their material property, what right have the leaders at the Round Table Conferences in London and elsewhere to urge Britain to entrust the lives of 350 millions and a boundless Empire in the hollow bank of Indian hands? If it does not mean Responsibility at the Centre, hang the Centre and the Responsibility, and may the Defence of India be screwed to Britain's hands. Is India's safety to be staked simply because a few politicians, more intent on seeking their vain glory than the serious protection of an Empire, indulge in the wild talk of senseless expansion of Indians' power at the Centre? Indianisation of the Army must by all means get on at a reasonable speed. But the training ground must be sought elsewhere in India; never at the gate. Although the White Paper would have: "The Instrument of Instructions will also formally recognise the fact that the defence of India must to an increasing extent be the concern of the Indian people, and not of the British Government alone," still I for me would not agree with that policy which is

short-sighted and dangerous. You might impute a want of love for my Motherland that prompts me to talk so. Not at all. It is that very love that empowers me to express my conviction boldly on the life-and-death question of India and the Empire. Suppose all Europe is brought under one rule and Bosphorus remains the strategic point of the European Empire. Will an Englishman or a Frenchman be accused of unpatriotic motives if he, out of regard for the safety of his native land, openly suspects the Russian or the Turk as being in secret league with the enemies of the Empire and so objects to Bosphorus being placed in such a custody? Counting human weakness, particularly avarice for gold to be great, will I not be justified in imputing the charge of treachery to any one at least of so many Indian hands guarding the gate? Will any amount of patriotic demands proudly claimed on grounds of national self-respect be a bar indeed against the possible irruptions of powerful nations into India as an easy sequel to the treachery of a single Indian? Was not Babylon destroyed by the treachery of a priest who opened its gate to the enemy? When millions perish in a wholesale massacre, where will the Gandhis and the Saprus be to atone for the blood of innocent India? Speech is good at conferences and diplomacy may count as a state-craft; but prudence, practical, level-headed, far-sighted, statesmanly prudence is necessary elsewhere if India is to be spared the tragedy of unforeseen evils. If human life is not to be sported with as in pre-British days, responsibility must be held, not in the centre, but at the top. I do not emphasise this point exclusively of Britain and her rule in India. It holds the same for any

government worth the name. The weight of responsibility which overhangs an Empire of many nations should rest in one firm single hand, and is not a thing to be flirting about in the wild game of constitutional tussle. Therefore the safety of India does not fall within the purviews of polemics. It cannot so light-heartedly suffer the dangerous experiment of Indian capacity to fill the fastnesses of Afghanistan or climb the untrodden cliffs of the Kyber Pass. But, transcending all such foolish reveries, it clings on with a dogmatic faith to a power that has assured it in the incomparable achievements of 150 years of its rule.

While treating the subject of defence, we are drawn to the convivial bliss which our politicians try to effect by diplomatic speeches between the Army and the Central Legislature. Addressing a crowded meeting at Allahabad on 23rd March 1933, on the Army question as outlined in the White Paper, Sir Tej Saprú expressed dissatisfaction and said that a great deal of the ascerbity and the misunderstanding about the Army would disappear if the Legislature were brought into direct touch with the Army and if the Legislature were to feel that the Army was their Army and not an Army of occupation. But I beg to state with due deference to the eminent lawyer and politician that if the Army were brought into direct touch with the Legislature, it would indeed be no more an Army of occupation, but it would undoubtedly be an Army of crucifixion. It would then be consigned to the gibbet of ascerbity and humiliation imposed upon it by an all-powerful Legislature. Instead of fighting the enemy with a free and a powerful hand

as an Army of occupation, it would have to face every minute privation of its purse and paucity of its number as a result of the pin-prick will of the majority in the Council. And instead of guarding the people of India with devotion and enthusiasm as befitting a British Army which is also superbly responsible for the glorious achievements of the British rule in India, it would have to guard itself against the encroachments of the Legislature which, in the tussle that is certain to ensue between it and authority on 'national self-respect,' would degrade it to the level of a mercenary body that is called upon to fight for another man's country.

