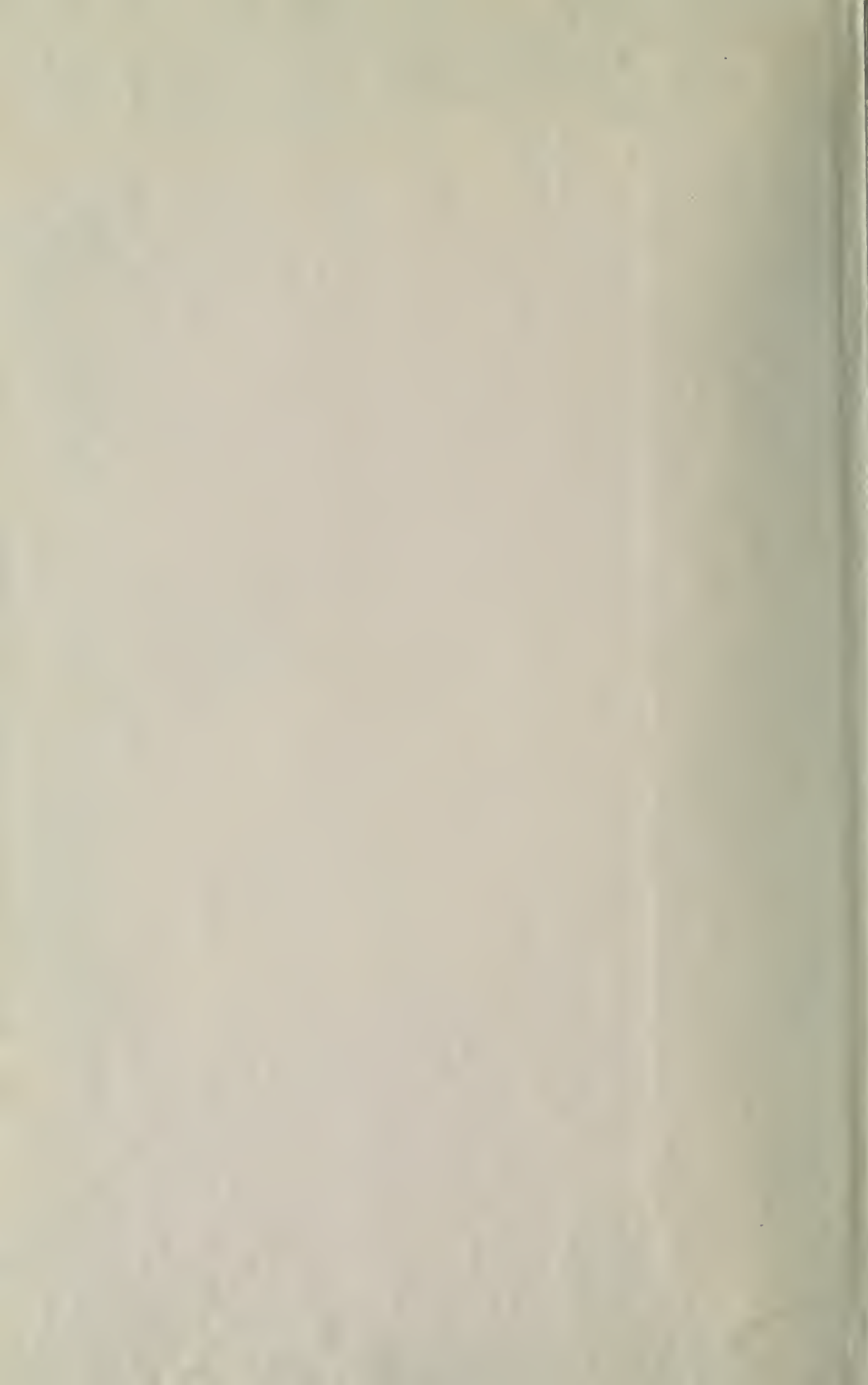
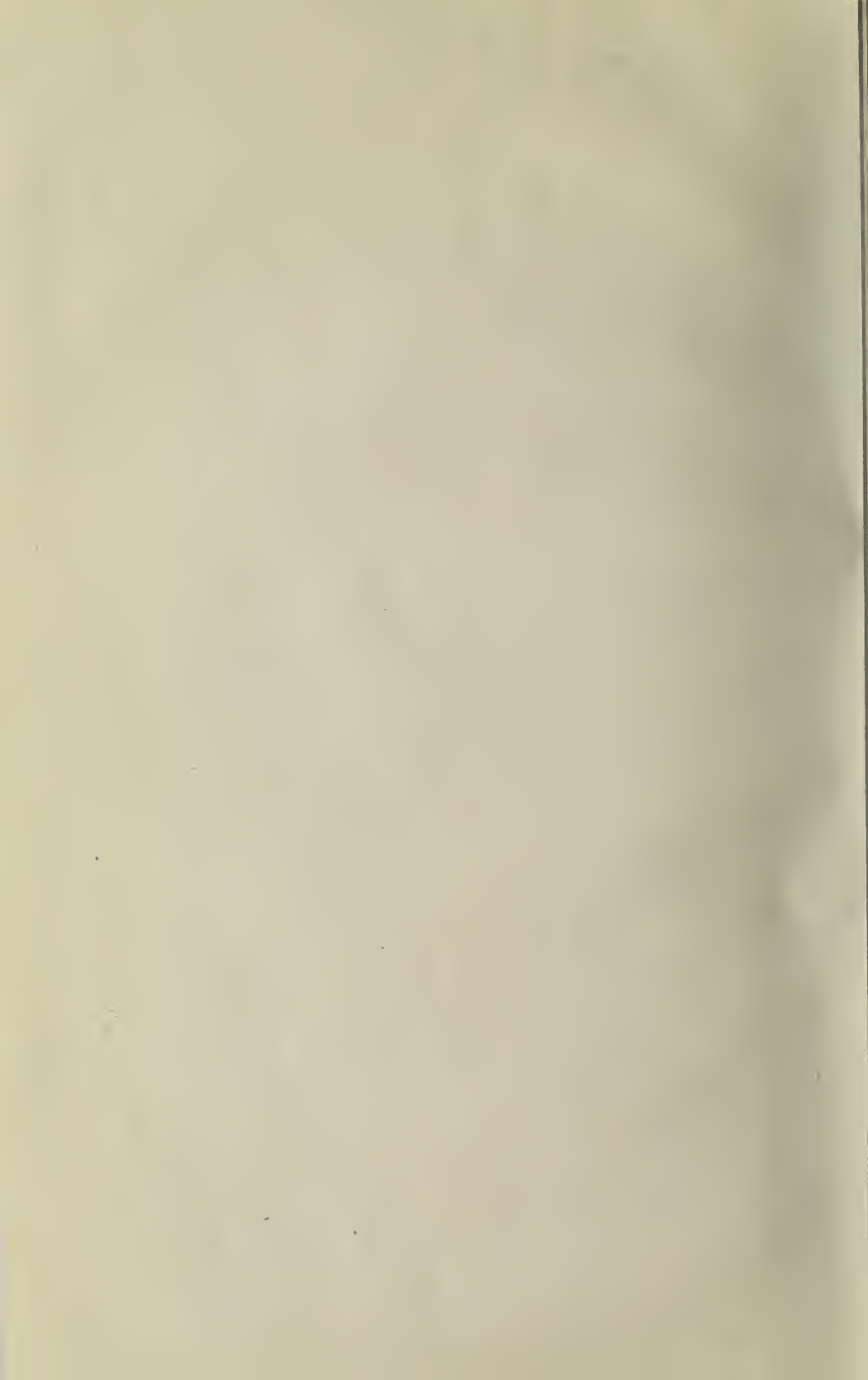


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All-India Moslem League

1918 Session, Delhi.



Presidential Address.

Delivered by

The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Haq.

December 30th, 1918.



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Brethren of the Muslim League and Gentlemen,

You have been pleased to summon me, a mere commoner from a corner of the Indian continent, to bear the responsibility of presiding over the deliberations of a gathering composed of the best exponents of Muslim political thought, and representing ideals which are moulding the minds of the present generation into higher and nobler conceptions of progress and liberty for the nationhood of India. The honour that you have thus conferred on an insignificant and a humble comrade is unbounded, and evokes my warmest gratitude; but the responsibility is also commensurate with the honour, especially at the present moment when the dark and sinister clouds which had been lowering over the political horizon of the Muslim World have at last floated into the sky and threaten to burst over the heads of our co-religionists in all the regions of the Globe. At a moment of such supreme crisis in the history of our community, the position of a President of the Muslim League is one of unprecedented difficulty, and I hope I can count upon your indulgent cooperation to help me in conducting the proceedings of this meeting in a manner worthy of the great organisation to which we have the honour to belong, and in keeping with its past traditions of guiding into lines of progressive and ordered development the political activities of the Mussulmans of India.

2. Brethren, we meet to-day under circumstances and conditions somewhat different from those of the last four years when we used to hold our deliberations with the shadow of death hanging over millions of homes all over the world- The din of conflict and the clash of arms has ceased, and we are all looking forward to a lasting and enduring peace which will give the amplest opportunity to a weary world to repair the wastages on humanity, and the damage done to culture and civilization. Peace however is yet a mere distant

Muslim apprehensions regarding Turkey.

prospect and it is difficult to foresee how the mutual jealousies and rancorous envy of the European nations will harmonize with the essential requirements of a real and effective peace. To Mussalmans all over the world, the present times must be full of intense anxiety. The war, which has ended so dramatically in rejoicings for the Allies, has unfortunately brought in its train the most gloomy forebodings to Muslim minds. One by one the Muslim kingdoms of the world have fallen a prey to the Earth-hunger of the Christian Powers of Europe, inspite of their vaunted declarations of anxiety to respect the freedom of small nationalities; Morocco, Tunis, Algiers and even Egypt tell a dismal tale of unprovoked aggression of the strong against the weak; only the other day, the strangulation of Persia sent a thrill of horror throughout the Muslim world, and now the Christian powers of Europe seem to be gloating over the impending dismemberment of Turkey. To us, the Indian Mussalmans, the fate of Turkey cannot but be a matter of the deepest concern, for with it is closely interwoven the question of the Khalifate and of the guardianship of the holy places of Islam. We are often told that England has more Mahomedan subjects than even any of the Mahomedan powers of the world; but many a time within living memory the responsible Ministers of the Crown in England have shown an utter disregard for the feelings and sentiments of the millions of His Majesty's Mussalman subjects in India. Over the achievements of British diplomacy and statesmanship in the past we are ready to draw a veil, but it is time to remind British statesmen that it is politically unsound and against the teachings of history to indulge in heavy drafts on the loyalty of a subject people. "It is the last straw that breaks the camel's back" is an English and not an Indian Proverb; and although the Indian Mussulman may be a greater miracle of endurance than even the proverbial camel, it is well that our rulers should remember that there are moments when Nature revolts at constant and never-ending sacrifices at the altar of loyalty. Very little logic is needed to demonstrate the fact that the practi-

cal annihilation of the Military powers of Islam in the world cannot but have a far reaching effect on the mind of even the loyal Mussalmans of India. It is therefore a matter of the deepest regret that at the forth-coming Peace Conference, the Mussalmans of India would be wholly unrepresented and that the most weighty decisions on questions affecting the sentiments and feelings of 70 millions of His Majesty's Indian subjects will be arrived at in the absence of a proper representation of their interests. Recent utterances of responsible British Ministers have hardly been of an assuring character. Only the other day, Lord Robert Cecil declared in Parliament that Turkey had shown an utter incapacity for ruling subject races and he gave a plain hint as to how the Allies contemplate dealing with Turkey.

3 But has England, I ask, shown any conspicuous capacity for ruling subject races? Tall talk and low performances may be amongst the many and varied privileges of Englishmen, but do they seriously realize what the verdict of history is likely to be on the achievements of their own countrymen in India? To the average Englishman the present fabric of Indian administration is an abiding monument to the constructive genius of the British race and of England's brilliant success in ruling an Eastern Empire. Englishmen think of the Indian Administration as the Grand Duke thought of the British Constitution prior to 1832. It is from Heaven; it is sacro-sanct; and even the Viceroy and the Secretary of State, in promulgating their report on Indian Reforms could not withhold a glowing tribute to the high purpose and honorable aim of the generations of Englishmen who have been responsible for shaping the present administration in India. That there are reasons for an Englishman's legitimate pride in England's work in India, no honest critic of British rule has ever sought to deny. England has conferred on the people of India, what is after all the greatest of human blessings, Peace. She has introduced western education, bringing an ancient and civilised

England's
opportunity
in India.

nation in touch with modern thought, modern sciences, modern institutions and life. She has built up an Administration which, though it requires reform with the progress of the times, is yet strong and efficacious. She has framed wise laws, and has established courts of Justice, the purity of which is as absolute as in any country on the face of the earth. These we all admit; and cheerfully put to the lasting credit and glory of England. But there is also another side of the picture which Englishmen are too often apt to forget and it is necessary to hold the mirror up to actual facts in order to temper the glow of self-satisfaction which Englishmen always feel when contemplating the achievements of their countrymen in India. No Englishman can honestly deny that England's opportunity in India has been unique for leaving an enduring mark on history in regard to matters of enlightened and beneficent administration. There is hardly any instance in recorded annals of any age or clime to furnish a parallel to the woeful and distressing figure of afflicted India when, torn with internal strifes and dissensions, she welcomed England as a deliverer sent down by Heaven to give her the blessings of peace and ordered Government. England accepted the responsibility and grasped the sceptre of Imperial sway over a confiding people with profuse declarations of those noble maxims relating to the principles of good Government with which Western nations have so often hypnotised the senses of Eastern peoples. On one side there was the amplest confidence and trust, and on the other the most solemn pledges which Rulers ever gave to their subjects. How have those pledges been kept, and how has the confidence which India reposed in England been honoured, during a century and a half of British rule in this country? Two divergent types of answers are given to these questions by two distinct classes of critics. The apologists of British Rule are constantly referring to the increasing prosperity of the country and the people; the advocates of the rival view are as incessantly dilating upon the rapidly growing and alarming impoverishment of both

the country and the people. Since the two irreconcilable views cannot both be right, the question arises, which view represents the real truth? A little consideration of the present economic condition of India readily supplies the correct answer.

4. About 17 years ago, on the 16th August 1901, Lord George Hamilton then Secretary of State for India uttered the following memorable words in introducing in Parliament the Annual Financial Statement concerning India :—

Lord George
Hamilton's
test.

“There is a small school in this country (England) as well as in India who are perpetually asserting that our rule is bleeding India to death.....I admit at once that if it could be shewn that India has retrograded in material prosperity under our rule we stand self-condemned, and we ought no longer to be entrusted with the control of that country.”

The challenge contained in the above statement brings the rival theories to an issue, and supplies a test by which we can judge of the real and actual results of British rule in India. Be it remembered that it is a test laid down by no less a personage than the Secretary of State himself and the bureaucracy must be prepared to stand or fall by the result of such a test.

5. How stand the facts? One of the most distressing features of modern Indian life is the frequency and intensity of the most terrible famines with which humanity is faced in any part of the globe. So much so is this a fact that India is now regarded as chronically famine stricken, and the misery and dissolation attendant on the acutest of famine visitations have ceased to have any extraordinary horrors for the Indian people. With that calm resignation to the inevitable which is the Oriental's last resort, the Indian now recognizes that famines have come to stay, and this melancholy feeling has at last woven itself into the very warp and woof of the vital strings of his daily life. These are facts which even the rulers have had to admit, although

Famines in
India chronic. Comparison with
Famines in
pre British
Rule. Terrible mortality from
Famines.

they are careful to disclaim all blame and to try and thrust the responsibility for all famines on the shoulders of a fitful and negligent Providence. It is true that a vast country like India with its immense population can never be absolutely free from such visitations, and no one denies that famines were not unknown before the advent of British Rule. Mussulman historians have left authentic records of the events of Indian history for the whole period of Mussulman rule in India, and it is not difficult to form a correct comparison between famines in pre-British days with those that have occurred since the establishment of British Rule. Careful investigations show that the famines in pre-British days were distinguished from famines under British rule in three important particulars; they were all local and never approached, in extent or intensity, the famines under British Rule; secondly, they were less frequent; and thirdly, they were less destructive. The following analysis is given by Mr. Digby in his book (Prosperous British India):—

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-----|----------|--|
| In the Eleventh Century | 2 | Famines, | both local. |
| „ Thirteenth | „ 1 | „ | around Delhi. |
| „ Fourteenth | „ 3 | „ | all local. |
| „ Fifteenth | „ 2 | „ | both local. |
| „ Sixteenth | „ 3 | „ | all local. |
| „ Seventeenth | „ 3 | „ | ‘General’; area not defined. |
| „ Eighteenth (to 1745) | „ 4 | „ | North—Western Provinces; Delhi; Sind (twice); all local. |

For the purpose of comparison, let us take the nineteenth century alone and we find the following facts from authentic official records:—

| | | | Deaths. |
|-------------|----------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1st period, | 25 years | Five Famines. | Perhaps 1,000,000 |
| 2nd | „ „ | Two „ | „ 500,000 |
| 3rd | „ „ | Six „ | Recorded 5,000,000 |
| 4th | „ „ | Eighteen „ | Estimated 26,000,000 |

The total mortality according to official records between 1854 to 1901 was nearly 30 millions. Stated roughly, says Mr. Digby, famines and scarcities have been four times as numerous during the last thirty years of the nineteenth century as they were one hundred years earlier, and four times more wide spread. "The famines," says Mr. Romesh Dutt, "which have dissolated India within the last quarter of the nineteenth century are unexampled in their extent and intensity in the history of ancient or modern times. By a moderate calculation, the famines of 1877 and 1878, of 1889 and 1892, of 1897 and 1900, have carried off fifteen millions of people. The population of a faire-sized European country has been swept away from India within twenty-five years. A population equal to half of that of England has perished in India within a period which men and women still in middle age, can remember." (Economic History of India under early British Rule.) Mr. Digby has calculated that whereas the loss of life owing to wars in all the world during 107 years (1793-1900) has been about five millions, the loss of life in India from famines alone in only ten years (1891-1900) has been over nineteen millions.

The fact of the frequency and devastating character of these famines having been proved, the question naturally arises, to what are all these repeated famines due? The answer is writ large on the records of the economic history of India under British Rule. These famines, though terrible enough in their meloncholy death roll are only an indication of a greater evil *viz* the sad, the steady, the rapidly growing impoveishment of the Indian people. Officials some times complain that Indian critics of British Rule are apt to hold the British Government responsible for sorrows and sufferings which are not of human origin. They maintain that famines are due to rain failure, and being the direct result of freaks of nature, are absolutely beyond human control. This specious defence however hides the real truth. Failure of crops or

scarcity of food-products may be directly due to rain failure or monsoon disturbances; but the destruction of life due to such scarcity of food, approximating to famine conditions, are solely due to the fact that the people are now too poor to stand any strain, even the slightest. They are so resourceless, and so absolutely without any savings, that when crops fail within any one area, they are unable to buy food from neighbouring provinces rich in harvest. Scarcity of food in particular areas may be due to natural causes but the want of resisting power is due to the poverty of the people. The failure of rains destroys crops in particular areas, but it is the poverty of the people which brings on severe famines.

It is hardly necessary to waste time by trying to establish a fact so apparent and obvious as the appalling poverty of the Indian people. It has been officially admitted that the average income per head in India is much below £ 2/- per year, while in the United Kingdom the average income per head exceeds £45/-. "Except in very rich districts," says Mr. Dutt (*India in the Victorian Age*), "the agricultural labourer does not get even 3d a day; his average earnings scarcely come to over 2d per day. The appalling poverty and joylessness of his life under such conditions cannot be easily pictured. His hut is seldom rethatched, and affords little shelter from cold and rain; his wife is clothed in rags; his little children go without clothing. Of furniture he has none; an old blanket is quite a luxury in the cold weather; and if his children can tend cattle, or his wife can do some work to eke out his income, he considers himself happy. It is literally a fact, and not a figure of speech, that agricultural labourers and their families in India generally suffer from insufficient food from year's end to year's end. They are brought up from childhood on less nourishment than is required even in the tropics, and grow up to be a nation weak in physique, stunted in growth, easy victims to disease, plague or famine".

And yet from the earliest times of which history makes mention, India had the highest reputation for the wealth and prosperity of its inhabitants. Its fabulous riches used to excite the cupidity of western nations, and its trade and commerce were at once the envy and admiration of the world. It was this wealth and all this trade and prosperity that lured the traders of foreign nations to India. But it is not merely the glory of a distant past for which India has reasons for legitimate pride. Even at the very beginning of British Rule, the prosperity of India is amply proved by the testimony of Englishmen themselves. There was a time not more than a hundred years ago, when Peral was far richer than the United Kingdom itself. When Clive entered Murshidabad in 1757 he wrote of the city as "being as extensive, populous, and as rich as the city of London, with this difference that there were more individuals in Murshidabad possessing infinitely greater property than in the British Capital." "Less than a hundred years ago," wrote Sir Henry Cotton in 1890, "the whole commerce of Dacca was estimated at one crore of rupees, and its population at 2000,000 souls.