There is yet another aspect of the question. Our politician who has an extraordinary craze for cavil bombards Britain for her extravagance in spending most of the money she raises in India upon the Army. I grant it to satisfy his insatiable heart. But has she not, amongst heaps of blessings, given in exchange absolute protection to what every sensible Indian with a soul to feel for all that is ennobling and lovable in human nature prizes as the most sacred thing in India, the honour of her womanhood? Is it not infinitely more precious than the gold that is so vehemently coveted by the greedy monger? The British soldier is posted at the gate-way of India that he may protect with his life the modesty and the virginity of Indian mothers and maidens against the possible outrages of any invader, any beastly robber as he wont to do during three thousand years of Indian history with a hand to loot and a heart to lust. The maiden of India feels the rock of shelter under the Union Jack which for that purpose flies the highest in.

the world. She knows that her honour is safe till the enemy walks over the soldier's corpse. As an Indian I challenge my countrymen to show me a single instance where the women of India were molested by invading ruffians after England became the paramount power. Then why seek to modify a scheme which has reared upon the Himalayan rocks the impregnable citadel of India's safety preserved under the bristling guns of Britain ?

Allied to the subject of Defence is Law and Order. I cannot sufficiently denounce the iniquitous policy of placing Law and Order in the Ministerial list. Britain cannot possibly commit a more egregious blunder. In no other deviation of her policy is India's internal safety so jeopardised. No other deflection of statesmanship manifests the utter want of sanity so glaringly as in this direction. The mistake to be deplored here will bear no comparison to the mistake of the dyarchy in the Montford Reform. Those who know the inner secrets of the Indian temperament must confess their honest conviction that the moment Law and Order gets out of the Englishman's hands, there arises a condition from which the people will naturally recoil with horror as they will perceive the early dawn of the old Swaraj. It may be said that the Simon Commission has recommended it. But it is not the Simon Commission and the learned gentlemen that gave evidence before it in an academic fashion that are going to suffer. It is the common people, the people in the street, the people in the village, the people in the town that must have to endure all the tortures and the persecutions of the police whose

pretences for interference cannot be controlled by any power on earth and from whom the devil himself must beg for devices to entrap their victims by turning in their inimitable dexterity the Criminal Investigation Department into the Criminal Instigation Department. Hence arises the imperative demand that the Police which is the eye of the Government should at all times be provided with a powerful preserver in the head to protect it from the universal sore of corruption and tyranny. The judiciary will fare no better. Sir John Simon may apply all the art of a lawyer and adduce evidences from weighty sources to corroborate his case for letting the cat out of the Englishman's bag, and those who have heard him during the Parliamentary debate on the White Paper might have been swayed by the force of his logic. But a poor man like me can boast of no such accomplishment wherewith to prove my case except by the logic of the little mouse which shivering with fright in its tiny hole under the inefficient and generally corrupt administration of Indians,—and the Police has the widest scope for corrupt practices, will be eaten up wholesale by the hungry cat let loose. It may be that it falls short of autonomy if Law and Order were not transferred to the Province. It is purely a technical phrascology, a constitutional makeshift which may hold good for other countries, but which India may well afford to step over. What is food for one may be poison to another. Are abstract ideas to be suffered to prevail over the concrete good of the people for whom alone Law and Order exists? The delegates to the Round Table Conference are all conscientious and honourable men and so are they that believe in its deliberations.

But it is my duty before God to enter a protest, a solemn, conscientious, emphatic protest against the folly of this transference which means placing helpless India in a jungle before a ferocious wolf revelling in his unchained ramblings. You would surely call it a most beneficent Reform when the flesh has been torn from the mangled body and the terrified victim falls to the ground under the tortures of its cruel snap. Nay more. It would inevitably sink into a vast cesspool of corruption and inefficiency which, in due course, filling the land with its foul contamination might cause India her final disruption and doom. It is no use crying *mea culpa* then. Prudence is the better part of policy. If the welfare of the Indian peoples should form the guiding inspiration of her policy, if the unfortunate country should be spared the infliction of the internal plague of extortion, lawlessness and the recrudescence of the old Swaraj when thuggee, dacoity and countless crimes had their hey-day flourishing under powerful patronage, then here is the key: Don't disturb Law and Order. It is in the right place.