It is sometimes contended that flourishing and populous cities springing up on all sides, the large and growing volume of trade and commerce and the heavy demand in the country for articles of luxury are unmistakeable indications of the growing prosperity of India under British Rule. To a superficial observer, or to a holiday tourist such an impression is certain to be produced; but the impression is so misleading as to be wholly false. The India that meets the eye of the superficial observer or the tourist is not the real India; what meets the eye is merely a thin veneer of western civilization which hardly conceals the squalid misery and poverty that really exists; it serves the purpose of a brilliant screen behind which, peering through the glamour, the tumult and bustle superficially indicative of wealth and prosperity, is to be seen the sad, the dismal,

Erroneous impressions about India.

the sorrowful picture of the real India, lying prostrate at the feet of an alien bureaucracy, with faint indications of the riches and the wealth that once were hers, but now gasping for vëry life by reason of the terrible poverty which prevents her securing the barest sustenance necessary for mere existence. This is the picture which the British people have seldom the chance to see, but which painfully forces itself on the attention of all Indians who have eyes to observe and the heart to feel for the miseries of their motherland. On the question of the erroneous impressions generally conveyed by India's foreign trade, I would crave your indulgence for a few minutes to quote the remarks of Mr. Ramesh Dutt :—

“It is also necessary to guard against the unwisdom of judging the condition of the people of India by the volume of India's foreign trade. Englishmen find this a fairly correct test in their own country, and make the natural mistake of applying it to India. Englishmen live to a large extent on their commerce and manufacture. The sale of their manufactures enables them to buy food from foreign markets. The profits of commerce and of the carrying trade add to their wealth. The volume of trade is a fairly correct index of their national income.

But the circumstances are different in India. The external trade is carried on by foreign merchants with foreign capital. The profits of the trade go to Europe and do not remain in India. The earnings of the foreign trade are not the earnings of the people. The volume of the foreign trade is not an index to their national income. In the year 1881-82, under Lord Ripon's reign of peace and comparative prosperity, the total imports and exports of India were 83 millions sterling. In 1900-1901, a year of famines and distress, the total imports and exports were 122 millions. Who that knows India, or has heard anything of India, will say that India earned more, or was better fed, and was more prosperous, in 1900-1901 than in 1881-82?

Commerce, even when carried on by foreign capital and foreign merchants, is beneficial to a country. It brings in articles cheaper than the country can produce. And it also brings a higher price for the home-produce than can be obtained at home. In both these ways commerce is beneficial, even though the profits of trade go to other lands. But in India, even this benefit is restricted because her foreign trade is *forced*, not *natural*. The excise imposed on cotton manufactures restricts the production of articles which the country could produce. And the Land Revenue system of India, as well as the Home Charges, *forces the export of food grains*, much of which the country needs for its own population. Thus large imports of cotton goods into India are secured by restrictions on the Indian industry. And large exports of food are compelled by a heavy Land Tax and a heavy Tribute."

The first portion of the query put by Lord George Hamilton must therefore be answered, according to the test laid down by him, by saying that **India has retrograded in material prosperity under British Rule.**

To what, then, is this retrogradation due? Has it been due to causes beyond human control, or can the responsibility for it be traced to any policy of British administration? A little consideration will show that the retrogradation is directly traceable to the policy which has hitherto guided British Rule, and is due mainly to two causes; 1st, the British Administration has not promoted or widened the sources of national wealth in India; secondly, that all available wealth has been actually drained out of the country by a system of administration which could not have left any wealth in India without directly falsifying the fundamental and axiomatic truths of Political Economy. These are serious charges to make, but I have no other alternative than state the truth.

Causes of the retrogression in material prosperity.

The sources of a nation's wealth are agriculture, commerce and manufactures, and sound financial administration. Let us consider these three items separately.

As regards agriculture ; from earliest times Indians were noted for the progress which they had made in the arts relating to the cultivation of the soil, and, as expert husbandman, in carrying to perfection the primeval business of man. The ancient rulers also understood the importance of works of irrigation for improving agriculture, and the numerous wells, canals and tanks all over the country testify to the anxiety of the Indian Rulers to effect improvements in one of the main sources of national wealth in India. Unfortunately, however there has hardly been any development under British Rule. It may seem surprising, but it is none the less a fact, that the yield per acre of crops in India at present is very much lower than what it is in other countries. In Japan, where the natural conditions of the soil are by no means superior to those in India, the yield per acre of rice is twice what it is in India. The cause of this agricultural backwardness can be traced to the neglect of the Government in improving the methods of agriculture by bringing them into line with modern requirements. There is the amplest scope for the use of power driven machinery in agriculture, for lifting water from wells, channels, tanks and rivers, for irrigation and other purposes. Hand machinery of improved types might also be introduced, specially for the reaping, threshing and winnowing of crops (*Vide* recommendations of the Indian Industrial Commission). But the most distressing comment which one feels disposed to make is the neglect of the Government in promoting irrigation. Under pressure from English manufacturers in England, the Government has been spending enormous sums on Railway extensions but ridiculously low sums on irrigation. No one underrates the importance of extended Railways in developing the resources of a country but the peculiar conditions in India demand that the needs of irrigation should be regarded as of paramount importance, more pressing than the need for Railways. "Among the means", wrote the Famine Commission of 1880, "that may be adopted for giving India direct protection from famine arising out of drought, the first place must unquestionably be assigned to works of irrigation." The way in which, says Mr. Digby, the India

Office and the Government of India have acted upon the advice of the greatest of all the Famine Commissions is this: from 1882-83 to 1897-98 they expended from Revenue nearly 7 times more on Railways than on irrigation works and from capital more than six times as much. Mr. Romesh Dutt calculates that the total outlay on irrigation works in India down to March 1902 scarcely amounted to 24 millions sterling, as against 226 millions sterling spent on Railways. Latterly there has been an awakening of the official conscience to the needs of agricultural improvement, with the result that we have advanced a few short and mincing steps on the road wisely pointed out by the Famine Commission. The explanation lies in the fact that considerations of self-interest prevent the British people from duly discharging their duty towards India. "Indian administration is considerably influenced by the trend of public opinion in England, and not by the opinion of the people of India. Englishmen understand Railways and do not understand so easily the importance of irrigation for India. English manufacturers look to the opening of distant markets in India by means of railway extension. English merchants demand fresh facilities for trade with India by new lines of communication. British houses of trade influence Indian administration, both through Parliament and by direct correspondence with the India Office. Members of Parliament urge the construction of new railway lines by frequent questions in the House of Commons." These are sad and unpleasant remarks to make, but nevertheless they represent the real truth.

Let us next consider the condition of Commerce and Manufactures. On the question of the ancient glories of India as a manufacturing country little need be said. "At a time," says the Report of the Indian Industrial Commission, "when the west of Europe, the birthplace of the modern industrial system, was inhabited by uncivilised tribes, India was famous for the wealth of her rulers and for the high artistic skill of her craftsmen. And, even at a much later period, when merchant adventurers from the west made their first appearance in

Decay in
Commerce
and Manu-
factures

India, the industrial development of this country was, at any rate, not inferior to that of the more advanced European nations." But the continual tendency of events since the British occupation of the country has been to turn the people more and more towards agriculture, and less and less towards manufactures, "In the first place," writes Sir Henry Cotton in New India, "the invention of Steam Engines and the development of machinery enormously cheapened the cost of production in England. The English manufacturers were soon in a position to undersell the Indian artizans. Secondly, the operation of a strict monopoly of heavy transit duties in India, amounting to Rs. 44 Lacs per annum, and of heavy and ruinous import duties in England, amounting to no less than 75 per cent, combined to replace all the exertions of local industry. The introduction of Manchester goods was accompanied by the collapse of indigenous industry." The situation created by the selfish policy which England has unfortunately pursued towards India inflicting on her a wrong as grievous as any recorded in history, is thus summarized by Mr. Romesh Dutt :—

"It is, unfortunately, true that the East Indian Company and the British Parliament, following the selfish commercial policy of a hundred years ago, discouraged Indian manufacturers in the early years of British rule in order to encourage the rising manufactures of England. Their fixed policy, pursued during the last decades of the eighteenth century and the first decades of the nineteenth, was to make India subservient to the industries of Great Britain, and to make the Indian people grow raw produce only in order to supply material for the looms and manufactories of Great Britain. This policy was pursued with unwavering resolution and with fatal success; orders were sent out, to force Indian artisans to work in the Company's factories; commercial residents were legally vested with extensive powers over villages and communities of Indian weavers; prohibitive tariffs excluded Indian silk and cotton goods from England;

English goods were admitted into India free of duty or on payment of a nominal duty

The British manufacturer, in the words of the historian, H. H. Wilson, "employed the arm of political injustice to keep down and ultimately strangle a competitor with whom he could not have contended on equal terms;" millions of Indian artisans lost their earnings; the population of India lost one great source of their wealth. A painful episode in the history of British rule in India; but it is a story which has to be told to explain the economic condition of the Indian people, and their present helpless dependence on agriculture. The invention of the power-loom in Europe completed the decline of the Indian industries; and when in recent years the power-loom was set up in India, England once more acted towards India with unfair jealousy. An excise duty has been imposed on the production of cotton fabrics in India which disables the Indian manufacturer from competing with the manufacturer of Japan and China and which stifles the new steam-mills of India." (Economic History under Early British Rule).

"When Queen Victoria ascended the throne in 1837, the evil had been done. But nevertheless there was no relaxation in the policy pursued before. Indian silk handkerchiefs still had a sale in Europe; and a high duty on manufactured Indian silk was maintained. Parliament inquired how cotton could be grown in India for British looms, not how Indian looms could be improved. Select Committees tried to find out how British manufactures could find a sale in India, not how Indian manufactures could be revived. Long before 1858, when the East India Company's rule ended, India had ceased to be great manufacturing country. Agriculture had virtually become the one remaining source of the nation's subsistence..

British merchants still watched and controlled the Indian tariff after 1858. The import of British goods into India was facilitated by the reduction of import duties. The growth of

looms and factories in Bombay aroused jealousy. In 1879, a year of famine, war, and deficit in India, a further sacrifice of import duties was demanded by Parliament. And in 1882 all import duties were abolished, except on salt and liquor.

But the sacrifices told on the Indian revenues. In spite of new taxes on the peasantry and new burdens on agriculture, India could not pay her way. In 1894 the old import duties were revived with slight modifications. A 5 per cent duty was imposed on cotton goods and yarns imported into India, and a countervailing duty of 5 per cent. was imposed on such Indian cotton fabrics as competed with the imported goods. In 1896 cotton yarns were freed from duty; but a duty of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. was imposed on cotton goods imported into India, and an excise duty of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. was imposed on all goods manufactured at Indian mills. Coarse Indian goods, which did not in any way compete with Lancashire goods, were taxed, as well as finer fabrics. The miserable clothing of the miserable Indian labourer, earning less than $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. a day, was taxed by a jealous Government. The infant mill industry of Bombay, instead of receiving help and encouragement, was repressed by an excise duty unknown in any other part of the civilised world. During a century and a half the commercial policy of the British rulers of India has been determined, not by the interests of Indian manufacturers, but by those of British manufacturers. The vast quantities of manufactured goods which were exported from India by the Portuguese and the Dutch, by Arab and British merchants, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, have disappeared. India's exports now are mostly raw produce largely the food of the people. Manufacturing industry as a source of national income has been narrowed." Vide India under Victorian Age).

Possibly few Englishmen realize how largely England herself is indebted for her industrial efficiency and prosperity to her connection with India, and how grave an economic wrong has been systematically done

to India by the policy hitherto pursued by our British Rulers. Much of modern European national prosperity is based upon the plunder of nations representing ancient civilizations. Spain robbed South America; the conduct of other great Nations has hardly been more honorable. Up to the middle of the eighteenth century, English industry was in a very backward condition. Lancashire spinning and weaving were on a par with the corresponding industry in India so far as machinery was concerned, but the skill which made Indian cotton a marvel of manufacture was wholly wanting in any of the Western nations. It is true that important inventions towards the middle of the eighteenth century in England gave England an undoubted superiority in effecting unprecedented improvements in her manufacturers. But as has been rightly remarked by Brooks Adams:

“Inventions in themselves are passive, many of the most important having lain dormant for centuries, waiting for a sufficient store of force to have accumulation to set them working. That store must always take the shape of money, money not hoarded, but in motion. Fortunately for England the money requisite came from India. England’s industrial supremacy owes its origin to the vast hoards of Bengal and the Carriac being made available for her use. The influx of the Indian treasure by leading considerably to the nation’s cash capital, not only increased its stock of energy, but added much to its flexibility and rapidity of its movement. Very soon after Plassey, the Bengal plunder began to arrive in London and the effect appears to have been instantaneous. Possibly since the world began no government has ever yielded the profit reaped from the Indian plunder. (Brooks Adams law of Civilization and decay).

“What was the extent of the wealth” asks Mr. Digby, “thus wrung from the East Indies? No one has been able to reckon adequately, as no one has been in a position to make a correct ‘tally’ of the treasure exported from India. Estimates have been made which

vary from £500,000,000 to nearly £1,000,000,000. Probably between Plassey and Waterloo the last-mentioned sum was transferred from Indian hoards to English banks."

Evil effects
of the export
of raw
produce.

All the various causes mentioned above conspired to kill the industries and manufactures of India and to render the country an essentially agricultural one. The operation of Economic laws was further stimulated by the mistaken policy of Government in encouraging the export of raw produce. Here again the policy was dictated by considerations of British commerce and not in the interests of India. In the 18th century the colonies of England were looked upon as mere "Plantations" whose raw produce was sent out to the mother country to be manufactured and sent back to the colonies and the rest of the world. After the American war of Independence, the colonies refused to be subservient to the interests of British manufacturers and developed their own Industries by protection even against England. Since then, in the expressive language of Mr. Ranade ;—

The great Indian Dependency of England has come to supply the places of the old Colonies. This Dependency has come to be regarded as a Plantation growing raw produce to be shipped by British agents in British ships, to be worked into Fabrics by British skill and capital, and to be re-exported to the Dependency by British merchants to their corresponding British Firms in India and elsewhere." (Essays page 99).

"This is best illustrated", says the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, "by the case of cotton. The Court of Directors of the East Indian Company began so early as 1788 to take an interest in the question of the cultivation of cotton in India, but this was only with a view to improve the quality and quantity of the Indian product for the benefit of British looms. But although the Government has hitherto pursued the fatal policy of encouraging the export of cotton along

with other kinds of raw produce, little or nothing has been done to encourage the conversion of our raw cotton into manufactures."

While all this has been happening in India other nations, free to organise their own resources, have not been idle. "Since 1870", says the Hon'ble Pandit Malaviya, "other nations have made enormous progress in manufacturing industries. I would particularly mention Germany, Austria, and United states and Japan, as their progress has specially affected India. They have each done so by devising and carrying out a system of general and technical education for their peoples, accompanied by a system of state aid and encouragement of industries. And these nations—and several others besides—most of whom have built up their industries by some form of state aid or protection have taken full advantage of the policy of free trade to which India has been subjected, to purchase raw produce from India and to flood her markets with their manufactured goods. India has thus been exposed to ever-extending commercial subjugation by these nations, without being armed and equipped to offer a resistance and without being protected by any fiscal walls or ramparts. This incessant and long continued attack has affected her agricultural as well as manufacturing industries."

India at a disadvantage compared with free countries.

It is sometimes argued that even granting that the Government has been guilty of neglect in developing the industrial and manufacturing resources of the country, the people themselves have been almost equally negligent and must be prepared to bear a proportionate measure of blame. It is true that the achievements of Indians in this direction have been inconsiderable, but our critics seldom realise the almost insurmountable difficulties which lie in our way. The most patent as well as the most material of all these difficulties is due to want of capital. "Industry," says Mill, "is limited by capital. Industry cannot be employed to any greater extent than there is capital to invest." I need

Backwardness of Indians in developing their own country due to want of capital.

hardly say anything to convince any Indian or even a foreigner acquainted with real India, that there is hardly any available capital in the country. The hoarded wealth of India is now a cruel myth. Not to speak of the struggling masses, the great middle class which in every country forms the real backbone of society, is here composed of men who are financially slightly better than mere bankrupts. No doubt there are some Indians who may be styled rich, but their number is quite insignificant compared with the enormous number of those who live in actual poverty. As in England the millionaire and the pauper co-exist, so in India a small number of well-to-do folk are to be found side by side with two hundred and thirty millions of struggling people. In England the suffering and struggling poor are few; in India they are the vast majority, the well-to-do being a very small minority. The reasons why Indians have not been able to "develop" their own country have thus been summarized by Mr. Digby :—

"It may be asked, Why did not India herself use Hargreaves' spinning jenny and its descendants, and turn to account James Watt's kettle o' steam?" My answer is of threefold character :—

1. Presidencies of Bengal and Madras, when these improvements were ready for use, had been drained of their resources, which resources had gone to England, and therefore, their people had no money with which to profit by Hargreaves' ingenuity and Watt's genius ;

2. The Government, most lamentably, as it has provd, did not conceive the paternal duty which it had assumed towards India,—without the leav of the people being sought, though the aid of the people was relied upon to make the necessary military conquest,—called upon it to help the people in this direction. On the contrary, it deliberately strangled Indian manufactured exports and thereby gave English mercantile

enterprise an opportunity to obtain a footing which, once obtained, has led to the whole country being covered with the product of English looms ; and

3. The drain, begun in Bengal and openly recognized as consisting of ill-gotten gains, was in later times, decently veiled under the guise of trade necessities and public works' improvements out of capital from a foreign country and with foreigners as controllers of such work alike in construction and management and was continued in ever-increasing volume, until there is now no capital left in the country for investment nor even enough for the common needs of decent folk."

It seems hardly necessary to say anything further to emphasize the point that the lack of financial facilities is at present one of the most serious difficulties in the way of the initiation and extension of the industries of the country. I am not one of those who think that the Indians as a rule are lacking in enterprize or the capacity to organise industrial concerns. Whenever a suitable opportunity has been given, Indian talent has manifested itself in spheres of industrial activity as conspicuously as in other matters. This is best illustrated by the success which has attended such industrial enterprises as the Cotton Mill Industry, the Tata Iron and Steel Works and the Tata Hydro-Electric Works. The history of the Iron industry in India supplies a withering comment on the selfishness of English policy towards India in industrial matters. At the time when Lord Dalhousie in obedience to the impulse to secure the widest possible market for English industries filled the country with a network of railways, iron ores were found in abundance in numerous parts of India. It is possible that if this bountiful local supply of iron had been utilised in full, India would not only have met the demand for iron materials needed for her railways, but would have built up a most lucrative export trade in iron with the civilized and progressive countries of the world. But here again our rulers acted towards India in a spirit of jealousy.

Indians not lacking in industrial enterprise.

History of the Iron industry as an example of commercial jealousy.

England was then the only other iron producing country in the world and did not want India to become a rival and destroy her world-monopoly; and secondly, the manufacturers of English cutlery, hardware and other articles wanted India to be a market for their produce and not that India should build up an iron industry of her own. The munificence, patriotism and public spirit of Tata has now enabled Indians to resuscitate this dormant industry and the success that has attended the enterprise has been phenomenal. Tata's shares are now worth a premium of 4,000 per cent and the value is daily growing. All these enterprises are thoroughly Indian, financed by Indian capital and worked under Indian control.

Financial
Adminstra-
tion.

Having now discussed the condition of agriculture, commerce and manufactures under British Rule, I propose to say a few words as regards the system of financial administration in this country. It can not be denied by even the most ardent apologists of British rule that India is one of the most heavily taxed countries in the world. It is true that the average tax realized in India does not work out to a high figure expressed in money; but we have to remember that the average income of an Indian per annum is about the lowest known in any country possessing a civilized Government. It is one thing to take three shillings from an income of one pound, and quite another thing to take even three pounds out of an income of 45 pounds. The plain fact is that the incidence of taxation in India is one of acutest known, and tells very heavily on the poor Indian tax-payer. Heavy taxation is in itself an evil, but this evil is aggravated a thousand fold when the taxes that are realized are taken out of the country to enrich other people, and not allowed to remain in the country to fructify local arts, manufactures and industries. Before the advent of British Rule also, the rulers imposed a heavy land tax on the people. But the taxes that were imposed were seldom realized, whereas the British Rulers realize their impositions with the utmost rigour; secondly,

Heavy
taxation.

money never flowed out of India and even the spoils of plunder flowed back to the people in some shape or other. Even the pompous luxuries in which Indian Rulers sometimes indulged gave occupation to thousands of artisans and workmen, and ultimately tended to enrich the people and to stimulate the growth and development of industries.

The Economic Drain.

But the most cruel wrong done to India has been the perpetuation of what is known as the "*Economic drain*" which has been practically bleeding the country white for the last hundred and fifty years. So much has been written and said about this economic drain that I will not detain you by making any detailed remarks of my own. I will put the case in the simplest manner possible without indulging in the use of those technical expressions which convey little meaning to the uninitiated and which sometimes hide the real truth. Briefly stated, the position is this. The East India Company were merchants as well as sovereigns of the country. In the former capacity they engrossed its trade, while in the latter they appropriated the revenues. The remittances of revenues to Europe were generally made in the commodities of the country and by the export of their raw produce. These exports represented so much wealth being drained out of the country without, in the words of Lord Salisbury "a direct equivalent"; the system acted very much like a sponge, drawing up all the good things from the banks of the Ganges, and squeezing them down on the banks of the Thames

One of the items in this Economic Drain which has come to possess a terrible significance for the Indian tax .

payer is the one known as the "Homē charges." The Secretary of State for India has to disburse a large amount of money in England to pay himself his establishment and various other people in consequence of what is known as "Services rendered to India." These payments now amount on an average to over 17 million pounds. Few of these payments can hardly be honestly debited to Indian revenues but the system has been going on in spite of the most persistent protests of the Indian people. An examination of these items of expenditure will show how unjust and inequitable have been the burdens which have hitherto been thrown on India. As regards some of the items relating to the India office, the reform Scheme has recommended a partial alleviation, but even if the suggestion in the Report be accepted, the relief that will be granted will be very slight. One of the largest items of payments represents interest on the Indian debt. This Indian debt is a cruel myth. When the Sovereignty of India passed from the hands of the Company to the Crown their capital was paid off by loans which were made into an Indian debt, on which interests is paid from Indian taxes. "The British nation says Mr. Romesh Dutt, "had pent millions" of their own money in acquiring dominions in other parts of the world but in India an Empire had been acquired, wars had been waged, and the administration had been carried on at the cost of the Indian people; the British nation had not contributed a shilling. The trading Company which had acquired this empire had also drawn their dividends and made their profits out of the revenues of the empire for two generations. When they ceased to be traders in 1834, it was provided that the dividends on their stock should continue to be paid out of the taxes imposed on the Indian people. And when, finally, the

Company ceased to exist in 1858, their stock was paid off by loans which were made into an Indian Debt. The empire was thus transferred from the Company to the Crown, but the Indian people paid the purchase-money. And the Indian people are thus virtually paying dividends to this day, on the stock of an extinct Company in the shape of interest on Debt !”