A great deal of unpleasantness and heart-burn of political India could be easily set aside if only Britain, while giving India a constitution, placed in the forefront of her proposals her stern responsibility she has to exercise in behalf of the unwieldy masses whose welfare forms the first and foremost concern of her administration, not losing sight of the fact that the mentality of educated India in its intrepid haste and selfishness which cause innumerable safeguards and special responsibilities to sit tight on the proposals of the White Paper,

stands violently opposed to it. It pays also to bear in mind that one of the cleverest performances of the opportunity-seeking politicians of India is to make capital out of some ill-qualified statement which might have dropped from the unwary lips of some British statesmen in a moment of excitement or enthusiasm. And there is no Viceroy of recent times whose ethical exhortations are so eagerly snatched by them to establish their hopeless case for Self-government for India as Lord Irwin. Here is an instance. "The only way" said His Excellency on leaving the shores of India in regard to the constitutional settlement between India and Britain, "of achieving the end is by a synthesis of the best statesmanship of the East and West, by the collaboration of the two partners working side by side, not in any huckstering spirit as to who would get the best of a bad bargain, not with a view to this or that individual, or this or that community gaining advantage or victory over a rival, but with the sole purpose of creating and perpetuating a prosperous, strong, contented India, embracing both the British India and the States as an honoured member of the British Commonwealth of Nations". Never were nobler words uttered by an English Nobleman to express the lofty sentiment of a noble people. But, unfortunately in the case of India, they fall flat. Is the creation of such a condition possible? It has been tried over and over again for the past fifty years, and its evolution is still a dream. Why? A Greater Viceroy has predicted about two thousand years ago in His parable of the sower that the happy evolution which is enshrined in the heart of a great friend of political India, is a perfect Utopia in a land like India. Britain has sown the seed of constitu-

tional liberty on the Indian soil. But the soil in most parts is too barren with illiteracy and ignorance to allow the seed to grow. In some parts it is imbedded with the rocks of fierce communalism, which would not suffer it to take root. And where the seed is thrown by the way-side, the Congress birds come flapping down and eat it up. But the little that can grow needs to be well watered by good will. But where is the good-will to be found in a land of ill-will where every individual, every community, every race, every caste and every creed bargains for its own interest and advantage? And what is the evidence itself that is being given before the Parliamentary Select Committee but a vast volume of rival claims put forward by the various sections of the warring society of India with the desperate object of making the most of a bad bargain? It is not at any rate possible at present to conceive of an India created and perpetuated into a strong, prosperous and contented member of the British Commonwealth of Nations. Leave that to time; but now to facts.

England's great blunder is her thoughtlessness in not balancing, as much as possible, all classes and creeds in the matter of education. She has left absolutely in the impenetrable ignorance and superstition the great bulk of the people and given undue preference to a few already enlightened classes like the Brahmans in Colleges and Universities maintained at an enormous cost. And the result is the few educated classes aspiring to high offices without an adequate capacity and character to fill them, have cliqued into coteries, each changing its colour and creed as occasion demands but all combined in the

common quest for lucre. And the White Paper is the latest product of a constitutional fight persistently carried on between educated Indians who, though a microscopic body in comparison with the Indian population as a whole, have grown clever enough and strong to bully, in the name of the people over whom they would assume self-imposed responsibility, the British Government administered by a handful of Englishmen practically glued to their desks and confined to their clubs, and the British Nation and Parliament who, by reason of the great distance between them are kept, though not absolutely in the dark, yet in the sombre light of deception as to the real situation in India. And this gives them the vantage ground which they utilise to the best of their capacity and cunning. No wonder, they have been the chief instrument in forging a constitution of an Indian Government which, in spite of the safeguards it vouches for the Minorities, is the most fanciful that ever tickled the imagination of a fiction-writer. For which other mind can conceive of such a reckless document? If the Swaraj of old or the Indian Government had to its credit the slightest redeeming feature as far as justice is concerned; if it possessed the least pretence to humanity as far as it relates to subject peoples especially the lower orders who form the back-bone of India; if it ceased to reveal itself in the condition of the masses who are to-day the living history of the terrors it inflicted through all the long centuries of its deified rule, then the Indian Government which the White Paper is holding forth before the people to capture their imagination with honied assurance of their safety and progress under it, may have some meaning. But the man who has eyes to