But the wrong did not end with the mere creation of the Indian Debt. It increased by leaps and bounds on account of the charges thrown on India towards the cost of the Afghan and Chinese wars the Mutiny Wars, the Abyssinian and Soudan Wars and of every other military expedition undertaken in the East. The debt which was 51 million pounds in 1857 rose to 97 millions in 1862 and increased continuously till in 1901 it stood at 200 million pounds.

I believe we are now in a position to offer a complete answer to Lord George Hamilton, on the basis of the test laid down by him. We have seen that India is now chronically famine stricken and that these famines are really due to the abject poverty of the Indian people. We have also seen that this poverty has been directly due to the fact that under British Rule the sources of national wealth in India have been gradually narrowed and that unjust charges on the Indian people have drained away all available wealth in the country. **India therefore has materially retrograded in material prosperity under British Rule, in consequence of the policy hitherto pursued by our British Rulers.**

What then is the remedy? According to Lord George Hamilton, our British Rulers ought to retire from India, but this is not what the much maligned Indian agitators suggest. For more than 30 years the Indian National Congress, and latterly the All India Muslim League have suggested a change of policy based on a reform of the Indian Administration which renders unnecessary that heroic measure of retirement from India which Lord George Hamilton declares ought to be the Englishman's

duty. The defects in Indian administration are due to the fact that it represents an autocratic oligarchy unresponsive to the voice of Indian public opinion. Under present conditions and under the present constitution of the Indian Government, it would have been a miracle if the condition of India had been better than what it really is. Every great interest, every section of British subjects can bring pressure to bear on the Indian Government—except only the people of India. The British Cabinet can press its demands through the Secretary of state; British manufacturer can use their votes and work through their representatives in the House of Commons, to demand and obtain concessions, and Military men have an influence in the Viceroy's Council which till within recent years operated to the detriment of Indian revenues. *But by an irony of fate the only section which has no representation, no real voice, no effective influence in the Indian Administration are the people of India.* It is not surprising that the inevitable results should follow. "The Government of a people by itself," said John Stuart Mill, "has a meaning and a reality; but such a thing as Government of one people by another does not, and cannot exist. One people may keep another for its own use a place to make money in, a human cattle-farm to be worked for the profits of its own inhabitants. It is an inherent condition of human affairs that no intention, however sincere of protecting the interests of others, can make it safe or salutary to tie up their own hands. By their own hands only can any positive and durable improvement of their circumstances in life be worked out". As with individuals so with nations, the demands of justice and fair play often succumb to the dominating influence of selfishness and self-aggrandisement. Jesus Christ recognised this dominating force of self-interest in human character when he enjoined on his followers the duty of loving one neighbour as oneself; but unfortunately the teachings of a materialistic civilization have led our Christian Rulers to forget this commandment and to treat India as a "human cattle farm" to be worked for the benefit of England and her people.

The evils of the present system of British Administration themselves suggest their own remedies. Patch work reforms even though inaugurated with the best of intentions might work as mere palliatives, but will fail to effect a permanent cure. The most effective remedy lies in the immediate grant of a real system of Self-Government in India. There is no other remedy, for the simple reason that no other remedy is possible. The teachings of history have been in vain, the moral codes of the world are a sham, the laws of political economy are utterly false, if any other remedy for the salvation of India and her people can be suggested.

I do not wish to detain you by attempting a detailed answer to some of the most common and oft repeated arguments which have been advanced against the introduction of a system of Self-Government in India. They are wellknown to you and you know how baseless the objections are. It is said that we are not yet fit for Home Rule. This is a particularly cruel insinuation because our critics know very well that the charge is absolutely false, and really adds insult to injury. The past history of Indians in the arts of Government wholly belie the charge. Not to speak of ancient times, the genius of Abul Fazl, of Todarmal and others achieved in the sixteenth century what our present Rulers have not been able to surpass in the twentieth, with all the accumulated intellectual advantages with which the world has been enriched during four hundred years. No nation can be said to be absolutely fit for Self-Government, not even the British. Fitness is only a relative term, and Indian Administrators wherever given a real opportunity and full play have sometimes outshone even British Administrators in the arts of Government. Moreover, liberty alone and the enjoyment of all that flows from liberty, alone make people fit for liberty. "The character of political institutions," say the authors of the Reform Scheme, "reacts upon the character of the people. This fact, that the exercise of responsibility calls forth the capacity for it is the best ground for confidence in the working of Self-

Government in India." It is said that we will make mistakes, but who never did? He who never made a mistake, never did anything of any value. The infant who never fell or stumbled, never learn to walk. Nations learn and become strong and progressive, both by their failures and their successes.

The authors of the Reform Scheme have said that while they do not doubt the eventual capacity of Indians for Self-Government, they are not at present ready. This is another gross libel on the Indian nation. We are not ready now after a hundred and fifty years of British Rule we will never be ready so long as that rule lasts in its present form. The two most striking factors which according to the Montagu-Chelmsford Report ought to be recognized in any scheme of political reforms, are, 1st, that in the immense masses of the people are poor, ignorant and helpless far beyond the standards of Europe; secondly, that there runs through Indian society a series of cleavages of religion race and caste which constantly threaten its solidarity. Now, as regards the first point, the poverty of the people is hardly likely to decrease if any predictions can be based on the lessons taught by the past; the prospects of any substantial advance in educational matters are also hardly bright, having regard to the achievements of our Rulers in imparting the blessings of even elementary education to a people whose marvellous aptitude in literary acquirements have always elicited universal admiration. As regards the second point, the existence of an irresponsible and foreign bureaucracy are likely to accentuate rather than heal the differences that already exists. Under present conditions, all the different races and nationalities enter into a competition with one another in winning the favours of the Ruling power, and this naturally creates intercommunal and international jealousies. The existence of these very conditional supply an argument strongly in favour, rather than against, the introduction of any system of Self-Government. In England itself, the prosperity of the nation as well as the wide spread of education followed but did not precede

popular Government. With power comes a feeling of responsibility, and this responsibility has always taught people to display a lively and effective sense of the sanctity of other people's rights.

Another reason for denying India the blessings of Self-Government is contained in the assertion that India is a mere geographical expression and the inhabitants have not attained any measure of homogeneity to render this form of administration feasible. This again is an argument which is shown to be untenable by the effects which the introduction of a system of Self-Government has produced in other countries. The United States of America, Canada, the Transval, Switzerland, not to speak of numerous smaller countries, contain populations belonging to a wide diversity of races, nationalities, religions and other factors quite as sharply dividing their respective peoples as can anywhere be met with in India. But they are all self-governing, and some of them evolved system of Representative and Responsible Government, quite as efficient as in any of the progressive countries in the world. The introduction of Self-Government tended to the unification of divulgent elements, welding the different units into a sense of responsibility and loyalty to the common interests of the whole. So, please God, will it do in India.

India a mere geographical expression.

Then again it is said that public spirit is wanting in this country and without the acquirement of what is called the "citizen spirit", no measure of Self-Government can possibly be introduced into this country. Here again the actual facts do not bear out the charge. It is now generally admitted that India was the home of a highly efficient system of Self-Government long before Christ was born, and before any organized system of Government was known to any other nation in the world. The East, as is now well known, was also the birth place of Municipal Institutions. Besides, the authors of the Reform Scheme themselves recognized that these qualities are only developed by exercise.

Unless then the opportunity is given, it is difficult to see how Indians will ever acquire the necessary qualifications to fit them for Self-Government.

Official criticism of the Congress League Scheme.

I do not think I need say anything further in refutation of the various arguments that are usually advanced against the introduction of Self-Government in India. The declaration of August 20th, 1917 have now pledged the Government to the grant of responsible Government to India and also to substantial steps being taken in the direction of the grant of responsible Government. In pursuance of this declaration of policy the Secretary of State and Viceroy have promulgated a scheme of reforms. Previous to this the Indian National Congress and the All India Moslim League had jointly prepared a Scheme of Reforms which is now well-known as the Congress League Scheme. The authors of the Official Scheme have rejected the Congress-League Scheme as being unacceptable from the point of view of the declaration of the 20th August, and have put forward their own Scheme which seems to have caught the fancy of some of the most eminent of our leaders. For my own part, I frankly confess that the official criticisms of the Congress-League scheme have never appealed to me. I am only sorry I can deal with this point very briefly. The Congress-League Scheme stands for 3 great principles.

- (1) Power of the Legislature over finance.
- (2) Power of the Legislature over Legislation.
- (3) Power of the Legislature over the Executive through resolutions.

The first objection against the Congress-League scheme urged in the official Report is about the financial power demanded for the legislature.

Paragraph 165 of the Report says.—

“Where next we find ourselves at variance with the draughtsmen of the scheme is in their claim to control completely the Provincial finances. It may be that

constitutional practice elsewhere has not been fully appreciated. In England it is well-established rule that the Government only can propose fresh expenditure; no amendment can be moved to increase a grant or alter its destination,.....But we need hardly lay stress on matters of form when there is an objection of principle. Finance is the vehicle of Government; and unless the executive can raise money for its needs and lay it out as it pleases, it cannot continue responsible for the administration.

The reference in the above criticisms to British Parliamentary practice, involves a fallacy. The British cabinet which forms the Government is composed of the leaders of the majority in the House of Commons and consequently all items of the Budget proposed by the Government are necessarily accepted by the House, because the party which the Government represents forms the majority. As regards the second objection, the principle embodied in the proposition laid down by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State is the very negation of the first principles of *Representative Government* as understood in England. The great constitutional struggle waged for centuries in England, resulted in the final establishment of the principle that *the executive cannot raise money or lay it out as it pleases.* The proposition is also the negation of the first principles of *Good Government* as understood in Political science. The next objection urged against the Congress-League Scheme is that the wide powers of the legislature suggested in the scheme, if combined with an irremovable executive, would lead to a deadlock and would be contrary to the experience of history. Here again the criticism is not justified by facts. A slight consideration of the constitutional history of the various types of colonies will show that in the case of the Crown colonies, which do not enjoy *Responsible Government*, we find the combination of a legislature, with the widest powers over legislation and finance combined with an irremovable executive. Lastly, the Viceroy and the Secretary of States object to the proposal in the Congress League Scheme for powers to influence the

Government by means of Resolutions. Here again the proposal is justified by the facts of the history of the development of constitutional procedure in England itself and the various colonies.

Now let us see how far the official scheme fulfils the promise held out by the declaration of the 20th August 1917. A study of constitutional history of England and other countries will show that *Responsible Government* is always preceded by the grant of complete *Representative Government*. In other words, we begin with a representative assembly, meaning there by a legislature the majority of whose members are elected; such a legislature is given control over finance, legislation and some control over the executive by means of resolutions. These are the essential requisites of *Representative Government*. Finally, the legislature is given complete control over the executive also, and then we get *Responsible Government* in the complete form.

The Congress-League scheme proposes full *Representative Government*, and a slight advance towards *Responsible Government* when it demands that half the members of the Executive Council should be elected by the members of the Legislative Council. The official scheme proposes something which falls short even of *Representative Government*; and yet there are people in this country who in their blisful ignorance of constitutional history in England and other countries are prepared to sacrifice the Congress-League Scheme and to hail with delight the official scheme as giving us a substantial advance towards *Responsible Government*. The proposals of the Congress-League scheme themselves fall short of *Responsible Government*, but may be said to constitute only a first step towards that direction. In this sense, the demand contained in our scheme does not go beyond the announcement of the 20th August; but the official scheme does not fulfil the promise contained in the announcement. The normal course of development of any system of Government throughout the British Empire has only been through a complete form of

Representative Government to complete *Responsible Government*. The system proposed by the Official Scheme is not a complete form of even *Representative Government*, because it is not proposed to give effective powers over legislation, and hardly any over finance; and yet it contains some extraneous features of *Responsible Government* when it proposes to make the ministers gradually responsible to the legislature. But it is in substance neither the one nor the other. It is therefore, in the language of the Report itself, "without any precedent" and wholly contrary to political experience throughout the world.

Brethren of the League, I am painfully conscious of the fact that I have already inflicted a long speech on you, but I have done so advisedly in order to put before you the plea for Self-Government in India from a point of view which I hope will be appreciated by all the communities in India alike. In dealing with the present economic condition of the country, I have not said anything new, nor have I been able to put forward any novel arguments in support of the proposition that the present system of Indian Administration has been productive of the most baneful results. It has been said of the ancient Roman Empire that it sucked the orange of its provinces dry and left only the rind to its subjects. The Economic History of India shows that a similar process has unfortunately been going on in this country under British Rule and our Rulers have not only sucked the Indian orange juiceless, but the chances are that if they are not pulled up in time, even the rind will not be left over for the Indian people. For my own part, I have told you my firm conviction that the salvation of India lies in the introduction in this country of a real system of Self-Government. In our demand for this necessary measure of Reform, we are not acting merely as the child in the advertisements who stakes his happiness on getting the article for which it had put forth its hand; it is not with us a question of satisfaction or happiness, but a matter of life and

Necessity
of Self
Govern-
ment.

Supposed
Mussulman
apprehen-
sions:

death, and vitally affecting our very existence. But I have heard it said that in joining in this demand for Self-Government, the Mussalmans of India are making a fatal blunder and are playing into the hands of Hindu agitators who are craftily trying to establish Hindu Rule under the guise of responsible Government. It is argued that the introduction of a system of responsible Government will mean the transfer of power into the hands of the Hindus, and as they are the natural enemies of the Mussalmans, they will not hesitate to use every opportunity to bring about the political extinction of our community. In support of this antagonism, the Arrah riots of 1917 are pointed out and it is urged that oppressions by Hindu landlords, money-lenders, lawyers and others are so common and frequent that the Mussulmans would be ill-advised to vote for a system of Government which will place their enemies in a position of advantage in the exercise of political power. In short Self-Government in India is confidently asserted to mean nothing but Hindu Government, and so long as a cleavage between the two communities exist, Mussulmans, we are told would not be justified in voting for Self-Government. As a natural sequence of all these warnings it is urged that the British Government is the only refuge for weaker communities in times of difficulty and hence the transfer of power from the present Rulers must necessarily spell disaster for the Mussulman and other politically backward communities in India.

Objections
answered

These gratuitous warnings call for a few remarks. On the question of Hindu-Moslem relations I consider it a gross libel on both communities to say that the Hindu is the natural enemy of the Mussalmans. Those who base their case on unfortunate incidents like the Arrah riots and similar disturbances at once betray the weakness of their arguments. These disturbances are due to the fanaticism and ill conceived religious fervour of those sections of the two communities who, from want of education and other causes, have not learnt to be tolerant of the feelings and sentiments of others. We must look to a liberal spread of

education and to all that education brings in train, to effect that broadening of view and to inspire our people with that spirit of mutual toleration and forbearance which alone can put an effective quietus to such disturbance. No one has ever heard of a riot between educated Hindus and educated Mussalmans; sectional differences between the lower orders must always exist and riots between different sections of one and the same community are also not unknown, these are amongst the numerous ills incidental to human life, which only give opportunities for leaders of men to discharge one of the highest duties to society by bringing their erring brethren to the paths of reason. As regards the oppressions of Hindu landlords, money-lenders, lawyers and others, I do not think that the Mahomedan representatives of these sections of society are less merciful to their respective victims; the relation between a landlord and his tenant, between a money lender and his debtor, between a lawyer and his client are merely personal and individual and are seldom affected by communal consideration. I know of instances of actual oppressions by Mahomedan landlords and money lenders on Mahomedan tenants and debtors which can hardly be surpassed by any authentic records of oppressions, by any members of non-Moslim communities. These oppressions, again, can only be effectively minimized, for they cannot be completely wiped out of society, by the spread of education amongst the masses, which will give them the necessary resisting power. Those whom nature has placed in a position of inferiority, or whom circumstances place in a position of disadvantage, must be taught to be self-reliant and to acquire that requisite knowledge of their rights and privileges which will naturally weaken the hands of their oppressors, or enable them not merely to resist oppression but also to effectively seek redress. Government officials, however well intentioned, cannot always stand between the oppressor and the oppressed; there have even been cases where officials have even sided with the oppressors, through ignorance of real facts or in obedience to those sinister influences which the strong can always bring to bear on those in authority. The belief in an alien Government as a heaven

of refuge is as silly as it is incorrect. It is true that as between different Indian communities, an alien ruler can afford to be impartial and exhibit the requisite qualities of detachment; but here again every thing depends on the sense of justice of the particular official concerned. Not infrequently do we hear the remarks made that Mr. so, and so is a pro Mussalman officer or that another is a pro-Hindu officer, and it is a point of wisdom to always remember that our present Rulers are human beings and are not wholly free from those human weaknesses and failings which may some times lead them to be partial and even unjust. Under present conditions, the Government is British but the machinery which works the details is largely Hindu; even now the Hindus can commit all possible oppressions on Mussalmans, secure in the protection which is ordinarily afforded by their official superiors. During the recent disturbances in Eastern Bengal, instances of the grossest oppressions by Police Officers, both Hindu and Mahomedan, were brought to our notice; the attention of Government was drawn to these oppressions by every conceivable method; in some Districts the District Magistrates were good enough to put their ideas of prestige in their pocket and to hold enquiries which resulted in numerous prosecutions of the Police Officers concerned, but in others the District Magistrates and the Superintendents of Police refused to believe the allegations made against their subordinates and practically refrained from making any enquiries. The result was that although thousands of Mussalmans had been subjected to a heavy black mail, they could not get any redress at the hands of the Government. It is the system that is at fault, and not the officers. If the District Magistrate wants to take any erring subordinate under his protecting wings, the cry of the oppressed may reach the footstools of the Almighty but never pierces the non-conducting medium of bureaucrats who intervene between the head of the Administration and the people. The Almighty however seldom appears to interfere in mundane affairs, having perhaps transferred such unimportant matters to the

control of the white sections of the human race; and unless He has reserved the right of reentry — as the authors of the Reform Scheme wish to reserve for the British Government in their scheme of reforms the ear which is supposed to be “cognizant of even the sparrows fall” may continue to be deaf to the agonizing cries of the distressed and the oppressed.

These considerations will at once show that although British officials can afford to be impartial, the chances of an oppressed Mussulman getting redress as against an oppressor depend mainly on two things :—1st the innate sense of justice of the District Officers who are usually the nearest available British officials; secondly, the absence of any influence which the oppressor may afford to bring on the authorities. It may be argued that the British officials can always be depended upon in cases of emergency, and will never betray an utter and a reckless disregard of Mussalman interests, in all cases where the Mussalmans may have a real grievance. Experience however teaches a different lesson, Let us take the case of appointments in various public services. Even now, there are numerous departments in the public service where the Mussulmans have not succeeded in securing a fair share of the appointments; and although circular after circular is issued by Government enjoining on heads of departments the desirability and even the necessity of giving a larger number of posts to Mussalmans, these circulars are allowed to rust on the dusty shelves of the public offices where spiders conveniently spin their webs or white ants bore innumerable holes through the records of the pious wishes of our Rulers. It is sometimes said that the British officials are honest in their intentions and sincerely anxious to accommodate Mussalmans, but their Hindu subordinates always stand in their way. If this argument be correct, the British officials, if not actually dishonest and unjust, are at best mere figure heads; they can do no good, that they are powerful enough for mischief for they can always use their official authority to protect their mischievous

Officials not invariably impartial.

Disregard of Muslim interests.

Hindu subordinates, and the sooner therefore such figure heads are removed the better for all concerned. If it is the Hindu official who is all powerful for good or for evil, it matters little whether he is a mere subordinate or the head of the office. In the latter case he will act with a sense of responsibility, but in the former case he is not hampered by any of those considerations which afford protection against the exercise of irresponsible power. Next consider the case of Mussalman representation in all Self-Governing bodies. Have our Rulers hitherto shown any jealous regard for the protection of Mussulman interest? Local Self-Government began in the early sixties of the last century, and from that time till now, no provision has been made in the various acts for the special protection of Mussulman interests. In those days when the experiment was being first made, the Mussalmans were politically an absolute nonentity. Provisions for separate representation of Mussulmans were of more vital importance than now, when Mussulmans can occasionally hold their own. Why was it that no safe guards for the protection of Mahomedan interests were then provided? Even early eighties, twenty years latter, when the various Municipal Acts and Local Self-Government Acts inaugurated an era of wide extention of the principles of Self-Government, no provisions for Musalman representation were made. The power of nomination which Government for the resrepresentation of minorities, is necessarily restricted by various considerations, and it is no wonder that Mussulman interests have all along grievously suffered. Even where the Government reserved to itself the most extensive power of nomination the Mussulmans have been systemitically treated as negligible nonentities. In the Calcutta University for instance, where the Government exercises the power of nomination to the extent of selecting 80 per cent of the members of the senate, the Mahomedan representation in that body never exceeded 8 per cent. Separate representation to Mahomedans was given only in 1908 under the Morley-Minto Scheme of Reforms, but even then the proportion of seats reserved for

Mahomedans is utterly insignificant. Only the other day, in the proposed Calcutta Municipal Bill, Government thought that the allotment of 13 per cent of the Municipal seats to Mussulmans was quite sufficient to meet the just demands of the community, although official figures show that Mussulmans form more than 85 per cent of the total population of the city. It is needless to multiply instances. I for one do not believe in an attitude of helpless reliance on the mercy of the Government for anything that I desire and which I really deserve; nothing worth having was ever secured by the art of begging, however skilfully the art may be practised.