see and a soul to feel the reality of India as she is, gets shocked at the idea of India drifting back to her old rotten state, and therefore not unreasonably discredits the pretensions of the White Paper which virtually places the Government of India in the hands of Indians. "We take responsibility, we ask for responsibility, we demand responsibility, because we have got that confidence that we would be able to carry on our affairs in a decent manner and I feel certainly in a much better manner than British administrators have done or could ever do." Says Mr. Gandhi. And by transferring just at this juncture British responsibility to Indian politicians, does not Britain sacrifice her prestige and honour in endorsing this bluff of Mr. Gandhi? The truth is that, seeing India well swept and cleaned and garnished under the British Rule, the old devil of Swaraj with its black face whitened a bit with the toilet powder of the White Paper comes back again claiming to be the friend of the people. But need I say that the day that Britain devolves her responsibility upon Indians whilst they are a good way off to shoulder that responsibility, the day that she shirks her duty, the duty she has been performing with a devotion and enthusiasm unequalled in the annals of any other nation on Earth in the sphere of administration, the day that she ceases to be what she has been for the past 150 years of her rule, a friend of the people, a friend to console them in their afflictions, to protect them against their enemies both from within and without, to enlighten them with her own culture, to push them onwards in the path of progress and civilisation, in fine, a friend that was their very shield and shelter in everything, that day will see her denuded of

her Imperial splendour and her Imperial sovereignty, and in her prostration she will lie a lifeless corpse to be devoured by greedy vultures that are hovering over her present greatness; while India, which will be the victim of the repercussions of the ill-fated England, will be born again in her history to tell her old tale of universal injustice, lawlessness and crime getting hold of the country and disrupting her society till some powerful nation steps in to sing the funeral dirge over her grave.

The whole embroglio on which the White Paper is based is its erroneous belief in the representative character of Indians, a coterie here and a coterie there who have become daring exploiters of English education claiming to represent the people. As a matter of fact, there is no such thing as the representative character in any body in the whole of India. I solemnly deny it. I deny it in the Hindu Mahasabha which presumes to stand as the champion of Hindu culture and civilisation and as the accredited exponent of Hinduism, which claim has been exploded by the unparalleled fury with which Orthodoxy assailed the rebel Hinduism in consequence of its allegiance to Mr. Gandhi, the protagonist of the heresy as propounded in the case of untouchability. As recently as June 8, 1933, we learn from the papers that Sir Chamilal Setalvad told a Press representative among other things, "I would like it to be clearly understood that neither Dr. Moonje nor the Hindu Mahasabha represents the bulk of the educated Hindu community who do not belong to that body and owe no allegiance to it." I deny it in the All-India Muslim Conference of a purely political character which has

provoked a counter All-India Muslim Conference which cut deep into each other's politics in recent times at the various centres of India. I deny it in the All-India Christian Conferences held separately by Catholics and Protestants whose resolutions were mutually abhorred as they clashed with their rival interests. I deny it in the All-India Depressed Class Conference whose real interests no one knows and no one can possibly know as, I am saying this with profound grief, it is completely enveloped in the darkness of illiteracy and ignorance, incapable of any representation. And I deny it point blank in the Indian National Congress which puts forth its unfounded ambition to rule the country, claiming to represent all India, having jurisdiction over her races and consequently the final tribunal to settle all matters of their social, political and religious concerns. But how hollow, how ridiculously preposterous that claim is can be verified by a single test. Now that the Congress "king," the Congress leaders and the Congressmen are all shut up in prison and their activities laid at rest by Ordinances, the whole of India should put up an uncompromising, unceasing and vigorous fight with Government for their release. But do they do so? They don't bother about them anymore than they would for common criminals who come in and go out of a penitentiary every day. To them their existence is a matter for memory.

To be candid, representation in India is sought to be established by politicians in the same way as magicians produce trees and flowers and fruits from apparent nothing. A few interested persons calling themselves

representatives of the people congregate at a convenient place, draft a resolution which may in fact run counter to the sentiments of the people whom they would represent,—a most uncalled-for act of intruders and interlopers, and wire it off to the Premier or to the Viceroy for his prompt decision touching a question of an 'All India' character. The Poona Pact is a case in point. It is neither authorised nor recognised by Hindus. It is a covert agreement contracted with a lightning speed and in a melo-dramatic mesmerism between a few Congress Hindus of extreme opinion and a fewer men of the Depressed Class who eagerly snatched at the bait thrown to them by political ruse on the plea of saving Mr. Gandhi's life which he staked in that queer fashion to coerce Government to his venomous scheme. But the voluminous reports that appeared in the Press, the deputations, the monster meetings and all the happenings in India soon after showed that the Pact was a downright sham deliberately planned to throw dust in the eyes of the Government and pilfer some political rights for a purpose of their own in the name of a dying man. The Prime Minister, on receipt of the cable, ought to have said to himself, "It matters little if Gandhi goes; but I, as the Premier representing, not the frivolous freaks of a sentimental people, but the grave concerns of Imperial Britain and the safety and the welfare of the great continent of India, must be first assured that the Pact was duly agreed upon by the great Hindu community." But he did not do so. The jugglers gave him no time to think or move. He too succumbed to the political hypnotism practised upon him by the flashes of the wire. And so, the counter-

feit coin has found currency among the proposals of the White Paper which is similarly fraught with other proposals formulated by the "agreed demands" of the so-called representatives of the Indian peoples. The Sarda Act stands as a sign post wherein can be read how much representation there is even in elected Legislatures.