There is a class of self-deluded people in our community who think that the Englishman has a natural liking for the Mussulman and as between a Hindu and an European it will be beneficial to Mussulman interests if the control of affairs were vested in the hands of Englishmen than in the hands of the Hindus. Acting under this delusion, they maintain, that if power is to be transferred from officials, it is better that it should pass to the hands of non-official Europeans. For the consideration of those members of my community who honestly hold these views, I would place one fact before them which may possibly have escaped their notice. The great Anglo-Indian community in India include a large number of merchant princes and heads of various organisations, who all control thousands of office establishments throughout India. In these offices there are thousands of clerks and assistants who are Indian ; but it is a significant fact that these Anglo-Indians have not shown particular liking for Mahomedan employes. Full statistics are not available, but a rough calculation shows, from a consideration of facts in at least two provinces, that the proportion of Mahomedan employees in the Offices of these Anglo-Indians does not exceed even 1 per cent. Comment on such a state of things is superfluous. So long as our Anglo-Indian friends do not furnish a satisfactory explanation of their obvious aversion to the employment of Mahomedans, I am not prepared to prefer the Anglo-Indian to a country man of mine, even though he happens to be a Hindu,

A mistaken
idea.

Apprehensions as to Services being Swamped by Hindus.

One other apprehension of the Mussulmans to the introduction of Self-Government remains to be considered; It is said that the introduction of Self-Government will mean the practical monopoly by the Hindus of all the posts in the public services. To many, this objection if well founded, is likely to appeal very strongly and I therefore propose to offer a few remarks on this point. Let us realise for a moment the number of posts which are at present occupied by Indians of all communities. India gives, says the Report on the Reform Scheme, out of every 100, 71 to agriculture or pasture, 12 to industries 5 to trade 2 to domestic service, 1.5 to the professions and 1.5 to Government service or the Army. The total number of Indians in Government service would therefore be about 1 per cent of the total population. Suppose all the non-Muslims were driven out of these posts, and every available post given to Mussulmans only. A rough calculation shows that even then not more than 3 per cent of the total number of Mussulmans in India would be provided with posts in Government service. But what about the remaining 97 per cent? They will have to fall back on other sources for a means of livelihood, and unless suitable avenues of employment are found out, they will either have to prey on society or die of starvation. Now take the converse case; Suppose every available post goes to a non-Moslem under a system of responsible Government; it is only 3 per cent of the total number in our community who will suffer, Whereas 97 percent will benefit by all the advantages which will undoubtedly accrue from the establishment of Self-Government in this country. Arts and manufactures will flourish, all the industries once were monopolized by skillfull Mahomedan Artizans and manufacturers will revive, the economic drain that is now sucking the life blood of the people will be minimized, and the prosperity and hapiness which have now vanished like a dream will again come back and make our people once more prosperous and happy. It is rank madness if nothing worse to think of the interests of 3 per cent and oppose measures of reform which cannot but have the effect of benefitting the remaining 97 per cent of the community.

I have always wondered that Mussulmans do not realise that under the present system of Government it is the Mussulmans who are the greatest sufferers. Perhaps the psychology of the official mind is not properly appreciated. There is nothing which our Rulers so much appreciate as clamour and agitation, and the cry of the Press and the platform possess more terrors for the official mind than even the roar of the Cannon. The fact that Mahomedans are not adepts in using the modern and more effective weapons of political agitation, that they are poorly represented in the Press, and that they seldom use the public platform for a ventilation of their grievances, have often led the officials to ignore their claims altogether. A well known case is that of the annulment of the Partition of Bengal, when British statesman displayed their anxious solicitude for the protection of Mussulman interests by ignoring the entire Mussulman community altogether. Only the other day Lord Ronaldshay declared at Dacca that the partition of Bengal was annulled in response to the wishes of the people of Eastern Bengal, although His Excellency knew very well that Musulmans, forming nearly 70 per cent. of the people of East Bengal, were violently opposed to the annulment of the partition. In other words, His Excellency treated the opinion of 30 per cent. of the population as the opinion of the entire people thereby treating the 70 per cent. who happen to be Mussulmans as a mere negligible quantity. And yet His Excellency is one of those few Rulers who are supposed to be extremely sympathetic towards the Mahomedan community! But this is not all. Repressive legislation affects Mussulmans most because they are politically a weak community and wanting in resisting power. They tell us in medical science that the liability to catch and succumb to virulent disease increases directly with the absence of the power of resistance; so it is with the operation of repressive laws on the people whom they affect. The history of the Press Act and the Defence of India Act has shown how rigorously repressive measures can be used to strike a helpless and defenceless community. Under present conditions

Under present conditions, Mussulmans greatest sufferers.

every British official in India is an autocrat, and the only limitations to his exercise of unlimited power are his natural sense of justice and of the duty towards the people over whom he is placed in authority. If he chooses to be just and merciful, all goes well. But if he yields to the temptation of an unrestricted use of power, the poor victims have only to sit down and die. A significant illustration is afforded by what is known as the late Calcutta disturbances.

I will only dwell on the facts relating to the disturbances very briefly, because a full statement has already been published by the Bengal Presidency Muslim League and another statement has been made by the non-official commission in Calcutta which enquired into the events relating to the disturbances. As is now well-known, there was a paragraph in the Indian Daily News of the 27th July last which contained a sentence in which a most objectionable reference was made to the Holy Tomb of our Prophet. The Bengal Muslim League passed a resolution condemning the article, and the Secretary of the League wrote to the Editor of the paper to publish an apology. Neither the Bengal Government, whose attention was drawn to the offensive article, nor the Editor of the paper took any notice of the protests of the League. The Mahomedans of Calcutta thereupon organized an All India meeting to which they invited well known Moulans from all parts of India. The meeting was organised with a view to urge upon the Government the necessity of putting a stop to systematic insults to Islam and was duly advertised to be held on the 8th, 9th and 10th September. All went well till the 31st August, when the Commissioner of Police in Calcutta appeared on the scene, and wanted some information from the organizers regarding the meeting. The informations were supplied and on the 3rd of September, the Governor held a conference with several Mahomedan gentlemen, a few of whom advised Government to stop the meeting. The organizers of the meeting represented to the Governor

The Calcutta Disturbances.

that it was practically impossible to stop the meeting at that stage and asked for a deputation to represent matters for permission to go on with the meeting. This was refused, and on the 4th September the Government stopped the meeting and issued a communique stating the reasons for stopping the meeting, the principal of which was that the meeting would be held just a week previous to the Bakrid and the Government apprehended that the Mussulmans might use the sacrificial knife to cut the throats of Hindus out of revenge for the offensive article which had appeared in an Anglo-Indian paper! Feeling naturally ran very high and several Mussulmans made up their mind to hold the meeting in spite of Government prohibition. On the 7th September, I was asked to interfere and stop the meeting. The Commissioner of Police told me that if the meeting were stopped he would arrange for a deputation to wait on His Excellency. There was no meeting on the 8th as previously advertised, and we were told that His Excellency would receive a deputation on the next day, at 2 p. m.. At about noon several Mahomedans wanted to proceed towards Government House to know the result of the deputation. They were stopped by the Police and driven back, and later on a gun was fired into the midst of a Mussulman crowd which killed a man and wounded two others. Disturbances immediately broke out and as is usual in such cases all the roudy elements in the city found in the riot that followed a convenient opportunity for pillage and plunder.

The military were immediately called out, and together with the armed Police they adopted their own methods of quelling the disturbances. On the 10th September a soldier even trespassed into one of the biggest mosques in Calcutta and the military were responsible for one of the most unprovoked assaults on innocent persons that could be conceived. One of the Soldiers shot down a Mussulman and wounded eight others one very seriously. The loss of life due to the disturbances has not been correctly estimated,

but popular estimate puts the number of deaths between 500 and 1000. Two things have to be carefully borne in mind regarding these disturbances. In the first place, they were not due to the defiance of the people in holding the proposed meeting inspite of the Government prohibition. There was no meeting on the first day and there would probably had been no meeting on the next two days either; the people were only repeating their prayers to the Governor for permission to hold the meeting, which was being as persistently withheld; and when a few of the more ardent amongst the enthusiasts wanted to proceed to the Government House to hear the decision of the Governor they were stopped by the Police and a gun was fired right into the excited mob, thereby bringing about one of the most deplorable riots in the history of Calcutta. Secondly, ever since the Government prohibited the meeting, we were repeatedly urging upon the Government to grant us permission to hold the meeting and we were prepared to give a guarantee that everything would be peaceful and orderly, and that the speakers would be carefully selected and the proceedings of the meeting kept under proper control. On the last day I made a personal appeal to His Excellency for permission to address the people for even 10 minutes to explain the situation and to ask them to obey the Government orders and disperse quietly home. But the decision of the Government was unalterable. They persisted in their original decision for the sake of the favourite prestige. The result of this perverse tenacity was the terrible loss of lives which every man with a heart must deplore.

The evidence recorded by the non official commission has shown the excesses of which the Police and the Military had been guilty, and yet the Government had the face to publish a resolution in which they exonerated all Government officials from blame and recorded a high encomium on the Military and Police. Quite recently, the Secretary of State has expressed public approbation of the decision of Lord Ronaldshay and

endorsed the high encomiums passed by the Government of Bengal on the conduct of the Police. How is it, one feels disposed to ask, that the official view of such things is different from the popular view? The reason is obvious. Neither the Secretary of State nor the Governor were eye witnesses of what the Police had been doing in the streets of Calcutta. The Governor depended for information on the Police and they could not be expected to report against themselves. According to official etiquette, the reports received from official sources were accepted by the Governor as gospel truth and anything to the contrary was necessarily regarded as mere perversion of facts, if not deliberate untruths. But facts remain what they are and people begin to wonder that wrong doers are not only not punished, but even rewarded for oppressions committed on the people. If the officials concerned have a conscience they might well explain in the words of Thackeray :—“Whom is it we seek to deceive ?

Ourselves, or God, with all this make-belive ?

The same process of makebelieve is going on all over the country. The British Officials do not mix with the people, although they claim that they are the real defenders of the people against the oppressions of their own countrymen. The Indian holding the highest position in society may pay a visit to the merest Anglo-Indian stripling just landed in India, but this visit will never be returned. For all that we do and say, the officials have to depend on Police reports or on informations gathered from Indians in the course of ceremonial visits. These reports and these informations may often be correct but may some times be wrong; if they are adverse to any particular persons, there is no chance of that person explaining the adverse report and in course of time it becomes crystallized in official records. It then gathers extraneous additions as plants gather moss with the lapse of time, and then the provisions of some one or other of the repressive enactments appraise him when too late of official wrath and displeasure.

Internments

One of the saddest and most grievous of plunders which the Government have ever committed in consequence of blind reliance on *ex parte* reports has been in its adoption of a policy of internments. Some of the most honoured and most trusted of our leaders have been deprived of their liberty by an exercise of arbitrary power which has evoked a storm of righteous indignation all over the country. The cases of Messrs. Mohammed Ali and Shaikutali, Moulana Mahmudal Hasan and Moulana Abul Kalam Azad and a host of others will at once rise in the minds of us all. Throughout these long years, we have been using every conceivable means of constitutional agitation to secure their release, but in vain. Our repeated protests have rather exasperated the officials and the number of victims has shown a continued tendency to increase. Only the other day some of the most respected Indian merchants in Burma were ordered to be deported, and although the order has recently been withdrawn, the injury that has been done to the victims has been irreparable. Our Rulers do not perhaps realise the effect that this policy has been producing on the minds of the Mussulmans in India or they think that they can afford to flout with impunity the feelings of a subject people. But I would ask them to compare Muslim feeling in India to-day, with what it was only a few years ago, and earnestly beseech them to consider whether they are really serving the best interests of British Rule in this country. I wish to tell them in the language which I hope they will understand that they are driving the Mussulmans slowly to the very verge of despair. Let us hope that they will yet be wise in time and prevent a permanent feeling of discontent and disaffection from creeping into the minds of the loyal Mussulmans of India.

Caliphate.

Brethren, I know I have already inflicted a long speech on you, but I cannot sit down without saying a few words as regards the question Khalifate and the safety of the holy places of Islam. You have already listened to the discussions of these questions by D.:

Ansari who seems to have made a thorough study of the entire problem relating to these two matters from every important point of view. The question of Caliphate must be determined by the Mussulmans; themselves without the intervention of non-Moslems, and the holy places of our Faith must also remain immune from non-Moslem influences, even though conveyed through pliant tools professing Islam and apparently vested with some show of religious authority. The revolt of the Sherif of Mecca has jeopardized the future of the Holy places in Arabia and the entire Muslim world must be watching with intense anxiety the trend of events following on the Sherif's declaration of independence. I wish to leave these questions to be further discussed by the Moulanas whom I see present here, but I wish to emphasize one particular aspect which may perhaps escape the attention of our Rulers. All questions relating to the Caliphate and the holy places touch the Musslman in the most vital points of their religious belief; and however much our Rulers may indulge in the pastime of setting up convenient imposters to mis-represent the real views of the community on political questions, any attempt to repeat this process regarding religious matters is bound to be attended with the most serious consequences. We are loyal to the British Crown and we are prepared to vindicate our loyalty by making sacrifices, subject to the one vital condition of consistency with the teachings of Islam, and with fidelity to the dictates of our Faith. But in making one sacrifice after another the dividing line may soon be reached, and then we have got to tell our Rulers that in the event of a possible conflict between Divine commandments and the laws of an earthly King, a true Mussulman must allow the former to prevail even at the risk of laying down his life.

I am afraid I have trespassed much too long on your patience, In the face of the painful facts which I have tried to place before you, all party controversy ought to be silenced, and every patriotic Indian, as well as every Englishman faithful to the British Empire, ought to feel it

their duty to take steps for the removal of the causes which are slowly and insidiously bringing India to the verge of ruin. The economic dead weight which is hampering the development of Indian industries and manufactures must be removed, and the unceasing drain on India's resources must now be stopped so that India's wealth may ultimately flow back to India. If England is proud of her work in India, she must also be shown her unfortunate mistakes of the past and by way of repentance, she should be asked to introduce reforms which will once more make India happy and prosperous. So far as we are concerned, the path of duty lies plain before us. This is not the time to waste our energies by petty squabbles about the number of seats in Legislative Council which the different communities are to secure in any prospective scheme of reforms. It is no doubt important that all communities should be given a fair chance of securing a voice in the administration of affairs of the country, but we should also remember that seats in the Legislative Council or in any of the self-governing Institutions can never be an end in themselves; they are only the means to an end and it should be our earnest endeavour to adopt the most suitable means to secure the end which we all have in view. We can not render any real services to our country unless we are prepared to rise above petty selfish considerations and if need be to sacrifice self at the glorious altar of duty. All the different communities must learn to outvie one another in coming forward to serve the motherland, and it will be a glorious day for our community if in this race for the honours of unselfish patriotism, Islam can win her way to the forefront of the noble band of Indian patriots. Even from the point of view of selfishness and self protection, Indian Mussulmans must learn to sink their differences with other communities and win their cooperation, help and assistance in all their programme of work for the future. We would lose half of our strength, if in our struggles for safe guarding the interests of our community, we fail to have our non-Moslim brethren by our side. If racial and communal strifes have some times tarnished the

history of the various communities in India, recent events have also shown that non-Moslems have not failed us in moments of real peril. Through out the recent disturbances in Calcutta, it was a Hindu journal, the redoubtable "Amritabazar Patrika"—which espoused the cause of the poor Mussulmans whose own journals had been suppressed by a rigorous exercise of the provisions of the Defence of India Act. I take this opportunity of publicly acknowledging the services rendered to our community by the "Amritabazar Patrika," the "Bharatmitra" a vernacular organ of the Murwari community in Calcutta, and also to the Hindu leaders in Bengal who were ever ready to help us with advice and assistance. It is through the cooperation of Hindu leaders that we were enabled to work up a commission to enquire into circumstances connected with the Calcutta Disturbances. I mention these facts with a little pardonable pride if only to show that Hindus and Mussulmans do not always out one another's throat but can even render one another material help and support. I have also a word to say to those whom providence has placed in authority over us. It is not for me to teach Englishmen the duty they owe to India and her people. England is now practically the most powerful of all the world powers, and a contemplation of their glorious position amongst the nations of the world may fill the minds of Englishmen with undue vanity and pride. Our Rulers should learn to ascertain facts for themselves and not depend merely on Police report and the sycophancy of office seekers and title hunters for information about Indian affairs. It is these false friends who lack the honesty to tell the truth, that lull the Government into a false feeling of satisfied security and who are really the greatest of the enemies of the British Indian Empire. The educated Indians may be harsh critics, but their one aim throughout has been to broaden the basis of British administration so as to secure for British Rule in India as long as a lease of life as providence may be pleased to vouchsafe for the benefit of both India and England. There is a class of Englishmen who are vain enough to fancy that British rule in India can never have an end. This is a most foolish delusion. It is God's

Kingdom alone that will endure to the end of time, while human Empires will rise and fall as they have done since the world began. Standing here in Delhi, amidst the faded monuments of many a vanished glory, one feels forcibly reminded of the vanity of human accomplishments and of the nothingness of Man. Some of the mightiest Empires which the world has ever known have here held their sway, but they have all vanished like a dream, or crumbled to pieces like the baseless fabric of a vision. England should therefore so shape her administration in India that when history comes to write *fiat* over her rule, she may not have reasons to be ashamed of her epitaph. She should begin by revising her economic policy towards India. She should also revise her statute book. Repressive legislations may be convenient weapons in the hands of a Czar or a Kaiser; but they are unworthy to be handled by civilised Rulers. The Press Act and arms Act should be at once repealed and the Defence of India Act should be so completely wiped out as to leave no pernicious traces behind. Englishmen have always taken a pride that in securing for Right a complete victory over Might, England has borne the most honorable and most conspicuous part. Will England, in the hour of her Victory deny to India the application in the administration of affairs of those very principles for which England claims to have spent so much blood and treasure? The success that has crowned the British Arms has brought to the minds of Indians a natural pride and high expectation. Let us hope that expectation will be justified, and these hopes amply fulfilled, by the introduction into India a real measure of Self-Government.

Above all, our Rulers should give up their past policy of looking upon the educated classes with suspicion and even contempt. It is a gross libel to suggest that educated Indians are not in sympathy with our less fortunate brethren. The records of the Indian National Congress and of the Moslem League amply testify to the solicitude which educated Indians feel for the masses of the Indian people. It would be inhuman and unnatural if we had heart to feel for our own country men. They are

bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh ; amongst them we are born and amongst them we live and move and have our being ; and when our earthly career is at an end, it is amongst them that our last remains are laid. It is amongst them, in the expressive words of Burke, that we repose the hopes of our posterity ; and it is amongst them that our posterity beholds the work of their fore-fathers. When the ryots of Behar were being crushed to death by the oppressions of Behar planters, it was our Gandhi and no Anglo-Indian, who came to the rescue of the poor ryots. In our demands for Self-Government we may naturally look forward to securing influence and power ; it is in human nature to seek a little advancement for self, and we have never claimed that we are in any way more than human. But in all our demands for Reforms, our eyes have always rested on a much larger canvass, on those teeming millions who are daily sinking deeper and deeper into a mire of misery and helplessness. Let our Rulers therefore have no apprehensions that the transfer of power into Indian hands will spell disaster for the inarticulate millions of India. They may rest assured that any powers with which educated Indians may be entrusted will be used not simply for selfish purposes but with an eye to the common good.

I have only now a few more words to say. To me the future of Islam in India seems to be wrapped in gloom and anxiety. Every instance of a collapse of the Muslim Powers of the world is bound to have an adverse influence on the political importance of our community in India. The future of Turkey, as far as I can see seems to be doomed. The feelings of the European powers towards Turkey have hardly ever been friendly in the past, and in the nature of things could not have been otherwise. In spite of the lapse of centuries, the relation between the East and the West is seldom free from a tinge of that immemorial conflict which dyed red the waves of Salamis and the Nile, and later on hurled the hordes of Christendom against the bulwarks which the heroes of Islam had raised for

the protection of the Holy places of our faith. It is an antagonism between two distinct types of civilizations and divergent outlooks on life, and is based on almost all the factors that can possibly divide Man from Man. I will not therefore be surprised if they take this opportunity to finally dispose of Turkey and her problems in Europe. And herein lies food for the amplest reflection. As years roll on, the position of the Mussulmans in India becomes more and more critical, and demands our most anxious thought and care. In my humble opinion we should invoke Divine help and guidance in all sincerity and meekness of heart. Above all, we should renounce any lurking spirit of strife and quarrel with other communities, and seek their help and assistance in our troubles and difficulties. There are some Mussulmans who think that intolerance of non-Muslims is a point of bravery' and that a contrary feeling betokens cowardice. I have even come across Muslims who take a particular pleasure in assuming a militant attitude towards non-Muslims, as if devotion to Islam demands that we should always be on the warpath, irrespective of consequences. All this is not merely morally reprehensible, but politically a grievous blunder. We are daily drifting towards a position when we shall have to tackle one of the most obstinate and powerful bureaucracies known in history. We shall then need all our strength, and also the help and cooperation of our non-Muslim brethren. Experience has shewn that we can have this help and co-operation for the mere asking. Shall we be wise and strengthen our arms by alliance with our brethren, or shall we be foolish and weaken whatever strength we possess, by internecine quarrels and strifes? We have to decide with the Future of our community in the palm of our hands, and please God, let us decide wisely.



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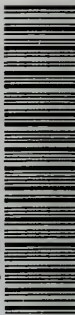
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