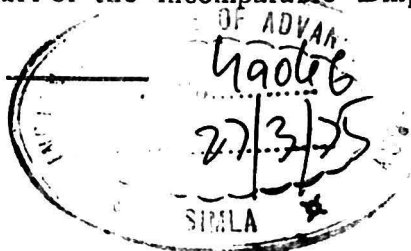
But then, is India's representation to go by default? Oh, no. Turn to the other side of the picture. That representation is solemnly and silently demonstrated by the unassuming Civilian toiling at his desk from morn till night; by the unflagging Engineer roasting in the sun at his works; by the unobtrusive School-master, the real revolutionary of India, imparting English education and its ideals in schools and colleges; by the patient doctor tending the sick and the plague-stricken in hospitals; by the policeman standing on the road under a merciless sun to see that all goes well with the people; by the heavy-pacing soldier posted on the snowy caps of the Himalayas ready with his rifle against a daring intruder; and, above all, by the blood of chivalry shed in the cause of humanity on many a glorious field in India which keeps the heart of administration warm in the performance of its duty as it steers the great Empire of India upon the broad ocean of Imperial Sovereignty through adverse currents of Non-co-operation and Civil Disobedience and howling tempests of anarchism and revolution, keeping clear of the reefs and rocks of communal riots, steady and safe to her haven of Freedom. That is representation. And who could claim it? But the Nation that is full to the brim with achievements is

silent. Yes, in that natural silence worthy of a great nation is their grave responsibility thundered out, as it were, from the brazen throats of ten thousand guns.

"We serve by ruling," in the noble utterance that emanates from the soul of every true-blooded Englishman in his connection with India. It is the service of humanity placed at the disposal of the poor, the persecuted and the down-trodden millions all the world over, in evidence thereof the Sun which is the emblem of Divine goodness never sets on the British Empire. This is no time or place to dwell at length on the glorious deeds of England in India in this divine cause. If, however, we look back upon the path of history, we find that her rule, viewed in the achievements of the past one hundred years, is but a means to an end, which is the consummation of her political unity and independence to be accomplished by the moral resurrection of the great mass of people from a condition imposed upon them by ages of despotism and persecution. And while the process of their elevation is steadily going on under her hands, India is surprised with a Constitution which tends to undo all her noble work and put the clock of India back. Is England prepared for a huge vampirism in place of an orderly Empire?

Sons and Daughters of Britain, I beg to address you as a grand Jury before whom I have ventured to plead the case of India, a Jury composed of stout hearts and sterling minds whom nothing in the world however mighty and tempting, no amount of subtlety employed in the art of seduction can prejudice, who are not swayed by party spirit nor committed to any political creed but are there being empanelled by the tribunal of British

justice to discharge a great and solemn duty as citizens of a great Empire, and respectfully invite you to give your verdict upon the case on the strength of the evidences adduced in this little book which stand out before you like the hills on the bosom of the earth ; a verdict which will decide the issue that lies between the British Rule which trusts as it always trusted to Divine Wisdom in the guidance of government and the bogus rule of political India resting upon flowery speeches, paper resolutions and empty promises with nothing tangible to back them up and the unproven administrative capacity of limitless ambition which, if given effect to, would bury a whole continent in the ashes of universal destruction ; a verdict which, far from being the cackling of a jungle fowl, will be the very scream of the Royal eagle floating highest in the firmament of Imperial sovereignty ; a verdict which, emanating with the seal of the mightiest power on earth, will call for a Constitution, the most practical and prudent and therefore the best for India, that will keep, as it has kept for the past one hundred and fifty years, the 700 Princes and 350 millions of His Majesty's loyal subjects perfectly immune from foreign invasions and internal wars and disorders, give them with living proofs of their reality abundance of peace and prosperity all round and elevate them *step by step* in political advancement till, in the fullness of time, a grand Federated India arises before the enraptured gaze of mankind in full splendour and beauty as an integral part of the incomparable Empire of Britain.



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